

LEISURE AND RECREATION IN COLONIAL MALABAR

THESIS

Submitted to the University of Calicut
for the award of the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

By

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this thesis entitled '**Leisure and Recreation in Colonial Malabar**' submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, University of Calicut is a record of bonafide research carried out by **Vasisht. M.C.** under my supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted for the award of any degree or title before

Farook College
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DECLARATION

I, VASISHT. M.C., hereby declare that the thesis entitled **Leisure and Recreation in Colonial Malabar** submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History is done by me and that has not previously formed the basis for the award of any other degree or title before.

Farook College
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Vasisht. M.C

Dedicated To

My Beloved Parents, who are not with me today.

My mother Late Lakshmi Sreedharan and father

Late Prof. M.P. Sreedharan

Acknowledgement

Two biggest industries of the contemporary world are related to the leisure and recreational activities of the human beings, sports and games and cinema. My ardent interest in sports and games and great enthusiasm in movies made me to choose the topic of my thesis titled 'Leisure and Recreation in Colonial Malabar' which is submitted to the University of Calicut for awarding Ph.D . The researcher feels that this study is only an attempt and In future more and more researchers will contribute to enrich this area.

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ABBREVIATIONS

RAK	:	Regional Archives Kozhikode
R-DIS	:	Retain Disposal
B No	:	Bundle No
S No	:	Serial No

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Leisure has often been defined as a quality of experience or as free time.¹ Leisure is the free time of an individual, the time spent away from work, business, domestic chores, education, eating, sleeping and so on and so forth. It could also be considered as an experience when it perceived the freedom and choice. The range of leisure activities extends from the very informal and casual to highly organised and long-lasting activities. The concept of leisure as a human right was realised in article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Leisure is universal and is old as humanity itself. Under ordinary circumstances every one experiences some of it in different forms. Time available for leisure varies from one individual to another and from one society to the other. It has been argued that hunter gatherers tended to have significantly more leisure time than people in modern complex societies. Leisure is an important part of everyday life of human beings all over the world. It may have qualitative and quantitative differences, but it exists universally. It can be practised alone or in a wide variety of environments. Leisure has several implications which are generally positive for individuals and groups in any society.

Definition of Leisure

According to the Oxford Dictionary the word leisure, pronounced as lezh'er means having acting or done at, deliberately ². The word 'Leisure'

¹ John Kelly, *Leisure*, Allyn and Bacon, London, 1995, pp.17-22.

² H.W.Fowler and F.G.Fowler (ed.), *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English*, 5th Edition, Oxford University Press, London, 1964, p.693.

pronounced as Le'zher, Lezh'er means freedom from the demands of work or duty, free or unoccupied³

Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights categorically states that 'everyone has the right to rest and leisure'⁴ It could be derived from the above statement that leisure has been recognized as a universal phenomenon and each and every human being is accorded with the absolute right to leisure. Leisure was and is an integral part of the life of the human beings from their beginnings to the present, with variations in time and space.

Leisure has often been defined as a quality of experience or as free time. Any theory of leisure must be based on the understanding that the usage of time in any society is primarily a functioning of the existing mode of production. The relationship between leisure time, work time and the mode of relations of production is to be considered as a pre-requisite to develop a meaningful theory of leisure.

Leisure as an experience usually emphasises dimensions of perceived freedom and choice. From the very early period itself, scholars have been trying to view leisure in a theoretical way. Aristototele saw leisure as the 'goal of human behaviour the end towards which all action is directed'. Leisure in this sense is the reflection on oneself and one major prerequisite for this is the freedom from obligations and necessities of life. Aristototele considers reason the best part of human beings. According to him, the use of reason practically and theoretically is required to become a complete person. Leisure

³ *American Everyday Dictionary*, Random House, New York, 1949, p.265.

⁴ Article 24 of Universal Declaration of Human rights: 'Everyone has the right to rest and leisure including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay "linked to reasonable working hours, leisure time and paid vacations is the right of each person to self-development and education'.

is the cultivation of mind, spirit and character⁵ It has nothing to do with time, it is a state of mind. In fact, Aristotle offers a highly idealistic view of leisure. One major pre-requisite is a temporality of leisure. But ever since industrialisation, our society has been clock oriented.

According to Parkar and Paddik, work is seen as the dominant force in life and leisure as compensated for either the boredom or excitement of job.⁶ Even if we consider leisure as the time left over, it has to be accepted that it is the individual who decide to divide that time left over has to be used or not. So, it could be argued that the concept of leisure has to be theorised as the choice of the individual. It is the individual who decides what should be done to spend his leisure time. Thus, leisure is integrated to the individual and not comes under the purview of obligation.

Leisure is that which people have and at the same time they aspire to have. It becomes an open question that what people have as leisure and what they aspire to have as leisure and in a close analysis it could be assumed that both these are intertwined. One has to explain the implications of leisure in individuals and society.

A theoretical challenge that exists in the case of leisure is that it is not merely abstract. People are familiar with leisure and they have first-hand experience of leisure as participants and observers because leisure is part of their daily lives. This familiarity itself raises the barriers to a fuller understanding of leisure. When people are familiar with something they often taken it for granted. So, the task for theories of leisure is to separate leisure from obscurity rather than from the consequences of its very familiarity.

⁵ Bammel Gene et.al., *Leisure and Human behaviour*, Brown Publishers, USA, 1992, passim.

⁶ Parker Stanley and Robert Paddik, *Leisure in Australia*, Longman, Cheshire, England, 1990, pp. 47-48.

Another challenge is that people experience or think about leisure in different ways, although it is a part of their daily life.

Max Weber in his classic study ‘The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism’ understood modern capitalism as an ongoing quest for gain in itself. Profits are accrued not so they may be spent but so they may be invested to accrue still further profits ⁷ The continuous process of systematic labour, gain and reinvestment distinguishes modern capitalism from all other economic systems. Weber argued that Protestant ethic encouraged and provided the incentives necessary for capitalism to overcome the constraints of tradition. The Protestant ethic did not exclude leisure but insisted on leisure of a very particular sort, leisure was not to obstruct fulfilling the duties of diligent work, idleness or mere amusement was not to be tolerated. Leisure was for rejuvenating the mind and the body, not enjoyment for its own sake.

Thorstein Veblen in his work “The Theory of the Leisure class argues that modern capitalist society as the result of universal economic process that are the basis of all human culture ⁸ .In Veblen’s theory two distinctions are fundamental to human social organisation. The first distinction is between two forms of labour-industry and exploit, the second is between those who labour and those who do not. The structure of society is derived from these basic distinctions. Industry is the making of something new from the given raw materials with a form and purpose of exploiting the labour, the turning to one’s own ends something made by someone else. Class distinctions began as differences between those engaged in industry and those engaged in exploit.

⁷ Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Penguin, London, 2002,

⁸ Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of Leisure Class: An Economic study of Institutions*, Macmillan, publishing place , London, 1988

The leisure class emerged from the fact that lie in the transition from class distinctions based on type of labour to class distinctions based on ownership of property. In such a social and economic condition an individual need not work while providing an opportunity to display pecuniary strength. For the leisure class, this is a way of life. The weakness of Veblen's theory of leisure class is his based upon his assumption of a unified leisure class, whose members share similar backgrounds and outlooks. The leisure class with earned wealth and leisure class with inherited wealth are different in their outlook.

The British sociologist Stanley Parker contributed significantly to analyse the relationship between leisure and work. He regarded leisure as a reaction to work fuelled by increasing individual freedom and growth of social institutions associated with leisure. The most powerful influences on leisure were occupation, sex and social class. According to Parker, leisure provides relaxation, entertainment and personal development for individuals while it contributes to society by maintaining the social system and achieving collective ends⁹ The most important factor in fulfilling these functions is the relationship between leisure and work. He believed that work activities affected leisure activities.

The most influential social psychological theory of leisure is presented by John Neulinger who stated that the "one and only one essential criterion for explaining leisure is the "condition of perceived freedom"¹⁰ The condition of perceived freedom is which one feels that what he/she is doing by choice and because one wants to do it. 'Perceived Freedom' though may be illusory,

⁹ Parker Stanley, *The Sociology of Leisure*, Allen and Unwin, London, 1976, pp.33-41.

¹⁰ John Neulinger, *The Psychology of Leisure*, Research Approach to the Study of Leisure, Thomas books, Spring Field, Michigan, 1981, pp.15-16.

it remains one of the most frequently used terms in leisure research. The drawback of this social psychological theory of leisure is that it may not allow people to discriminate between what is leisure and what is not leisure.

It is a fact that from the ancient Greeks to the present, leisure has consistently been associated with freedom. However, assumptions about the form and content of freedom in leisure have varied considerably. In general, freedom is conceived as some form of choice, that means the ability to choose, in which activities to participate. But choice may not act a strict criterion for freedom. One's action in leisure activity may be the result of reason or motivation.

Aristotle developed the earliest, most influential and perhaps still the most fully articulated prescriptive theory of leisure. For him, each human activity aimed at a characteristic good in which it naturally culminated. The highest good at which human action aims is 'eudaimonia' which means felicity or true happiness. Aristotle believed eudaimonia could be achieved only through a life devoted to the right use of leisure. He described two ways of leisure that could be rightly used; first, through active participation in the civic and political life of the community; second, through a life of philosophical contemplation. Leisure, then was for Aristotle an essential aspect of being human that people are led by their very nature to be well, for it is the first principle for all action¹¹

The cultural studies approach is the recent contribution to the theory of leisure. The advocates of cultural studies approach point out that conventional meanings of leisure are socially conditioned and value-laden, like 'freedom', 'choice' etc. These terms are not fixed or neutral, instead are the result of interactions among individual action, socio-cultural influences, historical

¹¹ Benjamin Jowett, *Aristotle's Politics*, Forgotten Books, London, 2018, passim

tradition and material circumstances. The cultural studies approach provide growing attention to marginalised groups such as racial and ethnic minorities.

Another recent development in the study of leisure theory is from the feminist approach. The feminist approach has stimulated conceptual and methodological debates. The feminist researchers have pointed to gender based differences in the process of identity formation during leisure and questions the stereotypes on women's participation in leisure activities. Feminists have sought to problematize leisure as a site through which hegemonic masculinities are negotiated and alternatives are explored¹²

It is one of the oldest dreams of human beings to spend one's life at leisure. The concept and theories of leisure is different from one society to another. An integrative concept of leisure is complex and yet to be formed. To form an integrative theory of leisure one has to start with Aristotle again as he wrote thousands of years back that just as we make war 'in order to have peace, the reason we labour is to have leisure'.

Since its inception, Marxism has made remarkable efforts to investigate and evaluate the multifarious meanings of human life in its entirety and to analyse the structures of socio-economic relations on which its laws of motion are based. The Marxist School evaluated, as the main criteria for social development, the development of class relations, class interests and class conflicts along with the evolution of human culture that creates history and at the same time becomes a victim of it.

Marx began his inquiry into the causes of historical changes and the possibility of a non-exploitative social system at a decisive juncture of social development in the history of Industrial Revolution and extreme class

¹² Betsy Wearing, *Leisure and Feminist Theory*, London, Sage Publications, 1998, passim.

divisions, class conflicts as well as the unprecedented social exploitations it instigated.

Life can be seen turning upside down with its content and way when men who lived by hunting and gathering fruits and other food from nature gradually became farmers and small-scale producers. Wants of sustenance, uncertainty of life, ignorance regarding the natural phenomena, constant exodus, scary animals and various other natural threats then forced men to live in uncertainty and hazardous conditions. But the development of agriculture and the exchange and the acquisition of food significantly reduced the hassle of wandering for food and the uncertainty of life, providing a significant period of leisure between sowing and harvesting.

In fact, it is the surplus production and the labour associated with it that provide the intervals and the leisure time. Work creates leisure time and leisure has a compensatory effect on work by increasing the labour productivity. There have been groups in history that exploit labour, enslave the labour force and thus make production possible through which they find their own leisure time. The capitalists who emerged in history with the Industrial Revolution, and the landlords and clergies of the feudal period are some examples of this. Keeping themselves idle, they made others work to reap the fruit of their labour and enjoy the worldly pleasures.

It will be clear in the historical analysis, using the Marxian tool that the laws, rituals and restraints created by the exploiting class are, in a sense, the political apparatuses of the elite class in order to marginalize the working class, that constitutes the vast majority of the society, and snatch the surplus products and wealth various work forces produce by exploiting them, thereby live a prosperous life in idleness.

In Marxist point of view, the world's labour forces are the basis for the production of wealth, beauty, art and literature. Marxism describes the political inversion in which the forces of labour, which are responsible for the production of beauty, wealth, art and literature, are forced to live in ugliness, self-abnegation, poverty and infirmity. The main areas of analysis in Marxism are the social engineering, class conflicts and class relations, in which all good results are produced socially but benefits of the same have been accumulated only in the hands of a powerful minority in the society. The Marxist method of analysis unravels the laws of motion of history through which the production of wealth itself prepares the traps of inequality. The slave revolts, the French Revolution, the anti-colonial struggles and the peasant uprisings were all, in Marxist analysis, the results of class struggle against the long enduring class exploitation.

The industrial factory system and industry turned human life upside down. Even in the slave system the owner would ensure the food needed to sustain the slave's life. But the Industrial Revolution threw the worker into the cruel laws of the market and bargaining. Unhealthy workplaces and unhygienic living conditions endangered their life and health. They had to work in dangerous workplaces and mines like animals for meager wages fifteen or sixteen hours a day. Lack of recreation, rest and leisure time and unsafe and dangerous conditions in the workplaces have turned the lives of the workers pathetic.

In short, leisure is universal and is old as humanity itself. Under ordinary circumstances every one experiences some of it in different forms. Time available for leisure varies from one society to the other and it has been argued that hunter gatherers tend to have significantly more leisure time than people in modern complex societies. Leisure is an important part of everyday life of human beings all over the world. It may have qualitative and

quantitative differences, but it exists universally. It can be practiced alone or in a group and take place in a wide variety of environments. Leisure has several implications which are generally positive for individuals and groups in any society.

In fact rationalisation of leisure began in Europe where industrialisation brought about a shift in many cultural and social practices including leisure activities. Some scholars are of the opinion that the very concept of leisure emerged out of the particular conditions of industrialisation giving rise to the distinct spheres of work and leisure. It was during the period of industrialisation in Europe, a discrete area of human activities called "leisure" became recognizable. Earlier leisure time activities had existed in every society, but it began to be started and discussed as a separate arena only during the period of industrialisation. The British spread the concept of leisure together with leisure activities in various parts of the world along with the process of colonization.

Researcher's Concept of Leisure

The present researcher treat or consider leisure as having the following concepts. At the outset, it should be understood that it is an integral part of human life activities. Without the study of leisure and recreation, the study of human life and activities would be incomplete. Leisure could be considered conceptually as one's discretionary time spent in non-compulsory activities. But when one includes recreation as an extension of leisure, the distinction between compulsory and non-compulsory activities seems to be fading away. So, both leisure and recreation are to be treated as the two sides of the same coin.

The urge for leisure and recreation is inherent in every human being. Every one has the desire for leisure .When leisure is enjoyed individually or

with family it becomes private leisure and when it is enjoyed or conducted socially it becomes public leisure. The present researcher is enquiring about both the private and public or social leisure and recreation in its various forms, but it is mainly focused on public leisure and recreation. When leisure becomes public, naturally the state interferes and begins to dictate terms and conditions. The intervention of the state in social leisure reduces the individual aspirations to a great extent.

In the colonial context, the concept and practice of leisure and recreation changes. The establishment of the colonial rule changes the very basic texture of the colonised society. The colonial domination gradually expands to colonial hegemony and penetrates into the social and cultural vistas of the colonised society. The leisure, leisure time activities and recreation in colonial Malabar exemplify this aspect.

Malabar became one of the earliest regions in the Indian subcontinent to experience colonial political dominion and colonial hegemony. Towards the end of the 18th century, Malabar had come under the colonial administrative apparatus. The colonial dominion had become visible in every aspect of Malabar society in the administrative system through the implementation of the English legal structure, development of English education, penetration into the social and cultural aspects and so on and so forth, of course, apart from complete political domination. Thus Malabar turns out to be an appropriate region to study the changes implemented by colonialism in leisure and recreation. The willingness shown by certain sections of the Malabar society to collaborate with the colonial administration in its early stage also has to be considered as decisive.

Being the present researcher hails from Malabar he has more accessibility to the related sources and has personal experiences with the problem of enquiry. Visiting places of importance connected with the

problem and making personal interviews with those who belonged to the family which had shown more enthusiasm in the colonial leisure activities and recreation have added more accessibility to the enquiry.

Research Problem

Cultural studies have acquired more significance world wide in the present period. Political and economic aspects of colonialism have already been studied and discussed. Now the studies are shifting over to the study of the cultural hegemony of colonialism and its impact upon the people in the colonies. Numerous studies have been undertaken on the impact of colonialism on culture, architecture, law, education etc. in the recent times. Dr. K.N. Panikkar has made certain indepth studies on the cultural aspects of the Malabar society. See for example; "Culture, Ideology, Hegemony-Intellectuals and Social consciousness in Colonial India, Sten Nilsson's European Architecture in India 1750-1850, Santosh Abraham's studies on Colonial governance and Law in Early British Malabar ,K.S.Mathew and Joshy Mathew's Education in Colonial and Post-Colonial Malabar etc are the important works among them. However, studies on colonial leisure and recreation and its impact upon the social and cultural life of the people in the colonies are extremely limited. The study on the cultural impact of colonialism would be incomplete without the study on the evolution of leisure and recreation in a given society.

The present study is an attempt to enquire and study the evolution of leisure, leisure activities and recreation in Malabar during the colonial period with its necessary background. Hence the present research is undertaken to answer the following questions

- (A) What was the nature of leisure and recreation that had existed in different societies all over the world?

- (B) Was there a concept of leisure and recreation in pre-colonial Kerala?
- (C) What were the forms of manifestations of leisure and recreation in pre-colonial Kerala ?
- (D) What was the nature of leisure in pre-colonial Kerala ?
- (E) If at all there was a concept of leisure and recreation how was it externalised or articulated ?
- (F) Did colonialism perpetuate any changes to the concept and practice of leisure and recreation in Malabar ?
- (G) How were these changes expressed and articulated?
- (H) In which way was the colonial state interfered in the expression and articulation of these changes?
- (I) How were these changes in the leisure and recreation integrated to the concept of colonial cultural hegemony?

Leisure and recreation being an integral part of the human life universally, Malabar would not stand apart. However, world wide scholarly attention on the study of leisure and recreation began to be received only in the recent period. It could be seen that the topic received only scant attention from the scholars and studies on leisure and recreation have hardly been undertaken academically in India so far and the studies on leisure and recreation in Malabar are extremely limited. One could find certain reminiscences of certain individuals on their recreational activities in Malabar, together with some passing references in some other literary works. That is why the present researcher was attracted to this new field of study, which has no academic precedence and is an attempt to study the leisure and recreation in colonial Malabar with pre-colonial background.

Aims and Objectives

The main objective of the present study is to critically analyse and survey the changes effected by the British colonial modernity into the existing scenario of leisure activities in Malabar. The precolonial Malabar society had its own method of spending leisure time by involving in various types of leisure activities, but mainly related directly or indirectly with religion. The changes brought out by colonial intrusion to the existing pattern of leisure activities in Malabar and how these changes had effected its impact upon the society of Malabar and how the rigid caste ridden society had looked at the changes will be explored.

The main thrust of this research is to enquire the evolution of leisure activities in colonial Malabar and also to analyse how leisure was used as an agenda to the growth of cultural hegemony in the society of Malabar. It roughly covers the entire period of British colonialism in Malabar, stretching widely from early 19th century to the first half of the 20th century. The key factors that contributed to the evolution of the leisure activities and how they influenced all sections of Malabar society are also intended to be examined. The study also aims to explain leisure in the wider perspective of historical tendencies and to mark proper significance of social, cultural, political and economic aspects of leisure activities.

The study of leisure is considered and treated as part and parcel of popular culture in the new facets of colonialism and colonial culture. The objectives of the study includes the survival attempts of the traditional leisure activities of Malabar under the stress and interpolation of the newly introduced western leisure activities, resulting in a sort of transculturation of the native and colonial leisure. The study also attempt to have a class analysis of the collaborators with colonial administration and those who have kept distance from it. How the traditional leisure activities were continued during

the initial stages of colonialism, how they were incorporated with western leisure activities during the second stage and the dominance achieved by colonialism in the leisure activities towards the final stages ,have also to be discussed and analysed.

Review of Literature

Leisure was not considered and treated as a separate field of historical investigation till the second half of twentieth century, although general social histories often included accounts of sports, games, recreation and pastimes. The seminal publications of Keith Thomas on work and leisure, published in the mid-nineteen sixties formulated leisure as an identifiable field of history ¹³ In 1970s and 1980s this field began to expand with the publication of significant works by Peter Bailey, High Cunningham and Stephen Jones ¹⁴ In accordance with the contemporaneous interests within leisure studies, these were largely concerned with social classes and social control. Peter Bailey sketches the growth of historical studies on leisure and leisure time activities in general and particularly in Britain. He makes a comprehensive and critical review of the scholarly studies in social history of leisure and the growing appreciation of the complexity of leisure's role in social change.

However, the cultural historian Peter Burke has argued that leisure is in fact a modern invention in his essay 'The invention of leisure'¹⁵ The growth of leisure culture in early modern Europe is highlighted and he believes that

¹³ Keith Thomas, 'Work and Leisure', *Past and Present No 29*, London, 1964, pp. 50-66. And "Work and Leisure in industrial society, *past and present no.3*, London, 1965, pp.6-103.

¹⁴ Peter Bailey, 'Leisure, Culture and Historian; Reviewing the first generation of leisure historiography in Britain', *'Leisure Studies'* Vol 8. June 1989, London, pp.107-127.

¹⁵ Peter Burke, 'The Invention of Leisure in early modern Europe ', *past and present, Vol 146, Issue No.1*, London, 1997, pp.136-150.

the main problem confronting the history of leisure is the contradictory evidence for a pre-industrial leisure dichotomy on the one hand and for an unbroken continuity on the other. The point he was making related to the difficulty of imagining a continuous history of leisure reaching back into the middle ages, when activities we would now consider to be leisure, were not at the time conceptualised as part of a larger entity called 'leisure'

In India the inclusion of leisure with the main stream of historical research is a recent occurrence. As leisure is cordially linked with the social life of people, the idea of leisure has been added with the scope of social sciences. However, the historiography of leisure is still in its inception phase. The foreign travellers and officers in colonial India narrated the experiences about various aspects of Indian cultural life and leisure. Recently few research works on leisure and recreation have been done in India, in which leisure is generally highlighted with the discussion of Indian society and culture. Kumkum Bhattacharya in her 'Non western traditions; Leisure in India' argues that social cultural distinctions and their implications for leisure seems to have been always there in pre-colonial and colonial India ¹⁶ Pramod K.Nayar in his 'Days of the Raj: Life and Leisure in British India' sheds light on the daily lives of the British officials in India and their leisure activities ¹⁷ It is a collection of the reminiscences of the colonizers to the socio-cultural world of the colonised India.

Although academic works on leisure as such are very rare in India, few books on recreational activities including sports and games are available.

¹⁶ Kumkum Bhattacharya, 'Non-Western Traditions : Leisure in India', Chris Rojek, Susan.M.Shaw and A.J.Veal(ed.), *A handbook of Leisure Studies*, MacMillan, London, 2006, pp.75-92.

¹⁷ Pramod K.Nayar, *Days of the Raj: Life and Leisure in British India*, Penguin, New Delhi, 2009, passim

Among them, Cricket becomes the most attractive subject to scholars from different parts of the country. Football also has got consideration by the academics.

Ramachandra Guha in his 'A Corner of a Foreign Field: The Indian History of a British Sport'.¹⁸ Discusses cricket's extraordinary hold over India and Indians', interweaving the biography of famous forgotten cricketers with in a wider perspective of social change. Boria Majumdar's 'Twenty-Two Yards to Freedom: A Social History of Indian Cricket'¹⁹ details the democratization process of Indian sports and games in general and cricket in particular. According to him, democratization of sports and games in India, in a way anticipated the democratization of Indian polity itself. Boria Majumdar in his article 'Cultural Resistance and Sport; Politics, Leisure and Colonialism-Lagaan-Invoking Lost History'²⁰ is an indepth study of how cricket had turned out as a medium of cultural resistance by the Indians against colonial domination, in the light of the popular Hindi film "Lagaan".

Prashant Kidambi in his 'Cricket Country: the Cultural History of the First All Indian Team'²¹ analyses how the idea of India as a nation was fashioned on the cricket pitch in the high noon of the British empire. History of Indian Cricket of Mihir Bose and 'Tao of Cricket' by Ashish Nandi are other two important works on Indian cricket.

¹⁸. Ramachandra Guha, A Corner of a Foreign field, The Indian History of a British Sport, Picador, London, 2002

¹⁹. Boria Majumdar, Twenty Two Yards to Freedom, A Social history of Indian Cricket, Penguin, New Delhi, 2004.

²⁰. Boria Majumdar, Culture, Sport, Society, Volume 5, No 2, Summer 2002, Frankcass Publications, London,

²¹. Prashant Kidambi, Cricket Country, The Untold history the first All India team, Penguin, New Delhi, 2019

Partha Chatterjee in his article “Football and Collective Identity in Colonial Calcutta”²² enquires how football has played a crucial role in helping the formulation of collective identity in Colonial India, through the study of two important sporting clubs of Calcutta, Mohan Bagan and the Mohammedan Sporting. Md. Abdu Nasim in his work ‘Stadiums in Calcutta’²³ details the evolution of stadiums in Calcutta and discuss how stadiums have played a crucial role in popularising sports and games.

Nisha P. R’s work 'Jumbos and Jumping Devils: A social History of Indian Circus’²⁴ may be considered as a pioneering one on the circus industry in India. It explores the history of the evolution of the Indian circus in the pre-colonial and post-colonial India. Till date no academic works have been produced on the history of leisure and leisure activities in colonial or pre-colonial Malabar, so as in Kerala; except certain stray references in some articles and non-historical literary texts and that too about the leisure time activities of upper- and middle-class people of colonial Malabar. One of the earliest articles on games in Kerala was written by M. Raja Raja Varma Raja published in the “Malabar Quarterly Review of 1906”²⁵ Although the article is a description of the games played on a national level during British colonialism, it has some references about games played in colonial Malabar towards the beginning of the 20th century. M.S.A Rao, the Sociologist in his ‘Social change in Malabar’ published in 1957 has given a detailed description of religious rituals and ceremonies prevailed in Malabar during the first half

²². Pratha Chatterjee, et al., *New Cultural Histories of India, Materiality and Practises*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2014

²³ Muhammed Abu Nasim, *Stadiums in Calcutta*, New Genre of Sports culture, Notion Press, Chennai, 2021.

²⁴ Nisha P. R, *Jumbos and jumping Devils, A Social History of Indian Circus*, Oxford University, Press, New Delhi, 2020.

²⁵ Raja Raja Varma Raja. M, *Malabar Quarterly Review*, Vidya Vlasum Press, Ernakulam, 1906,

of the 20th century ²⁶ He argues that leisure was not seen as distinct from religious activities. M.P. Sivadasa Menon, in his work 'Malabarile Shikkar' published in 1959 describes the details of hunting, an important leisure time activity of the Europeans and native rulers in Kerala in the colonial period ²⁷ Some other references also could be seen in the articles on early colonial history of Malabar, about hunting. Sreejith.K. in his work 'The Middle Class in Colonial Malabar' has given a separate chapter for leisure time activities of the middle class in Malabar.²⁸

In the work based on his doctoral dissertation, the author discusses the changes that occurred among the middle-class people of Malabar under the impact of colonialism and how they responded to the changes unleashed by colonial modernity including the changes in their leisure activities. As this work is on the history of middle class in colonial Malabar, it is not an exhaustive analysis of the leisure time activities of all classes in colonial Malabar

Geographical area and Period of Study

The geographical area of the present study is Malabar, which was a separate district under the British colonialism. Malabar came under British domination in 1792 and then it was made a district under the Bombay Presidency and remained up to 1800. From 1800 to 1947 Malabar was a separate district under Madras Presidency of the British India. The British Malabar included the present day districts of Kannur, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Malappuram and Palakkad excluding Chittur town. It also included present day Chavakkad taluk and parts of Kodungallur taluk of Thrissur district and

²⁶ M.S.A Rao, *Social Change in Malabar*, The Popular Book Depot, Bombay, 1957.

²⁷ M.P.Sivadasa Menon, *Malabarile Sikkaru*, Udaya Publishers, Palghat, 1959, passim

²⁸ Sreejith K, *The Middle Class in Colonial Malabar, A Social History*, Manohar Publishers, New Delhi, 2021.

Fort Kochi area of Ernakulam district. The northern and central parts of present day Kerala state came under the erstwhile Malabar district. The detached settlements of Thangassery and Anchuthengu, which were British colonies within the kingdom of Tiruvitamkur in southern Kerala also had formed a part of Malabar district until 1927. The present study concentrates on the British district of Malabar to analytically investigate the evolution of leisure in colonial India. It was the British colonial authorities who used Malabar as the official term to denote their possession in Kerala, to separate it from the geographical entities of the princely states of Tiruvitamkur and Kochi.

The period of this study covers the entire period of British colonialism in Malabar, from 1792 to 1947. Since the study aims to analyse the changes that took place in the Malabar society during the period of colonialism, the period of the study starts from colonial occupation and British political domination of Malabar, when it was ceded to the British East India company as per the treaty of Srirangapatnam by Tipu Sultan in 1792. The study closes with the end of British colonialism in Malabar in 1947, as a part and parcel of Indian independence. Though the period of the study covers a vast span of time of around one fifty years it tries to analyse the subtle changes reflected in the Malabar society during the entire period of colonialism and not going into the marking of changes in a year by year method.

Methodology and Sources

The research methodology generally adopted to write thesis is to interpret objectively and critically analyse the available primary and secondary sources. The primary sources mainly collected from archives throw light upon the investigation of the central aspect of the leisure activities in colonial Malabar and the information collected from the secondary sources are used to supplement the information received from the primary sources as

well as to record the changes that took place in the realm of leisure activities of the society of Malabar, subsequently and consequently to the penetration of colonial interests. The authenticity of each and every source has been confirmed through a comparative and analytical method with the primary and secondary sources.

The study basically follows the historical method hinging on collection of historical data and subjecting them to critical procedures of ascertaining the authenticity and critically questioning the facticity of the data. The primary sources was thus compared with the secondary information. Extensive field works and personal interviews were conducted to verify contradictory data emerged from the consultations of primary and secondary sources. Autobiographies of the relevant personalities who lived in the period of study in Malabar were also consulted and analysed to formulate an accurate picture of the topic under study.

The method of research undertaken for the study is the analytical interpretation of information acquired from the primary and secondary sources. Leisure is an indispensable part of the social and cultural lives of the people, but it has not acquired so far serious academic attention and consideration in the study of history. Although leisure is intermingled with the historic process, the study of the history of leisure and its impact is still in its inception phase. So now it has become mandatory for the historians to write the comprehensive history of leisure as an important part of the popular culture.

This research thesis is written mainly on the basis of the official records collected from the Regional archives ,Kozhikode comprised of the British records of various types, covering a period from 1850 to 1947. The official records include Board procedures, Revenue Rd's files, Revenue Folded files, Arakkal files etc. Mathrubhumi newspaper from 1936 to 1947,

Basel Mission Records ,together with college magazines and souvenirs, biographies, Memoirs, autobiographies etc have been proved to be very useful to understand the political and social background of colonial Malabar. The Joint Commisioners' report of 1792 in its original form from the regional archives also has been a useful sources for the reconstruction of the Malabar society during early period of colonial domination.

Secondary sources in the form of published works also have been extensively used for the preparation of the dissertation. The Malabar Gazatteers prepared by C.A.Innes, Reports of Ward and Connor, accounts of Dr.Francis Buchanan and the works of William Logan have to be specifically mentioned. The biographies of C.Kesavan, Moorkoth Kunhappa etc also provide valuable information about the social conditions and subsequent transformations due to colonial intervention. It has to be specifically mentioned herein that no exclusive academic or research work has been published so far on the subject of leisure and leisure time activities in Malabar, except that of some stray articles published during the colonial period, which have been consulted and used for the preparation of this thesis

Organisation of the study

This dissertation has five chapters with an introduction and conclusion. The first chapter is entitled 'Evolution of leisure and recreation in historical contexts' which makes an analytical survey of the evolution of the concept and practice of leisure in human societies from the very ancient days to the modern period. It stretches from the pre historic societies to the historic societies and analyses how leisure activities had become a part of human culture through the ages upto the dawn of modern industrial society. This enquiry ascertain the fact that leisure was not only a universal phenomenon ,but also as old as humanity itself. The entire concept and practice of leisure underwent fundamental changes during the industrial period and thus the

changes occurred during the 19th century,leisure activities often characterised as ‘leisure revolution’

The second chapter deals with the title ‘Leisure in pre-modern Kerala’ and makes an enquiry into the leisure time experiences of the Kerala society through the different stages of its history. The oral and written sources show that the leisure activities of a ‘secular nature ’of the early period have been gradually transformed into one of a religious nature with the emergence and growth of temple oriented society in pre-modern Kerala. The growth of temple oriented society paved way for the development of caste hierarchy, which distinctively pushed back the lower castes from the ‘public spaces’ to their dwelling areas resulting in a clear cut separation of leisure activities between the higher castes and lower castes. This caste distinction in leisure time activities continued upto the colonial period without any aberration

The third chapter is titled ‘Evolution of leisure and recreation in Colonial Malabar : Historical Contours’, analyses the transformation that was implemented by colonial intrusion in the leisure activities of the Malabar society. The colonial authorities as a whole and British officials as individuals made a gradual intrusion into the leisure activities of the Malabar society, by allowing the continuation of the traditional leisure activities and at the same time introducing certain leisure activities of the European culture into the traditional society of Malabar. It was a deliberate attempt of the colonial modernity to transform the concept and practice of the leisure activities in Malabar and by the second half of the 19th century ,they could succeed in surpassing the traditional leisure activities of the Malabar society with European cultural traditions. In this process they could shatter the right framework of the caste rigidity and introduce secular type of leisure activities, at least in the public sphere. Along with this ,leisure activities in colonial Malabar became diversified in colonial Malabar.

The fourth chapter ,titled as ‘Types of leisure and recreation in colonial Malabar ‘makes an enquiry into the various types of leisure activities practiced in colonial Malabar by the beginning of the 20th century. Leisure activities became full fledged by this time in Malabar with its wider diversifications into the realms of all types of modern sports and games, recreation activities and other cultural forms like cinema, drama etc. The introduction of new technological devices and the necessary infrastructure enriched the very concept and practice of leisure in colonial Malabar, as elsewhere in India by the dawn of the 20th century.

The fifth chapter ‘State sponsored leisure and recreation in colonial Malabar; A case study of Malabar durbar of 1911’ is an exclusive study of how leisure was sponsored by the state itself in order to legitimize the colonial domination in India as well as in Malabar. The 1911 Durbar conducted by the colonial authorities is viewed as an ideological instrument to subjugate the mental stature of the native people and thereby forcing them to accept the hegemonic domination of colonialism. The state sponsored leisure was a unique experiment by the colonial government to make the native people believe that colonialism in the form of British administration was a reality to be accepted and mould their lives according o the needs and aspirations of colonialism.

Limitations

However, the study has its own limitations also. Since no other academic studies have been published so far on this particular area of study it has to be considered as a new attempt. The administrators and the intellectuals of the colonial period had not treated leisure activities as a specific branch of study to be seriously taken .Therefore, the primary and secondary sources on this particular area are very limited. One could get passing references regarding the leisure time activities of colonial Malabar in the other official

correspondences and files on various fields. With these limitations, earnest attempt is made by the present researcher to go through almost all available sources of various types during the period of colonial occupation.

Being a new field of study it has become more difficult for the present researcher to collect information from available primary and secondary sources. The information derived from the primary and secondary sources have been authenticated with the help of constructive reasoning and analytically interpreted. Eventhough it is a fact that leisure is an indispensable part of the social and cultural lives of the people, it has not acquired serious academic attention and consideration, so far in the study of history .It has to be admitted that the study of the history of leisure and its impact upon the society is still in its inception phase. Further detailed research attempts are to be undertaken by scholars in the field of leisure activities and recreation to fulfill the lacuna.

Although leisure has been an indispensable part of the socio-cultural lives of the people all over the world including Malabar, written records on this particular topic seem to be very few during the entire colonial period. The historical studies on the leisure activities in India are still in its inception phase and so the studies have to be started from the beginning itself. However, evidences related to the subject are scattered in several primary and secondary sources, which have to be sorted out and analyse and interpret for an objective endeavour fulfill the mandatory necessities of a research work

Hypothesis

Leisure activities were a part and parcel of the daily life of the people in Malabar, as else where in the world but the colonial interruption changed the method and structure of the leisure time and recreation activities of the indigenous people. The leisure time activities of the people of Malabar

during the pre-colonial period was mainly related to their religious beliefs and activities, but one could derive from the sources a gradual change took place from the religious orientation to one of secular or non-religious leisure time activities and also to private and public leisure activities during the colonial period. Towards the end of the colonial period this change from religious orientation to secular orientation was well evident. All these aspects have to be critically analysed and interpreted within the frame work of the thesis.

Chapter Two

THE EVOLUTION OF LEISURE AND RECREATION IN HISTORICAL CONTEXTS

Leisure is universal and it is as old as humanity. Under ordinary circumstances everyone experiences some of it in different forms even if they know it or not. Time available for leisure varies from one society to another and from one age to another. The ancient man tended to have significantly more leisure time than the people in their later periods. Ancient people did not make sharp distinction between work and leisure. Later societies set aside different periods for work and leisure.

In the modern period leisure practices began to be seen as a part of the wider social problem. Leisure was thus conceptualized not only in terms of individual aspects but of the economic, social and cultural environment. Individual leisure refers to activities that a person voluntarily engages in when he or she is free from any familial or social responsibilities or work. The individual attains leisure satisfaction as a result of engaging in leisure activities. Family leisure can be defined as time spent together as a family in free time. A related concept is social leisure which involves leisurely activities in social different social settings largely determined by different material activities.

It is necessary to provide a historical background of the evolution of leisure to have a clear understanding of the role of leisure in modern society. When we trace the origins of many of our contemporary leisure activities, it is identified that they are directly or indirectly related to the ancient cultural traditions and practices. The history of leisure is a rich complexity of people,

places, events and social forces showing the role of their arts, sports, pastimes and other amusements.

Leisure is simply the free time spent away from work and other necessary activities such as even eating and sleeping. It is a quality of experience and done for its own sake and for social correlations. It can be a non-purposeful activity also. Leisure as a purposeful activity is generally classified as recreation leisure. However, for the purpose of this thesis the concept of recreation is embedded in the term leisure.

In the ancient world people did not make a sharp distinction between work and leisure like in the modern societies. Work was customarily done when it was necessary and was often infused with rites and customs that lent it diversity and pleasure. Relatively, little is known about the nature of leisure enjoyed by the people in the ancient times. However, archaeologists have so far uncovered certain artefacts, drawings, paintings etc. that provide a direct evidence of the creation, athletic and recreation activities of the primitive people around the world. Pottery, painting, drawing and other artistic activities provide a record of not only their daily life but also their social interactions. The rock paintings, drawings and other artefacts pertaining to Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods have been discovered from different parts of the world. Many of the rock carvings like that which depict the hunting scenes throw light upon the daily life of the ancient people¹.

The primitive people were hunters and food gatherers. Since they had very few options as far as the fundamentals of food, clothing and shelter were concerned, they totally depended on nature and on their own skills for survival. Animal skin was used to cover their body. They were cave-dwellers

¹ John Kelly, *Leisure*, Allyn and Bacon, London, 1995, passim.

before there were households, fires and farms² . The date of Man's origin has not yet been definitely established .The ancestor of Man probably diverged from one another as early as the Miocene period, and Man acquired certain essentially human characteristics probably in the Pliocene period.³

But until about 20,000 years ago Man was still not the cleverest of the animals. By learning to walk upright and by using his free hands to do many kinds of work and in making and using tools, he grew more and more intelligent. Though he was much weaker in terms of body than the tiger and the elephant, his brain was bigger and he had that distinct ability to learn quickly and teach others what he had learned. Instead of spending all his time finding food or sleeping, he began to enjoy leisure⁴

Our awareness of the prehistoric times depends mainly upon material objects which gives hints about the activities of the human beings. In many places the remains of prehistoric men are found in the form of scattered bones or buried and unburied skeletons. These remains help in the calculation of height and other physical traits of these people. The graves indicate the religious beliefs of these people which include their belief in life after death. The ornaments, weapons, remains of clothing, and other objects in the graves reveal much about the life led by these people. Material objects are likewise found in great numbers at various places where prehistoric man lived for years. In many places the walls of caves are seen as decorated and the flat surfaces of cliffs adorned with drawings and paintings of the wild animals which they probably chased and hunted down. They also carved animal and human figures on pieces of stone, bone, ivory and horn. All these

² Michael Worth Davidson(ed.), *Everyday Life Through the Ages, Readers Digest*, London, 2000,p.11.

³ William L. Langer,(ed) *An Encyclopedia of World History*, Houghton Mifflin company, Boston, Massachusetts, 1940, p.50.

⁴ F. G, Pearce, *An Outline History of Civilisation*, Oxford, London, 1965, p.9.

representations give us a picture of the environment under which men once lived.⁵ Since they had no paper or pen or pencil or brush, they used their stone needles and pointed instruments to scratch or draw animals on the walls of the caves. As a result, only a few of their drawings are good and the rest are of low profile.⁶

Art, which is the representation of an aesthetic sense through the medium of the material, affords an interesting approach to the study of primitive man. Generally, art is a luxury but its presence indicates an inward desire that cannot be satisfied by the material. It holds a balance between a dream and the reality. When primitive man began practising finer arts, his perspective changed and he demonstrated a desire to portray things and people. While art in the early period was used primarily for utilitarian purposes, at a later stage it was used purely for decorative purposes.⁷

The everyday life of the pre-historic man was basically a struggle for survival in the midst of beastly animals and giant creatures. A major part of his life was being spent in this struggle that he had very little time to spare for leisure. Since the danger was more imminent during the night, he had to retreat to the secluded recesses of the caves at dusk in order to save his life from his enemies. As a result, the free time enjoyed by him was naturally between dusk and dawn which he used to spend mainly for sleep and rest.

During the spare time he enjoyed inside the caves his innate quest for creativity began to be manifested in the form of artistic activities. He used his leisure time working on the hard surface of the walls and ceilings of the

⁵ William L. Langer, *Op.cit.*, p.6.

⁶ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letter from a father to his daughter*, Puffin Books, Allahabad, 2004, pp. 39-40.

⁷ J.E. Swain, *A History of World Civilization*, Eurasia Publishing House, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 40-41.

caves. His artistic activities depicted the pictures of the deadly beasts he had to face during the day time .There are a collection of such paintings and drawings belonging to the pre-historic period in different parts of the world. Some of the paintings and the drawings manifest beastly animals or hunting scenes. These carving and drawings might be an indication of his fear of these animals or his sheer determination to face whatever odds that comes in his life. The leisure time was also used for the making and development of the tools needed for hunting and survival. The wooden spears might have evolved out of his continuous experiment and efforts .In short it can be argued that the pre-historic man utilised his leisure time for the development of his creativity and for the advancement of his life.

Man's growth from barbarianism to civilisation is supposed to be the theme of history⁸ Flat plains watered by great rivers were the sites of the world's first civilisations. The Tigris and the Euphrates, the Indus and the Nile flowed through regions with a similar climate where warm river mud nourished and replenished by flooding helped in the growth of bumper crops. These fed a booming population and allowed for larger urban settlements that had been impossible before⁹

Along with the transition from hunting to settled life, the discovery of agricultural cultivation and domestication, the leisure time activities also underwent rapid changes. With the development of a class-based society, leisure became the privilege of certain classes in the course of time.¹⁰ A new ruling class developed along with the division of society into soldiers, craftsmen, peasants and slaves. The society gradually divided into two, producing class and the class which lived on the surplus produced by the

⁸ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, Penguin Books, 2004, New Delhi, p. 7.

⁹ Michael Worth Davidson, *Op. Cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁰ John Neulinger, *Leisure; An Introduction*, Allyn and Bacon, London, 1981, passim.

former. Subsequently leisure time activities of different classes also became stratified.¹¹

As prehistoric societies advanced they developed specialization of functions. Human beings learned to domesticate animals and cultivate plants which permitted them to shift from nomadic existence based on hunting and food gathering to a largely stationary way of life based on grazing of animals and planting crops. Ultimately ruling class developed along with soliders, craftsmen, peasants, slaves etc. As villages and urban centres evolved and harvested by lower class workers, upper class gained power, wealth and leisure. Thus in the aristocracy of the first historic civilizations that developed in Egypt and Middle East ,we find for the first time the appearance of a leisure class.

Along with the changes that occurred in the life of man such as the transition from hunting to settled life, the concept and practice of leisure also underwent changes. The leisure time enjoyed during the hunting age gradually became limited especially for women during the period of settled life. They had to spend more time for household activities, preparation of food, looking after children, domestication of animals and also for agricultural activities. Infact they were literally tied up to their dwelling places with a variety of duties and hardships. Hence the space and time for leisure activities became more limited for women. The leisure class is composed of people exempted from manual work and from practising economically productive occupations.

Leisure was diversified and advanced in ancient Egyptian civilisation. They led colourful and pleasant lives with their leisure time spent in architecture, painting and hieroglyphics. Their other leisure time activities

¹¹ Thorsten Veblen, *The Theory of Leisure Class*, An Economic Study of Institutions, MacMillan, , 1988, passim.

included wrestling, gymnastics exercises and ball games. Bull fighting was also popular. Music and dance were mainly part of religious worship. They used various percussion and stringed musical instruments. Egyptians also had a literature of their own along with other cultural accomplishments. "The Song of the Harper" belonging to the Middle Empire is a jovial drinking song. "The dialogue between a Man weary of Life and His Soul" is one of the most artistic, emotional and imaginative of the Egyptian poems. "The Hymn to the Sun" written in the reign of Amenhotep IV is a simple, honest and sincere vision of the god Aton¹² Royal houses and temples served as the main centres of recreational activities.

Men mostly engaged in physical activities such as hunting, fishing, archery and stick fencing. Long distance race was organised to demonstrate physical power. Both men and women enjoyed swimming. Board games were popular and game boards were made of wood, stone, clay etc. Moves on the board games were determined by the throw of sticks. One of the most common games in ancient Egypt was 'Senet' which was played on a board of thirty squares divided into three rows of ten squares. It is assumed that this board game senet had some sort of religious significance.¹³

Another game to be mentioned is 'he hen', played by several players on a round board that almost resembles a coiled snake. In this game, pieces of small balls were moved from the tail of the snake to the goal on its head. Tomb paintings indicate that banquets were a popular form of leisure among the upper class. In the banquets, food, alcoholic beverages, music and dancing were the common forms of entertainment.

¹² J.E.Swain, *Op.Cit*, pp.64-65.

¹³ Douglas J. Brewer, *Egypt and Egyptians*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, Passim.

The national drink of ancient Egypt was beer and it was consumed in large quantities by everyone irrespective of being rich or poor, male or female. Beer was made from barley dough which was first baked and then crumbed into a large vat where it was mixed with water and at times sweetened with date juice. In addition to beer, wine was widely used. Eating and drinking were accompanied with song and dance. As a rule, people danced only with the same sexes. Men danced with men and women with women. Solo singers and choruses accompanied by musical instruments were very common.¹⁴

In the Fertile Crescent especially Babylonia and Assyria many sided leisure time recreations were performed about which historians get information from contemporary Cuneiform writings. Both Babylonia and Assyria were engaged in many popular leisure time recreations like boxing, wrestling, archery and a variety of table games in addition to dance, music etc. Assyrian nobles used to go for lion hunting on foot and spears were used to hunt them down. Pictures of hunting are recorded in numerous sculptures and inscriptions. The famous hanging gardens of Babylonia are an example of their leisure time activities.

Ancient Hebrews performed dance about which several references are available in the Old Testament. Dance was performed on occasions of celebrations. They also indulged in hunting, fishing and wrestling for leisure. Their major contribution was the setting aside of the seventh day of the week—the Sabbath as the time for people to rest and worship.

Ancient Mesopotamia was never a single unified civilisation. Generally speaking, from the rise of the cities in 4500 BCE to the downfall of Sumer in 1750 BCE, the people of the region of Mesopotamia did live in a

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

similar way. They gave importance to written words. Once writing was invented, the scribes recorded every facet of the lives of Mesopotamia.

Game and dice and board games were popular among all sections of their society. Sports primarily involved males and the most popular sports among the lower class were wrestling and boxing and hunting was the favourite of the nobility. After the evening meal, family members enjoyed music and storytelling. In poor families, one of the members would play an instrument or sing or tell a story after dinner while the wealthy hired slaves or professional entertainers for this purpose.

The percussion instruments of Mesopotamia included drums, bells and castanets. They used wind instruments like while flutes, horns and pan pipes and string instruments like harp .Inscriptions also depict Mesopotamians listening to music along with drinking beer. Bertman notes that music was an integral part of Mesopotamian life¹⁵ Mesopotamian board games were commonly racing games where one must get their piece to the end to win the game. The toys used by their children included spinning tops, jump rope, hoop and ball.¹⁶

It was with the growth of the cities like Assur, Nineveh and Babylon that the Mesopotamian people procured more resources and free time for leisure activities. Their daily life involved both work and leisure. A worker might take a bit of his time to play a quick game. After work he enjoys food with his family and probably engaged in listening to music or story telling before going to sleep.

¹⁵ Bertman.S., *Hand book to the life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, Oxford University Press, London, 2003, passim.

¹⁶ Linner, *What Babylonians did for fun*, www.chickenscratch.be.pot.com/2014/01.

For the ancient Chinese, leisure was not only a state of freedom and harmony with nature but also a life style. The word leisure translated into Chinese language as 'xiu xian' means 'being free or unoccupied'. The term, Xiu Xian was used by them from the very ancient period itself. It refers to perfect harmony between people and nature and between subjective mind and objective nature. This is reflected in the philosophy of Confucius, the foremost philosopher of ancient China whose ideals of leisure have been playing a significant role in the Chinese society throughout history.

Dance and music were the popular forms of entertainment in ancient Chinese civilization. They used a type of bell as the instrument accompanying music. They believed that music would bring harmony with nature. Dance was intertwined with acrobatics which at a later stage developed into martial arts. Most people in ancient China used to spend majority of their time working. They had to work a whole day for most part of the year with very limited off days. However, festivals were celebrated throughout the year. Music was an important part of ancient Chinese culture. Early instruments they used were bells and chimes. Overtime, new instruments were developed such as the flutes and other string instruments. In China music was often intertwined with philosophy. Music was believed to bring harmony with nature.

Music played a central role in the court life in ancient China. Visitors to the court of kings and lords could expect to be entertained by troops of dancers and accompanying musicians. Many of the poems in the classic Book of Songs were odes or hymns that were meant to be performed on ritual occasions. Early thinkers believed that music possessed great moral powers. Confucius distinguished between different sorts of music; the ancient Shao dance, for instance, was considered a positive force bringing people into harmony whereas the music of the state of Zheng was considered dangerous

leading to wanton thoughts. The word 'music' was written with the same character as 'enjoyment', a fact that led Xunzi to posit a connection between the two: Music is joy, an emotion which human beings cannot help but feel at times. Unable to resist feeling joy they must find an outlet through voice and movement: Xunzi also stressed that music affects people of all social levels and thus the performance of moderate and tranquil or stern and majestic music are excellent ways for a ruler to encourage a sense of harmony and restraint in common people¹⁷

Dance was another important form of entertainment for the ancient people of China. Dance was often combined with acrobatics along with other forms of entertainments such as juggling, martial arts and music. In the course of time music, acting and dance became combined, resulting in the production of Chinese opera. Performers used elaborate costumes and recited stories upholding morals to be followed by the society.

Kite was invented in China around 500 BCE. In the beginning kite was used for military purposes only. Later it became popular among the common people and gradually kite flying turned out to be the most popular arts and sports event. Kites were usually made of paper with bamboo frames. Some of them were beautifully decorated to the point that they were both work of art as much as toy at the same time.

One of the most popular board games in ancient China was 'Go', developed sometime around 500 BCE. In the course of time, it became so popular and began to be treated as a scholarly art form that was to be mastered by all Chinese gentlemen. It is a game of strategy played on a grid with small black and white pieces of stones.

¹⁷ Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Cambridge Illustrated History of China*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1996, p. 50.

Card games were developed during the time of Tang dynasty. A typical pack of cards contained thirty cards. Chinese are credited with the development of one of the earliest forms of soccer or football called 'cuju' around 200 BCE. The ball was made of leather on the outside and filled with rice bran on the inside. About twelve people each in a group of two played the game. Hands were not allowed in Cuju and the players could use only their head and feet.

Chinese performing arts have a long history. Acrobats and dancers entertained the palaces of the Warring States period. Cities in Sung times were enlivened by comedians, puppeteers, singers, and storytellers who drew on a substantial repertory of farces, moral tales, love stories and historical legends.¹⁸

Drama as a literary art was established during the Jin and Yuan periods.¹⁹ Even though the Chinese people loved drama and opera, the performers did not command high social status. Singers and actors were classified with prostitutes as a demeaned category of people, forbidden to marry ordinary commoners.²⁰

The Sung Age illustrates possibly better than many others the relationship between arts and letters and the facts of the social situation. Whereas in the seventh and eighth centuries an aristocracy in which there was a good deal of 'barbarian' blood had imposed its love of violent games (polo, riding, hunting). The governing class of eleventh to thirteenth centuries consisting of rich, educated families usually living in an urban environment on the income from their estates, despised physical efforts and wished to

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

stand aloof from the traditions of the steppe and from popular amusements.²¹ Most people in ancient China spent majority of their time working. They had to work all day long for much of the year with no days off. However, festivals were celebrated throughout the year. When they had the chance to play, they were involved in various forms of leisure. Music was an important part of Chinese culture. Early instruments were bells and chimes. Over the time, new instruments were developed which included flutes and other string instruments. In China music was often intertwined with philosophy. Music was said to bring harmony to nature²².

In India it is difficult to knit leisure activities within a uniform pattern because of the spatial distinctions and social and cultural differences. Going back to the very early days of Indian history, the unique Harappan civilisation emerges as an exemplified arena of leisure activities. The history of leisure in India can be traced back to the well-advanced Harappa civilisation. The excavations conducted at the Indus valley sites help us to identify the leisure activities of the Harappan people.

Harappan Civilisation is generally referred to as the most advanced civilisation of the ancient world. The discovery and study of the Harappan civilisation provided a striking proof of the ancient and original nature of the Indian culture.²³ Harappan society was clearly a class-based society as indicated by the archaeological evidences. The upper city seems to have been occupied by the ruling class or those who exercised control over the resources. The two cities were built on a similar plan. To the west of each city was a “citadel”, an oblong artificial platform some 30-50 feet high and about

²¹ Jacques Gerner, *A History of Chinese Civilisation*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1996, p. 331.

²² <https://www.internationsorg.living>

²³ K.Antonova, G.Bongard-Levin et.al, *History of India*, Progress Publications, Moscow, 1979, p. 14.

400 x 200 yards in area. Below it was the town proper, in each case at least a square mile in area.²⁴ On the basis of the thriving agricultural economy, the Harappa people built their rather unimaginative but comfortable civilisation. Their bourgeoisie had pleasant houses and even their workmen who may have been bondmen or slaves had the comparative luxury of two-roomed brick-built cottages.²⁵

Archaeological sources are considered as the most important source for the study of Harappan Civilisation. It is historically logical to assume that the residents of the upper city and the Harappan bourgeoisie had enough leisure time to enjoy various pleasures of life. Varieties of pottery involving wide use of unique technology, terracotta objects, seals, stone works, bronze, copper artefacts, gold and silver jewellery and bead making unambiguously exhibit the craft-producing abilities of the Harappans.²⁶ There were many handicraft works connected with their luxurious material life.²⁷ The archaeological excavations of Mohenjo-Daro have unearthed many cubical clay dice and elongated four-sided ivory dice. Most of these cubical dice except one are uniform cubes. The sum of the marks on the opposite sides of a modern dice is 7 but that of Mohenjo-Daro varies. These dices made of baked-clay contain traces of red paint on most of them. The well-preserved condition of the dice shows that these were thrown on some soft material.²⁸

Two bronze female figurines were found at Mohenjo-Daro. One of them is the famous 'dancing girl' statue. This figurine was found in a small

²⁴ A.L.Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, Picador, London, 2004, p. 16.

²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 19.

²⁶ Herman Kulke, *History of Precolonial India*, Oxford, New Delhi, 2018, p. 15.

²⁷ Irfan Habeeb, *Saindhava Nagarikatha (mal)*, The State Institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018, p. 48.

²⁸ Tridib Nath Ray, *The Indoor and Outdoor Games in Ancient India, Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 1939, Vol.3*, 1939, pp.241-261.

house in the south-western quarter of the city during the 1926-27 excavations. John Marshall named her the 'dancing girl' as he thought that she had the air of a semi-impudent 'nautch girl' with one hand on the hip and beating time to the rhythm of music with her feet. But the 'dancing girl' may not have been dancing at all and even if she was, she may not represent a professional dancer.²⁹ The image of the dancing girl indicates that dancing was a form of leisure during that time.

Terracotta toys of various kinds such as the balls, rattles, whistles, gamesmen, carts and moveable parts and animals on wheels have been found at various Harappan sites. Miniature terracotta cooking vessels, beads and other toy furniture which may have served as playing tools for kids have also been found. There are figurines of children playing with toys. One of them holds what seems to be a clay disc. Many clay discs have in fact been found at Harappan sites and it is possible that these are remnants of a pith-like game played with a ball and piled-up pieces of clay or stone. Lot of terracotta figurines of dogs have been found at Harappan sites. Some of them carried a collar suggesting that people kept dogs as pets.³⁰ Pet keeping might have been a form of leisure of the Harappan people. In the Indus cities six-sided dice have been found.³¹

The transformation of life style of the Indians from urban parameters of Harappan civilisation to the rural style of the Vedic Aryans had its changes in the concept of leisure also. In the Vedic period the ideas about leisure and leisure activities have evolved under combined influence of classical and folk heritage, having a symbiotic relationship of give and take between the two. Social and cultural distinctions and their implications for leisure seem to have

²⁹ Upinder Singh, *A History of Ancient and Early Medieval India from the stone age to the 12th century*, Pearson, Delhi, 2009, p. 162.

³⁰ *Ibid*, p.174.

³¹ A.L.Basham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 209.

been always there. Lack of access to economic resources constituted a significant barrier to engagement in leisure for the majority in the society.

The Rig Veda does not mention anything about fixed settlements (let alone brick-built cities) or of reading, writing, art, architecture. Music was restricted to chants for ritual.³² The centre of men's communal life was the Sabha: the word denoted both the tribal assembly and its main hall. Apart from the tribal council meetings, Sabha also served as a platform for relaxation. Only men were allowed in the Sabha. This tribal 'long house' was the scene of their favourite activity, gambling. The gambler with this one incurable passion and complete disregard for home and family is mentioned in a late though famous hymn of the oldest Veda. There is occasional mention of chariot races, female dancers and male fist fighters.³³ The "Gamester Lament" of the Rig Veda testifies to the popularity of gambling among the early Aryans.³⁴

The term used for festivals in Vedic literature is Samana³⁵ There are mentions of festivals in the Rig Veda, Atharva Veda and the Vajasaneyi Samhita of the Yajur Veda.³⁶ In these festivals the archers contested to exhibit their skill. There were chariot and horse-racing also. The poets tried to earn laurels by reciting their skilful compositions. The women then amused themselves. The youthful damsels adorned themselves in fine clothes and ornaments to appear agreeable to the suitors and the public women tried to captivate people by their charms.³⁷ These festivals lasted for days irrespective

³² D.D.Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical Outline*, Vikas Publishing house Pvt Ltd, New Delhi, 1999, p. 80.

³³ *Ibid*, pp. 80-81.

³⁴ A.L. Basham, *Op.cit.*, p.209.

³⁵ Taridib Nath Ray, *Op.cit.*, pp.241-261.

³⁶ *Ibid*.

³⁷ *Ibid*.

of day and night. Besides Samana there were other seasonal festivals which gradually degraded into ritualistic observances during the later ages. From the contemporary Kasika on the sutra 'nityam- krida-jivikayoh' of the great grammarian Panini we get the names of two festivals, Uddalaka-puspa-bhanjika' and 'Virana-puspa-pracayika'³⁸These plays or festivals served as amusement and performance of some household duty.³⁹

Gambling was popular in the Vedic age, especially among the chieftains and the 'kings'. Rig Veda testifies to the popularity of gambling among all classes in the Vedic period. Gambling played a small but significant part in the ritual of the royal consecration ceremony and the gambling hall attached to the king's palace in the later Vedic period had some magical or religious significance though its importance is not wholly clear.⁴⁰ In the 'Rajasuya', a ritual game was played in which the game was rigged so that the king wins the game. It was part of general understanding that the king should not fail in any games since it would exalt the position of the king. Apart from gambling, chariot racing is also mentioned in the Rig Veda⁴¹ However, gambling was the most popular leisure time game in the Vedic period. Though all classes enjoyed gambling certain individual Brahmin purohitas stayed away from the game. Though much reprobated by the brahmin authors of the Smriti literature, gambling was popular at all times and among all classes except the more rigid religious people.⁴²

Athletics, horse-racing, chariot racing, etc. were the principal amusements of the Aryan youths. The wrestlers must have also fought with each other. In the Epic, Buddhist texts and in the later literature, there are

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ A.L.Basham, *Op.cit.*, p.209.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.210.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.209.

⁴² Tardib Nath Ray, *Op.cit.*

ample references to wrestling, fighting with stick in a sham fight, etc. In a sutra (4.2.57) of Panini we get two terms, danda and maustya associated with sham-fights in which sticks and fists were used as weapons. The Buddhist suttas also refer to horse-racing, chariot-racing, elephant-racing, archery, fencing with swords and sticks and wrestling and boxing. The candalas used to play with iron balls and bamboo poles. They also showed all kinds of tricks which is now called magic.⁴³

The plot of the Mahabharata itself lingers round a great gambling tournament in which Yudhishthira lost his kingdom to his wicked cousin Duryodhana and the Epic tells a number of similar stories in the episode of Nala. The Arthsastra advocates strict control of gambling. It is mentioned that it should be confined entirely to officially-managed gaming houses, financed by a tax of five per cent of the stakes and a charge for the hire of dice for the gamblers who were forbidden from using their own. Stringent fines were imposed for cheating⁴⁴.

The word 'Aksa' in the context of gambling is generally translated as "dice" but the aksas in the earliest gambling games were not dice but small hard nuts called vibhisaka or vibhidaka. In the game the players drew a handful of these from a bowl and scored if the number was a multiple of four. Later, oblong dice with four scoring sides were used. Like the European gamester the Indians employed a special terminology for the throws of the dice such as the Krta (cater, four), Treta (trey), Dvapara (deuce), and Kali (ace). So important was gambling in the Indian scheme of things that these four terms were applied to the four periods (yuga) of the aeon. Among the chief men of the realm whose loyalty was confirmed by a special ceremony at

⁴³ A.L.Basham, *Op.cit.*, p.210

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

the consecration ceremony of the king was the aksavapa or thrower of nuts or dice, evidently the organizer of the royal gambling parties.⁴⁵

Though Arthashastra failed to mention about other games and entertainments, some other classical sources refer to gladiatorial displays at the court of Chandragupta Maurya.⁴⁶ People resorted to various activities for their amusement during the Mauryan age. The most popular method of amusement was hunting. The Edicts of King Ashoka gives a fairly good idea about the hunting expeditions arranged for the king. At the time of hunting expeditions, the king was surrounded by armed women who were in turn under the protection of the armed soldiers. Ropes were also fixed for the security of the king. Crossing of the rope was awarded with capital punishment. During the hunting expedition a large number of men blowing wind pipes and beating the trumpets also moved along. Usually, the king used bow and arrow for hunting down animals. The common people however amused themselves with various traditional methods such as chariot races, circus, magic, animal fights, oxen race, gambling etc. However, Ashoka placed a ban on games that involved any use of violence. Dancing and drama were other important sources of amusement for people.⁴⁷

Another popular amusement was Animal fights. Ancient Tamil Sangam described bull fighting as 'yeru thazhuvathal', literally bull embracing. It was otherwise known as 'Sallikattu' from which the modern term 'Jallikattu' is derived. Bull fighting was common among the Ayar people who lived in the 'Mullai' geographical division of ancient Tamilakham.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 211.

⁴⁶ S.C.Raychoudhary, *History of Ancient India, Earliest Times to 1000 A.D.*, Surjeet Publications, Delhi, 2015, , p. 181.

⁴⁷ A.L.Basham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 211.

The animals that were pitted against each other were little Indian the fierce quail (lavaka) ,the cock and the ram. There are records of fight between bulls, buffaloes and elephants. The one form of animal contest that was confined to the Dravidian South was the bullfight of which we have a vivid description in an early Tamil poem.⁴⁸ Bullfight had certainly some ritual significance and was connected with the fertility of the crops too.⁴⁹

The board games played with the help of dice, similar to present children's games such as ludo, which involved a combination of chance and skill were also common. By the early centuries of the Christian era, one of these games played on a board of sixty-four squares (astapada) developed into a game of some complexity. It had a king-piece and pieces of four other types corresponding to the corps of the ancient Indian army-an elephant, a horse, a chariot or ship and four footmen. The original game needed four players and their moves were controlled by the throw of the dice. As the game was played with pieces representing military forces and its strategy similar to that of the campaigning armies, it was known as Caturanga or "four corps".⁵⁰

It is assumed that organised outdoor games were not common in the ancient period. Basham points out some exception to this as children and young women were sometimes referred to as a playing ball⁵¹ Generally speaking, many of the amusements of ancient India were provided by professional entertainers as well as those who practised highly developed arts such as drama, music and dancing. There were others who travelled through town and village, diverting the ordinary folk who could not fully appreciate the nuances of the more sophisticated life. We read of musicians, bards,

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 210.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

acrobats, jugglers, conjurers and snake-charmers who were popular then as now. In the courtly theatre there occurred the staging of folk-drama, occasionally referred to in literature. It portrayed scenes from mythology and legend in dance, song and mime and was a forerunner of the Sanskrit drama.⁵²

The Brahmanical learning also gave them considerable leisure. The Brahmanical system of learning in the early period was not based on large institutions. More often students were attached to individual teachers who were old and were supported by donations from the pupils. Although impoverished students were also accepted it is likely that well-to-do students were preferred. This would coincide with the fact that only in sufficiently wealthy families would it be possible for the sons to have enough leisure to do justice to a Brahmanical formal education. The very nature of this education was to provide qualifications for those intending to become priests, rulers, bureaucrats and men of letters⁵³ In short education and various occupations gave them considerable scope to enjoy the leisure time.

The early centuries of the Common Era are considered as “the economically most developed period’ in the history of ancient India. Numerous factors contributed to the economic development. The predominant factor was the Indo-Roman trade. The ‘balance of Indo-Roman trade’ was very much in favour of India. The major part of Silk Route, which links China with West Asia was controlled by the Kushans. This route was a source of substantial income for the Kushans and they built a large prosperous empire on the strength of the tolls levied from the traders. It is significant that the Kushans were the first rulers in India to issue gold coins on a wide scale⁵⁴

⁵² Romila Thapar, *Ancient Indian Social History*, Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad, 2009, p. 127.

⁵³ R.S.Sharma, *India's Ancient Past*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2005, p. 196.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 228.

The growing crafts and commerce and the increasing use of money promoted the prosperity of numerous towns during this period⁵⁵ North India during the Kushan period experienced a high degree of urbanisation.⁵⁶ All these material elements had tremendous impact on the leisure activities of the urban elite.

The daily life of a comfortably well-off citizen as described in the Kamasutra-the book on the art of love-was a gentle existence devoted to the refinements of life. Comfortable if not luxurious surroundings were provided to harmonize with moods conducive to poetry, painting and recitals of music, in all of which the young city dilettante was expected to excel. The writing of a text on erotica is not altogether unexpected in a situation where urban living was held up as the model of a civilised life. The young man had also to be trained in the art of love. The Kamasutra discusses this with lucidity and sometimes startling imagination, a parallel to modern writing on erotica. The courtesan was a normal feature of urban life, neither romanticized not treated with contempt. Judging by the training given to a courtesan, it was among the more demanding professions, for, unlike the prostitute, she was a cultured and sociable companion similar to the geisha of Japan or the hetaerae of Greece.⁵⁷

Other amusements described in the literature of this period remind us of the diversions of the nagaraka in Vatsyayana's Kamasutra⁵⁸ The Kamasutra summarized the leisurely life led by the rich citizens.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Xinru Liu, *Ancient India and Ancient China Trade and Religious Exchanges*, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1994, p .35.

⁵⁶ Romila Thapar, *Early India, From the Origins to AD 1300*, Penguin Books, Gurgaon, 2002, p. 302.

⁵⁷ R.C.Majumdar, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bomay, 1955, p. 385.

⁵⁸ Xinru Lip, *Op. Cit.*, p. 41.

⁵⁹ R.C.Majumdar, *AncientIndia*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1974, p. 206.

We may get a general picture of the life of a middle-class citizen from the detailed description in Vatsyayana's Kamasutra (Bk,I,ch IV).It portrays a life of ease and luxury with healthy and refined taste for artistic and social activities in which wine and women played no considerable part⁶⁰ In the Kamasutra of Vatsyayana we get a list of the festivals which have been termed as 'samasya-krida' i.e., the play in which some citizens assemble together and amuse themselves.⁶¹

The people of Gupta period attached great importance to recreation and amusement. Various games were the main source of amusement. Hunting and shooting were also means of recreation in addition to buffalo and elephant fights. One of the coins of Samudra Gupta depicts the king killing a tiger. Theatre and drama were also common sources of amusement at that time. Fa-Hsien reports that chariot race was in vogue during the Gupta period.⁶²

Gupta period is remarkable for the production of secular literature which consisted of a fair degree of ornate court poetry. Bhasa was an important dramatist in the early phase of the Gupta period and wrote thirteen plays⁶³ The plays produced in India during the Gupta period have two common features. Firstly, they are all comedies. Tragedies are absent. Secondly, the characters of the higher and lower classes do not speak the same language. Women and Shudras featuring in these plays use the Prakrit language whereas the higher classes use Sanskrit⁶⁴ The dramas were meant to entertain and was a part of the leisure time of those who enjoyed higher status

⁶⁰ Tardib Nath Ray, *Op. Cit.*

⁶¹ S.C.Raychoudhary, *Op.Cit.*

⁶² R.S.Sharma, *Op.Cit.*, p. 246.

⁶³ *Ibid*

⁶⁴ Xinru Liu, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 41-42.

in the contemporary society and those people who were associated with the royal court.

Rich citizens and merchants developed a highly sophisticated urban culture as a result of which the flourishing Sanskrit literature of Gupta times came into being.⁶⁵ The city provided entertainment and recreation for leisure seeking people. The city women's sportive movement of their eyes and brows was contrasted with the country women's ignorance of the art of moving their brows. These phenomena demonstrate the existence of a sophisticated life-style.⁶⁶

The Outdoor games were mostly played in the courtyards, woods, gardens, fields, tanks and rivers. The indoor games were played in public and private club houses. Games of Chess, Dice etc, were played in the houses of individual citizens also. The houses of courtesans were in most cases rendezvous of the gamblers. From the Vedic and Smriti literature we get a clear idea of the gambling houses that were properly managed under the supervision of the State. Kautilya's Arthashastra, Brhaspati's Sukra-Niti and Kamandakiya Nitisara also support this view. In the Buddhist, Jain and Brahmanic literature there is a mention of Samajas where religious, social and economic discourses and other games and sports were performed. The instances of this kind of Samajas and Sabhas are not rare in the Vedic and Epic literature. From Vatsyayana's Kamasutra we get a vivid idea of club houses. He gives us an elaborate but pithy account of the Gosthis or clubs which were in existence during his time. Dramas of Bhasa and other kavyas and the vast Bhana literature give us ample instances of these gosthis.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 42.

⁶⁶ Tardib Ray Nath, *Op. Cit.*

⁶⁷ R.C.Majumdar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 385.

The popular amusements of these times were similar to those of the preceding period. It was a fashion for the high-born girls to play with balls (Kanduka). Especially in the spring season and on the occasion of the Swing Festival they used to enjoy the swing from trees in a garden. A very spectacular scene was presented by the charchari (musical or dancing) performance. On such occasions maidens richly adorned with pearls performed various dances known by appropriate technical terms. Afterwards they sprinkle one another with water from jars sometimes adorned with jewels. Sometimes in suitable attires and pose they paraded as savage mountaineers or even enacted cemetery scenes with offerings of human flesh in their hands. Dancing for recreation by ladies and dramatic representations in honour of deities are referred to in the inscriptions of the period.⁶⁸

In Rajasekhara's account of a poet's daily life he mentions of a poetical assembly (kavyagoshthi) that was supposed to be arranged by the poet after the mid-day meal. There is also reference to the goshthi of persons leading a high life such as that of a queen and of other women. Abhidhanaratnamala gives us technical terms for drinking –parties (apana and panagoshthi) as well as for drinking in company (sahapiti and sahanaka). Rati Rahasya tells us how young pleasure-seekers used to meet their mistresses at night in well-lit and scented houses amid amorous assemblies (narmagoshthi) to the accompaniment of sweet music. According to the same authority, excursions to gardens (udyanayatra) and excursions for drinking (panayatra and water-sports (jalavatara) was an opportunity for the unchaste wives to meet their lovers⁶⁹.

The social standing of courtesans in the ancient Chola country is clearly indicated by the numerous records registering rich endowments made

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 385-386.

⁶⁹ K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cholas*, University of Madras, Madras, 1955, p. 554.

by them for various public benefactions and the recognition afforded by local powers to their public spirit⁷⁰ At their best the courtesans led a life of cultured ease and pleasure and like their Greek cousin, the hetaerae, provided amusement and intellectual companionship to those who could afford the luxury.⁷¹

One of the most popular games practiced in early India was chess which was initially called the “Ashtapada”. Later, during the Gupta period it was named as ‘Chaturanga’. Unlike the modern Chess, chaturanga was mainly a game of chance the result of which depended on how the dice was rolled. The Tamil variation of Chaturanga was ‘puliathram’ or ‘goat and tiger’ game where careful moves on a triangle decided whether the tiger captures the goat or the goat escapes. Wrestling was another popular game of the early period and it was known by the name 'Malla yudha. It was the ancient Indian fighting style which allowed punches, kicks and head butts, clawing and even biting. Theoretically leisure was part of a number of ancient Indian ideas on how a good life should be and what it would be composed of. With the advent of the Arabs, Persians, Turks, Afghans etc the leisure activities in India underwent changes, at least for the people in the upper strata of the society.

The literature of this time (800-1200) shows that the people residing in the towns were fun loving. Apart from fairs and festivals, excursions to gardens, swimming pools parties etc were widely popular. Fights among various animals such as rams, cocks etc as well as wrestling bouts were popular among the masses. The upper classes continued to be fond of dicing, hunting and a kind of Indian polo which was regarded as a royal pastime.⁷²

⁷⁰ *Ibid*

⁷¹ Satish Chandra, *History of Medieval India*, Orient Black Swan, Hyderabad, 2007, p. 50.

⁷² *Ibid*

Arab writers compliment the Indians for their reluctance to include intoxicants in the leisure time activities. However, this appears to be an idealized picture. In literary works of the period there are many references to wine-drinking. Wine was used on ceremonial occasions including marriages and feasts and outings which were very popular among some class of citizens. Even women in the king's train indulged freely in the use of wine. While some smriti writers mention wine as a forbidden drink for the three upper castes others mention it as forbidden only to the Brahmanas. The Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas were permitted to indulge in it with some exceptions.⁷³

The Sultanate society was a society of great inequalities. In the town area, the Muslim nobility led a life of great ostentation in addition to some wealthy merchants and Hindus. A majority of people residing in towns as well as in the countryside lived a simple life and often had to face many hardships. It was, however, not a life without joy as numerous festivals, fairs etc, relieved, to some extent, the monotony of their lives⁷⁴ Islam never sanctified time or frowned on leisure activities, although it maintained strict segregation of the sexes. Traditional leisure activities of the upper strata of the Sultanate society include music and dancing.

The people engaged in all sorts of entertainments including different types of sports and games like hunting, duels among men, fighting of animals, chaughan or horse-polo etc. Polo was introduced in India in the 13th century. It had its origin in Central Asia and was first played in Persia. It was a Persian national sport played extensively by the nobility. Qutubuddin Aibak, the sultan of Delhi (1206-1210 CE) died in an accident that happened during a game of polo in Lahore, when his horse fell and he was impaled on the

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴. Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire of Vijayanagara*, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Publications division, New Delhi, 1962, p.241.

pommel of his saddle. It was almost at the same period that the Vijayanagara state in south India flourished with cultural rejuvenation.

Sports and pastimes formed an important part of the everyday life of the people during the Vijayanagara period. Being an age of strength and valour, physical culture was given proper attention not only by the royalty and the nobility but also by the common people. The daily exercise of Krishnadevaraya as described by the Portuguese traveller Domingo Paes is well known⁷⁵ Foreign travellers have provided a detailed description of various sports and games played by the commons. According to their reports these sports and games were conducted by the state and also by individuals. Contemporary sculptures threw light on the role of various pastime activities and amusements in the daily life of the people.

Hunting is another sport of this period about which contemporary literature gives detailed description. The expeditions undertaken by kings and courtiers are explicitly mentioned. Devaraya II (1442-1446 CE) is known by the title Gajaventekara (elephant-hunter). Varthema noticed that the capital of the Vijayanagar empire occupied the most beautiful site with certain beautiful places for hunting and fowling and it appeared to him as a second paradise.⁷⁶

Wrestling seems to have been extremely popular and received state-patronage as in the earlier times. From Paes and Nuniz, we learn that wrestlers from all over the empire received invitation to exhibit their art during the Navaratri celebrations at the capital.⁷⁷

According to the Portuguese traveller Fenaon Nuniz, any two nobles of the Vijayanagar Empire quarrelling over an issue would fight to death in the

⁷⁵ B.A.Saletore, *Social and Political Life in Vijayanagar*, B.G.Paul & Co, Madras, 1954, p. 422.

⁷⁶ Robert Sewell, *Op Cit.*, p. 261.

⁷⁷ A.L.Basham, *Op. Cit.*, p. 210.

presence of the king and his court.⁷⁸ One of the chief means of diversion of the Vijayanagar period was the theatre. The popularity of dramatic presentations is attested by an inscription of 1514 A.D which refers to Nattuva Nagayya, son Cegaya, who acquired reputation in enacting a drama called Tayikondanataka.⁷⁹

The plays that were composed during this period fall into two classes, the first one being the Sanskrit Plays.⁸⁰ One such play is Jambavatikalyanam that is attributed to the emperor Krishnadevaraya himself. The plays of this class were usually enacted on important occasions when large number of people gathered together at the capital. Jambavatikalyanam is said to have been put on hoards for the first time before people who had assembled at Vijayanagar to witness the spring festival celebrated in honour of God Virupaksa.⁸¹ The masses, however, were attracted by another drama written in the vernacular languages.⁸² They seem to be the earliest representatives of the modern yaksagana⁸³ The plays were generally staged on important occasions such as festivals and brahmotsavas of temples or during the performance of sacrifices.⁸⁴ The performance commenced with the songs sung by women accompanied by musical instruments.⁸⁵

There were other means of diversions also. The canarihara or strolling in the pleasure garden and the jalakrida or sporting in water were the two

⁷⁸ N.Venkata Ramanayya, *Studies in The History of The Third Dynasty of Vijayanagara, University of Madras, Madras 1935*, pp. 411-412.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

other forms of amusement which were very popular among the rich⁸⁶ The common people took considerable interest in cock-fighting.⁸⁷ A kind of game resembling polo was played by the princes and the nobles⁸⁸ The most exciting outdoor amusement, however, was the chase in which the emperor and his courtiers were greatly impressed. Varieties of chase such as *teraveta*, *edduveta*, *gantavela* etc., are mentioned by several contemporary writers.⁸⁹

The wealthy people of the Vijayanagar period appear to have sought diversion in playing the chess and the dice. Chess was a popular game which occupied the attention of the upper classes. The emperor Krishnadevaraya was an expert in playing the game.⁹⁰ The most famous chess champion of the age was a Timmana of the Bodducerla family.⁹¹ But the game of dice was more popular than the chess. The part which it played in the social life can be inferred from the place assigned to it at the imperial court. One of the ladies-in-waiting carrying the symbols or insignia had to hold a board of dice while waiting for the emperor. From the constant allusions to the game given by the contemporary writers it becomes evident that gambling was a fashionable pastime in the aristocratic circles. Women were as much addicted to gambling as men and the game was often played for stakes.⁹²

According to the widely accepted notion of leisure, Mughal India presumably provided relief from everyday cares and strains. The leisurely activities of Mughal India included not only sports, literary activities and art

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Annette Susannah Beveridge, *Babur Nama Journal of Emperor Babur (translated from the Turkish)*, Penguin Books, London, 2006, p. 352.

but also festivals and pilgrimages, court celebrations and harem activities. It had intimate and inextricable links with wider social, economic and religious activities and merged with them. There is a reference to the game of playing cards as a means of entertainment in Babur Nama⁹³ A branch of Mughal cultural life in which Hindus and Muslims cooperated was music. Akbar patronised Tansen of Gwalior who is credited with composing many new melodies (ragas). Jahangir, Shahjahan and many other Mughal nobles followed this example. Music in all its forms continued to be patronised by Aurangzeb's queens in the harem and by the princes and nobles.⁹⁴

Akbar inherited from his ancestors a love of hunting which became his regular pastime. His nobles and courtiers followed his example. Hawking was yet another hobby of Akbar. The game of polo was a favourite game of the upper-class people during the 16th century. Animal combats were also arranged periodically by the court and people gathered to witness the fight between elephants, tigers and wild boars. Wrestling and pigeon-flying were quite common and so was boxing. Abul Fazal provides us with a list of famous athletes of Akbar's reign. According to him, two well matched wrestlers used to contend every day before the emperor who rewarded them after the match. Akbar learnt pigeon-flying from one of his tutors and continued to take interest in this pastime until his old age. Pigeon flying remained popular throughout the Mughal period.⁹⁵

Indoor games were also preferred by the upper-class people during the age of Akbar. The emperor himself exhibited keenness at Chess or Shatranj.⁹⁶ The game was considered lawful even by the orthodox Muslims and hence

⁹³ Satish Chandra, *Op.cit.*

⁹⁴ A.K.Saxena., *Life and Culture in Medieval India*, ABD Publishers, Jaipur, 2020, p.68.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

was equally common in both Hindu and Muslim families. Another indoor game which was as popular as chess was the chaupar or backgammon. Next in popularity was the game of phansa. There was also the game of pachisi which was played with cowries. These games, namely chaupar, phansa and pachisi were played on a cloth board which was in the form of a cross. Each of the four arms of the cross was divided into twenty-four squares in three rows of eight each. The squares were indicated by patches in the coloured cloth. Akbar was particularly fond of chandal mandal and pachisi.⁹⁷

Akbar's court was the nucleus of national festivals such as the Raksha Bandhan, Dussehra, Diwali and Vasant. These festivals, usually celebrated by Hindus were adopted by the Mughal court and were celebrated with great vigour. The Persian festival of Nauroz was also celebrated by the court under Akbar for a week or more every year. The birthdays of the emperor and the crown prince, the anniversaries of the emperor's accession according to solar and lunar calculations were observed on such a grand scale as to give the impression of a festival. Hindus were very fond of going on pilgrimage to their holy places situated in all parts of the country. The sacred places where periodical fairs were held and which were thronged by thousands of people were Haridwar, Taneshwar, Mathura, Ayodhya, Prayag, Gaya, Ujjain, Puri, Kanjevaram and Rameswaram. Akbar had abolished the "Pilgrim tax" on the Hindus as early as 1563 which must have given great impetus to Hindu pilgrimage.⁹⁸

Some of the common recreations included shows and performances such as the Kathputli, Juggler's performances, Monkey-dancers, Acrobats, Ram Lila Marriages and other Sanskar which offered recreation and amusement to the common people. Nautch and music were very common in

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.69.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

all parts of the country⁹⁹ Intemperance was a common evil among the upper classes of medieval age. In spite of the Quranic prohibition, Muslim courtiers were generally addicted to liquor. Rajput's, too, were fond of wine and opium. Some of the other castes in royal employment likely had familiarity with wine.¹⁰⁰

In the field of music, a perfect harmony of tastes and sentiments developed during the Mughal period. Persian and Indian tunes were combined to enrich Indian music further. The art of music received patronage from three of the most prominent Mughal emperors, Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Akbar was a great patron of music and according to Abul Fazal there were more than 30 singers in his court, Tansen being the most famous of them all. The purpose of leisure in pre-modern India in general was presumably to provide relief from every day chores and strains. In that period generally, leisure in the country was linked widely to social, economic and religious activities and also merged within them.

As part of the general survey about the evolution of leisure activities on a world level, now the focus of enquiry is naturally shifted to ancient Greece and Rome. As the purpose of this chapter is to provide a general enquiry into the evolution of leisure in different historical and geographical contexts the enquiry would be extended to the leisure activities that prevailed in other parts of the world in the pre-modern and early modern period. The enquiry in a universal level ought to be started with the leisure activities of the classical Greece.

The concept of leisure in Greek society was associated with freedom. Aristotle developed the earliest and most influential prescriptive theory of

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p.70.

¹⁰⁰ Salma Ahmed Farooqui, *A Comprehensive History of Medieval India*, Pearson, Delhi, 2011,p.298.

leisure as he regards leisure as the arena in which the highest human capacities were best used. He reminded that idleness must be distinguished from leisure. Ancient Greeks customarily made extensive provisions for parks and gardens, open air theatres and gymnasiums, baths ,exercise grounds and stadiums. A gradual transition occurred in Greek approach to leisure that all citizens were expected to participate in leisure activities.

Ancient Greece was made up of independent city-states, each with its own laws and customs. European Historians at will found happiness in celebrating the Classical Greek Civilisation. Five hundred years before Christ, in a little town on the far western border of the settled and civilised world, a strange new power was at work. The minds and spirits of the men there were awakened to an extent that it influenced the world in the passage of time. Many changes were brought about. Athens had entered upon her brief and magnificent flowering of genius which so moulded the world of mind and of spirit that was different from the mind and spirit today.¹⁰¹

Greece or Hellas as the early Greeks called it, is a peninsula of about 25,000 square miles extending from the mainland of Europe into the Mediterranean Sea. The Greeks did not actually possess the degree of social equality that is sometimes attributed to them. The social ideals of the Greek philosophers give the impression that their theories were actualities but any organisation in which less than 40 % of the inhabitants are free cannot be called typical society of social equality. In Athens, the most democratic of the city-states, there was constant struggle between the oppressors and the oppressed.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ Edith Hamilton, *The Greek Way to Western civilization*, The New American Library, New York, 1948, p. 7.

¹⁰² J.E.Swain, *Op. Cit.*, p. 118.

It is often stated that the classical Greek civilisation was based on classical slavery. Under Pericles, Athens made great progress but social equality suffered a considerable loss. Men dominated the Athenian society. Wives did not join husbands in entertainment. They even lived in separate quarters¹⁰³. The Athens of Pericles is one of the most remarkable places in history. And this is not only due to her world-renowned intellectual and artistic culture but also her political institutions that are peculiar in a high degree¹⁰⁴. The years of Pericles' supremacy saw the construction of great buildings, among which the new Temple of Athene was the masterpiece. Released from war, Athenian energies flowed swiftly into a new channel¹⁰⁵.

The Athenian state was a democratic state.¹⁰⁶ The remarkable phenomena of Athenian democracy were achieved with the exploitation of the labour power and the appropriation of surplus produced by them. The slaves also enabled the complete development of democracy in Athens.

To the Greeks, slavery was part of the order of nature¹⁰⁷. Slaves were so numerous at Athens that some historians believe they outnumbered the free population.¹⁰⁸ The literature of Greece from Homer to Euripides and beyond him is full of the pathos of captivity of the city of strong men who, by enslavement, has lost 'half his manhood' and of the women and children whom he failed to protect from shame and insult. The real horror in Greek warfare, that great dread that loomed behind the glorious and exciting tournament, was the lifelong imprisonment that might await the unhappy

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 126.

¹⁰⁴ Adolf Holm, *The History of Greece*, Macmillan and Co Limited, London, 1909, p. 196.

¹⁰⁵ A.R.Burn, *Pericles and Athens*, Hodder & Stoughton Limited, London, 1948, p. 138.

¹⁰⁶ Adolf Holm, *Op.Cit.*

¹⁰⁷ Alfred E. Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth, Politics, and Economics in Fifth-Century Athens*, Oxford, London, 1911, p.381.

¹⁰⁸ C.E.Robinson, *Everyday Life in Ancient Greece*, Oxford, London, 1933, p.87.

survivors of the vanquished¹⁰⁹ Most of the slaves at Athens were imported from barbarians, for it did not pay, on the whole, to breed slaves in the city itself. They had been kidnapped or taken as prisoners from Thrace, or Asia Minor, or Syria, or Dalmatia and were brought to Piraeus for sale with the rest of the trader's stock.¹¹⁰

Greek democracy was rendered possible by the leisure of a population of slave-owners. Greek physical beauty is connected with their distaste for manual labour and Greek art and literature and philosophy owe their growth and survival to men's enviable freedom from practical cares and preoccupations. Greek civilisation, in a word, with all its wealth of thrilling achievement, is inseparably associated with conscious cruelty and injustice¹¹¹.

Athenian citizens enjoyed considerable leisure partly because of their nature of their occupations. Farmers, for example, were not always busy. There were slack times between corn-harvest in May and the vintage in September and again after the vintage till the olive-picking in late autumn. Sailors, similarly, were unoccupied during winter when storms made the sea unsafe. The crafts-men, being independent and not working for a regular employer were masters of their own time and could knock off work when they chose. Retail dealers, too, could close their shops to attend a political meeting or dramatic performance. Furthermore, the household chores were done by the womenfolk. In rich households' women were assisted by slaves. There was a small class of really rich men who owned a large number of slaves and were under no necessity to work at all. Slaves and women therefore played an important part in the background of Athenian life¹¹². They

¹⁰⁹ Alfred E.Zimmern, *Op.Cit.*, p.382.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.383.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.389.

¹¹² C.E.Robinson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.81-82.

were looked upon strictly as part of the chattels of the house, on a level rather with horses and oxen than with human beings. No Greek philosopher, however, humane, had the least idea of objecting to slavery in itself, which was, Aristotle thought, quite necessary and natural in all societies ¹¹³.

In Ancient Greece grand festivals were organised to please their Gods and Goddess. All the seasons were considered sacred and the proper division of the year was in terms of festivals¹¹⁴ The summer was sacred to Apollo and his sister Artemis and the winter to Dionysos, the wine-God in whose honour all the gayest festivals were celebrated. It was their custom to conduct these great feasts in different places and some were attended only by the people who lived in that particular place, while others were so popular that men travelled from different parts of the country to join in them¹¹⁵ Besides the ordinary sacrifices and temple services and the private hero-worship of families, there were many public festivals in honour of the gods.¹¹⁶

The festivals were attended only by the citizens of the state. Slaves were prohibited from attending it. Thus, the leisure time was only for the elite sections of the society and they were used for various festivals, mainly the religious festivals.

Of the leisure time activities, the most celebrated were the Olympic Games which were so important that the Greeks reckoned their time by Olympiads as they called it the interval between two festivals. The Olympic Games were held every four years and the earliest took place in 776 B.C. This was only a few years before the founding of Rome in 753, the date from which the Romans reckoned their calendar. This festival was at first probably

¹¹³ Alice Zimmern, *Greek History for Young Readers*, Longmans, London, 1906, p.274.

¹¹⁴ J. P. Mahaffy, *Greek Antiquities*, Macmillian, New York, 1886, p.39.

¹¹⁵ Alice Zimmern, *Op.Cit.*, p.28.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

nothing more than a great sacrifice in the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia to which delegates were sent from the neighbouring states. When a group of people met together it was natural that they should celebrate the occasion with songs and banquets and those gymnastic contests and trials of skill which all Hellenes enjoyed. More and more attention was paid to these until they became the chief object of the gathering and competitors came from all parts of Greece to compete for a prize at the Great Games¹¹⁷

The origins of the ancient Olympics are lost in legend. There are some stories that hail Zeus as the beginner of these games. He began them to celebrate his victory over his father Kronos after which he became the king of the gods. On the other hand there are stories that say Pelops began the games after his successful campaign against the King of Pisa. Later King Iphitus took up the tradition to put an end to the plague raging in Peloponese¹¹⁸ Athletic contests were open only to the people of Hellas, not a country as Greece is today, but rather a community people with like cultural traditions¹¹⁹ The Olympic games were the most renowned games in Greece. They were celebrated in the sacred precinct of Olympia in the territory of Pisa on the western side of the Peloponnese in the angle between the river Alpheius and a tributary, the Cladeus, flowing from the north.¹²⁰

These Greeks gave great value to competitions and made physical excellence part of their religious observance. Some of the first races were between local boys eager for the privilege of lighting the priest's sacrificial flame. There were other games besides those at Olympia such as the Pythian games that were dedicated to Appollo at Delphi, the Nemean games dedicated

¹¹⁷ W.S. Robinson, *A Short History of Greece*, Rivingtons, London, 1902, p.18.

¹¹⁸ Alice Zimmern, *Op.Cit.*

¹¹⁹ James Coote, *The ITV book of the Olympics*, ITV Books, London, 1980, p.14.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

to Zeus at Nemea and the Isthmian games in honour of Poseidon at Corinth¹²¹
These Olympic Games were the greatest of all the festivals to all Hellenes and any free-born Greek might take part in them so long as there was no stain on his character while slaves and foreigners might not even be onlookers. The games helped to remind the Greeks of their common brotherhood.¹²²

In the ancient world, state and cultural affairs were inextricably mixed up with religion. So naturally religious ceremonies occupied a large part of the five days allowed for the games. They included offerings to Zeus, to whom the site of Olympia was sacred including the sacrifice of 100 cattle on the third day of each game. The games attracted enormous crowds. People came not only for the athletic contests but also for the religious ceremonies. Artists produced special works for the Olympics. One of these was the Pheidias statue of Zeus in gold ivory which was considered as one among the seven wonders of the ancient world. Later, the great Greek intellectuals like Socrates and Plato attended the games. Philosophical debates took place in the public sphere. This great popular festival was facilitated by the Olympic truce. For a period of three months peace was observed among the warring states of Greece so that the Olympics could take place. The truce never stopped any of the wars but it did allow people to gather from all over the country.¹²³

The one-day festival was later extended to five. There were several contests under each head for boys as well as for men¹²⁴ None but Greeks of pure blood could compete. It was necessary that all competitors must make

¹²¹ W.J.Woodhouse, *The Tutorial History of Greece, University Tutorial Press, London, 1905*, p.71.

¹²² James Coote, *Op.Cit.*, p.14.

¹²³ Alice Zimmern, *Op.Cit.*, p.31.

¹²⁴ James coote, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

good their pedigree before the stewards and judges, the Hellanodicae, appointed by the Eleans to control the contests¹²⁵

Other festivals of this kind were also held at different places¹²⁶ But the festival at Olympia was the oldest and continued to be the most important. It began before the beginning of the Greek history and continued after its decline; for when Greece had lost her freedom and become a province of the Roman empire, the Games were continued by the conquerors.¹²⁷

Leisure in ancient Greece was mainly the activity of the elite section as they had plenty of free time in their daily life while for the slaves and other ordinary folk it was a little free time at the mercy of their masters. To Aristotle leisure was the ideal human state in which 'our full potential for happiness can be realised'. Leisure was to be enjoyed as being free from physical and forced activities like labour. They played music and enjoyed the physical art of war and sports. They involved in intellectual activities also which naturally consumed much time. For the ancient Greeks, leisure was at the root of the society and its culture which paved the way for many great philosophers through intellectual discussions.

A distinction has to be made between individuals and classes in ancient Greece in terms of the enjoyment of the leisure. The distinction was that a certain group of people were allowed to engage in leisure while others were forced to engage in labour and hard work. It was the privilege of the upper classes to engage in leisure whenever they wanted. Though leisure was mainly seen as a privilege of the higher classes, the lower class also experienced leisure in a limited extent. The ancient Greeks generally considered leisure as a part of human nature. They also used leisure as a

¹²⁵ W.J. Woodhouse, *Op.Cit*, p.71.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ Alice Zimmern, *Op.Cit.*, p.31.

cultural arena in which vital questions of human means and ends of purpose have been addressed. In short, they used leisure as a means to understand the meaning of life.

Rome, when it comes into the light of history, is a little trading city at a ford on the Tiber, with a Latin-speaking population ruled over by Etruscan kings.¹²⁸ The second great Mediterranean civilisation of the Classical period was the handwork of the Romans, a people closely akin to the Greeks¹²⁹.

The free population of Rome as a developed city state was composed of two elements, Patricians and Plebeians¹³⁰ The full legal status of a Roman citizen was designated by the word “caput”. The Romans built their glorious civilisation on the basis of the labour power of the slaves. Slavery may at all periods of the history of Rome be defined as an absence of personality¹³¹ A slave has no legal relatives, no legal wife, he may be permitted to retain the fruits of his own labour but even his master’s will cannot make it his property¹³² The backbone of the early Roman republic was replaced by estates worked by slaves after the Punic wars. The agricultural slaves were captives who spoke many different languages so that they could not understand each other or they were slaves who had no solidarity to resist oppression, no tradition of rights, no knowledge, for they could not read and write¹³³

The establishment of a stable government by Augustus ushered in a period of prosperity for Italy which lasted for more than two centuries. Trade was now extended to all parts of the known world, even to Arabia, India and

¹²⁸ H.G.Wells, *A Short History of the World*, Collins, London, 1922, p.82.

¹²⁹ John Geise, *Man and the Western World*, Harcourt, Brace and Company, Newyork, 1940, p.228.

¹³⁰ A.H.J. Greenidge, *Roman Public Life*, Macmillian, London, 1901, p.4.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, p.31.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p.24.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp.24-25.

China. Manufacturing reached more than significant proportions especially in the production of pottery, textiles and articles made of metal and glass. As a result of the development of rotation of crops and the technique of soil fertilization, agriculture flourished as never before. In spite of all this, the economic order was far from healthy. The prosperity was not evenly distributed but was confined primarily to the upper classes.¹³⁴

Festivals and games marked the leisure time of the Romans. These festivals and games like the Greeks were meant only for the upper sections of the society and not for the peasants and the slaves. The Romans celebrated festivals and involved in various games at the expense of the labour power of the slaves. A great majority of the inhabitants of the country were not landowners but peasants, small tenant farmers and hired labourers. The excitements and the amusement of the town were not for them. When their rent was paid in kind more often than in cash they had little to spend on luxuries.¹³⁵

Most of the slaves of the Roman Empire were captured in war. The slave uprisings constantly poised threat to the very existence of the Roman Empire. The great influx of slaves also intensified the adulteration of Roman culture at a period when Roman society was so absorbed with its own problems that it did not have the time or energy to devote to the assimilation of aliens.¹³⁶

One of the oldest games of the world called by the Romans as little marauders (*latrunculi*) was popular. It was played like draughts or checkers, there being two sets of “men” white and red, representing opposed soldiers

¹³⁴ H.G.Wells, *Op.Cit.*, p.135.

¹³⁵ Edward Mcnall Burns et.al., *World Civilizations from Ancient to Contemporary*, W.W.Norton & Company, Newyork, 1955, p.255.

¹³⁶ W.N.Weech, *World History*, Odhams, Long Acre, London, 1959, p.217.

and the aim of each player was to gain advantage over the other. This game as old as Homer is represented in Egyptian tombs which are of much greater antiquity than any other Grecian monuments.¹³⁷

The games of the Romans range from the innocent tossing of huckle bones to the frightful scenes of the gladiatorial show. Some were celebrated in the open air and others within the enclosures of the circus or the amphitheatre. Some were gay and festive and others were serious and tragic. Some were said to have been instituted in the earliest days by Romulus, Tullius or Tarquinius priscus and others were imported from abroad or grew up naturally as the nation progressed in experience or in acquaintance with foreign people. The great hike in the instances of games and festivals and their enormous cost were signs of approaching trouble for the republic.¹³⁸

Athletic activities such as racing, boxing and wrestling were engaged in informally but the chief sport was chariot racing. So popular was this pastime that under the Empire the Circus Maximus had to be enlarged to hold at least 150,000 spectators who excitedly followed, often with wagers, the fortunes of their favourite teams. By the fourth century chariot races took up almost sixty-four days in a year.¹³⁹

There were impressive games that were celebrated from the fourth to the twelfth of the month of September called the Great Games of Roman Circus.¹⁴⁰ A variety of games were conducted in this circus. Horse races were the most important. Another game was the play of Troy, fabled to have been invented by Aeneas, in which young men of rank on horses performed a sham

¹³⁷ John Geise, *Op.Cit.*, p.248.

¹³⁸ Arthur Gilman, *Rome from the Earliest times to the End of the Republic*, T.Fisher, Unwin Ltd., London, 1887, p.321.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.321-322.

¹⁴⁰ T.Walter Wallbank, Alastair M.Taylor, *Civilization Past and Present*, Scott Foresman and company, Chicago, 1954, p.174.

fight. On certain occasions the circus would be turned into a camp and equestrians and infantry would give a realistic exhibition of battle. Moreover, there would be athletic games, running, boxing, wrestling, throwing the discus or the spear and other exercises testing the entire physical system with much thoroughness. On some days the amphitheatre would be filled with huge trees and savage animals would be brought there to be hunted down by criminals, captives or men specially trained for this desperate work and who has taken it as their profession¹⁴¹

Scarcely less popular, but infinitely less civilised, were the gladiatorial contests which was organised under the guidance of the emperors as a regular feature on the amusement calendar. These cruel spectacles, which have no exact counterpart in any other civilisation, were held in arenas, the largest and most famous of which was the Colosseum. The contests had various forms. Different animals were pitted sometimes against one another and sometimes against armed combatants. Occasionally they were even matched against unarmed men and women who had been condemned to death. Another type of contest was the fight to death between gladiators who were generally equipped with different types of weapons but matched on equal terms. Some of the gladiators lived to win fame and fortune in these bloody encounters. It was not uncommon for the life of a defeated gladiator who had fought courageously to be spared at the request of the spectators. It should be pointed out that many Romans, like Seneca, decried these bloodletting contests.¹⁴²

In order to find an arena for these combats the circus was found and the amphitheatre was invented by Curio for the celebration of his father's funeral games. It differed from a theatre in that it permitted the audience to

¹⁴¹ Arthur Gilman, *Op.Cit.*, p.322.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p.323.

see from both sides¹⁴³ It must not be supposed that all these exhibitions were known in early times, for, in reality, they were mostly the fruit of the increased love of pleasure that characterised the close of the period of the Republic and reached their greatest extravagance only under the emperors¹⁴⁴ Social life in Rome was duplicated by the towns in the provinces in proportion to their individual means. They too had their circuses and chariot races, arenas and gladiatorial contests. And as in Rome, their citizens patronised the theatres and baths and in general enjoyed the amenities which an imperial economy provided them with.¹⁴⁵

Although much of Ancient Roman life revolved around work and business, time was spared for leisure. Ranging from swimming to playing ball games and attending theatre performances, athletics and games were enjoyed by ancient Romans. In fact, they were not much different from those activities that exist in the present. The form of leisure in ancient Roman Empire suggests that the people were very sociable. They would often gather at public baths for dinner parties of the wealthy and taverns were the gathering area of the poor. As for the Romans, leisure worked as a vehicle towards an ideology preventing social fragmentation as well as encouraging rural migration to urban centres. It could be argued that theoretically leisure played an important role to improve cohesion among the people of the vast Roman Empire or a tendency to remain united.

Religion occupies a substantial role in people's lives, which was evident from Medieval Arab Islamic world. The relationship between religion and leisure is exemplified by the linkage between Islamic tradition with leisure. Much of leisure in the Arab world may be accounted for by the forces

¹⁴³ T.Walter Wallbank, Alastair M. Taylor, *Op.cit.*, pp.174-175.

¹⁴⁴ Arthur Gilman, *Op.cit.*, p.325.

¹⁴⁵ T.Walter Wallbank, Alastair, *Op.Cit*, p.175.

of tradition and taste in free time activity as these two have evolved across the centuries, since the birth of Islam.

Arab historians had their interest centred too much in the Caliph's affairs and political happenings to leave us an adequate picture of the social and economic life of the common people in those days. But from sporadic, incidental passages in their works, mainly from literary sources and from ordinary life in the conservative Moslem Orient of today, it is not impossible to reconstruct an outline of that picture.¹⁴⁶

Under the caliphate certain indoor games became popular. A sort of club house existed in Makkah under the Umayyads that provided with facilities for playing chess. Al-Rashid is credited with being the first 'Abbasid caliph' to have played and encouraged chess. Chess which was originally an Indian game soon became the favourite indoor pastime of the aristocracy, displacing dice. This caliph is supposed to have included among his presents to Charlemagne a chess-board.¹⁴⁷ Harun al-Rashid (786-809) encouraged learning and arts bringing together Persian, Greek, Arab and Indian influences. Baghdad became a world centre for astronomy, mathematics, geography, medicine, law and philosophy.

Among other games played with a board was the backgammon (nard, trick-track) which was also of Indian origin. Notable in the list of outdoor sports were archery, polo, ball and mallets, fencing, javelin-throwing, horse-racing and above all hunting¹⁴⁸ Among the Caliphs particularly fond of polo was al-Mu'tasim whose Turkish general, al-Afshin once refused to play against him because he did not want to be against the commander of the

¹⁴⁶ Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, St. Martin press, New York , 1996, p. 333.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p.339.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*.

believers even in a game. References are made to a ball game in which a broad piece of wood was used.¹⁴⁹

Al-Masudi has preserved for us the description of a horse race at al-Raqqah in which a courtier of al-Rashid won the first place to the enthusiastic delight of the caliph who witnessed the event. In the *iqd* there are a number of poems which carries description and honour of many prize-winning horses. The custom of Betting, as we learn from this same source, enlivened such races. In the 'Abbasid 'period, as in the earlier one, hunting was the favourite outdoor pastime of caliphs and the princes. Al-Amin was particularly fond of hunting lions and a brother of his encountered death while pursuing wild boars. Both Abu-Muslim al-Khorasani and al-Mu'tasim were fond of hunting cheetahs. The vast number of early Arabic books dealing with hunting, trapping and falconry testify to the keen interest in these sports.

Falconry and hawking with its origin in Persia were introduced in Arabia and it is evident in the Arabic vocabulary relating to these sports. They became particularly favoured in the later period of the caliphate and in that of the Crusades¹⁵⁰ Gazelles or antelopes, hares, partridges, wild geese, ducks and qata, hawks and falcons were employed and assisted in the big games that involved dogs¹⁵¹ Among the later caliphs, al-Mustanjid (1160-1170 CE) organised a number of regular hunting parties¹⁵² Wine drinking was part of the gentlemanly code of behaviour in the Arab world. Only in high political circles, pre-eminently in the court of the caliph himself, could this secular, leisured and essentially aristocratic style of life flourish freely.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.340.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p.341.

¹⁵³ McNeill, William H, *A World History*, Oxford University Press, London, 1979, *passim*.

Children's entertainment in the medieval Islamic world included puppet theatres and seesaws as well as games played with balls, dolls, toy animals and birds. Board games such as chess and backgammon were popular among all sections of the society in addition to card games. Entertainments that involved tests of physical powers were quite popular such as wrestling, races, polo, mock military competitions and other displays of horsemanship-a sort of medieval rodeo¹⁵⁴

Storytelling and reciting poetry were also among the important leisure activities of the Arabs. Among the early Arabs whose literary tradition was almost entirely oral, the pleasure of reciting poetry and storytelling became important. It continued during the entire phase of the Arab rule during the pre-modern period.

Hunting was a favourite pastime of the Abbasid society. Hunting for them was a source of recreation, physical exercise, source of income and food, and above all, a well-accomplished art¹⁵⁵. The Abbasid caliphs in general seem to have been very fond of hunting which was one of their favourite amusements. What made them conspicuous in this field was their skilful use of trained birds and beasts in their hunts. The influx of wealth, the intimate connections with the Persians and their non-expansionist policy perhaps explain the ever-increasing enthusiasm of the Abbasid caliphs in such costly and complicated sports¹⁵⁶

The literature on the subject shows that the art of hunting was in essence practised by two distinct social groups, one being the caliphs and their court dignitaries indulged in hunting as a lively pass time. They used to

¹⁵⁴ James E Lindsay, *Daily Life in the Medieval Islamic World*, Greenwood press, London, 2005, p.225.

¹⁵⁵ Muhammad Manazir Ashan, *Social Life Under the Abbasids (170-289/ 786-902)*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, London, 1973, ProQuest no.10672928, p.231.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.233.

spend large sum of money on this diversion and conducted elaborate hunting expeditions for pleasure almost throughout the year. The poorest social classes formed the second group. They took to hunting as a vocation. These 'professionals' looked upon hunting as a means of earning their livelihood. The methods and technique used by them depended upon their meagre resources¹⁵⁷

The Abbasids practised a number of sports, some of which they inherited from their forefathers while a few others adopted from foreign societies. Among their outdoor sports, horse-racing, archery, running, polo, wrestling etc were significant. Chess, backgammon and the like were popular as indoor games. The literature surviving from this period throws insufficient light on such questions as whether or not the Abbasid period saw the emergence of new sports or even the introduction of new elements into games and pastimes that already existed. Outdoor games were played not only for recreation but also for physical exercise and military training while the indoor games were regarded as a means to sharpen the mental faculties¹⁵⁸ Pigeon-flying (zajl or zijal) in competitions also enjoyed a wide popularity. Pigeons like horses, called forth a considerable literature, most of which seems to have been lost. Being less expensive than horses, pigeons offered to most people a readily available means to satisfy their love of gambling.¹⁵⁹

Unlike pigeon-racing, the game of polo was limited to the higher and more sophisticated elements in the Abbasid society. The Abbasid caliphs, especially Harun - al-Rashid and Mu'tasim were very fond of this pastime.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.236.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p.290.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p.299.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.303.

A game that was quite common at the court of the Abbasid was the Tabtab. And it appears to have been one of the most popular games of the Abbasids. The furusiyya games, The game of tabtab, as it seems, was very much similar to playing the polo. It was played on a horseback with a broad piece of wood or racket (tabtab) and a ball. This game is reported as one of the favourite pastimes of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid, who happened to be the first among the Abbasid caliphs to have played it in a naydan. As reported by Jahiz, the Turkish troops of the Abbasids emerged as the champions of the game of tabta.¹⁶¹

A game called birjas was also widely played during this time. It was more a military exercise than a public game. According to Masudi, the Caliph Harun al-Rashid was the first Caliph to play birjas in the hippodrome. It was a game in which the players, mounted on horses, rode on one after the other, releasing arrows at a target.¹⁶²

Archery (rani al-nushshab) was yet another popular game of this period. Since the bow was a main weapon in a war, the game of archery was always regarded with special favour and esteem. The Abbasids devoted much attention towards the maintenance of archery which assumed sufficient importance to attract the attention of numerous authors who compiled treatises on this subject.¹⁶³ Another popular sport was wrestling. The caliphs and the high dignitaries of the imperial court encouraged this pastime, employed famous wrestlers, watched the matches and even joined personally in feats of wrestling. The Caliph Amin is reported to have been especially fond of this physical exercise. He fought a duel with a lion and got his fingers

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.305.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p.306.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.307.

injured badly in the combat. In order to show his physical strength and powers the Caliph Mutadid fought a duel with a lion and killed it.¹⁶⁴

England emerged as a separate political and cultural entity from the wider scenario of general European cultural and political heritage in the 16th century. It was the Elizabethan period that is often considered to be the golden age in the English cultural history. During this period leisure activities became more varied than in any other previous period of English history and more professional with what might be called the first genuine entertainment industry providing leisure for public with regular events

The Renaissance initiated an emphasis on the freedom of thought and rational view of life in Europe including England. But as a part of Reformation, the English Puritans sought to limit or condemn sport and other forms of entertainment. However, during the Elizabethan era the Anglican Church though attacked several leisure activities on the one side, the liberal attitude of the queen and the general liberal atmosphere that had existed in the country for the growth of a healthy leisure time activities.

Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603 CE) was very popular and the country was at peace within its own borders and became successful in its war against Spain. The bold mariners looked abroad to overseas empire. Best of all, the new national pride and self-confidence found expression in a glorious literature¹⁶⁵ In the time of the Renaissance, people studied the old plays in Greek and Latin and borrowed both plots and methods from them. There grew a new type of drama dealing with history or scenes from everyday life instead of purely religious themes. These plays were presented very crudely in open courtyards without scenery, in ordinary costume and with men or boys taking

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.311.

¹⁶⁵ William L. Langer(ed), *World History* volume 2, Hough Miffin Company, Washington, 1944, p.307.

the women's parts as well as the men's¹⁶⁶. Attending the theatre was an extremely popular pastime during the Elizabethan era. The theatre flourished during the sixteenth century partly because Queen Elizabeth herself was a supporter of the arts. She enjoyed attending theatrical entertainments and that legitimised the activity for the rest of the citizens¹⁶⁷ Leisure activities in the Elizabethan era became more varied than in any previous period of English history and more professional with what might be called the first genuine entertainment industry providing the public with regular events such as theatre performances and animal baiting.

Outdoor activities included tennis, bowls and archery, fencing and team sports like football and hockey which were more violent and less rule-bound than their modern versions. Card games, board games and gambling were all immensely popular as were music and dancing events where people of all classes could show their skills and make new friends. The success of all these activities and the general pleasure and hilarity they produced is evident in the Puritan movement's disapproval of just about all of them.¹⁶⁸ But not everyone was thrilled with the theatre's popularity. There were some who shunned it and others who actively campaigned against it. The Puritans were particularly vocal in their opposition to the English playhouse and numerous treatises and pamphlets were written warning citizens of the evil and immorality that could be found festering in these amusements.¹⁶⁹ The opposition of the Puritans towards the English theatre actually shows the popularity enjoyed by the play houses as centres of leisure.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.307-308.

¹⁶⁷ Asmat Nabi, 'Development of Elizabethan Drama', *IOSR Journal of Humanities and social sciences*, vol.22, Issue 11, November 2017, pp.86-90.

¹⁶⁸ Mark Cartwright, 'Sports, Games & Entertainment in the Elizabethan Era', *World History Encyclopaedia*, April 2021, <https://www.ancient.eu/article/1579/sports-games-entertainment-in-the-elizabethan-era/>

¹⁶⁹ Asmat Nabi, *Op.cit.*

Hunting has always been a popular activity amongst the aristocracy during the Elizabethan era. Both hunting and hawking were pursued by men and women. Tournaments continued to be popular in the Elizabethan era. Tournaments were sometimes a part of festivals as were military drills where bands of pikemen showed off their collective skills. Games played on a lawn were especially loved by the Elizabethans. Lawn tennis required both space and equipment and so was reserved for the rich. Probably the two most common indoor leisure activities were needle work for women and reading for both sexes. Card games were popular and played by all people irrespective of their class. Gambling was popular with all classes especially using cards and dice and also on games like bowls where the betting was highly formalised¹⁷⁰ Music and Dance were the other popular entertainments of the people. Elizabethan songs covered all sorts of subjects from romance to commemorating military victories to chasing foxes from the farm land. There were traditional English country dances and also imports from France and Italy.¹⁷¹

The nineteenth century not only saw the progression of an industrial Revolution that brought about economic, cultural and structural changes but also a “leisure Revolution”. This revolution in the ideology and practice of leisure had two distinct phases, one during the period between the years 1700-1850 and the other after the 1850s. The earlier period reflected the roots of the traditional leisure activities in which work and leisure were integrated in, though on a small scale, communal ways of life that were heavily ritualised and bound by the seasons. According to some historians, preindustrial times had a robust and gregarious culture, whose plebeian festivals (markets, fairs

¹⁷⁰ Mark Cartwright, *Op.Cit.*

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

and so on) were regularly patronised by the gentry as part of a paternalistic ethos¹⁷²

These early ritualised leisure activities continued even after the influx of the people into the early Victorian towns. A Frenchman who witnessed a football game in Derby in 1829 was moved to the extent to remark "if Englishmen call this playing, it would be impossible to say what they would call fighting". Bailey comments that "it became clear enough that such occasions were often now formless and convulsive compensations for the strains of coercive industrial society, rather than the ritualised exercises of a traditional popular hedonism". A clear connection between the modification of leisure brought about by the new environment and work practices of the early Victorian town becomes evident.¹⁷³

The Victorian era (1838-1901 CE) is considered as a turning point in the history of Great Britain. It is also considered as the period of peace and prosperity for the British Empire. During the Victorian age, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the industrial development reached unprecedented heights. Trade and commerce flourished and the benefit was shared by all sections of the population. Improvement in transportation and communication made the life of people more comfortable. The all-round development ensured better living conditions. Working conditions in factories improved and the poor in the towns came to have a better cultural efflorescence. All these had tremendous impact on the life of the people. The Victorian age also marked the birth of modern sports and games.

Books, magazines, games, crafts, hobbies and music occupied Victorian families during the evenings. While traditional celebrations lingered

¹⁷² Stephen Hall Clark, '*Development of Leisure in Britain 1700-1850*', <https://Victorianweb.org/history/leisure3.html>.web, April 2021.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

in the countryside public entertainments multiplied in towns. As working hours were cut short and new holidays created most people had ample free time. Museums, clubs and youth organizations encouraged constructive recreation. Railways played an important role in bringing families to the seashore. Sports were organized, commercialized and professionalized. The leisure patterns of a mass society were taking shape.¹⁷⁴

When Queen Victoria ascended the throne of Britain in 1838 most of the subjects lived in the country side¹⁷⁵. Long before the end of Victoria's reign, however, it became apparent that the new forces were taking a hand in shaping people's lives¹⁷⁶ The 1880s and 1890s were the golden age of the British public house, a place to enjoy a full evening 's entertainment or simply to shelter from the weather and the tangled traffic of the city streets.¹⁷⁷ The relaxing atmosphere of the pub made it a favourite place for people from all walks of life to meet and chat over a drink¹⁷⁸. Drink and the pub remained a major form of working-class entertainment throughout the Victorian period. Other working class leisure activities included bowling, quoiting, glee clubs free and easies (the foundations of the music hall), amateur and professional dramatics, fruit and vegetable shows, flower shows, sweepstake clubs and meetings of traders and friendly societies¹⁷⁹ In an age of social dislocation, the pub also provided the closest thing to home, especially for the single man in lodgings and for the travelling artisan. For them and many others the pub

¹⁷⁴ Sally Mitchell, *Daily Life in Victorian England*, Greenwood publishing group, London, 2009, p.215.

¹⁷⁵ Michael Worth Davidson, *Op.Cit.*, p.278.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.278.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.294.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ Stephen Hall Clark, *Op.Cit.*

remained a centre of warmth, light and sociability. It served, in other words, as a heaven for the overcrowded urban poor.¹⁸⁰

The Victorians made a distinction between sports (which were serious and mainly competitive) and games (which were playful activities shared with women and children). Both were extremely popular.¹⁸¹ The Victorian middle class shaped the idea and practice of leisure as direct responses to its fears of political instability and labour unrest. It was accepted that, leisure, above all had to be rational. The ways in which people could entertain themselves varied depending on whether they were rich or poor, male or female. During the second half of the 18th century radical social change undermined traditional amusements. By the late Victorian era the leisure industry emerged in all the British cities which provided scheduled entertainments which included sporting events, music halls and popular theatres. Women were now allowed in various sporting events. Participants in sports and all sorts of leisure activities increased in due course of time.

Other outdoor pastimes, including skating, archery and lawn tennis gave young women and young men opportunities to exercise, socialise and even to flirt. Bicycling, at the end of the period were both a popular recreation and an affordable and liberating means of transportation. Although some sports (e.g. sailing and foxhunting) were only for the wealthy, men educated at public schools had been taught that sports were essential to health and discipline. Since these men realized that regulated competition could promote public order, they sponsored amateur clubs, village teams, factory tournaments and religious organisations that provided training and competition for boys and men from the working class. Central bodies standardized playing fields and published rules regarding the activities. In the

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Sally Mitchell, *Op.Cit.*, p.219.

second half of the century, the shortened working week combined with inexpensive rail transportation permitted the development of professional spectator sports.¹⁸²

During the Victorian times, interest in sports, both for participants and spectators increased rapidly. Among the most popular activities was the Soccer. Ever since the first Football Association Cup competition in 1872, new clubs had been springing up everywhere. Usually, the clubs began with teams of workmates or friends.¹⁸³ Cricket at that time became more and more popular.¹⁸⁴ From the 1870s majority of the people had more time to devote to leisure due to the reductions in the working hours and the weekly half-holidays¹⁸⁵

Sports at English public schools and universities developed a common code of character such as the team spirit, loyalty, a so-called stiff upper lip unmoved by triumph, defeat, or pain. Men who took part in matches between Oxford and Cambridge earned a blue (the equivalent of a letter in U.S. school sports)¹⁸⁶ Most of the sports that became central to twentieth-century international competition were codified and professionalized in England during the 1800s. The game that the rest of the world calls football was standardized between 1840 and 1860.¹⁸⁷ As the work week grew shorter and railways made it easier for large crowds to attend games, the professional clubs built their own grounds and began to charge admission. With the formation of the Football league in 1885, the structure of football as a

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 220.

¹⁸³ Michael Worth Davison, *Op.Cit.*, p.294.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.295.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

professional spectator sport attained virtually its modern form¹⁸⁸ Rugby football grew out of a disagreement over the Football Association's rules.¹⁸⁹

Rugby, far more violent than soccer remained throughout most of the nineteenth century as an essentially amateur sport for the aristocrats and the gentry. Cricket was played in public schools, universities and by the village and country house teams formed when young men came home for the summer. Local boys were recruited to join the games. Country clubs emerged in the 1860s. They were made up of gentlemen and players, that is, they combined local amateurs with a few working-class men hired for their athletic skill. The pay was originally intended to make up the wages a man lost when he stayed away from work for a match which could last up to seven days¹⁹⁰ Tennis, once an indoor game for royalty was revived by the Victorians as family pastime for people with large lawns.¹⁹¹

Healthy outdoor activities were never completely out of fashion. Country ladies with horses rode them daily and a groom went along if they used public roads¹⁹² At the middle of the century, mixed-sex pastimes such as croquet, archery, tennis and ice skating grew popular. Suburban tennis clubs and subscription skating rinks allowed middle-class women to participate in them. In these protected spaces, young women and young men could safely share public activities without any chance for scandals. Other sports pertaining to women developed along with the reforms in girls' education. As they adapted boys' public schooling to educate girls, teachers recognized that games developed healthy bodies, provided outlets for adolescent energy and promoted teamwork and sportsmanship. Rules were somewhat modified; girls

¹⁸⁸ Sally Mitchell, *Op.Cit.*, p.221.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.222.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, pp.222-223.

played cricket, for example, with a softer ball. By the end of the century, field hockey was the most popular sport for girls' inter-school and intercollegiate competition, although matches were also held in lacrosse, golf, archery, fencing, tennis and netball¹⁹³. Women's greatest athletic passion was aroused in the 1890s by the advent of bicycle.¹⁹⁴ Bicycling blossomed as an enormous fad in the mid-1890s. Bicycle clubs also sprang up¹⁹⁵

At home, middle-class families created their own amusements. Reading aloud was a popular entertainment¹⁹⁶ Many of the musical items sung in drawing rooms were the popular tunes of the day.¹⁹⁷ When guests came everyone joined in party games like charades and danced to music with the help of a hired orchestra if the hosts were very rich or with the help of a piano in less exalted homes. Dancing was a skilled business¹⁹⁸ Away from the business and confusion of the world, sheltered behind solid masonry and amid the solid comfort of their ornate furnishings, middle-class fathers retired each evening to enjoy the fruits of their daily labour.¹⁹⁹ Family vacations were a particularly nineteenth century middle-class invention. The advent of the railways helped in the excursions that lasted one or two weeks to the mountains or to the seashore. It was available to the families of even moderate means. Entrepreneurs built large, ornate hotels adorned with imposing names like Palace, Beau Rivage, Excelsior and attracted middle-class customers by

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.226.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.229.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.229.

¹⁹⁸ Michael Worth Davison, *Op.Cit.*, p.295.

¹⁹⁹ Edward Mcnall et.al., *Op.Cit.*, p. 977.

offering them on a grand scale exactly the same sort of comfortable and sheltered existence they enjoyed at home.²⁰⁰

As rail travel simplified journey to coastal resorts, summertime trips to the seashore became popular.²⁰¹ Seaside towns in Lancashire and Yorkshire were visited by factory workers in the weekends or a day specialised for it. Blackpool was the most popular workers' resort. Piers that extended out into the sea were constructed in the 1850s and they provided not only a place for pleasure boats to land but also a promenade and space for amusements, games, rides, fortune tellers, kiosks for food and drink, shops selling inexpensive souvenir and slightly risqué postcards.²⁰²

After the 1850s the Victorian middle class increasingly shaped the idea and practice of leisure as direct responses to its fears of political instability in the form of Chartism and labour unrest and appealing problems of public health. Victorian middle-class opinions travelled both upwards and downwards in the social scale. Coupled with the ethos of productivity and a new moral role of respectability and self-justification, the powerful middle class sought to reform classes above and below it in the social and economic scale while formulating the new leisure activities of their own. Leisure for this class had to be not only respectable but also productive, good both for the soul and for the country as a whole²⁰³.

Money was another important factor in leisure and so middle class used its business and organisational skills in great effect to establish clubs. Pooling together members' resources enabled the purchase of grounds and buildings for leisure activities. The golf, cricket, rugby and tennis clubs

²⁰⁰ Michael Worth Davison, *Op.Cit.*, p.295.

²⁰¹ Edward Mcnall, *Op.Cit.*, p.977.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p.980.

²⁰³ Sally Mitchell, *Op.cit.*, p.218.

exemplify this trend. Public liability legislation further encouraged these developments.²⁰⁴

Technology changed the nature of leisure and recreation in Victorian Britain. Although the railway introduced different classes for its passengers on the other hand it contributed to the development of a new leisure culture in the form of excursion. Work holidays also added to the establishment of the sea side resorts. New technology like the steam press caused an increase in the consumption of pulp fiction mainly purchased by the working classes and cheap newspapers further advanced leisure publicity. Similarly, the invention of the bicycle not only enabled excursions and cheap modes of transport but also had a great effect upon women. The use of bicycle as an accepted leisure practice freed many women from restrictive clothing. The bicycle also led to calls for the improvement and building of better roads which in turn affected the Victorian town.²⁰⁵

Commercialisation of leisure in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century became an increasingly influential factor. The latter nineteenth century commercialisation and mass production produced many familiar commodities such as the post-card, fish and chips, ice-cream, cigarettes, mineral water and the teacup. The Victorian town was the mould which contained all these elements both reshaping leisure and being reshaped by this process of leisure revolution.²⁰⁶

The study made above regarding the evolution of leisure in different historical and geographical contexts, ascertain the fact that leisure is not only universal but also as old as humanity. From the regional variations it could be well established that there remains an uninterrupted continuation of leisure time activities throughout the ages of history. It can be concluded that under

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁵ Stephen Hall Clark, *Op.Cit.*

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

ordinary circumstances everyone irrespective of where they are, experiences some sort of leisure, even if they are known by different names.

It has to be noted that the time available for various leisure activities varies from one society to the other. The people of the hunter-gatherer age tend to have significantly more leisure time than their counter parts in the later ages. Time spent for livelihood during the pre-historic period was less than that of the people in the historic period, as by then society was becoming more complex. Along with the emergence of new institutions in the society like family, community etc leisure activities became diversified and separated clearly from the concept of work. Thus, in the process of the growth of civilisations leisure activities began to be separated from work, in contrast to the earlier concept of non-separation of leisure from work.

Leisure became diversified along with the limitation and separation of leisure time activities according to the newly formed hierarchical structure of the society. The difference between the haves and have-nots in the society began to be reflected in the so-called civilised societies throughout the world. When the wealth of the society began to be amassed within the hands of a minority as a result of the growth of the concept of private property, the new ruling class and their associates started exploiting the labour of the majority, resulting in a sharp distinction. This in turn led to the formation of class-based societies. The leisure activities also began to be changed along with this formation of class-based societies.

In the course of time historic societies became more complex with divisions like ruling class, soldiers, craftsmen, peasants and slaves. While the ruling class and the other upper classes began to enjoy leisure in the major part of their daily life, the time of leisure enjoyed by the lower classes became very limited. The upper strata even dictated the time period and activities of leisure to be enjoyed by the lower strata. The dominant classes had more time for leisure and they began to experiment new items for their leisure time activities. These experiments went up to the extent of forcible mortal combats

between the selected ones from the oppressed classes like the gladiatorial fights in the Roman society, simply for the enjoyment of the upper classes.

The leisure activities followed by women are found to be directly proportional to the freedom enjoyed by them in the society. It could be seen that the equality enjoyed by them at all level with men in the pre historic societies gradually decreased in the historic period and so the leisure time activities also. With the exception of freedom enjoyed by the women in the ancient Athenian society of Greece, it can be argued that the general deprivation of the status of women in all other ancient societies was a common factor. Women did not enjoy the leisurely pursuits of men in earlier societies as they were in general pushed back to the little space of their residences.

During the entire Middle Ages, the members of the upper classes and the nobility enjoyed a leisure life while the lower classes had little time for leisure as they were always at the mercy of their lords. In medieval Europe every aspect of life of the labouring class was under the surveillance of the church and their leisure activities were mostly related to religious events. By around 16th century things began to change and that is evident from the leisure activities of the Elizabethan England.

Leisure activities in Elizabethan era became more varied and more professional providing the public with regular events. Naturally the rich had more time for leisure. The lower classes had very little time to spare for their own pursuits beyond making ends meet. The public entertainments as theatre were cheap enough for the commons to enjoy at least once in a while. As the country with the most advanced market economy and largest urban population, England became a leader in developing consumer leisure from the 16th to the 18th centuries.

In the early stages of industrialization, the time that the workers could spare was indeed scant. Industrial revolution changed level of leisure from local to national as well as leisure activities began to be defined by class than

by community. Some scholars argue that the 19th century not only saw the progression of an industrial revolution that brought about economic, cultural and structural changes but also paved way for a 'leisure revolution'. It is further argued that the leisure activities of today are the manifestations of activities that existed in the 19th century. The new labour process and the influx of people into the Victorian towns together with the intensity of working hours provided a new configuration to the leisure activities.

The new industrial process curtailed traditional agrarian based leisure. As the towns in the Victorian age became more crowded and the workers getting limited free time, the duration of leisure activities came down. The newly developed production owning bourgeoisie class became increasingly powerful and their attitude and values played a major influential role in the progression of leisure.

From the above enquiry into the evolution of leisure in different societies and periods it could be noted that the theory of practice of leisure changes according to the changes in modes of life of humans. It is generally related with the possibility of improved leisure functioning, quality of life, access to leisure opportunities and right to leisure. The parameters of leisure changes through the ages, but still an underlying continuity of experiencing leisure is visible from the earliest to the modern period. The evolution of theory also demonstrates how power relations influence leisure choices. Leisure is generally connected with pleasure, fun and enjoyment.

From this broad frame work, the present enquiry is extended to leisure in Colonial Malabar and how the colonial penetration had changed the leisure and activities in the daily lives of the native people. During the colonial period the British brought some characteristic changes in traditional form of Malabar leisure. But before going into the enquiry of the changes that were effected by colonial intrusion in the leisure activities of the Kerala society, it is necessary to have a general background of the leisure activities by the people of Malabar/Kerala in the pre-colonial/pre-modern Kerala

Chapter Three

LEISURE IN PRE-MODERN KERALA

Although the concept of recreation and leisure pursuits have a different connotation altogether in the modern times, it is always applicable to all forms of arts and entertainments practiced by people of various societies crossing the boundaries of established spacio-temporal dimensions. It is in this general assumption that the term 'Leisure' is being used in this thesis to characterize the leisure time experiences of the pre-modern Kerala society.

The leisure time experiences of the pre-modern or of the modern Kerala society have to be understood only as a continuation of the experiences of the past. By using the method of constructive reasoning from the known to the unknown one can assume that many of the modern day leisure activities have their origin in the ancient cultural past. The history of leisure in Kerala society is interconnected with people, places, events and social forces showing the role of religion, customs and values of culture. Archaeological or epigraphical evidences of ancient Kerala do not directly throw light upon the leisure activities of ancient Kerala society. In fact we have sporadic references to leisure activities of the ancient Kerala society from the literary evidences like Tamil anthologies.

The history of the period between the decline of the early Cheras probably towards the 5th century CE and the formation of the later Chera state in the 9th century CE, still remains in obscurity, predominantly due to the lack of concrete evidences. Same is the case of leisure activities of the period. The polity of south India including Kerala during this period has been analytically characterised by scholars as a combination of several unevenly evolved and kinship based redistributive economies of chiefdoms and these polities were

structured by the domination of agro-pastoral means of subsistence and predatory politics.¹

Although, archaeological or literary evidences regarding the leisure activities of the period could not have been procured so far, it could be logically concluded that there existed a continuum of leisure activities. This is evident from the various forms of leisure activities in the ensuing early medieval period of second Cheras or later Cheras.

The earliest known social formation of Kerala, as in the Tamil region, dates back to the times of ancient heroic Tamil anthologies generally assumed to have belonged to 300 BC to AD 300, when the deep south as a whole remained a single culture zone called Tamilakam.²

Early historical society of classical Tamilakam is generally known as Sangam period. The history of Sangam period is reconstructed mainly from the early Tamil anthologies popularly known as Sangam literature and only recently it has been corroborated by archaeological evidences. However, one has to depend mainly upon the references found in Sangam to study their cultural aspects. Sangam age had its roots in the iron age which covered the period of more than 600 years. However the society that existed during the period could not be considered as a well organised state society. From the available evidences and from the different source materials, it could be argued that the early stages of the Sangam period were tribal in nature and so were the leisure activities of the early period which was also tribal in nature

Sangam literature encompasses several forms of entertainments or art forms. The Panars and Viralikal were not just singers but they actually linked

¹ See, Rajan Gurukkal, Classical Indo-Roman Trade; Amisnomer in Political Economy, economic and Political Weekly, vol-48, issue, Bombay, June 2013, pp26-27

² Rajan Gurukkal, *Social Formation of Early South India*, Oxford, 2010, New Delhi, 2010, p. 306.

different localities. Sangam works also had references to dance forms like Kuravaikoothu, Thunagaikoothu, Oalval Amala etc. Koothu of the Sangam period was a form of entertainment performed by certain sections of the society like Vedar, Idayar, Uzharvar etc. on various occasions like birth, death, marriage, war and the like. Both men and women participated in Koothu. Apart from Panar, Paryar, Pulluvar and Kuravar also performed both dance and music. Their pioneering efforts led to the creation of Sangam literature. An important characteristic feature of the Sangam art forms was that they were not performed by a single artist. They were rather performed only by a group of singers or dancers³ Many scholars have mentioned about several such popular art forms, Kooravakoothu, Kaikottikali and Koorthiyattam, to name a few.

War and women were the universal preoccupation of the leisured classes, besides wine and song and dance. No occasion was lost for holding a feast and the poets were more eloquent to which they were so often invited. The flesh of animals cooked whole, such as pork, appam (pudding) soaked in milk, the flesh of tortoises and particular kinds of fish are mentioned as delicacies served at such feasts⁴ Easily the most cultured amusements open to the upper classes in those days were poetry, music(particularly singing), and dancing, which often went together. The poets were men and women drawn from all classes of society: They composed verses to suit the immediate occasion, and were often rewarded generously for their exertions. Their poems, especially by the shorter ones, are full of colour and true to life⁵

³ K.N.Ganesh, *Keralathinte Innalekal (Mal.)*, Department of Cultural Publications, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1997, pp. 320-21.

⁴ K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *The Illustrated History of South India*, Oxford, New Delhi, 2009, p. 515.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 52.

The Sangam people gave importance to entertainment to spend their spare and leisure times. Music, dance, drama, bull fighting, goat-fighting etc. were some of the games and entertainments referred to in the texts. Bull-fighting was a popular heroic game. Mostly young men participated in the game and even sacrificed their lives. Wrestling was another important game in the village areas and in sea coasts. It was conducted among the young.

Ammanai, playing with ball, singing, dancing, talking with birds and taking bath with the agents were some of the entertainments of the women. Children played games, young children played kiludili, made up of palm leaves. Young boys and girls stood on elevated places and counted the carts going on the roads. The paravada children in the sea-coast area watched and counted the boats moving on the sea. Small children played with their wooden dolls. The people in the remote villages indulged both in cultural and vulgar games.

The Akam literature of the Sangam age gave ample reference to the courtesans as a separate class of persons. They were called parattaiyar or kanigaiyar. The courts were also enlivened by roving bands of musicians followed by women who danced to the accompaniment of their music, the panar and viraliyar who moved about the country in companies carrying with them all sorts of quaint instruments. They seem to have been the representation of primitive tribal groups who preserved the folk songs and dances of an earlier age⁶ The art of music and dancing were highly developed and popular. Musical instruments of various types are described and included many kinds of yal (a stringed instrument like the lute) and varieties of drums⁷.

Music, sports and dancing provided entertainment to the upper classes and they were systematically cultivated. Dancing was a common past time of

⁶ *Ibid*, p. 53.

⁷ *Ibid*.

the people of the Sangam age and it was indulged in, on all occasions of rejoicing. Mixed dances in which both men and women participated were not rare. Musical instruments like flute, drum, pipe etc, were known .Hunting, wrestling and boxing were popular pastimes. Dice play was a popular pastime of old men. Vattu, a kind of ball, was a favourite game of the children. Cock fighting was a common amusement. Festivals were common. Kamavel, a festival in honour of kama, the God of Love, was celebrated in summer.⁸

Dance, Drama and Music were the three major art forms developed with the patronage of the kings⁹ During the Sangam period dance developed into a complete and complex dance form. Various forms of dance had existed during the Sangam period. There were dances for the kings and common people, there were Tamil and Aryan dance forms. Dances were also classified according to regional basis¹⁰. Apart from dance, the art form called music also reached its zenith. Music was mainly patronised by ganika women. Music was essential for their profession, which was dance.¹¹ Various musical forms are found referred to in the Sangam texts, Athiyayau, Odakuzhal, Thanamai (equal to mridangam), Padalai, Mannmuzhai, Cheruparai etc .These musical instruments were used by Panar.¹² The place where drama was performed was known as Arangu¹³

Different types of entertainments and arts festivals existed during the Sangam age. Music and literature were also very much developed. Different types of musical instruments like yazhai, mizhavu, kuzhal etc. were referred

⁸ A.Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2012, p. 79.

⁹ N.Subrahmanan, *The administration and Social Life of The Sangam Tamils*, DC books, Kottayam, 2003, p. 314.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 316.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 319.

¹² *Ibid*.

¹³ *Ibid*., p.31.

to in sangam works. According to Pathittupattu, the pana women were considered to be the symbol of prosperity of Chera Kingdom.¹⁴

Different types of folk dances added colour to the life. According to Pattipattu, it was a common sight to see women dancing in the streets and getting rewards from the Chera rulers and the wealthy people. Kaviyattam was an entertainment of Koothar. According to Purananuru Koothar used to entertain in different attires. Both men and women collectively preferred these dance forms. Thungahai Koothu was performed to celebrate the victory. Besides these there were also dance forms like vallikoothu and alliyam.¹⁵ According to Nattinai, the people also celebrated the festival of karthika. Purananuru makes references to the karthika lights. Maduraikanchi mentions the celebration of Thiruvonam. There is a reference in Paripadal about a festival called Margalineeradal.¹⁶

These forms of art and entertainment, tribal in nature, which had been quite popular among the masses of earlier society could be considered as the rudimentary form of later day art forms of the state-oriented society. It could also be argued that these earlier forms of art with a popular base must have been transformed into more sophisticated forms later, limited to certain elite sections of the state-oriented society

Even though the incidents and situations described by the poets may not be historical, or may be partly historical and partly imaginary, the authenticity of the practice cannot easily be questioned, since it is mentioned

¹⁴ P.K.Gopalakrishnan, *Keralathinte Samskarika Charithram*, The State Institute of Languages, Trivandrum, 2008, p. 179.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 180.

¹⁶ *Ibid*.

by several poets hailing from different places and celebrating a variety of themes¹⁷.

The leisure activities were not institutionalised in the early stages of Sangam period. Transformation was taking place throughout the Sangam period from tribal settings to state oriented society which could be depicted from the information from the process of formation of Kiliar to Velir and then to Ventar or the Muventar.

Towards the later stages of the Sangam period leisure activities began to be separated from among different sections of the society which is manifested in the war songs. By this time the dominant section or the ruling class began to control certain leisure activities. From then on information from the text generally threw light upon the leisure activities of the dominant sections.

One has to note that the caste system based upon Vedic brahmana tradition has not made its intrusion to the early Sangam society and leisure activities were not limited to caste ridden mechanism. But still social classes had its own role in making the leisure activities restricted to separate sections. The people practising subsistence economy usually used the free time for leisure either individually or socially with its roots in folk heritage. Along with the process of formation of loosely knit state system of the Muventar leisure activities also underwent relative changes.

The continuation of this transformation from tribal society to state oriented could be understood along with the transformation that took place in the leisure activities also. The historical period of Kerala society moving from ancient to early medieval witnessed the stages in the leisure activities from the

¹⁷ M.G.S.Narayanan, *The Role of Peasants in the Early History of Tamilakam in South India, Social Scientist*, Vol 16, No 9, September 1988, p. 19.

earlier system to caste-based leisure activities. By the beginning of the early medieval period society was divided into separate castes which paved the way for the growth of social inequalities among the people and it resulted in the division of leisure time activities also. From here onwards one could see references of leisure activities only related to dominant sections and the leisure activities of the majority being discarded.

However parallel to the main stream leisure activities one could make inference of oral tradition of the contemporary period about what could be characterised as 'labour leisure'. The term labour leisure is used here to denote the leisure activities of the labouring class which was not in an organised form when compared to that of the leisure activities of the dominant class. Labour leisure could be characterised as spontaneous as it came in the odd hours of the day after a daylong hardwork. Apart from this they had their own social gatherings of leisure activities generally related to festivals and important occasions of their social life.

Inscriptions and contemporary literary texts which are the major sources for the study of the Second Chera reign gives us an insight into its social life. There are now a total of 150 inscriptions in stone and copper belonging to this period. The Chera inscriptions mainly focused on the management and administration of temple and temple lands. They also focus on issues like the power structure of contemporary period, the employees who were related to the temple, land structure, social groups etc. temple acted as the agent for developing, consolidating, transmitting and conserving the legacy of culture.¹⁸

Art forms / entertainment which developed around the temple in the form of dance /drama can be identified as pre-modern leisure. In the temples,

¹⁸ Kesavan Veluthat, *The Early Medieval South India*, Oxford University Press, London, 2009, pp. 63-64.

dance and music were used to please gods and this caused the emergence of a group of dancers and musicians. References to them are found in the contemporary Chera inscriptions. The art forms flourished in Kerala during the period of the Chera Perumal's and were confined mainly to the upper strata of the society. Only a minority in the society attained progress in art, culture and philosophy; and they created poets, scholars and philosophers¹⁹

Art and labour are inextricably linked to each other. According to Marx, labour is the means for the transformation of nature's benefits to man and therefore it becomes the common factor in every form of social structure. Art is as old as human society because art objects are, in reality, natural products that get transmuted through human labour²⁰. Ernest Fischer describes art as an occupation and uniquely human²¹. George Thomson states that art has its genesis in the rhythmic body movements that accompany collective labour²²

'The drummers, dancers and musicians formed a large group of temple employees and were drawn from non-brahmana people. The drummers were called Uvaccakal in contemporary records. Kottikal was another term frequently used for referring to them. The temple dancing maid or courtesan is referred to in the records as Nanna, Tevaticci and Kuttaci. The earliest available epigraphic mention of a nanna in Kerala is found in the Cokkur trends where a record of the fifteenth year (AD 898) of Kota Ravi²³.

¹⁹ E.M.S. Namboodiripad, *Kerala Charitram Marxist Vikshanathil*, Chintha Publishers, Trivandrum, 1990, p. 39.

²⁰ A.K.Nambiar, Surviving Folk Arts and the Social analysis of their Origin and development, in P.J.Cheriyar(ed.), *Essays on the Cultural Formation of Kerala*, Kerala State Gazetteers Department, Trivandrum, 1999, p. 35.

²¹ *Ibid*

²² *Ibid*.

²³ Rajan Gurukkal, *Op.Cit.*, p.54.

The role of Nanna as a temple maid was essentially to attract the rich to the temple. The nanna performs the recreational function for the temple society and it was open to all who entered the temple. The nanna as a courtesan was a source of pleasure for big merchants and landlords in a more restricted sense and therefore in a concealed sphere. The dancing girls as a libidinal gratification could have attracted the landed aristocracy as well as the moneyed trading class and indirectly caused the flow of wealth from them to the temple²⁴. The consolidation of temple culture further strengthened the position of the temple dancers²⁵

A class of temple dancers and musicians must have come into existence along with the temples themselves. They were unknown to the early Greek writers in India or to Kautalya though the latter gives a detailed account of a category of public women called Ganika. The temple dancers did not figure in Jataka tales or the journals of Chinese travellers in ancient India. Therefore, it is clear that they were not very common till seventh century. References to them are found in Matsyapurana, 10th chapter and Padma Purana, 23rd chapter, probably composed in the Gupta age²⁶.

Hereditary dancing girls associated with religious centres had not been mentioned earlier but they came to the forefront in Cilappatikaram and Manimekalai. Temple dancers figure prominently in the life and literature of the Saiva and Vaisnava saints of the Bhakti movement also. The Saivite Nayanar, Sundara Murti, who was a friend of Ceraman Perumal Nayanar, had a dancing girl of Tiruvalur temple as his wife. Among the Vaishnava Alvars, we find a woman named Andal also. This lady considered herself to be the

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.55-56.

²⁵ P. Soman, *Devadasikalum Sahithya Charithravum*, The State Institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2009, p.29.

²⁶ M.G.S.Naryanan, *Perumals of Kerala*, Cosmo Books, Thrissur, 2103, p 350

bride of Vishnu in the manner of the Devadasis themselves²⁷ The erotic element found its fullest expression in the poems of the woman-saint Kodai, who came to be known as Andal (literally, 'one who rules'). Andal's poems are laced with the pangs of separation and longing for union with her lord²⁸

At any rate the rise of the Devadasi system in South India may be dated to a period not later than the eighth century AD²⁹ The terms 'Tevaticci' and 'Nangacci' are found in Cera inscriptions. The first term signifies a 'servant at the feet of the Lord' and the second simply denotes a dancing girl though the context clarifies that she was a dancing girl of the temple³⁰. Many inscriptions and chapters of the medieval South commemorating donations to temples refer specially to 'devadasis'³¹ When temples developed, the practice of presenting women as temple dancers also developed. Thus, the Kuttacikal got transformed into Tevaticcikal³²

This indicates the degeneration which affected Mohiniyattam in the later days. Mohiniyattam is an institution much akin to the Dasyattam of the east coast. A leader obtains the services of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them in the obscene technicalities of the profession. This leader is called the Nettuvan. He takes these girls from one house to another and gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance and thus they make a living. It is performed usually at night, when the girls are robed in the finest attire and the dance begins, led of course, by the Netuvan. All sorts of obscene practices are resorted to during the process. This institution is an extremely abominable one. The females who are thus rented out are looked

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ . Upinder Singh, *Op.Cit.*, p.618.

²⁹ K.K.Pillai, *The Suchindram Temple*, Madras, 1953, p.279.

³⁰ M.G.S.Narayan, *Op.Cit.*, p.351

³¹ A.L.Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, Picador, London, 2004, p.187.

³² K.N.Ganesh, *Op.Cit.*, p.325.

upon in civilised circles with the utmost contempt and it may be said that they exist as separate isolated class with little or no community of social interest with other classes. It proves to our satisfaction that the institution is dying a silent and natural death gradually³³

In ancient Kerala, although women were not employed in Government services, a large proportion of the employment in temples was reserved for them. Among these, the post of Devadasi was the most important, to which well-born and highly educated ladies, proficient in the arts, were appointed. Inscriptions mention these Devadasis under various names, such as Tevaradiyal, Tevadiyal, and Adigal³⁴ The Devadasis of Kerala danced only in the temples. The sculptures and paintings of many temples still demonstrate the proficiency of the Devadasis in dance. In Kerala, their main occupation was music, dance and plays³⁵

There were also male actors in the temple known as Cakkai or Cakyar. Their descendants continue to perform Koothu (Mono-act and storytelling) and Koodiyattam (acting and dancing together), forming a sub-caste of hereditary professional actors in Kerala. According to the tradition followed by the families of Cakyars, King Kulasekhara, the dramatist, along with his friend Tolan, revived the Sanskrit theatre in Kerala. The two plays of Kulasekhara- Tapatisamvaranam and Subhadra Dhananjayam are included in the Cakar's repertoire. The organisers of Koodiyattam in the ninth century were inspired by the Pallava example and it is evident from the popularity of Mattavilasa Prahasana and Bhagavadajjuka among the Chakiyars of Kerala³⁶ Among the art forms of Kerala, the most ancient art forms of Chakiyars are

³³ T.K.Gopal Panikkar, *Malabar and its Folk*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 185-186.

³⁴ Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, Trivandrum, 1970, p. 278.

³⁵ *Ibid*, pp.282-283.

³⁶ M.G.S.Narayanan, *Op.Cit*,p 352

Koothu and Koodiyattam. They actually prepared the background for the emergence of later art forms like Kathakali and Ottam Thullal. Both Koothu and Kutiyattam had the base of science and literature³⁷

In course of time, Koothu developed into a temple art form and it became a medium for the Brahmins to present their kavya-dramas³⁸ and it was performed only in the temples³⁹ There are references to three types of Koothu, Nangiarkoothu, Prabandham and Kutiyattam. It seems that Nangiarkoothu, performed by women, was the earliest form of Koothu performed in the temple. Prabandham Koothu later came to be known as Chakiyar Koothu. During the early stage, Koothu was performed both by men and women. But during the later stage it came to the hands of the Chakiyar alone and Nangiyar was reduced to a mere singer in Koothu. Koodiyattam is a sort of koothu performed in groups Koothu is performed by Chakiyar alone while Koodiyattam is dance-drama performed in groups⁴⁰ Different views exist regarding the origin of Koodiyattam. Some scholars argue that it had emerged at least 2000 years ago⁴¹

The Koothu or Chakiyar Koothu to be more precise, is an institution that dates back to times immemorial. It is an exclusive art form performed by Chakkaiyars, inside buildings attached to temples and specially set apart for important utsavams or/and other occasions. The actor dresses up in a quaint style with Brummagem bracelets on the forearms and feet. Around his waist he ties a peculiar cloth with a ridiculous profusion of folds all round and reaching barely to the knee. He wears a head-dress also; and with ashes and

³⁷ Ambalappuzha Ramavarma, *Keralathile Pracheenakalakaal*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society Ltd., Kottayam, 2014, p. 12.

³⁸ K.N.Ganesh, *Op. Cit.*, p. 321.

³⁹ K.P. Narayana Pisharoti, *Kalalokam*, Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Thrissur, 2002, p. 41.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Saidharan Clari, *Keraleeya Kalakal*, Olive Publications, Kozhikode, 2007, p. 13.

sandal smeared all over the body comes to perform his Koothu Chakkiya women are known as Nangyars, one of whom is always present by the side of the Chakkiyar when engaged in his performance. The women of Nambiar families were known as Nangiyars. The duties of the Nangiyars include playing the female roles in Koothu, performing the Nangiya Koothu, reciting the sloka for the stage performance, playing music for the stage performance etc. They were treated as ambalavasis and their income mainly comes from the temples⁴²

The Chakkiya recites certain Puranic slokas and makes funny comments on them. He is of course remunerated by the temple authorities⁴³ The influence of local art forms of Kerala on Koodiyattam is quite significant. There were 18 major Chakkiyar families in Kerala⁴⁴

The consolidation of temple society, expansion of agriculture under the Brahmins and the triumph of Brahmin hegemony were explained as the factors which caused Koothu to transform into a male-centred art form. Any art form which had been performed by both the sexes, when it comes to a patriarchal society, quite naturally gets limited to the male performers over the course of time, seemingly a universal isolation of women. Brahmins succeeded in detaching koothu from the lives of the common people and ascribed it to the elite class which was closely related to temples. The theme of Koothu was often based on the dramas of Bhasa, Mahendra Varma's Mattavilasa Prahasana, Bhagavadajjuka, Tapatisamvaranam, Subhadra Dhananjayam etc. which hardly had any connection with Kerala. Gradually, Brahmins added a number of sub stories related to the contemporary events to

⁴² Nirmala Panickar, *Nangyar Koothu Charithravum Attaprakaarvum*, Mattathil Press, Changanssery, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, p. 25.

⁴³ T.K.Gopala Panickar, *Op.Cit.*, pp.184-185.

⁴⁴ R.Sreekumar, *Koodiyattom*, The State Institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013, p. 16-18.

the existing classical pattern so as to enable the elitisation of these art forms. In short, with the consolidation of Brahmin supremacy, Koothu was popularized as a leisure form monopolised by the Brahmins who had actually controlled and administered temple and temple properties⁴⁵

For every artistic performance, there should be a performer on one side and the spectators on the other. Though the performance had been performed in the name of a temple deity, it used to be performed only in front of a group of spectators who belonged to the upper strata of the society. Unlike the lower class, these privileged groups obviously had enough of leisure as they had not been involved in the production process directly. Their leisure was a crucial factor in the evolution of various temple-related art forms.

Theatre is an extremely political and pre-eminently social form of art as it lets the human community experience its own identity directly and reaffirms its social situations. Just as in any ritual, theatre not only provides its congregation with a collective experience on a higher spiritual level, but also teaches them the rules and code of conduct for social co-existence in highly practical terms. All dramas are therefore political events as they either reassure or undermine the code of conduct of any given society⁴⁶

Arguably, these types of leisure activities had two aspects which combined to usher the social and cultural activities of earlier society. One is the satisfaction of the elite spectators, while the other is the ritualistic aspect related to the temples and temple deities.

Instrumental music formed an integral part of the temple service. There were drummers known as Kottikal or Uvaccar in temples whose duty was to

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p.326.

⁴⁶ Martin Esselin, *Anatomy of Drama*, University of California, 1977, *Preface*.

sound the drum at the time of worship everyday⁴⁷ Be it folk, sacred, secular or the traditional theatrical, the most interesting feature of the history of music in Kerala, is its sparkling variety, each with an exhilarating charm and melody of its own⁴⁸

The Kantarpikar (instrumental musicians) have been mentioned along with Nangaimar (dancing girls) in a record of Nedupuram Tali⁴⁹ The Kottikal or Uvaccakal and their Virutti have been mentioned in a record of Trikkadittanam⁵⁰ There was an arrangement for five drummers to perform at Niratupalli every day in Tiruvalla temple⁵¹ Six drummers performed on Tiruvonam in the same place. A total of 33 drummers and pipers performed in that temple⁵² It is stated that Kantan Kumaran alias Maluvakkon, the governor of Kilmalainatu, instituted a Panchamasabdam in that temple with nine persons; one timilai, one cekandi, one pair of kaittalām, and two kalams to perform at Sribali three times a day⁵³ There was an arrangement for Panchamasabdam to be sounded at Nirattupalli in Tirunelli temple⁵⁴. Manalmanrattu Yakkan Srikantan, the governor of Nanrulainatu, instituted Pancamasabdam at Trikkadittanam temple.⁵⁵

Various instrumental musical forms had existed in Kerala from the time of establishment of temples, ever since the time of second Chera period.

⁴⁷ M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op.Cit*,p 352

⁴⁸ Leela Omchery, in *Music of Kerala Forms and Instruments in Essays on the Cultural Formation of Kerala*, P.J.Cherian, *Essays on the Cultural Formation of Kerala*, Kerala State Gazetteer, Trivandrum, 1999, p. 105.

⁴⁹ M.G.S.Narayanan, *ibid*.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*.

⁵¹ *Ibid*.

⁵² *Ibid*.

⁵³ *Ibid*.

⁵⁴ Ramachandran Puthussery, *Kerala Charithrathinte Adisthana Rekhakal*, , The state Institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2021, pp 75-77

⁵⁵ *Ibid*., pp.63-68.

Most of them had been developed in temple art, as a part of rituals and ceremonies. Panchyavadyam, Thayambaka and Chenda Melam are the three major instrumental musical forms that had developed in Kerala in association with temples. The term Panchyavadyam is used to refer to the musical performance in which five instruments such as Timila, Madalam, Edakka, Kombu and Elathalam are used. Besides these, conch is used at the beginning or at times in between⁵⁶ Amongst all the instruments used in Panchyavadyam, only Elathalam is used along with Chenda in Thayambaka. Panchyavadyam is performed by a group of artists while Thayambaka is a solo performance⁵⁷ Chenda Melam which would often last for three to four hours is performed by many artists according to certain rules and regulations⁵⁸

Many of the art forms which later came to be known as temple arts had been developed as a part of rituals. They also were regarded as a source of entertainment for those who were permitted to enter the temple premises⁵⁹

During the early medieval period, the people who had controlled the production process had enough time for leisurely activities. Being a period of temple-centred society, the elite section utilised the ritual rites connected with the temple as a means of entertainment. They had indeed been observed as ritualistic and at the same time they had also been an opportunity to conduct leisurely activities. So, the amusement which was performed at the temple premises heightened the position of elite sections and the necessity of leisure activities was recognised and eventually became a part of the social scenario.

⁵⁶ A.S.N.Nambisan, *Thalangal Thalavadyangal*, Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Thrissur, 2005, p. 83.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p.127.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.148.

⁵⁹ Manoj Kuroor, *Keralathile Thalangalum Kalakalum*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-Operative Society Ltd., Kottayam, 2014, p. 13.

Long story short, rituals and leisurely activities together made an important aspect of social and cultural life of early medieval Kerala society.

There is a reference to dicing in Parthavipuram Copper plates related to Ay ruler Karunanthadakkkan, dated back to 866 AD. There had been certain rules and regulations in the Salais, temple centred educational institutions, to be followed by Chatter or *Chattirar*, *the students of Salais*. *According to these Copper plates, Chatirar should not be allowed to dice in the temple premises*⁶⁰ *Chattiran means a group among the Brahmins as it is indicated in Kollam inscription*⁶¹ *and the term was derived from a Sanskrit word Sasthan. Dicing is similar to board games of today such as ludo, which involved a combination of chance and skill*⁶²

By the third decade of the 12th century, the Second Chera dynasty disappeared from the scene'. The sudden disappearance of the central authority in the Chera kingdom demands an explanation but the circumstances under which it occurred are far from clear in the present state of our knowledge. The continuous defensive wars carried on for about half a century from about 1070 AD against the mighty Chola empire, far superior to the Chera kingdom in material resources. They must have unleashed new social forces.. The central treasury must have been depleted, the revenue and tribute for years must have remained uncollected, and all the routine religious and administrative work must have suffered from neglect by the central government for a long time⁶³

⁶⁰ Puthussery Ramachandran, *Op.Cit.*, p.123.

⁶¹ C.K..Namboothiri, *Chathiramgam*, Kerala Sahithya Akademi, Thrissur, 2013, pp. 42-43.

⁶² A.L.Basham, *Op.Cit.*, p.210.

⁶³ M.G.S.Narayanan, *Op.Cit*, p.133

Along with the decline of the Second Chera dynasty / decline of Kodungallur, the rise of Naduvazhi Swaropams originated in various parts of Kerala after the 12th century. This was due to the bifurcation of Kerala into different cultural/linguistic zones, caused by the regionalisation or localisation of agriculture. The post Chera period was also marked by the composition of literary works like Unniyachi Charitham, Unniyati Charitham, Unni Chirutevi Charitham (Champus) and Sandesa Kavyas like Unnuneeli Sandesam, Kokasandesam which are the best literary representations of the leisure activities of the post-Chera Period⁶⁴. Champus are prose-poetry pieces for e.g., ‘Unnichirutevi Charitham consisted of three pieces in poetry and 30 in prose. Unniyachi Charitham is of 27 poems and 30 prose compositions while Unniyati Charitham consisted of 184 poems and 32 prose pieces⁶⁵. Sandesa Kavyas are the poems in the form of messages sent by a male lover to his departed female lover.

Ulloor S. Parameswara Iyer provides an interesting explanation for the origin of Manipravalam literature⁶⁶. The theme of Manipravalam works is mainly centred on the life of dancers. The heroines of these poems, Unniyachi, Unniyati, Unnichirutevi, Unnuneeli are dancers. These dancers are considered as Devadasis.⁶⁷

But these literary works are not mere depiction of the life of dancers but rather focused on the material life of medieval Kerala. Manipravalam works give us important insights to the markets and trading centres of Medieval

⁶⁴ M.R.Raghava Varier, Rajan Gurukkal, *Kerala Charitram*, Vallathol Vidyapeetham, Edapal, 1991, p. 39.

⁶⁵ Sundaram Dhanuvachapuram, *Unnichirutevicharitham*, The State Institute of Languages Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 2005, p. 1.

⁶⁶ Ulloor S. Parameswara Aiyer, *Kerala Sahitya Charithram*, Vol. I, Kerala University, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015, p. 54.

⁶⁷ K.V. Dileep Kumar, in Prof. Elam Kulam Kunjan Pillai's *Unnuneeli Sandesam*, National Book Stall, Kottayam, 2016, preface, p. 15.

Kerala⁶⁸ The angadis of Mattam and Sri Parvatham were under the domination of Vempolinadu Naduvazhi. They have been mentioned in Unniyadi Charitham⁶⁹. Ananthapura Varnam describes an angadi called Ananthapuram situated very near to Padmanabha Sawmi temple⁷⁰ Unniyachi Charitham describes Thirumarthur angadi located near Tirunelli Temple in Wayanad. The work describes a flourishing city called Tirumarthur⁷¹

We have not come across any coins of Kerala ascribed to the medieval period. But we have found numerous references to medieval coins in Manipravalam texts. Circulation of coins of cheaper metals indicates that there was an increased use of coin-money even in small-scale transactions. Further, it also shows the spread of money-use into the lower strata of society⁷²

Despite the fragmented political structure of medieval Kerala, the economic development that had taken place crossed the boundaries of various Naduvazhi principalities. The period was also marked by the development of trade, trade centres, trade routes and circulation of metallic money in the form of coins. It is evident from Unniyadi Charitham which focused on Thirumarathur angadi which developed around Tirunelli Temple in Wayanad that trade centres had developed even in hilly areas or in mountainous regions. Expansion of agriculture and surplus in agriculture seem to be the factors which contributed to these economic changes. A significant development was the emergence of affluent groups of traders, landlords etc.

⁶⁸ M.R.Raghava Varier, Rajan Gurukkal, *Op. Cit.*, p. 256.

⁶⁹ N. Gopinathan Nair, *Unniyadicharitham prose 18 & 19*, National Book Stall, Kottayam, 2016, pp. 98-99.

⁷⁰ M.R.Raghava Varier, Dr. Rajan Gurukkal. *Cit.*, p. 256.

⁷¹ N. Gopinathan Nair, *Unniyacheecharitham*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative society Ltd., Kottayam, 2016, p. 50.

⁷² Raghava Varier, Rajan Gurukkal, *History of Kerala, Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad, 2018*, p.157.

They had time for leisure and entertainment as a result of which we find the emergence of various forms of entertainment in angadis and towns. The leisure activities of this upper class are clearly described in the Medieval Manipravalam Literature.

As stated by Elamkulam about the ‘orgiastic’ state of the elite sections of the Medieval Kerala society, the newly emerging sections related to trading activities had also been in the social milieu of leisure enjoying strata of the society. In the course of time, both the traditional elite section and newly emerging traders combined to enjoy different forms of leisure which paved the way for important social changes criss-crossing different sections limited to the upper strata of the society. The Manipravalam literature of the medieval period mirrored this tendency of the contemporary society.

The three famous Champus are Manipravalam, Unnichirutevi Charitham and Unniyadi Charitham. These champus are actually set in three different geographical backgrounds. Thirumarathur in Kurumporai Nadu in northern Kerala was the residential area of Unniyachi. Poyilam near Chokiram in Central Kerala was the seat of Unnichirutevi and Kandiur, the ‘capital’ of Odanadau was associated with Unniyadi. Unniyachi Charitham is generally considered as the oldest Manipravalam text⁷³ and one or two of its pamphlets have been lost.

The authorship of Unniyacheecharitham is credited to Tevan Chirikumaran (Devan Sreekumaran) and the scribe was Raman Chirikumaran. *The work is centred on Unniyachi, the famous dancer of prosperous Thirumarathur Angadi. It gives you an idea about the leisure activities of the elite section of the Medieval Kerala society.*

⁷³ N.Gopinathan Nair, *Op.Cit.*, p.9.

*A festival viz. Ashtami Ustavam was held in Thrissillery Shiva Temple in the Malayalam month of Kumbham. It gives us an idea about the festivities and entertainments of Medieval Kerala. Beautiful women, Brahmins and lords who belonged to the elite sections of the contemporary society attended the festival which was marked by various forms of entertainment, playing various loud musical instruments, female dancers etc*⁷⁴.

*It is evident that there was no gender bias for the entry of female dancers to the so-called 'public spaces. The female dancers of Medieval Kerala had considerable influence and had close association with the local rulers. They were allowed to sit with the naduvazhis. For e.g., Unnuneeli of Kaduthruthi was the concubine of the naduvazhi of Vadakkamkur. Unniyadi was the daughter of Kerala Varma, the naduvazhi of Odanadu in a woman called Chirukarakutty*⁷⁵.

*At this festival, Ashtami, a Gandharava, who had come from heaven met Unniyachee and immediately he fell in love with her. The story of Unniyachee is narrated to Gandharava by a chattiran. They moved towards Unniyachee's house and on the way, they saw the Thirumarthur angadi*⁷⁶. The angadi had various types of material objects and traders who spoke different languages⁷⁷ They reached near Sree Krishna Temple where they saw a Nadakasala or theatre⁷⁸ The theatre might have been the centre for the performance of Sanskrit dance-drama or Koothu. This indicates that temples were also the centre of various types of ritualistic art forms which provided entertainment and leisure to those who were associated with the temple.

⁷⁴ *Ibid*, p.84.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.96.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.102.

Medieval records indicate that only those who enjoyed a higher economic status in the contemporary society were admitted to the temple.

The author describes the residential quarters of the heroine, Unniyachee where they found a dancing hall⁷⁹ The author describes those who assembled at the house of Unniyachee which include Brahmins, traders, poets, gamblers etc. His reference to the gambler's points to the fact that gambling was very common and it was a popular entertainment of the upper class. In short, Unniyachee Charitham gives us important information about the leisurely activities of Medieval Kerala.

The authorship of Unniyadicharitham is credited to Damodara Chakiyar. It is one of the oldest champus of Manipravalam literature. The author, Damodara Chakiyar, seems to be a chakiyar who performed Koothu⁸⁰ Unniyadicharitham was composed in the 14th century and its author's patron was Kerala Varma, the ruler of Odanad⁸¹ .Unniyadicharitham was composed in the period between the composition of Unnichirutevi Charitham and Chandrautsavam⁸².

This work provides us with the information on various forms of leisure and entertainment. According to the poem, Odanadu was blessed with the presence of numbers of singers and artists⁸³ which in turn shows that singing as well was a form of entertainment. The 17th prose of the work has a reference to drunkard⁸⁴ and taking intoxicating drink seems to be another

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.109-113.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p.11.

⁸¹ Sundaram Dhanuvachapuram, *Unniyadicharitham*, The State Institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, p. 4.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.5.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.79.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.83.

form of leisure. The poems 47 to 55 contain songs pointing to the arrival of summer⁸⁵

Unnuneeli Sandesam is the most famous sandesa kavya among the Manipravalam literary works. The Sandesa Kavyas are centred on the messages sent by the departed lover to his lady lover. The sandesa kavyas which were compiled after Megha Sandes is modelled on this epic poem⁸⁶. Like Meghasandesam, Unnuneeli Sandesam is also divided into two; Purvasandesam with 136 slokas and Utthara Sandes with 101 slokas⁸⁷. Altogether the kavya consisted of 237 slokas.

The slokas from 69 to 86 of Unnuneelisandesam, describe the 'Prosperity of Kollam City'. Actually, this part narrates the economic progress achieved by the medieval urban centres of Kerala. These poetic descriptions also indicate the presence of an elite section in medieval Kerala cities that consisted of traders, Brahmin landlords, overseas traders and the like.

The material life of Medieval Kerala has been skilfully phrased in Unnuneeli Sandesam. The poem mainly focused on various aspects of human lives and material activities. Nearly 20 prominent temples, five major rivers and a number of angadis of Southern Kerala have been referred to in the text. The messenger even noticed the different categories of angadis. All these angadis were flooded with enormous trade commodities and traders who spoke different languages and came from distant areas. They were also the centres of leisure activities of the elite.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.89-90.

⁸⁶ P.V.Velayudhan Pillai, *Manipravalkavitha*, The State Institute of Languages, Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1989, p. 70.

⁸⁷ Ulloor S. Parameswara Aiyer, *Op.Cit.*, p.252.

Fundamental to the social formation was the generation and appropriation of surplus by the contemporary elite which gave them leisure; leisure to those who were involved in controlling the forces of production and factors of production. It was in this space, we find the presence of women, whose beauty was the main concern of the author and they were merely treated as pleasure or leisure objects by the contemporary elite.

Chandrolsavam, a well-known Manipravalam work of 15th century CE has got numerous references to the leisure activities of medieval Kerala.. The author is not well-identified and the authorship of the text is credited to a Brahmin Namboodiri of northern Kerala⁸⁸

Chandrolsavam is divided into five sections. The first part consisted of 108 slokas, second is of 110, third is 149, fourth 107 and fifth and final section is of 95 slokas. The work Chandrolsavam is centred on a festival of the same name organised by Medini Venilavu, a Ganika woman of Medieval Kerala and was attended by Ganika women, Naduvazhis, Brahmins and landlords from various parts of Kerala. At the time of Portuguese arrival in Kerala, the moral degeneration of Kerala reached its peak. It was the orgiastic season of the Namboodiris. On one hand, they upheld Manuvian principle “na sthree swanthanthram arhati”, but at the same time they granted concessions to the Ganika women.

The elite section of the contemporary society used other women as their pleasure objects. In order to fulfil the sexual needs of the elite they created a group of women, prostitutes by profession whose existence or rather subsistence was justified through various literary works like Chandrolsavam.

⁸⁸ Elamkulam P.N.Kunjan Pillai, *Chandrolsavam*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society Ltd., Kottayam, 2016, p. 12.

The appropriation of surplus gave these elites ample time for leisure and entertainment.

It would not be wrong to call Chandrolsavam as the mirror image of the contemporary society. In the sloka no. 26⁸⁹ of the first part of Chandrolsavam, there is a reference to dance and music performed by the heroine Medinivenilavu.

The most important sloka of Chandrolsavam is the sloka no. 50 of the first part. The sloka had a special reference to Mahamagam or Mamangam festival⁹⁰. The sloka no. 64 indicates the ambition of the Ganika woman to have a beautiful daughter to carry out the same profession as her⁹¹ Here the poet actually expresses the desire of the contemporary elite to have more Ganika women to carry out the profession of prostitution.

There is a reference to Penkettu in sloka no. 102 in the second part. The penkettu is a ritual; according to it, a devadasi or dancing girl was married to God/Deva. This was done to give a divine status to the profession of dancing, prostitution⁹² The heroine's friends like Thenmavi, Pushapalekha, Kelilatha, Thenmavi etc are referred to in the sloka no. 26 in the third section. The heroine and her beautiful friends were the main attraction of the Ganika festival.

The sloka no. 47 is about the festival called Chandrolsavam. According to the poet Chandrolsavam, the Ganika festival, is the most important festival of the women and it is designed by Brahma himself. Yet again, the poet tries divine prostitution, the profession of the dancing girls⁹³. The poet further states that

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.25.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.32.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.36.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p.76.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.90.

the festival brings goodness to the women, though it has not been organised anywhere in the world. Thus, the poet idealises the popular festival of Ganika women⁹⁴.

The sloka no. 72 has the most crucial reference to the profession called prostitution. Here the poet states that no woman should waste their youthfulness; and in order to justify her beauty, she should involve in prostitution, a noble and sacred profession through which her greatness will reach far corners of the world⁹⁵. Luckily for the people of Kerala, this noble profession is growing fast here in Kerala⁹⁶.

The medieval Manipravalam literature for a long period has been referred to as erotic literature focused on the life of prostitutes. Now they are referred to and treated as an important source for the reconstruction of medieval Kerala history. References to medieval trade centres, traders, trade articles and many more have been found in these texts. The texts also contain detailed descriptions of the angadis of medieval Kerala. Manipravalam literature focused on the leisure life of the so-called elite sections of the Kerala society who became materialistically superior due to the increased surplus in agriculture which contributed to the expansion of trade and commercial activities. Sexual activities was their most important form of entertainment for which a group of women was required and they were called the Ganika women. The Ganika women and their life activities were idealised through literature like Manipravalam literature.

State festivals of Medieval Kerala also offered leisure and entertainment. The biggest state festival of Medieval Kerala was Mamangam, celebrated once in 12 years on the banks of the river Perar (now known as

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.92.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.96.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.97.

Bharata puzha) at Tirunavaya⁹⁷. Being very much political in nature, it may not be out of place to describe Mamangam as a ‘state’ festival. It was also an opportunity of strengthening the relationship between the king and the locality chiefs, local magnates and the royal functionaries.⁹⁸

The grand festival also promoted social and cultural interaction. People flew in from different parts of the kingdom, to attend it, making it an elaborate social gathering. Consequently, merchandise and trade should have accelerated. Many entertainments and art forms like Krishnanattam, Ramanattam, Koothu, Pathakam and Kutiyattam were known to have been performed during this period⁹⁹.

Before Kunnalakon, Before Navamukundan at Tirunavaya

For the fulfilment of their wishes, everyday

The performing Chakyars with their *kooththu*

The watching Brahmins with their *Paathakas*

Commentaries on Bhagavatha and other Puranas

Queries and answers on what lay ahead in life,

Krishnanaatta and Ramananaatta,

Sermons on the past by Devotees of Lord Krishna,

And dances in Narasimha’s costume¹⁰⁰

(For the Malyalam Version see Appendix 1 A)

How far the grand festival of Mamangam had promoted social and cultural interaction is not clear. The art forms like Krishnattam, Ramanattam,

⁹⁷ V.V.Haridas, *Zamorins and the Political Culture of Medieval Kerala*, Orient Blackswan, New Delhi, 2016, p. 260.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.276.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.275.

¹⁰⁰ Manavikraman Raja, *Keralotpathi Kilippattu*, Sahithya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society, Kottayam, 2016, p. 111.

Koothu, Pathakam and Kutiyattam performed at Tirunavaya are generally treated as classical arts forms meant for the upper class of the society. Thus, it is clear that even the art forms performed at the state festivals were not meant for the general public. There had been no question of permitting illiterate adiyalars them to enjoy these art forms.

Several elaborate programmes and rituals accompanied Mamangam which lasted for 30 days. Muslims were involved in the performance of music and also in the lighting of fireworks. They were paid by the Zamorin at Ponnani Thrikovil Kovilakam¹⁰¹

A year before Mamangam, a one-day festival called Thaipuyam was celebrated at Tirunavaya. The ceremonies of the Thaippuyam are a replication of those on the last day of the Mamangam¹⁰² Thaipuyam was not as grand as the festival of Mamangam, which is indicated by its duration itself¹⁰³.

Qualitatively, the concept of leisure could have been marked as the activities relating to the upper strata of the earlier societies of Kerala. It was because of the fact that only the upper classes had the privilege of leisure whereas the lower sections of the society were barely in a position to enjoy their daily life and convert any of their time into leisure.

We have references to the leisure activities of the upper classes like that of Naduvazhis, Namboodiri's and the like, during the Perumal period. As mentioned earlier in the text above, many temple-oriented art forms like Koothu, Kutiyattam, dance, music etc. have been cited in various works of the contemporary period.

¹⁰¹ V.V.Haridas, *Mamankavum Chaverum*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-opertative Society Ltd., Kottayam, 2015, p. 60.

¹⁰² V.V.Haridas, p. 278.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p.281.

Ramanattam, Krishnattam and Kathakali were the other important traditional performing art forms that had originated in Pre-modern Kerala. Ramanattam is based on the story of Ramayana from the incarnation of Rama to the Rama-Ravana war¹⁰⁴. It was developed under the patronage of Veera Kerala Varma (1653-1694 CE), a member of the Kottarakkara royal family¹⁰⁵. The authorship of Krishnattam is credited to Manadevakavi of Kozhikode¹⁰⁶. Assumably, Ramanattam was a popular form of Krishnattam, originally written in Sanskrit and it was Ramanattam which later developed into Kathakali¹⁰⁷.

Kathakali is generally considered as the prime art form of Kerala.¹⁰⁸ Formerly, Kathakali was staged only in the royal courtyards, temples and in the houses of rich landlords¹⁰⁹. It usually started after sunset and went on till the next day break¹¹⁰ and was performed fully at a stretch.

These traditional /classical art forms never became popular as they remained as elite art forms and their complexity confined them to the micro social spaces. The time schedule of Kathakali, from sunset to the next sun rise did not allow the producing class to enjoy them since it was their time to rest. Arguably, these art forms were formulated by the dominant sections of the society by deliberately making it more complicated so as to distance it from other sections of the society. In the then social milieu, the lower caste people

¹⁰⁴ Aymanom Krishna Kaimal in P.J.Cherian, *Essays on the Cultural Formation of Kerala: Literature, Art, Architecture, Music, Theatre and Cinema*, Kerala State Gazetteer, Trivandrum, 1999, p. 105.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.104.

¹⁰⁶ N.Ajithkumar, *Keralasamskaram*, Cultural Publications, Government of Kerala, Trivuvanathapuram, 2004, p. 194.

¹⁰⁷ P.K.Gopalakrishanan, *Op.Cit.*, p.483.

¹⁰⁸ N.Ajith Kumar, *Op.Cit.*, p.190.

¹⁰⁹ P.J.Cherian, *Op.Cit.*, p.103.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.112.

might have taken it for granted, like many other social restrictions they had adhered to.

Thullal is a solo-dance which tells a story, normally drawn from puranic legends, through verbal acting and miming. Compared to Kutiyattam and Kathakali, modes of dance and miming are simple and the language used in the performance is easily comprehensible to all¹¹¹. Ottam Thullal was an improvement on two earlier popular dance forms viz. Sitankan Thullal and Parayan Thullal which had been performed in the nearby Sastha temple at Takazhi during the annual Patayani festival in Medam (April-May) to entertain non-Brahmin sections of the Hindu community. Ottam Thullal was indeed a popular entertainment to the literate as well as the illiterate sections of the society¹¹².

The origin of Thullal could be traced back to the 17th and 18th century, when this art form took shape¹¹³. By the eighteenth century, cultural creativity of the upper class almost came to an end. A large section of the society was thrown out of the artistic world and was frustrated. Thullal was their response to this ostracism and the artistic fulfillment of their creativity. When the Chakiyar Koothu was performed on the Brahmanical stages, Kunjan Nambiar brought his art form outside the sphere of temple. He had mixed language, songs and dance to bring out a new form of art which actually marked a cultural revolution in Kerala¹¹⁴.

Several changes were taking place in the social structure. The traditional ruling class consisting of Naduvazhi chiefs and Brahmanas, found themselves confronted by powerful non-Brahmana madampis and land-

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.113.

¹¹² A.Sreedhara Menon, *Op.Cit.*, p.353.

¹¹³ P.J.Cheriyar, *Op.Cit.*, p.113.

¹¹⁴ P.K.Gopalakrishnan, *Op.Cit.*, pp.484-485.

owners. New ruling families emerged and local chiefs held absolute jurisdiction in their respective areas¹¹⁵. Kunjan Nambiar, the major exponent of the art of Thullal lived in these times. He witnessed the changing social structure and cultural forms. He sought to develop a new style in performing arts which could communicate directly to the people, unlike Kutiyattam and Kathakali which could only be appreciated by the elite who were conversant with the idioms. As a result, he composed a number of poems, based on puranic themes which could be enacted in the form of Thullal¹¹⁶Thullal songs to a large extent represented the vocabulary of the common people who lived in the southern regions of Kerala.

Thullal and its songs were meant for the common people and we do not have a clear understanding about its popularity among the major sections of the society. Although Thullal is simple, narrative and humorous, appealing even to the illiterate people, its popularity was limited due to the absence of public spaces.

The Post-Perumal period witnessed the consolidation of more power and dominance within the hands of the Brahmins and other similar sections. The political power was decentralised resulting in the emergence and growth of regional power centres. Each regional power centre continued to encourage and patronise the art forms which had the quality of rich leisure. As mentioned earlier, the Manipravalam works of Medieval Kerala reflected the affluence of those sections which had control over surplus in agriculture and also over trading activities. In fact, they were the people who changed the orientation of the ritual leisure into sexual vulgarism which are manifested in works like Chandrolsavam.

¹¹⁵ P.J.Cheryan, *Op.Cit.*, p.113.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.113-114.

The activities connected with the leisure of the upper caste could be characterized as 'Ritual Leisure' as it was centred around the temple as well as to the entertainment of those who were in power and closely related to the temple. In fact, these leisure activities had the pretext of ritualism which in a way strengthened the power enjoyed by the dominant classes. The tradition of leisure that existed during the Perumal period more or less continued in the same vigor during the post-Perumal era also, but with certain changes.

The ritual involves words and actions performed according to a set sequence prescribed by the religions of a given community. The term "ritual leisure" is used here to denote the leisure activities of the upper class and upper caste of the pre-modern Kerala society which was connoted with the religion. These ritual leisure activities were legitimized and validated by the Brahmins and mainly performed at the temple premises and occasionally at the residential premises of the Brahmins. As it was a temple centred society temples were the important centers of all social, economic and religious activities of the period. However it should be noted that the majority of the society comprising the lower caste people were not allowed to attend the ritual leisure. So the ritual leisure was exclusively enjoyed by the upper class/upper caste or dominant sections of the society. They had enough leisure time as they had not participated in the process of production and were enjoying the fruits of the labour of the agrarian labourers who being the lower caste.

Outside the sphere of Brahmanical society we find the presence of backward communities. The ideology called 'caste' was the main factor which pushed the majority to the bottom of the caste oriented social structure. Caste was the greatest social evil in Kerala. In no other part of India have caste norms and caste practices been more rigidly or more meticulously

observed¹¹⁷ The backward communities developed their own folk arts in the form of leisure which was mainly associated with their rituals and labour.

Most of the folk arts of Kerala are closely associated with rituals. In some, like Kothamooriyattom and Poorakkali, the theatre element predominates. Other art forms like Theyyam and Mudi yettu, have the ritual and art elements beautifully intertwined. Some magical rituals, like Kolamthullal and Sarpamthullal, do not have performers that are comparable with the rest. A few others are performed to propitiate Gandharvas or Nagas, or for obtaining children. In some folk arts, the elements of drama and dance are so intermixed that it is difficult to classify them. Theyyam. Mudi yettu, Poorakkali, etc are at once ritualistic performances, folk drama as well as dance. There are others like Thiyyattu, Kolamthullal, Sarpamthullal etc ,which combine music ,painting, drama and dance. The folk arts of Kerala can be broadly classified under two heads :ritualistic and non-ritualistic. Ritualistic folk arts can be further divided into two; devotional and magical. Devotional folk arts are performed to propitiate a particular God or Goddess. Theyyam, Thira, Poothamthira, Kanyarkali, kumatti, etc. are some of them. Forms like Panappattu and Thottampattu are composed in the form of songs. In Kolkali, Margamkali, Dappumuttukkali etc ,the ritualistic element is not very strong. Magical folk arts seek to win general prosperity for a community or exorcise evil spirits or to beget children. Gandharvas and nagas are worshipped in order to win these favours.The magical folk arts include Pambinthullal, Pooppadathullal, Kolamthullal, Malayankettu, etc.¹¹⁸

The art and literature of an age is related to the prevailing mode of economic production. The transition from hunting-gathering to agriculture

¹¹⁷ .P.Chandra Mohan ,Growth of Social Reform Movements in Kerala in P.J.Cheriy an, (ed) *Perspectives on Kerala History, Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p 476*

¹¹⁸ P.J.Cheriy an, *Cultural Formation, Op.Cit., P.39.*

marked an important milestone in human history. Folk songs constitute the most important historical evidence for a people's ethos and their material and cultural evolution. Kerala's historical past is most powerfully reflected in the songs which are directly related to agricultural operations. These songs refreshed the peasants' minds and lightened the burden of work.

There are songs for all occasions: ploughing, sowing, reaping, threshing. The landlords who knew the palliative value of the songs which tied down the peasants to their work without a break, encouraged their singing. While submitting to the hegemony of the feudal ruling class, these songs were an outlet for the peasants' pent-up grievances and protest. Unorganized and resigned to their lot, they had no other means of resistance. It was back-breaking work from dawn to dusk. No amount of work could assure them a decent living. To the landlords they were nothing more than animals or machines. They had to turn up for work even when they were ill or incapacitated. The songs of peasants at work are an integral part of Kerala's folk culture. These songs serve as material for the study of cultural history. These peasants' anger at their unending exploitation resounded in these songs across the vast expanse of the fields.

Before the dawn

The thamburan comes and summons

Swinging his cheenakkuda,

He summons Women,

The young, the nursing and the grief-stricken old,

He stands and summons us out

Swinging his cheenakkuda ¹¹⁹

(For The Malayalam version, see, Appendix 1 B)

¹¹⁹ C. R. Rajagopalan, *Nattarivu Pattukal*, DC books, Kottayam, 2009, p. 25.

This song actually shows the exploitative character of landlordism in Kerala

The day fades
Under the shade of pookkaitha, 3
They scourge us till the day turns dark,
Gave us only a stingy bite of coconut
And barely one konda4 rack5 ,
They squeeze us till the day turns dark,
We built this all
Out of nothing,
But now I stand here barehanded,
The day turns dark
Under the shade of pookkaitha.¹²⁰

(For the Malayalam version see Appendix 1 C)

One hears the loud, raging protest against feudal hegemony and exploitation in this song. Even in their state of repression and pain the tillers of the soil rejoice when nature bestows its bounty. The peasants have cultivated, over generations, their unique ways of loving and cherishing the land and the crops they grow on it, though they have no rights over them.¹²¹

In North Malabar the Pulluvar, a caste of singers who wander with their lyre sing a song called *kattappattu* (literally ‘song of sheaves (of grain)’ during the harvest in the month of Kanni (September-October).

Before us

Grew the weed rice,

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.26.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

kararyiyan, perariyan, kashakan, modaka, chennal, karinchennal,
kathakapootthada, nalikan seeds

Kanjirakkottan, kadinjolanaran, peradan, karinjoran, veliyan, vayakan,
kavungin pootthada, ennakkuzhamban, ponkilivalan

And widened in the paddy the lord of gold ponnariyan ¹²²

(For the Malayalam version see, Appendix 1 D)

They reel off the names of seeds of paddy and narrate a myth about the beginning of agriculture in the world. The peasants whose toil made the earth yield its bounty were paid only a very small part of the produce as wages. The rest went to fill the landlords' granaries. Yet the peasants rejoiced more than the landlords over a good harvest as this song shows:

Kunnatthu Kochali,
The young,
It's harvesting at Karumalippady,
Ullattal reaped, Maniyal too,
Tens and hundreds swiftly reaped,
Kokkara kora kora steadily we reaped
Kunnathu Koyyali also reaped
We bundled into sheaf,
Lifted and kept it on the balk,
At last,
The thamburan came to adjudge,
“Dear, I needed some rice for a bowlful of kanji
But he ordered to pay for last day”
“What did you do then?”

¹²² *Ibid*, pp.26-27.

“Oh, woe is me!

I paid for the last day’s. .¹²³

(For the Malyalam version see Appendix 1-E)

The glory of the village life of the past gleams in folk songs. The myths about rural life they embody are significant. There are separate repertoires of songs according to caste and community. The castes and communities represented include Vellavas, Pulayas, Pullavas, Panar, Malayar, Vannan, Kammalar, Thiyadi, Kuruvan, Kaniyan, kusavan, Parayar, Mappila Muslims and Christians. There are marked differences between these collections of songs.

For some castes, songs and arts are part of their occupation, while for others they simply serve to lighten their burden of work. *Krishippattu* (songs sung during agricultural operations), *vanchippattu* (boatmen’s songs) and *thekkupattu* (the songs of peasants who lift water from wells and ponds for irrigating the fields) belong to the latter. Most of the *krishippattu* are sung by the Pulaya peasants who were virtually bonded labourers.¹²⁴

There are a number of songs which narrate the life of Pulayas in bygone days. Here are a few that have been collected.

When I went to Kunjaram paddy to sow,
The thamburan came and offered me the betel,
I chewed,
Now I watch my belly grow
And sing a miserable womb song!
Thiyyo thinantho thinanthinatho thaka

¹²³ *Ibid*, pp.27-28.

¹²⁴ Kariveli Babukkuttan, *Pulayar: Charithravum Varthamanavum*, Poorna Publications, 2013, p. 133.

Thiyyo thinantho thinanthinatho thaka

Kunjalechi who reaps three nazhi rice from half of the field ¹²⁵ (For the Malayalam version, see Appendice -1 F)

Kunjalechi who reaps three nazhi 4 rice from half of the field
(thiyyo)

She reaps chembavu

paddy at swampy Embakkam and muddy Eriviry
(thiyyo)

Her betel stained lips resemble the ruddy chembavu rice,
(thiyyo)

You have betel in your lap?

Better watch yourself

As others do,

When he comes, ask him if he
will make you his beloved?

(Theyya thinantha thinanthiram tharo

Thara thinantha thinanthiram tharo) In our paddy

Chakkukandam

We will sow tomorrow,

(theyya)

Karumbiippenne,

The one who saw the beauty of Chakkukandam,

Stood astonished seeing it,

(Theyya) ¹²⁶ (For the Malayalam version please see Appendix 1-G)

The cart sank in muck

The carter sank in mire

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, P.114.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.115.

The cart ploughed mud
The carte carter chased
T Mambulli bull on right
Chembora bull on left ¹²⁷

(For the Malayalam version please see Appendix 1-H)

A harvest song:
Rain poured,
Streams welled up,
We ploughed the field
Thrown the bundled gnats,
Everyone came,
Omala
Chenthila
Mala
Cheru
Kannamma
Kaali
Karumbi
Chatthan
Chadayan
They stood lined
Tied the bundled gnats
We bended and planted it deep
Omala, the young cherumi pleaded
'A song should be sung
as we sow'
A parrot nested on the tree

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.116.

Omala, the young cherumi implored

‘Will you come and tell us a story’¹²⁸

(For the Malayalam version please see Appendix 1-I)

These songs reflect the pathetic conditions of their bonded life as well as the few brief interludes of happiness, composed in their rustic dialect and transmitted by word of mouth across generations which have been lost to us.

Folk songs constitute the most important category of orally transmitted folklore in Kerala. There are several broad categories: myths, legends, proverbs, riddles and other oral narratives in prose; folk songs in various forms and folk plays with a mixture of prose and verse.¹²⁹

Another characteristic of folk songs is their regional variation. The same song may be sung differently by different group of singers. The Thottam Paattu (hymns) of the same Theyyam performance differs both in text and tune across locales. Thus, the Thottam Pattu you hear in Kasargod changes as you move to Payyannur, and again when you move to Thalassery or places in Wayanad district.¹³⁰

Folk songs like other folk compositions arise from the collective life of the community, which means that you find the thoughts and emotions of the community reflected in them. which is why you find them exuding the deep-rooted agrarian culture.¹³¹ The contributions of the Paraya caste to the

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.117.

¹²⁹ M.Sivasankaran, *Valluvanatale Nadan Pattukkal*, Current Books, Thrissur, 2008, p. 7.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.8.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p.9.

repertoire of folk songs is considerable. Two important forms, Cheru Neeliyaattam and Malavay Pattu are wholly ritualistic in content.¹³²

It is natural for people who indulge in various vocations to sing songs to refresh themselves. The origin of songs like *Vanchippattu*, *vandippattu*, *thekkupattu*, *chakappattu* and *vattippattu* can be attributed to such a cause. It is also natural to feel the urge to sing when one is at leisure. *Vinodappattu* or songs for entertainment would have been composed for such a purpose. Thus, songs were delinked from work to become means of entertainment.¹³³

All folk songs can be classified into four: 1. Songs which are peculiar to a community or social group, 2) Songs which are part of rituals, 3) Songs which are linked to work, and 4) songs for entertainment.¹³⁴

The Pulaya community was spread out across the state. Peasants by occupation, they had a variety of rituals, forms of art, cultural expressions and entertainments. Regional differences can be identified, which makes it a complicated job to collect and classify them. Most of their songs are linked to rituals.¹³⁵

All folk songs have an element of entertainment. In this work songs which are primarily for entertainment are introduced, which should not lead to the notion that they do not have other functions. But in both songs which are linked to work and to rituals, there are elements of entertainment. Although songs which are connected with games certainly have elements of entertainment, one should not be under the impression that the word '*kali*' ('play' 'game') always denotes a game. Thus *Poorakkali*, *Kanyarkali*,

¹³² *Ibid.*, p.89.

¹³³ M.V.Vishnu Namboodiri, *Nadanpattukal Malayalathil*, The State Institute of Languages, Trivandrum, 2008, p. 3.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.10.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.84.

Panenkali and the like are not games, but rituals. Of course, there are elements of entertainment in them. On the other hand, But *Kummattukali*, *Pazhungakali*, *Thalamkali* and *Purattukali* are games.¹³⁶

There are also songs which are not connected to any particular game, but which are sung purely for amusement. As we know many such songs are doggerels or meaningless utterances, and quite a few are ribald in content. All these constitute the broad category called songs for entertainment. As for songs connected with rituals, these songs too have no taboo or restrictions in their use.¹³⁷

Leisure has historically been the privilege of the upper classes as opportunities for leisure came with power and money. But the 'historyless' people or the producing class had their own leisure time activities though restricted in the general social milieu. Labour leisure can be explained as the leisure enjoyment of the laboring class to their satisfaction after an unpleasant and hazardous period of labour.

Labour leisure was enjoyed generally in three phases-individual leisure, family leisure and social leisure. Leisure time activities were expressed in several forms like songs, dances, games and so on and so forth. The labour leisure generally expressed the sorrows, anguish and aspirations of the labourers occasionally referring to the exploitation, cruelties and brutalities of their masters and seldom expressing their protest. These protests of the labouring class were not expressed openly or directly but in the form of camouflage as they were under the constant fear of their wrath of their masters.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.334.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.334-335.

In the pre-modern Kerala the laboring class belonged to lower castes and their masters to upper castes. The class distinction in the then society was intertwined with the rigid caste inequalities. As historical events were recorded by illiterate upper caste no information about the labour leisure is available in recorded form as the lower caste laboring class were denied literacy. However their leisure time activities are sporadically preserved generally in the form of folk songs with interpolations through the passing generations.

After a day of hard work, individual labourer found solace and satisfaction by singing solitary songs in the wilderness of the night. Individual labour leisure came up spontaneously from the inner self and almost faded away with the individual himself. In fact, the producing class found leisure activity a solace to the tedious experiences of the day. The laboring class never enjoyed holidays and were subjected to hard work during the entire day time.

Family labour leisure experienced during certain special occasions or some events are connected with the family. The family members gathered together and had involved in certain time leisure activities most prominently, songs and dances.

Social leisure of the laboring class was enjoyed in groups of the lower castes. It was conducted in a public sphere, though the extent of the public sphere was limited and restricted as the general public sphere controlled by the upper castes was unapproachable for the lower castes. The limited and restricted public sphere of the laboring lower castes was generally within premises of their dwelling areas.

The social leisure was generally connected with their religious practices resulting in ritual leisure activities. Examples of ritual leisure activities of the laboring lower castes pertaining to the pre modern Kerala society could be gathered from different sources like that of folk songs, country songs, community songs etc.

Malabar has a long tradition of various types of native sports and games played and enjoyed by the people of all sections as a part and parcel of their leisure time activities. In the beginning ,although they were played according to the contextual requirements and aspirations of the participants, certain rules and regulations were introduced in the course of time ,as they became almost competitive. They became popular among different sections of the society and being played both in private and public spheres.

One of the most popular games of Malabar from the very ancient days was known as 'Kuttiyum Kolum',or otherwise known as 'Vattu Kali'and Kilithattu'It was very similar to the 'Gill-dana' game of north India. The ingredients needed for the game were a small wooden piece,'Kutti' and a bat like wooden piece,'kolu'. A circle is drawn in the plain ground in which a small hole is dug. The 'kutti' is inserted into the hole at an angle. The player with the 'kolu' swings it and strikes the 'kutti' lofting the 'kutti' as far as he can. The lifted 'kutti', which is airborne is caught by the opposition player. The striker is out and if not ,the striker gets another chance. This continues until the 'kutti'is caught by the opposition. Then the opposition member gets the chance to strike the 'kutti' and the play will go on. Although the basic rule remains the same, regional variations are there in deciding the winner.

'Thalapanthukali' was another traditional native game played in Malabar from the early period onwards. It was a native form of football. The

game is played with a small ball made of leather and coconut fibre. The teams generally consist of five or seven players and was played in the open field. The first player throws the ball at the opposing team and if any player of the opposite team catches the ball or kicks it outside the fixed area, they get a point and if not the first player team gets the point.

Another popular game played in early Malabar was ‘Eru Panth’ or Dodge Ball. It was yet another popular game of early Malabar. Two teams are involved in this game with five members on each side. One group stands inside a fixed circle and another group with same numbers stand outside the circle. The players of the outside throw the ball at the opponents legs below their knees inside the circle. Those inside the circle evade the ball by jumping, running or dodging. The player inside the circle, if hit by the ball below the knee is out and the game continues till the last player is hit and declared out. Then the opposite team enter the circle and repeats the ball throw. The team which gets more points within the stipulated time, wins.

‘Goti Kali’ is the popular traditional game of Malabar, normally played by two players. A small ground with three holes dug is required for this game. Players shoot the golies of small stones with their fingers in to the holes and the one who hits three holes with the goties first, become the winner.

In ‘Vattu Kalli’ or ‘Akkadi’, eight squares of equal size are prepared adjacently on the fixed ground. A stone or wooden piece called ‘vattu’ or ‘Akka’ is placed on the first square and the player should hop on one leg without touching the side line push the ‘vattu’ to the next square and thus complete with eight squares. If the player misses any square he is out and the player who covers the eight squares with the ‘vattu’ wins. This was mainly played by girls.

The Nambuthiri Brahmins of Malabar had enjoyed more leisure time, as elsewhere in the country along with increased wealth and power. They spent most of their time in 'vedivattom' or idle talks. The literature of the medieval period, especially the Manipravalam works, give references to the 'vedivattom' of the Nambuthiris. They lived in a make-believe world of idle talks, feasts, gatherings and art forms like koothu and koodiyattom.

'Chaturangam' the game closer to modern chess was the favourite and popular game among the Nambuthiris of the medieval period in Malabar. The famous literary works like 'Payyannur Pattu' of 13th century, Chandrotsavam of 16th century etc have references about playing 'chaturangam'. It is said that 'chaturangam' was instrumental in the creation of the Malayalam poetic work 'Krishna Gatha' by Cherusseri Nambuthiri in 15th century. Many of the Nambuthiri 'illams' or residences were adorned with permanent arenas of Chaturanga. Many of the temples in Malabar also had separate permanent structures of granite floorings with sixty four small squares for playing 'chaturangam' by the Nambuthiris only as a part of their leisure time activities.

In the foregoing pages an attempt has been made to reconstruct the leisure activities practiced by the people of Malabar in the pre-colonial Malabar within the larger context. It could be assumed that leisure activities of this period were mainly connected with rituals, festivals and other occasions related with religion and was enjoyed by the people of different sections strictly on the premises of caste distinctions. It was in this cultural scenario of the traditional society of Malabar that the colonial authorities intruded with a new framework of the so called European modernity to make effective changes in the leisure activities of the people of Malabar. This

framework which prepared the necessary background for the incoming changes in the leisure activities in colonial Malabar, is discussed in the next chapter.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ . T.K.Gopal Panikkar, *passim*

Chapter Four

LEISURE AND RECREATION IN COLONIAL MALABAR: HISTORICAL CONTOURS

Historical contours for the transformation of leisure activities in Colonial Malabar were prepared and developed by the changes in the material conditions effected by the various kinds of activities of the colonial government. The colonial domination was not a single line political domination, instead it included several discursive and non-discursive practices enunciated by the colonial administration like revenue and legal systems, modern western education, improved means of transportation and communication and other economic and social reforms. It is because of these diversified activities that the British colonialism could be characterised as 'Colonial governmentality', which includes a wide range of control techniques that made the subjects governable ¹. Colonial governmentality naturally brought out transformation in the existing leisure activities also.

The socio-economic changes effected by colonialism paved way for the emergence and growth of new social classes in Malabar during the colonial period and their world view and quest for identity helped to make changes in the existing attitude towards leisure activities. The emergence of new social classes in Malabar was the direct consequence of the establishment of new type of state system and state administration including the spread of

¹ Foucault was the first scholar to use the term 'governmentalities explain the all-encompassing activities of the government to control its subjects.

A. Barry et.al (ed.), *Foucault and Political Reason: Liberalism, Non-Liberalism and Rationalities of government*, Chicago University, Press, Chicago, 1996, pp. 231-251.

modern western education. The changes in the land relations, penetration into the society by commercial and other forces, introduction of modern industries etc brought out drastic changes in the material conditions which subsequently reflected in the leisure activities also. In order to make a detailed enquiry into the various aspects of colonial governmentality in Malabar, it has to be looked into the very beginning of the colonial occupation of 1792.

Malabar came under the British rule in 1792 when it was taken over by the English East India Company from Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore after his defeat in the Third Anglo-Mysore war. The ceding of Malabar was put in record through the Treaty of Sriranga Patam signed between the Company authorities and Tipu Sultan in 1792². This could be considered as the of the East India Company's quest to control the valuable spice trade in Malabar, for which the European powers had been struggling over almost three centuries since the arrival of Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese maritime explorer at Calicut in 1498³.

The geographical area of Malabar thus received by the English East India Company towards the end of the 18th century, extended from north to south along the Arabian sea coast, a distance of about one hundred and fifty miles. The boundaries of the district of colonial Malabar proper were: South Canara district in the north, Coorg, Mysore and Nilgiris in the east, the native state of Cochin in the south and the Arabian sea in the west.

The Arabian Sea coast runs diagonally in a south-east direction and forms a few head-lands and small bays. This sea coast had helped Malabar to

² The Joint Commissioners' Report on Malabar 1792-1793, Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum, p 210.

³ K.N.Panikkar, *Against Lord and State, Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921*, Oxford University Press, 1990, p.1-2.

become one of the most significant centres of international maritime trade from time immemorial and had continued through the ages⁴

The English East India Company pursued its lucrative trade interests in the spices in Malabar from the very dawn of its presence in India, but it was only in the beginning of the 18th century the Company started its effective operation in the region. Consequently, the first settlement of the English Company was established at Tellicherry where an English Company factory was established in the beginning of the 18th century

Though Malabar came in to their hands by 1792, the English did not consider it expedient to take charge of the administration straight away. They were reluctant to fulfil their promise of restoring to the exiled rulers their territories. General Abercromby, the Governor of Bombay, who was deputed to negotiate provisional agreements with regard to collection of revenues, recommended an interim agreement. There by two commissioners, Farmer and Dow were appointed for Malabar. One of the first measures of the united Commission was to announce to the inhabitants a general freedom of trade by a publication issued, under date the 20th December 1792, in all articles excepting pepper, which was to continue to be engrossed by Government till further orders ⁵The Joint Commissioners put forward the outlines of a plan for the administration of the ceded countries on the coast of Malabar.

The superintendents to preserve the peace to administer justice, and to justice the revenue, subject in all these points, to the direction and control of the Supervisor as the general Magistrate of that Coast, by whom all their acts must be sanctioned to give them validity; and they are to obey all his orders whatsoever, a right being reserved to them to remonstrate are to be

⁴ Ward and Conner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum, 1995, p.1.

⁵ *The Joint Commissioners' Report on Malabar, Op.Cit, p 210.*

transmitted to the Presidency in cases where they may differ from him in opinion, which remonstrances are to be transmitted open to, and through, the supervisor, who is thereon to forward the same without delay for the consideration of the Governor in Council, by whose determination the matter in issue is of courses to be decided ⁶ According to their decision the local rulers were to exercise authority and pay a fixed tribute to the company. The agreement so entered with local rulers including the Samutiri and the Raja of Chirakkal were for only one year; but subsequently it was renewed for a period of five years. In December 1792 two other Commissioners, Duncan and Boddam also joined. The Joint Commissioners proclaimed freedom of trade in all articles except pepper which was treated as a monopoly. Slave trade was prohibited in the Same year. They entered into separate agreements with local rulers, fixing the question of allowances or Mali Khana. On March 30,1793, Malabar was divided into two administrative divisions with headquarters at Talassery and Cherpulasseri. Each division was placed under the control of a Superintendent⁷

A Supervisor and Chief Magistrate was appointed for the whole of Malabar with headquarters at Kozhikode and he was to exercise general control over Superintendents. On May 20,1800, the Commission was abolished and Malabar was transferred to Madras presidency from Bombay. Major Macleod, the Principal Collector took charge of the District of Malabar in October 1801. Thus with the defeat of Tippu the “empire in the East” was at the feet of the English⁸

With the establishment of an entirely new administrative system by the colonial authorities, the history of Malabar entered into a new phase, that was

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.207.

⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, SPCS, Kottayam, 1970, p 257.

⁸ *Ibid.*,257-258.

practically unknown to the society and people. The political, social, economic and cultural changes that took place, together is often characterised as the introduction of colonial modernity. The compound term 'colonial modernity' could be assumed as the replication of European pattern of life and culture in terms of its institutions of governance and its technologies of production and social control. In fact colonialism and colonial modernity itself manifested its implications in various forms, even including leisure time activities. It became the colonisation of life worlds of the colonised people who came under European domination. Malabar was no exception. Once political domination was well established the colonial authorities started penetrating to every aspect of the society in Malabar, as elsewhere in India. The changes effected by the British in Malabar society were fundamental in the social, economic, cultural and political realms. In fact these changes demolished the very foundations of the traditional society and gradually transplanted the so called European modernity in Malabar.

In the course of time it gave rise to a conflictory amalgamation of modernity and traditionalism. This intrusion of colonial modernity in a way paved way for the gradual transition of colonialism into imperialist hegemony. Several social, economic ,political and cultural forces had contributed to the transformation of the traditional society of Malabar into colonial modernity. The Primary objective of colonialism in Malabar, as elsewhere in the world was the maximum exploitation of the resources of the land occupied. It was further motivated by the evergrowing needs of the industrial sector of the mother country. In the initial stages of colonial domination, trade was conducted through the normal way of exchange between the buyer and the seller, but it was later unilaterally transformed into direct exploitation in which the buyer became dominant and the seller was subjugated as victim of exploitation ,where the seller had no say over his production. This was the usual way of colonial exploitation and domination in

the entire world where in which the native actual producer had no role in trade.

Geographically Malabar was richly endowed with natural resources and was very favourable for the cultivation of a variety of agricultural products. The chief economic activity of the people of Malabar, at the time of the colonial penetration was agriculture except for a few who had engaged in non-agricultural activities like trade and commerce, cotton weaving, carpentry, smithy, fishing etc.

The people engaged in agricultural activities covered more than ninety five percent of total population of the district of Malabar in the beginning of the 19th century⁹ Malabar had remained a non-monetised economy except for the transactions that took place in the small urban centres and coastal trading centres, where coins were used as medium of exchange.

The colonial authorities on the outset of their domination, had identified the importance of the agrarian based economy of the occupied Malabar and their principal target of resource exploitation was directed towards the extraction of agricultural products in the form of land tax. This colonial motive was clearly manifested in the appointment of the Joint Commissioners in Malabar in December 1792 itself, immediately after their accession of the region. The necessary administrative contours were set up by them for the extraction of land revenue by dividing the entire Malabar region into 18 taluks comprising of Two thousand two hundred twenty two villages¹⁰

The villages became the basic administrative units for the extraction of land tax, day-to-day administration and maintenance of law and order. The

⁹ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Mathrubhoomi, Kozhikkode, 2012, pp.35-36.

¹⁰ Ward and Conner, *Op.Cit.*

land ownership rights were built on hierarchy of proprietorship in which actual cultivators and agricultural labourers stood at the bottom level. The land relations and tenurial system were based upon customary pattern sharing the produce between the actual producer and the owner proprietor or the 'jenmi'. Without properly understanding the customary land relations that was in existence in Malabar for centuries, the colonial authorities interpreted the customary 'janmam' right as absolute ownership of property and 'Jenmi' as the absolute owner.¹¹

The 'jenmi' who enjoyed major share of the produce had no interest in cultivation and has generally considered farming as an inferior occupation. In the meanwhile the colonial courts legalised the new land policy introduced by the authorities and also the new feudal relations¹² Consequently to the introduction and implementation of the new land policy by the colonial administration, the 'jenmis' could maintain ownership of large extent of agricultural land comprising several villages, and power to exploit the peasants. The 'jenmis' having acquired so much of land were not even aware of their land situated in the villages, as they could receive land rent at exorbitant rate. They lavishly lived without any work or responsibilities, except for the payment of fixed land revenue to the government and could enjoy a large amount of leisure time. These 'jenmis' mainly the Nambutiri Brahmins in Malabar enjoyed high social status also, remaining at the apex of the caste based hierarchial social order.

Political power together with economic domination and high social status, the Nambutiri Jenmis continued their 'orgiastic' life in the newly

¹¹ T.C.Varghese, , *Agrarian Change and Economic Consequences-Land Tenures in Kerala 1850-1960*, Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1970, p 136.

¹² B.A.Prakash, 'Agricultural Backwardness of Malabar during the colonial period, 1792-1947, An analysis of Economic causes', *Social Scientist*, vol 16, November, 1988, pp 5-6

created colonial ambiances. Their daily life, including both day and nights revolved around numerous leisure activities in the form of playing 'chaturangam' and enjoying or watching classical art forms like 'koothu' and later 'kathakali'¹³

The next group of people in the hierarchical structure of the tenurial relations in colonial Malabar was the 'Kanakkar'. They in fact, acted as the intermediaries between the 'jenmis' and the actual cultivator or 'verumpattakkar'

The Nairs and the Nambiaris, the hereditary warrior classes, traditionally loyal to the Nambuthiris had also enjoyed a secure position in the caste hierarchy, of course below the Nambutiris. Majority of the 'Kanakkar' were either Nairs or Nambiaris in Malabar, who also had considered direct cultivation as something which lowered their social position and social status.¹⁴

The jenmies leased their vast lands to the kanakkars on a fixed rate of rent and in turn, the kanakkars leased the land received by them to many number of 'verumpattakkar', who cultivated the land on a yearly basis, for which they had to pay a high rent to the kanakkar, usually in the form of major share of the produce. The kanakkaran also could live on the surplus produced by the verumpattakkar and other agricultural labourers¹⁵

Although some of the Thiyyas and Muslims of Malabar had enjoyed the position of kanakkar, a vast majority of them were verumpattakkar. Below them were the agricultural labourers, belonging to the Pulayas and other

¹³ The term 'orgiastic' was used by Prof. Elamkulam to denote the uncontrolled luxurious, merry making life of the nambutiris in Kerala Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, National Book Stall, Kottayam, 1970, p.136.

¹⁴ T.C.Vargheese, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

¹⁵ *Ibid*

downtrodden communities, who comprised the bottom level of tenurial relations. The kanakkar had enough spare time to involve in various types of leisure activities. The peasants comprising of verumpattakkar, who had cultivated small pieces of agricultural land on the basis of simple leases typically valid for one year together with the agricultural labourers constituted the vast majority of Malabar society.¹⁶

In fact, the peasants had very little time for leisure activities, as they had to toil all the day long in the agricultural fields. Still they had their own leisure activities and recreation mostly in the form of songs, dance, and activities connected with religious rituals. While the higher sections like the jenmies and kanakkar enjoyed their daily lives with maximum leisure activities, the lower sections had very little time for leisure activities in colonial Malabar.¹⁷

The percentage of population of Malabar in the initial stages of colonial domination, engaged in non-agricultural activities was less than five percent. They usually engaged in trade, commerce, cotton weaving, carpentry, smithy, fishing etc. Malabar had produced a variety of agricultural products like paddy, coconut, betel nut, ginger, pepper, cardamom and agricultural products like jackfruit, plaintains, mangoes etc. The important items of export were pepper, coconut and coconut products, betel nut, cardamom and timber in the beginning of the 19th century¹⁸. The single largest export item was

¹⁶ Radhamani.C. P, 'The Formations and Policies of Colonial agriculture in Malabar', *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, vol.6, issue No.2, March-April 2021, p 466.

¹⁷ For details of Malabar tenancy and tenure relations, V.V.Kunhi Krishnan, *Tenancy Legislations in Malabar, 1880-1970*, Northern book Centre, New Delhi, 1993.

¹⁸ Clemenston P.A, *Report on Revenue and other matters connected with Malabar*, Collectorate Press, Calicut, 1914, pp. 19-20.

pepper which amounted to 45 percent of total value of export from Malabar in 1804.¹⁹

Pepper was hailed as the 'black gold' by the Europeans and the entire power struggles between the European powers in the Indian ocean during the period between 16th and 18th centuries was centred around the monopolisation of pepper trade. Along with trading activities ,colonial period witnessed the growth of plantation economy in Malabar through which the traditional economy got integrated into the modern world economy. The plantation owners in Malabar in the early colonial period were the Europeans. These European owners of plantations introduced new products and scientific cultivation. The colonial authorities extended patronage and encouragement to the owners of plantations. Tea, rubber, teak and spices began to be cultivated with new methods and techniques. Number of plantations sprung in various parts of Malabar in the 19th and 20th centuries.²⁰

Plantation agriculture in Malabar turned out to be an important part of colonial economy, through which traditional economy gradually got integrated into the world economy. The coffee, cardamom, pepper and teak were cultivated in sprawling plantations. The new big scale managerial techniques required by these plantations were in accordance with the international demand for these commodities which also necessitated a large group of labourers. Transition to wage labour in Malabar during the colonial period has to be seen in the context of the emergence and working of the plantations. In 1797 the company established a spice plantation in Anjarakandy, the first of its kind in Malabar ,in Thalassery. After two years it

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.23.

²⁰ *The Asylum Press Almanac and Directory of Madras and Southern India,1917-18*, Madras Times Printing, Madras, 1924, p.839.

was handed over to Murdoch Brown, a Scottish royal officer for 99-year lease. It was he who cultivated coffee, cinnamom, pepper and nutmeg in the 200 acres of the plantation.

The area of the plantation was extended to 3000 acres in due course by confiscating the lands of the natives ²¹ Brown had maintained close relationship with Jonathan Duncan, the then governor of Bombay Presidency. Brown was given liberal grants by the authorities during the inception of the plantation it self. He had built necessary buildings for his stay and for the workers. It is reported that separate accommodation facilities were provided for the employees and workers of the plantation as per their social position in the traditional caste hierarchy.²²

In the first half of the 19th century the British authorities had identified Wayanad as a suitable location for plantations. Coffe was the first crop planted in Wayanad, near Mananthavady between 1830 and 1840, followed by Tea. They even tried cotton plantation in Wayand but later it was discontinued because of unsuitable conditions. Since the inception of coffe plantations in Wayanad, twenty seven small and medium sized estates were started by 1859.²³

By the beginning of the 19th century textile industry had taken its firm roots in England following the industrial revolution and its repercussions were visible in Malabar also. A silk thread making unit was started in Chombala in Kadathanad in 1833. In fact, the major European capital investment in the field of industry was made by the Basel Mission. Their main focus was on

²¹ K.K.N.Kurup, '*European Capital investment in Malabar*', *Malabar Mahotsav Souvenir*, M.G.S.Narayanan (ed.), Calicut, 1993, p.431.

²² P.Mohandas, *A Historical Study of the Colonial investments in Malabar and the Nilgiris in the 19th century*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Calicut, 2014, p.66.

²³ Joshy Mathew, '*Plantation Economy in Colonial Malabar with reference to Wayanad*', *proceedings of Indian History congress*, vol.67, 2007, pp.730-737.

weaving and tile factories .Basel Evangelical missionary Society or Basel Mission, founded in 1816 had sent their trained men to Malabar during the 1830s with the primary objective of proselytisation.

The Basel Mission had to provide jobs for the newly converted ones who suffered violence and social boycott at the hands of the land lords and caste – communities. A vast majority of the converts were from the lower castes including Thiyyas and Pulayas. It was in this background of newly created socio-economic milieu that the mission authorities decided to start weaving and tile factories in Malabar with the primary object of providing secure life to the new converts. Thus Basel Mission factories were started in the major British centres of Malabar like Kozhikode, Farook, Kodakkal, Thalassery and Kannur²⁴ While the caste-stratified society of Malabar and its stagnant economy posed a challenge to the evangelical ideas of the missionaries, conversion proved to be a viable means of recruiting and disciplining an industrial labour force.²⁵

Establishment of the large industries involved recruiting and disciplining of a sufficiently large labour force .The labour force itself consisted mainly of converts with different backgrounds. In fact, it was the expulsion of the converts from the traditional caste related occupations that prompted the Basel Missionaries to initiate economic activities. The social engineering effected spread of basic literacy, inter caste marriages of the converts and the factory environment under which the converts worked. To the persons belonging to Thiyya and Cheruma castes who contributed the majority of converts, conversion offered for social mobility, chances for

²⁴ K.K.N.Kurup, *Op.Cit.*, p.432.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

obtaining basic literacy and to shed the vestiges of the caste system like untouchability.²⁶

The modern education system introduced and implemented by the British in Malabar brought fundamental changes in the traditional society. The European Christian missionaries encouraged and financed by the colonial administrators were the first to implement modern education system in Malabar during the first half of the 19th century. The Basel Missionaries who had arrived at the coast of Malabar became very active in places like Nettur-Thalassery, Chova-Kannur, Puthiyara- Kozhikode, Chombal, Kodakkal, Parapperi, Chalissery, Palakkad, Vaniyamkulam, Manjeri etc. They worked mainly among the backward sections of the society²⁷. In continuation of their mission, the Basel mission opened 42 elementary schools in Malabar and textbooks for these schools were prepared by scholars of the mission²⁸. The European Christian missionaries adopted colloquial Malayalam language as the medium of instruction in the beginning before switching over to English and for this they prepared some Malayalam text books for the use in their education centres.

The Basel Missionaries established many number of schools in which students from all sections were admitted irrespective of their caste affiliations. They opened up elementary Vernacular school at every station. The first mission school at Tellichery was founded by Dr.Rev Herman Gundert in 1839. An English Mission school was started in Kannur by Samuel Hebach,

²⁶ Jayaprakash Raghavaiah, 'Basel Mission Industries in Malabar' M.G.S.Narayan (ed.), *Malabar Mahotsav Souvenir*, Calicut, pp.143-144.

²⁷ Muhammedali.T.N, 'Colonial Education: Public Sphere and Marginality in Kerala: The case of Mappilas in Kerala society', Kunhali.V(ed.), *Historical Perceptions*, Department of History, University of Calicut, 2002, pp. 86-100.

²⁸ Chumar Choondal, 'The Missionaries and Malayalam Journalism in Malabar', M.G.S.Narayanan (ed.), *Malabar Mahotsav*, Calicut, 1993, p.140.

one of the pioneer Basel Missionaries.²⁹ In 1846, the small girls' school was opened at Calicut in 1846. The Mission school started at Palakkad in 1867 admitted only boys in its early stages, but later girls were also admitted.

Although the number of students admitted in these Mission schools were not large, they began to increase in due course and by 1870s the number of students increased enormously³⁰ The trend in the growth of elementary schools was continued in the subsequent decades also.

The missionaries had received many funds and favours from colonial administrators. The Malayalam school of 1843 established in Calicut was supported by H.V.Conolly, the then district collector of Malabar³¹ Even though the prime objective of the missionaries in Malabar was proselytisation, their contribution in the spread of modern education among the masses of the malabar society, especially during the 19th century was remarkable. In many ways they tried to idealise the colonial government. But in doing so they introduced liberal, western, modern education in Malabar and it became a major factor which eventually contributed for the modernisation of the society.³²

The colonial government's attention to the cause of promotion of modern education began at a later period. Even the development of education

²⁹ K.P.Varid, *Herman Gundert*, title of the book National Bookstall, Kottayam, 1973, p.49.

Also see, Frederick Sunil Kumar, '*Contribution of the Basel Mission to Education in Malabar*' K.N.Ganesh (ed.) *Exercises in Modern Kerala History*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sangham, Kottayam, p.85.

³⁰ B.A.Prakash, *Op.Cit.*, p.57.

The number of students had increased from 1013 in 1886 to 27527 in 1878.

³¹ Shinoy Jesinth, *Urbanity and Spatial Processes*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Kalady, 2013, p.167.

³² Sudheer Kumar.P, *Education and Political Consciousness in Kerala with special reference to Malabar, 1900-1950*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Department of History, University of Calicut, 2014, p.205.

which began after 1835 was strictly based on the infiltration which gave more emphasis to higher levels of school education and collegiate education than primary education. The colonial government had started public schools at centres like Calicut, Thalassery, Kannur, Malappuram and Palakkad. The introduction of modern public education by the colonial authorities among the natives of Malabar was indeed a part of their imperialistic agenda of the 'civilizing mission' of the 'heathen' people of colonies and it was in this camouflaged pretext that they began educating the natives. The colonial education system mainly tried to develop an educated group of people who would satisfy the administrative and military requirements of the colonial state. One of the important characteristics of the colonial administrative system was that it touched all aspects of its subjects' lives.

The colonial government was in no way supportive of the old system of education as it did not address the needs of the colonial administration. The government needed English educated people so that they could rule the large illiterate masses in a better way. Gaining access to higher education and consequent employment in government service had been one of the means through which the lower castes especially the Thiyyas had acquired social mobility. The Brennen school opened at Thalasseri by the Basel Mission was taken over by the Thalassery Municipality and raised to a second grade college in 1890, affiliated to the University of Madras. In 1919 it was taken over by the government and renamed as Government Brennen College. Similarly, the Rate school started at Palakkad in 1866 was taken over by the government in 1919 and named as government Victoria³³

The two private colleges in Calicut, the Zamorin's College and the Malabar Christian College were responsible for spreading higher education in

³³ V.Karthikeyan Nair, Documentary History of Higher Education in Kerala, The Kerala state Higher Education Council, Trivandrum, 2011, p 13

Malabar. Malabar Christian College at Calicut and Brennen College at Thalassery had been in the fore front in providing higher education to the lower castes ³⁴ Certain leading public figures of Calicut/Malabar also had taken interest in imparting education facilities to the common people especially to the lower castes. The lower caste children were not given admission to the Zamorin's College and as a protest to this, D.Ganapathy Rao, the then educational activist of Calicut opened a school in 1886, known as the Native school, which was later re-named as Ganapathy school ³⁵ In the meanwhile activities were going on to impart modern education to muslim children, who as a community turned their face against the European modern education in the beginning stages of colonial occupation. Maulana Chaliyakath Kunhahammed Haji had contributed much for the development of education among the Muslim students. In 1909 he was appointed as the mudiris/religious scholar of Vazhakkad in Kondotty taluk, where he introduced elements of modern education to both boys and girls of muslim community.³⁶

The overall growth of modern education among the various sections of the society of Malabar, irrespective of their religious and caste affiliations, heralded changes in the general social awareness of the people. Whatever may be the reason behind the implementation of modern education in Malabar, it caused tremendous changes in all aspects of social and cultural life of the people of Malabar towards the end of the 19th century. Instead of the traditional and conventional education, the modern education introduced new

³⁴ Sreejith.K, *Middle Class in Colonial Malabar; A Social History*, Manohar Publishers, Delhi, 2021, p.124.

³⁵ A.C.Govindan, *Mukha Parichyam*, K.R. Brothers, Kozhikode, 1959, p.87.

³⁶ A.P.Ahammad, *Muslim Navoathanam Chila Keraleeya Chithrangal*, Kairali Books Private Limited, Kannur, 2018, pp.68-72.

(Also see, Ajmal Mueen, *A Historical Probing into the Life and Reforms of Muslim Women in Malabar*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, University of Kannur, 2018, p.11.)

values embedded in rational scientific awareness. This enabled the educated people to question and challenge old values and customs and eventually they turned out as the ardent imitators of western culture and its cultural practices like games and leisure activities.

The growth of press in colonial Malabar could be considered as an extension and continuation of the development of modern education. The Christian missionaries especially, those belonging to the Basel Evangelical Mission and Church Mission society played vital roles in the growth of printing and press in Malayalam. The prime motive of the introduction of press in Malabar was the diffusion of the Christian ideas among the newly educated literary people of the region. The Basel Mission at Thalassery headed by Dr Rev. Herman Gundert published the first newspaper in Malayalam in Malabar, named 'Rajya Samacharam' in 1847 and in the very next year, Arch Deacon Koshy and Rev. George Nathen published 'Jnana Nikshepam' another newspaper in Malayalam.³⁷ Yet another Malayalam journal published from Thalassery was the 'Paschimodayam' with Rev. F. Muller as the editor.

These journals acted as the catalysts of imparting wide varieties of knowledge among the literate people of Malabar. It is believed that most of the articles in these journals on various secular subjects like astrology, antiquity of Kerala, natural science, geography etc. were prepared by Dr. Gundert.³⁸

³⁷ Anoop V.S, 'Press in Malabar before 1947-A Historical Review', *Journal of Applied Science and Computations*, Vol.V, Issue XII, Dec. 2018

³⁸ Herman Gundert (1814-1893), the German missionary, scholar and linguist is better known for his contribution as an Indologist and for his compilation of the first Malayalam grammar book "Malayala Bhasha Vyakaranam (1859). He worked primarily at Thalassery and also contributed for the growth of education in Malabar especially among the lower caste people.

Skaria Zakharia (ed.), *Thalassery Rekhakal*, DC Books, Kottayam, 1994.

Another important factor which shattered the traditional existing caste based social order and mobility in Malabar and helped the growth of colonial modernity was the improvements made in the fields of transportation and communication. These development ³⁹programmes were carried on through three distinct stages, each stage representing a different system, meant for the exclusive incorporation of the region of Malabar into the dominant world system. The change from one stage to the other was the result of the colonial policy of resource extraction and appropriation. These three stages of transport infrastructure development were marked by the beginning of artificial canal construction, roads construction and the introduction of railways. The colonial state in Malabar was just adopting the scheme of experiments already put in practice in the transport sector of the mother country ⁴⁰. The improvement of transport and communication provided an opportunity to the people of Malabar to interact with each other irrespective of their class, caste, cultural and gender identities.

Rivers and backwaters were the major means of transport and communication network that existed in Malabar till the colonial occupation ⁴¹. In fact, the colonial administration took no steps to improve the canal during the initial stages of its occupation. It was in the 1840s that the authorities took steps to improve the existing canals and to construct a few artificial ones so as to facilitate improvements in transport. The important canals in the Malabar region like the Payyoli, Canolly, Ponnani and Vatakara were constructed

³⁹ C.Balan, *'Resource Appropriation and Development of Transport Facilities in Kerala during the Colonial period'*, *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 2007, Vol. 67, p.739.

⁴⁰ B.A.Prakash, *Economic History of Kerala from 1800 to 1947, Part I Malabar'*, Economic Studies Society, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018, p.45.

⁴¹ P.Ibrahim, *'The Development of Transport Facilities in Kerala, A Historical Review'*, *Social Scientist*, No. 8, Vol.6, Trivandrum, 1978, pp.34-35.

during the two decades between 1840 and 1860⁴² As the construction of new artificial canals and repair of existing canals hastened transportation of goods and other materials, the colonial administrators viewed ferry as a source of revenue and subsequently ferry tax was imposed. The archival records speak about the opening of a public ferry across Karimpuzha in Eranad taluk.

By 1880s with the completion of canals at Ponnani and Chowghat, the inland water communication network connected Tirur railway station to Cochin⁴³ The ferry centres of Connolly canal were at Elathur, Karaparamba, Eranhipalam, Puthiyara and Kallai⁴⁴ Among these ferries only Eranhipalam had the facility to load and unload goods. Thus it soon developed into an important public space and commercial centre within the urban space of Calicut⁴⁵

Most of the pre-colonial trade routes on land were transformed into roads by the colonial government in Malabar through which army and goods were transported from one place to another. Bullock carts and other similar carriages were generally used. Tipu, the Mysore sultan, during his conquest and occupation of Malabar had constructed many roads throughout the breadth and width of the region. Even the Britishers had hailed Tipu as the 'pioneer of roads in Malabar'.⁴⁶ The construction of roads in Malabar have

⁴² RAK, *Revenue Files, B 524/4* (Also see, *Madras Entertainment Tax Act 1939, G.O.MS 2266 dated 23.10.1940 From the Board of Revenue*)

⁴³ B.A.Prakash, *Op.Cit.*, p.46.

The total length of this system of inland navigation was 93 miles of which 77 miles were in Ponnani taluk.

⁴⁴ The Hindu, Calicut, 05-01-1-2005.

The Conolly Canal was constructed in the year 1848 under the orders of the then collector of Malabar, H.V.Conolly, to facilitate movements of goods to Kallai port from the hinterlands of Malabar through Kuttiadi and Korapuzha river systems.

⁴⁵ T.B.Seluraj, *Kozhikodinte Paithrukam*, Mathrubhoomi Books, Calicut, 2011, p.273.

⁴⁶ C.A.Innes & F.B.Evans, *Madras District Gazetteers*, Madras, 1951, p.268.

also been influenced by military and law and order considerations, apart from the transportation of goods. The frequent occurrences of the ‘Mappila outbreaks’ during 1830s and 1840s necessitated the government to construct new roads in Malabar, to carry goods and army in order to facilitate early action to suppress the revolt. A number of roads were constructed and by 1880s Malabar had about 97 roads covering a distance of 482 miles in total, connecting Calicut with other important places and neighbouring districts. Archival records also provide information on ghat road that connected Mysore with Calicut ⁴⁷. Archival records also list the number of roads in the district of Malabar⁴⁸

The British introduced railways to India primarily for the transportation of goods and raw materials from the hinter lands to port cities as well as for the free movement of army between different parts of the country. The reasons for the introduction of railways in Malabar were not different either ⁴⁹ The railway line constructed between Beypore in Calicut to Madras passed through several commercial centres.

To accelerate the movement of goods from Calicut port, the authorities had constructed a tramway from Beypore port to Calicut town as early as 1862⁵⁰

(Also see, Sharafunnisa C.H, ‘*City Life in Colonial Days: The Case of Malappuram Town 1800-1947*’ T.Muhammedali (ed.) *Social History*, Farook College, Calicut, 2017, p.46.)

Francis Buchanan certifies Tipu’s ‘Gun Roads’ between Malabar and Mysore as ‘the best in India’, see his ‘A Journey from Madras Through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, Asian Educational Service, Delhi, 1988, p.435.

⁴⁷ RAK, *Board Proceedings*, 35/45, Government of Madras. 1866.

⁴⁸ RAK, *Revenue folded files 9, S3, Regarding list of roads in the district of Malabar July 1878*.

⁴⁹ P.Ibrahim, *Op.Cit.*, p.36.

⁵⁰ Anas Ali, ‘*Football in Colonial Malabar*’, *The Introduction of the; Beautiful Game* 1900-1940, *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Vol 77, 2016, pp.749-750*.

A number of bridges were also constructed in Malabar during this period connecting railway lines, roads and canals. One of the earliest bridge to be built in Malabar was across the river Kallai in 1813, which was renovated in 1862. The proceedings of the then Madras government revenue department of 1862 speaks about the construction of the Pulamanthal bridge over Tutapuzha⁵¹ These newly constructed bridges also helped to connect people of two different areas and created more space for the people of different localities to interact with each other.

The colonial period was also marked by the improvement in the means of communication system in the Malabar region. Wireless stations were started at the headquarters of the Malabar district police⁵² Strict instructions were given by the authorities to the trainees for using the wireless system and privated messages by wireless were strictly prohibited. It was treated exclusively for the use of government purposes only.

The material and physical conditions set up by the changes in land relations, revenue administration, rule of law, education, transport and communication etc paved way for fundamental changes in the traditional society of Malabar. The overall changes helped the native people belonging to different sections and caste groups belonging to the different parts of the district to come and know each other and these interminglings opened up new vistas of social relations. As the colonial authorities had no concern for the caste rules and regulations as long as their authority and law and order are not threatened, the lower caste people utilising the benefits of the changed circumstances began to come up to the open public places, which were forbidden for them in the pre-colonial days.

⁵¹ . RAK, *Proceedings of the Madras Revenue Department, No 3163,06-06-1867*

⁵² Innes and Evans, *Op.Cit.*, p.392.

The emergence of public places were the pre-requisite for changes in leisure activities and recreation to be experienced in public. The development of public places in colonial Malabar was the result of the political, social and economic changes brought about by the colonial rule. Public place is a place that is generally open and accessible to all sections of people. Every one has a right to access and use public space, which is exactly opposite to private space which is embedded in different types of restrictions.⁵³ In pre-colonial days there was no such distinct public spaces in Malabar where not all had the accessibility due to the rigid caste restrictions and regulations. Public place in colonial India became a new object of discourse during the period of 19th century.

It was generally considered a social place open and accessible to all people. The public spaces in Malabar opens up new vistas for all types of people to intermingle with each other irrespective of their caste affiliations and restrictions. This was for the first time Malabar had experienced such an open discourse between different sections of people in a common place. The material conditions along with ideological penetrations precipitated by the colonial governmentality was responsible for this new experiences.⁵⁴

New social relations began to come up in Malabar during the 19th century between the new social classes that had emerged as a result of the colonial experimentations. However, these new social classes had been organised on the basis of the age long caste system, as even colonialism and its administrative changes could not basically shatter the fundamental framework of caste system. The Brahmins still enjoyed superior status in the society as their economic dominance in the society was not demolished by the

⁵³ *International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*, University of Warwick, UK, 2009.

⁵⁴ Sudip Kaviraj, 'Modernity and ethnicity in India: A History For the present', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 30-03-1995, p.3378.

revenue reforms of the colonial government. As they enjoyed the superior social and economic status in the society they gradually turned their face against modern education and other positive administrative reforms of the government in the earlier stages of colonial domination.⁵⁵ As the most tradition oriented group the Nambutiri Brahmins firmly rejected exposure to western education and took no active part in commerce, industry or civil service. Their leisure activities remained within their families and to the maximum extent within the Nambutiri community itself and they generally avoided the newly created public spaces.

In the caste hierarchy, Nairs and their sub castes like Nambiar, Kurup, Adiyodi etc had enjoyed a dominant position because of their close alliances with the Nambuthiris.⁵⁶ It was the colonial policy not to disturb or weaken the social status of the privileged classes like the Nairs.⁵⁷ The colonial authorities found Nairs a natural ally as they were the managers of the landed property of the Nambuthiri jenmis. The Nairs came forward to utilise the colonial public places provided and began to involve in different types of leisure and recreation of the colonial modernity. In fact, colonial modernity and growth of public spaces went hand- in –hand in Malabar during the 19th century.⁵⁸

The Thiyyas, who had suffered oppression and suppression from the upper castes for centuries now found a new environment under colonialism to

⁵⁵ Edward Said writes that “each particle of brahmin tells of his Brahmanness, so much so that the attribute of being Brahmanical over rides any counter vailing instance”.

Edward Said, *Orientalism*, Pantheon Books, New York, 1978, p.321.

⁵⁶ F.Fawcett, *Nayars of Malabar*, Asian Educational Service, Madras, 2004, p 122.

⁵⁷ G.Aloysius, *Nationalism without a Nation in India*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997, p.49.

⁵⁸ J.Devika, *Imagining Women’s Social Space in Early Modern Kerala*, Working Paper no.329, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, 2002, p 9.

seek for their self-identity. The general disclaimment and disregard towards the practices of the caste system by the colonial authorities opened up new public passages through which the lower caste people like the Thiyyas were able to make their headway towards modernity. The Thiyyas had a traditional background of caste based conventional education and knowledge as 'vaidyans' or customary physicians. It could be argued that they found a 'safety valve' in the fundamental changes brought about by the colonial authorities in the realms of education, administration, trade and commercial activities. They had maintained close affiliation with the regional authorities of the colonial government in Malabar and were involved in trading activities, thus emerged as an influential group in the colonial Malabar society. They had outnumbered the Nairs in Malabar towards the end of the 19th century in population⁵⁹

In 1844, the colonial government in India declared that preference to colonial government services would be given to those persons who had acquired English education.⁶⁰ As the services under the British were reserved for the English educated, there was a feeling of surety that an English educated person would get a job in government service. The Thiyyas went for English education offered by colonialism as they had no caste inhibitions in going for the new ventures.⁶¹ This approach helped them to use the public space created by the colonial authorities and participate in the newly introduced leisure activities and recreation.

⁵⁹ According to the Census of 1881, the number of Thiyyas were 5, 59,716 and Nairs 3,21,674.

See, P. Bhaskaranunni, *Pathonpatham Nuttandile Keralam*, Kerala Sahitya Academy, Kottayam, 1988, p.217.

⁶⁰ Crouzet et.al(ed.), *Studies in the Cultural History of India*, Shiva Lal Agarwala, Agra, 1965, p.32.

⁶¹ K.K.N.Kurup, *Modern Kerala Studies: Social and Agrarian Relations*, Mittal Publications, Delhi, 1988, pp. 83-84.

The lowest stratum of the society occupied by the Dalits comprised of Pulayar, Cherumar and Parayar in colonial, by tradition had no opportunity to enter into the public place and other facilities offered by the colonial authorities. even though the missionaries had provided them elementary education, it did not prove enough for them to come out of the age old servitude and enter into the newly created public space. These untouchable communities had to remain aloof from modern education due to caste inhibitions, economic backwardness and cultural degradations ⁶² They had identified that the new public spaces crested by colonialism was not meant for them and they remained aloof from the leisure activities and recreation of colonial modernity.

In general, the Mappila Muslims of colonial Malabar, especially the majority of them residing in south Malabar had shown a consistent negative attitude towards the colonial modernity and its appropriations. In fact the Muslims in south Malabar, at the time of the colonial occupation of Malabar were still lingering on the memories of the privileges they had enjoyed during the period of Mysorean occupation.

They maintained an approach of enmity towards the colonial authorities and so they turned their faces against the public spaces created by colonialism. But that was not the case with all sections of Muslims especially in north Malabar, in and around Thalassery, one of the important centres of British administrative centre of Malabar. They maintained close relations with the British ⁶³ The Keyis of Thalassery, a predominant section of the Muslims in the coastal areas of north Malabar was one of the early modern merchant

⁶². P.Sanal Mohan, *Modernity and Slavery: Struggles against Caste inequality in Colonial Kerala*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 2015.

⁶³. Scaria Zacharia, *Op.Cit.*, p.122.

groups to make comfortable alliance with colonial administration ⁶⁴ At that period the English at Thalassery was in continuous struggles with other European trading companies in Malabar and they needed loyal and faithful intermediaries, who were not only proficient in the local language, but also conversant with local economic conditions and current political under pinnings. So, they sought the support of local merchant to ensure cheap and easy supply of spices from various hinterlands of Malabar region. It was in this context, that the keyi merchant family of Thalassery became the ally of the English Company ⁶⁵

The Keyi Mappila Muslim merchants had a tradition of commercial activities in the pre-colonial period and they saw that the alliance with the English company would help them to expand their commercial activities ⁶⁶ all along the western coast of the Indian sub-continent. They, in due course emerged as the most influential and affluent trading group in the Malabar coast during the early British colonialism

The Keyis had no reluctance in utilising the newly created colonial public places and involve in the leisure and recreation activities along with the Europeans. The Keyis with their secular ⁶⁷ approach started intermingling with other communities. They not only played various modern sports and games, but also played a distinctive role in popularising them. With the support and patronage of the Keyis, a number of hockey, football and billiards clubs were

⁶⁴ K.K.N. Kurup, *History of Tellicherry Factory*, Sandhya Publications, Calicut, 1985, p.32.

The English East India Company had established their trading centre at Thalassery as early as in 1694.

⁶⁵ Santosh Abraham, 'The Keyi Mappila Muslim Merchants of Tellicherry and the making of Coastal Cosmopolitanism on the Malabar Coast', *Asian Review of World Histories*, No.5, 2017, p.148.

⁶⁶ K.K.N.Kurup, E.Ismail, *Thalasseryile Keyimar*, The State Institute of Languages, Trivandrum, 2009, p.53.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

formed in and around Thalassery. It is interesting to note that in a small town of Thalassery had more than one club for one game like cricket. They spent large amount of money to form sporting clubs and to organise competitions.⁶⁸

It could be argued that the Thiyyas and Keyis were the two communities in Malabar to first use the public places created by the colonial government. They enjoyed their leisure in these newly created public places, thus transforming the caste-oriented leisure activities of pre-colonial Malabar into a secular and democratic activity.

It was in contrast with the leisure experiences of the pre-colonial era, where the institution of caste had prevented lower caste people from entering public spaces. The colonial modernity prepared the necessary social contours for the people of Malabar to involve in newly introduced leisure activities, irrespective of their caste leanings.

British Colonists in India was well established due to military superiority, economic exploitation, political intrigues, etc but it was strengthened and sustained as much by cultural hegemony also. Cultural knowledge and practices of the colonizers were inculcated in the traditional cultural traits of the colonised which in due course created a hybrid cultural form both European and Indian, in which towards the later stage, the European or British cultural traits dominated the Indian. The ideological trajectories of cultural colonialism provided new strengthening forces to colonialism in India. It was a deliberate attempt of the Britishers to dominate the natives culturally and leisure activities of various types turned out to be a modality of colonial hegemony.

The newly emerged middle class along with Christian missionaries worked together to change the Kerala society in an unprecedented manner.

⁶⁸ M.S.A Rao, *Social Change in Malabar*, popular Book Depot, Bombay, 1957, passim.

The village-based caste-oriented Kerala society changed with new aspiration, dreams and leisure concept. And they came across new production system, communication system, new transport system. New public places which were earlier unknown had emerged. Missionaries and some enlightened individuals who represented the aspirations of middle class started many educational institutions in the form of schools. These educational institutions highly influenced the traditional society. The rising middle class in the urban centres were seeking spaces to spend their leisure time, spaces for recreational activities etc. Their enquires led to the formation of clubs, conversion of productive areas into centres of leisure and recreation.

Leisure and recreation became a part of the various aspects of colonial domination and colonial discourse through which the colonial authorities could maintain an epistemological domination upon the Indians. The epistemological domination was a part of the larger discourses of colonialism in India during the 19th century ⁶⁹ Cultural colonialism was in fact an extension of political colonialism and one of its exhibits was leisure activities. The significance of leisure was reflected in politics, society, economy and even in aesthetics. It was in this background colonial leisure and recreation made its impact in the Malabar society and these leisure and recreation activities of colonial Malabar are discussed in the next chapter.

The fourth chapter tries to analyse the diversified spatial and timely interferences effected by the colonial authorities in the leisure activities in Malabar. New European games and sports were popularised through several aspects including educational institutions together with the opening of new spaces like maidans, cinema halls, clubs, circus, drama halls, bungalows etc.

⁶⁹ Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1997, p.3.

Chapter Five

TYPES OF LEISURE AND RECREATION IN COLONIAL MALABAR

There is no universally accepted way to categorise leisure activities, as they change according to time and space but they cover all physical and mental activities of human beings instead of working. In Malabar, in the period of colonial modernity changes occurred in the modes of leisure activities either individual or social.

During the colonial period the British introduced some characteristic changes in Indian leisure activities. In the initial stages of British colonialism they had tried to imitate the existing cultural traditions of leisure. But from the mid 19th century along with promotion of traditional types of leisure the Britishers introduced new concept of leisure in Malabar also, as elsewhere in colonial India. They started a new type of leisure for themselves in which the natives had no right to participate and the Indian elites or aristocrats began to imitate the British culture of recreation and leisure and got involved in it.

The British helped to shape a centralised administrative system in Malabar. They encouraged the creating facilities for a wide section of people, set up postal and banking services, built roads and railways and introduced cash crop production as the basis for the economy. In doing so, the British laid the infrastructure for modernisation on the Malabar coast¹ Only in the 19th century, urbanisation started to emerge on the Malabar coast at a snail pace. The Second half of the 19th century witnessed a systematic increase in the number of towns and increase in the size of the already existing trading

¹ Raja Lekshmi K., *Urbanisation in the state of Kerala, 1961-2001*, University of Madras, 2005, p. 103.

centres.² .These towns and trading centres became the centres of new forms of leisure.

One of the striking transformations that took place in Malabar during the colonial rule was the evolution of leisure from individual leisure to public or social leisure. This was due to the emergence of powerful trading community which represented the interests and aspirants of the middle class. The new middle class emerged without the distinction of caste, community and religion. Here caste distinctions gave way to class distinctions. Samuel Aaron, the proprietor of the aaron weaving establishments at Kannur and Rarichan Moopan at Kozhikode are best examples. But during the early stage only a small section of the society consisting of colonial employees and professionals along with the commercial and trading elites could enjoy this.³ The newly emerged middle class was a part of the colonial modernity⁴

A sense of satisfaction was created among the British with their success in establishing complete domination over Malabar society. This satisfaction paved way for the introduction of British modes of leisure activities in Malabar towards the end of the 19th century. They led a happy and luxurious life and added or initiated new ventures in leisure and recreation activities. Besides the British, the local ruling classes, land lords, elite class and educated middle class of Malabar were also involved in modern leisure activities. Thus the colonialists began to dominate over the minds, selves and culture of the colonised people of Malabar and it all became a part of colonial modernity. In fact, leisure constituted a tool for imparting

² *Ibid.*, pp.103-104.

³ D.Damodaran Namboodiri, '*Caste and Social Change in Colonial Kerala*' P.J.Chcrian (ed.)*Perspectives on Kerala History*, Kerala Gazetteers, Thiruvanthapuram,1999, p.426.

⁴ Jiji K.V, '*In search of an Alternative Space; the Late Nineteenth Century Calicut Cosmopolitan Club and the National Elite*', *Indian History Congress*, Mumbai,2012, p.2.

cultural imperialism towards the end of the 19th century in Malabar, as elsewhere in colonial India. The native people, especially in centres like Kozhikode, Kannur, Thalassery, Malappuram, Palakkad, and the rest of Malabar even with ordinary and scant income were attracted to the leisure activities of the colonial modernity. Thus it became the deeds of the British and the native people, especially the deeds of emerging middle class of colonial Malabar Bungalows

In Malabar, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, under the impact of colonial modernity, changes occurred in the modes of leisure and recreation.⁵The main centres of individual as well as social leisure were the residential quarters of the British officers known as Bungalows. The residential quarters of the Britishers in Malabar were generally addressed as Bungalows by the native people. The bungalow is invariably situated in a large walled 'compound' with generally one main exit to the road on which it is situated. The kitchen, servant quarters, stabling, and room for the carriage and the car, are separate and placed at the rear of the bungalow⁶ Special parties in the form of lunch, dinner which were often supplemented by intoxicating drinks were organised by the British officers in the bungalows. In these parties we often find the presence of native elite ,who were the local collaborators or supports of the colonial administrators. Thus the bungalows became the centres of micro and individual spaces of leisure.

The colonial rule in India introduced many plantations. These plantations were one of their means of exploitation and it brought a drastic

⁵ Sreejith.K,'*The Middle Class in Clonial Malabar*', *A Social History*, Manohar Publishers, New Delhi,2007, p.96.

⁶ C.H. Sharafunnissa, '*City Life in Colonial Days, the case of Malappuram Town, 1800-1947*', *Socialscapes and Locality*, T.Muhammedali (ed.), centre for Social History, Farook College, Calicut, 2017, pp. 45-46.

and radical impact upon the Malabar region ⁷One of the important features of colonial economy in Kerala has been the development of plantations-Tea, Rubber, Teak, Coffee etc. ⁸ The estate managers had their residential quarters in the form of bungalows where they created enough space and time to enjoy their leisure time.

The European officers of the estates were living in typical western fashion. Their residential quarters or bungalows were built in the western European style. Their life styles were entirely new thing to the local people. And the new games and activities of the Europeans were, slowly imitated by the local people. The people knew about the life style of the officers especially food habits, manners, dress code etc from their cooks, menial labourers and the like. The 'coolie' were also a new thing to the natives percolating the colonial culture among the people especially the new habits of consumption that were started⁹ Bungalows were often constructed along the roads of cantonments for officers and in the 'civil lines' for Doss, judges, and other officials to live ¹⁰.The most important bungalows of the colonial Malabar were District collector's bungalow, District Judge's bungalow, Additional District Magistrate's bungalow, Gundert bungalow, Brown's bungalow etc.

Formation of Clubs

The British who were rooted in the colonies began to create their style

⁷ Udayakumar.P, '*Ecological Impact of British Colonialism on Malabar: Some Preliminary Reflections*', *Social scapes and Locality*, T.Muhammedali (ed.), centre for Social History, Farook College, Calicut, 2017, p.82.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.83.

⁹ Udayakumar P, *A History of Kerala Estate -A British Rubber Plantation of the Colonial Period in Malappuram District*, Unpublished M.A.dissertation, NSS College, Manjeri, 2006, p.76.

¹⁰ David Gilmour, *The British in India*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2019, p. 342.

of living in the colonies. Ian J. Barrow calls it as the nostalgia for 'home.'¹¹ It was this factor that prompted them to build such communities and structures as clubs, hill stations, and churches in the style of their home. They maintained a strict British code of conduct and etiquette in these places. By constructing such an 'imaginary Britain', they tried to bring social barriers between themselves and Indians.¹² The club was the social centre of the civil station and the cantonment, more important for officials than for army officers because they had no mess in which to congregate. It was a place you went for leisure, exercise and conversation, where you could be serious or frivolous as you wished.¹³

The middle class, as a class, and their common interest compelled them to unite themselves to safeguard their taste, and form voluntary organisation known as clubs for their leisure and their different types of entertainment. These clubs were comparatively free from restrictions and barricades of the then caste oriented social structure. The newly emerged clubs thus inaugurated the idea and concept of common public secular place in Malabar society.

The club was not an ancient institution, a legacy of the East India Company's rule. In the great cities a few very grand clubs were founded before the 1857 Rebellion, but not in the mofussil until around 1870. Before that year the only meeting places in a station were the church and the coffee shop, after that date, clubs proliferated so fast that almost every station had one within a decade. What the newspaper editor Stanley Reed called 'the aristocracy of the clubs of India'-the Bengal, the Madras and Byculla of

¹¹ Ian J. Barrow, *Making History, Drawing Territory: British Mapping in India, 1756-1905*, Oxford University Press, 2005, p.29.

¹² Jiji K.V., *Op.Ciit*.

¹³ David Gilmour, *The British in India*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2019, p.396.

Bombay-were established in, respectively, 1827, 1831 and 1833, in the same period as the principal clubs of Pall Mall in London¹⁴

Clubs rarely had Indian members before the First World War, but they did not usually feel the need to proclaim their exclusivity.¹⁵ Europeans started the Beach Hotel at Calicut in 1890. It was opened only for themselves. The entry to this Hotel was prohibited to the natives. In the early archival records it is named as the Malabar Club. This factor might be noticed by the Indian middle class of Calicut who wished to get the same platform. The Cosmopolitan Club would be its outcome¹⁶ This club came into existence in 1900 and became an important space for the native urban elite¹⁷The details of this club are found in Almanack and Directory of Madras Presidency. ¹⁸ The cosmopolitan club was a perfect 'secular place' for the rising urban elite which include people who belong to different class backgrounds. The entry fee was very high and it restricted the entry of common people to the club .The club became a centre of leisure and recreation of affluent sections of Calicut and was a symbol of prestige. Similar clubs had also had existed in Tellicherry.¹⁹

Clubs were set up in colonial Malabar even on religious and caste basis.

In 1912 October a club known as S.N.D.P club was inaugurated at Paran hall in Calicut. This club was set up exclusively for the Thiyas of

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.400.

¹⁶ Jiji K.V, *Opcit.*

¹⁷ RAK, *Revenue Folded Files*,312/25.1900

¹⁸ . *Almanack and Directory of Madras and Southern India* (including Nizam's dominions, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin), Directories and Agencies limited proprietors and Publishers, Madras, 1935, p.353.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Malabar. The club was set up at the initiative of C.Krishnan. Almost all the leading citizens who belonged to the Thiya community was present at the time of inauguration of the club.²⁰ The Thiyas in every sense followed or copied the Britishers and set up their same platform, the club. The Kozhikode ladies club²¹ also met at Paran hall. When Lord Loshan, Governor of Madras Presidency, visited Calicut, a tea party was organised by the ladies club at Paran hall. The residence of Krishnan at Calicut was a meeting place for all the cultural and political activists of his time. Gandhi, Malavya, Annie Bessant and so many stalwarts had visited and spoken in Paran Hall. It included a library, women's club and auditorium in its prime. It also housed the SNDP club of Calicut. The Calicut Bank was also founded by C.Krishnan nearby. One part of the complex also housed his Empire Press.²²

Another club sort of an organisation of women that existed in colonial Malabar was Mahila Bharat Sangham. One of their main activities was honouring the woman who had established their identity in different fields. In January 1935 the organisation gave a reception to noted writer Srimati Tharavath Ammalu Amma.²³

Archival records point to the existence of a European club at Kottayam taluk, Vadikkagam desam, Tellicherry. The record prescribes the rules and regulations to get licence for using the state land for recreation purpose of the European club. In the order it is specifically stated that the

²⁰ K.R.Achutan, *C.Krishnan*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society, Kottayam, 1971, pp.82-83.

²¹ For a long time Mulayil Janaki was the secretary of Ladies club, Calicut
See interview with Puthurmadam, Former Deputy Director, PRD, government of Kerala, 22/12/2020. Calicut

²² K.R.Achuthan, *Op.Cit.*

²³ Tharavath Ammini Amma, *Srimati Tharavath Ammalu Amma*, autobiography, Norman Printing Press, Calicut, 1937, p.68.

land assigned to the club shall not be used for political meetings.²⁴ A Muslim club had existed in Tellicherry.²⁵ Although the club was known as Muslim club it consisted of non-muslims including English men, indicating the consolidation of 'secular' public spaces 'originated as a result of the colonial rule. Tellicherry Muslim club mainly consisted of contemporary elite which include businessmen, traders, professionals etc.

Sports and Games in the colleges of Colonial Malabar

Along with colonial modernity, numerous reforms introduced by colonial rule highly influenced the public consciousness and caused the possibility for public places ,and come across with new forms of entertainment in the form of sports and games which were probably almost unknown in the pre colonial Malabar.

For instance schools and colleges established for modern education caused far reaching and unprecedented consequences in the social and cultural life of Malabar, which is evident in the college magazines. College magazines provide information on the importance attained by the physical education in the colleges and also on the organisation or conduction of various modern sports and games. They reveal how colleges the symbols of modern education caused the emergence of public places and became centres of sports

²⁴ RAK, *Tellicherry Sub Collector Office, List II, S No 114, Tellicherry (1938)* The official report sends by J.L.Wood,Sub Colleeor,Tellicherry and is addressed to the collector of Malabar.

According to the record the sole purpose of leasing the foreshore is to obtain a certain amount of privacy for people from the club bathing in the beach.

²⁵ RAK, *Arakkal Records, List No.2, S.no.7506, CA/1109/33*

According to the archival records the club had organised two back to back functions at Tellicherry in September 1933, on 19-09-1933 and 20-09-1933. Both these functions were organised in association with the departure of Khan Bahadur Mir Zynuddin Saheb Bahadur (District & Sessions Judge North Malabar), for Cudappah on transfer. The tea party was organised at the Sada cinema hall and the dinner at Tulsidas upstairs. Thus there many many public halls in Tellicherry emerged during the colonial regime.

and games cutting the barriers of cast, religion, gender etc and proved that such reforms stepped up the process of modernity in Malabar.

Victorian England was the wealthiest country in the world, its apparently inexhaustible wealth coming from colonial expansion had given rise to an upper middle class that, along with nobility, had plenty of leisure time and expendable income.²⁶

The colonial period was marked by the development of modern British sports in Malabar. Schools and Colleges became the main centres of these spectator sports like badminton, tennis, volleyball, hockey, football, cricket etc .The modern educational institutions were largely responsible for popularising the British sports in India/Malabar. The year 1857 was marked by the revolt of Indian rajas, sepoys and peasants against the British Raj .The year was also marked by a silent revolution in India. It was in 1857 that we find the establishment of universities at three centres of British rule in India, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras.

The University of Calcutta was established on 24-01-1857, Bombay university on 18-07-1857 and the university of Madras on 05-09-1857. These universities established in three different corners of the Indian sub continent played a vital part in spreading British sports among the people.

The Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College established by Sir Sayed Ahmad Khan at Aligarh in 1875, St.Xavier's College established in Calcutta in 1860, St.Stephen's College, Delhi established in 1881 etc were the other prominent educational institutions of the 19th century which played a vital part in promoting British sports. The situation was the same in Malabar also. British sports actually opened the doors for the natives to the world of

²⁶ Anindya Dutta, *Advantage India the Story of Indian Tennis*, Westland Sport, Chennai, 2021, p.14.

modernity . For the natives or indigenous people sports and games were a path to civilisation

Sports can evoke a wide range of emotions which comes from inspiration, pride, exhalation, satisfaction, fear, anger, panic, frustration and so on. Sports is a social activity, its production, distribution, and reception can be understood from the sociological history. Sports also connects the individual with the greater society in the locality, province, nation, and globally. Sports often inculcates the concept of domination and subordination, hegemony, oppression, marginalization, dictatorship, whereas it should have an egalitarian, socialist and spiritual inclination.²⁷

During the colonial period great attention was given to physical activities²⁸. The four important educational institutions in Colonial Malabar were Government Victoria College, Palghat, Government Brennen College, Tellicherry, Zamorin's college, Calicut and Malabar Christian College also at Calicut. Victoria college is a first-grade college and the others are second-grade colleges with secondary schools attached to them. The first two are maintained by the Government, and the third was founded and endowed by the Zamorin of Calicut, and has been handed over to a committee of management²⁹ The educational institutions became the breeding grounds of outdoor games. Outdoor games like football, cricket, basketball, volleyball, badminton, tennis and hockey are becoming common. But these are mostly played by students and those who are members of sports clubs. Many have

²⁷ Muhammed Abu Nasim, *Stadiums in Calcutta, a New Genre of Sports Culture*, Notion Press, Chennai, 2021, p.29.

²⁸ Cherukad, *Jeevithappatha*, Current Books, Thrissur, 2005, p.99.

In Cherukad's autobiography there is a reference to drill house meant for the students at Perithanalmana Government High School in Valuvanad taluk of British Malabar

²⁹ C.A.Innes,F.B.Evans(ed.), *Malabar*, Superintendent Government Press, Madras, 1951, p.296.

cultivated a taste for these games and the tournaments have attracted wide public attention³⁰

Zamorin's College, grew out of an English school started by the Zamorin in 1877. It became a second grade college in 1879 and in 1900 it was named the Zamorin's College'. In 1920 the college was thrown open to all classes. In 1925 the management of the college was taken over by the Court of Wards but in 1927 it was handed over to the Zamorin, who in turn entrusted it to a board consisting of seven members.³¹

Originally it was known as Kerala Vidya Sala. According to the college calendar even during the last decade of the 19th century the college had a gymnasium, drama society and various sports clubs. Attendance at gymnastics, according to the time table is compulsory, and no student was exempted except with a medical certificate.³² The drama society, named as The Kerala Amateur Dramatic Society was open to all members of the college and high school classes, which meets ordinarily on Friday nights for recitations and rehearsals of scenes from Shakespeare's various dramas³³ The various sports clubs of the college was placed under a common president who was annually elected by the college council from among the senior masters. The most popular games of colleges were Tennis, Badminton and Football³⁴

³⁰ M.S.A.Rao, *Social Change in Malabar*, The Popular Book Depot, Bombay, 1957, p.187.

³¹ Almanack and Directory, *Op.Cit.*, p.486.

³² *Kerala Vidyasala Calendar*, Vidya Vilasum Press, Calicut, 1897, p.17.

"During the fine weather the gymnastic instructor will be in attendance every Wednesday from 5 to 6 P.M and on Saturday from 7 to 9 A.M to give extra instruction to all students desiring his services with a view to perfecting themselves in the various exercises".

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

The following annual report of the principal of Zamorin's College actually shows the importance given to physical education in school/college "Careful attention is paid to physical culture and students are afforded ample opportunities of developing their physique. The cricket team of this college won the cup in the Rukmini Memorial Cricket Tournament played at Palghat on 20.04.1936. As ill luck would have it ,the team got defeated and lost the cup.To wipe off the disgrace of this , the badminton team scored a splendid victory and won the shield in the tournament played at Kottayi on 1-11-1936..The boys have begun to take a real interest in sports and games and their physique has visibly improved. Our only regret is that in the inter school competitions we don't meet with as much success as is warranted by our athletic activities in the college'³⁵

Along with the boys the modern educational institutions provided space for the girl students. The college authorities gave extreme importance for the entry of girl students in various sports and games .The following passage from the college magazine testify this statement. 'One novel feature of this year was the large number of girls who took part in sports and games. Till now Mr.Kurup was rather handicapped in organising and supervising games and sports for girls. The appointment of Srimathi Narayini Kutti Kovilamma provided him with an assistant who could move freely among the girls and persuade them to come out of their purdah of shyness and physical inactivity. Now that the ice has been broken for once, we hope more and more of them will come forward. The girls took part in the college sports and some of whom are to receive prizes today for their athletic skill. I sincerely hope that this feature will be continued on a grander scale in the years to come and that the girls will prove themselves no less inferior ,if not superior ,to the boys

³⁵ *The Zamorin's College Magazine, Calicut, 1937-38, p. 63.*

on the physical size as well'.³⁶

The annual prize day held on 26th February,1937 featured name of the students who won prizes in various items³⁷ Many of these items were fancy rather funny games.³⁸

The sports items organised for the boys was more than the items organised for the girls. The detailed list of winners in various sports items are provided in the magazine³⁹ Different types of races were organised for boys in the Junior and Seniors categories .The detailed list of winners are also provided in the report⁴⁰ Throwing the Cricket ball and Kicking the Football were the two funny items associated with British sports like cricket and football. The items organised for the senior students include 50 yds dash,100 yds dash, 220 Yds dash,4 40 yds dash, 880 yds dash, hurdles, chatty race, three legged race etc⁴¹

The college report indicates that tug of war was a common and popular item. Items like 220 Yds dash, long jump ,tug of war were organised for the old students of the college. A football match was also organised as part of Annual Sports between old students and present students.⁴²

The extensive number of sports and games organised as a part of annual sports day is a proof for its popularity in schools and colleges. The college calendar of 1938 presents the names of girls who were victorious in

³⁶ *Ibid*, p.5.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.56.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.56-59.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

various sports items. Sports items include 75 yards race, three legged race and tug of war. Tug of war was also organised for the girl students.⁴³

The different principals of the college always stressed the importance of physical education in schools and colleges. This is evident from this description of the principal.' Physical activities of the college were conducted on healthy lines. The want of a good play ground is still a great handicap. Now that there are over 1200 students, it is high time to think of acquiring a suitable plot so that games may be made compulsory in the lower secondary and high school classes also. The various College teams participated in the West Coast and other tournaments and gave a good account of themselves. The Tennis team won the cup at the West Coast tennis tournament. The college teams also took part in the Inter-collegiate football and hockey tournaments organised by the University .There were friendly matches between the old students and the present students. The girls also took a keen interest in the sporting activities under the guidance of the physical Instructors'.⁴⁴

The annual report(1938) of the Principal on sports and games of the college focused on the absence of good play grounds and a popular tournament organised for the colleges of the western coast of the Indian sub continent by the University of Madras, known as West coast Tournament.

The yearly sports report of the college Principal (October 1938) is on Inter Collegiate matches.' Sports and games hold an important place in the life of the students and they really enjoy the games. All the departments of various games turned out good work and every and every section showed improvement. A unique feature of this year's activity is that we took our Football and Hockey teams on tour to Mangalore to play friendly matches

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

with educational Institutions there’⁴⁵ This shows regular occurrence of spectator sports and games all along the western coast.

The physical director of the college had provided minute details on sports tours conducted by the college for inter collegiate matches. 'The tour was enjoyed very much by the students. Our students acquitted themselves creditably in all the matches they played. Our tour to Mangalore was a distinct success. Early this term, we took part in the Tournaments conducted by the athletic association of the Govt. Victoria College, Palghat. In the Inter Collegiate Hockey tournament we were defeated by Malabar Christian College. But in Football we won the first two rounds, defeating Malabar Christian College and St. Aloysius College, Mangalore respectively’⁴⁶ This shows that from the very beginning inter collegiate matches were very popular or common. ‘The divisional finals in Football will be played shortly. If success should be evaluated by the number of matches won, I may say that we had a successful season in football this year’⁴⁷ The Physical Director ended his report with the request to students and teachers to take greater interest in the athletic activities of the College so as to raise the standard of games and sports. The college magazines usually had the photos of the school and class teams of various sports and games

Apart from the sports and games various entertainment programmes were also organised in schools/colleges on the occasion of school day/college day. 'One important feature of this year’s entertainment was the participation of a large number of senior girls of the college who took part in them and contributed largely to the success of the function. The Indian Dance staged

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Physical Director gives the credit of team’s success largely to the enthusiasm and organising ability of the captain, Mr. Krishnan, who stands a fair chance of being selected to represent the university of Madras.

by the two graceful girls of the fourth form was really a superb performance and the background music was perfect'.⁴⁸ There is a note in K.P.Kesava Menon's autobiography about staging of drama in the college.⁴⁹

The schools and colleges were attached together and functioned as a single institution. Both these educational institutions offered much room for sports and games and other forms of entertainment usually conducted or organised on specific occasions. Thus enough space and leisure and recreation time were created for the younger generation to develop their physical and artistic skills. This was done within the frame work of an institution or with the blessings of the state. The channelisation of younger generation's energy was crucial in stabilising the existing political structure. The leisure and recreation time was created in educational institutions to divert the energy and attention of the youth which was very crucial for the existence of colonial state.

Malabar Christian College, Calicut was founded by the Basel Mission as an Anglo-Vernacular school at Kallai in 1848. The school was removed to the Mission compound in 1859. In 1906 school was shifted to its present building. The school was raised to a second grade college in 1909. The management of the college was taken over by the authorities of the Madras Christian College in 1919, but retransferred to the Basel Mission in April 1927.⁵⁰ The college magazines of Malabar Christian College had also got reports and notes on the organisation of sports and games in the college. Sports form an important part of the College activities. Sports and games were organised from the early years of the college. A cricket match was

⁴⁸ *The Zamorin's College Magazine, Op.Cit.*, p.3.

⁴⁹ K.P.Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kalam*, Mathrubhumi Printing and Publishing Co,Ltd, Kozhikode, 1969, p. 18

⁵⁰ Almanack and directory, *Op.Cit.*, p.484.

organised between Basel German Mission College and Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry at Calicut on 03.11.1911 ⁵¹

The following report of the college Principal shows the importance of sports and games in the campus. 'The interest in sports is growing among the students and boys themselves which is shown by the fact that a small group of students started of their own accord a cricket club. The Tennis club, too, is managed by the students themselves with a lecturer as their Secretary. The official clubs conducted by the College are those for football, hockey, volley ball and badminton. Compulsory physical education, has this year, been introduced in the College classes.. Our College at the recent West Coast Tournament won three cups, namely those for football, badminton and relay race'⁵².

Advertisements published in the college magazine is an evidence of the popularity of European sports and games in Calicut ⁵³ The photo of school team which won West Coast Football

Tournament is also published in the magazine ⁵⁴ The college calendar speaks about the organisation of various sports and games in the college

⁵¹ *Basel German Mission College Magazine*, Mangalore, July, 1912, passim

⁵² . *The Malabar Christian College, Annual Magazine*, Mangalore, 1929, p. 63.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

The advertisement states that Spencer & Co. Ltd., Empress Hotel Buildings, Calicut, apart from articles like Wines and Spirits, Tobaccos and Cigarettes, Perfumery and Drugs, silver and E.P. Ware, Stationery also sells Games and Sports Goods.

(B) *The Malabar Christian College, Annual*, 1929, p 71, The advertisement states that S.H.Badsha Saheb & Co, Huzoor Road, Calicut, apart from Indian and foreign piece – goods, fancy articles ,photographic materials also sells Athletic Goods For All Kinds of Sports

These advertisements actually show the consolidation of new forms of entertainment rather leisure, in the form of sports and games etc.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p.31.

⁵⁵The College magazine of 1944-45 has got extensive reports on sports and games. 'In Athletics, things have continued to go well. A very large section of our students are playing some game or other regularly and every bit of space available in the compound is being used under the supervision of our Physical Instructors and other teachers. Besides the compulsory physical training there is provision for football, hockey, basketball, volleyball, badminton and tennis. Physical training has been made compulsory for women students in the College classes. In the West Coast tournaments the college won the Hockey cup, but lost the Football cup which won last year',⁵⁶

The detailed report of the College Hockey ⁵⁷, Volleyball ⁵⁸ Football and Tennis⁵⁹ teams are also furnished in the College magazine. The report on various tournaments indicate the presence of inter collegiate rivalry in games. A defeat or victory in the matches was considered as a shame or prestige for college. Thus by the middle of the 20th century we detect the penetration of modern sports and games in educational institutions. In educational institutions leisure and recreation time was created for the development of modern sports and games which also contributed to the physical wellbeing of the students. Trip matches or tour matches of the college teams was an occasion of enjoyment and leisure for the students ⁶⁰

Inter collegiate matches were very common in colonial India from the second half of the 19th century. In 1890 a cricket match between the cricketers of Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College and St. Stephen's College were

⁵⁵ As per, Malabar Christian College Magazine the annual sports day for the year 1929-30 was held on November 29, 1929.

⁵⁶ *The Malabar Christian College Annual Magazine, Calicut, 1944-45, p.11.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.49.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.51.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.52.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.39-42.

arranged in Delhi to coincide with first Muslim educational Conference. Dr. Syed Ahmad Khan did indeed hope that the students would read the Quran before classes began and play English games after they ended.⁶¹

In the 1940s various sports and games were becoming common in the colleges of Malabar. 'Year by year the college made progress by introducing new spectator sports. In 1945 the college was able to form a Basket-Ball team. We had a strong Basketball team this year .We kept ourselves in form by playing a number of practice matches. In the West Coast Tournament, we were beaten. Although the game went against us, every one of us did his best. The excellent team spirit and the high standard of discipline that we displayed throughout the year are a matter for self-congratulation'⁶² The establishment of colonial rule gave exposure to the girl students to public spaces and to enjoy the modern sports and games

Students' magazines reveal how in schools and colleges, students' tours tried to combine study with the pleasures of picnic .⁶³ This is evident from the description of a trip under taken by the girl students of the College to nearby place, Tikkodi.⁶⁴ Although the trip was to a short distance, it was very important for the girl students who were able to break the shackles of caste system which actually restricted the mobility of the women.

The Brennen College, the smallest of the three colleges, is one of the oldest educational institutions of colonial Malabar. It started in 1862 as a free school. But later amalgamated with the Basel German Mission High school

⁶¹ Ramachandra Guha, *A Corner of a Foreign Field, The Indian History of a British Sport*, Picador, London, 2002, pp.42-44.

⁶² *The Malabar Christian College, Annual*, Calicut, 1945-46, p.51.

⁶³ Sreejith.K, *Op.Cit.*, p.105.

⁶⁴ *The Malabar Christian College, Annual*, 1945-46, *Op.cit.*, p.38.

and named 'B.G.M.Brennen School'⁶⁵It owes its inception to Mr.Brennen, Master attendant at Tellicherry, who died in 1859 leaving Rs 12,000 for the foundation of a school to be called the Brennen school wherein' persons of all creeds and denominations might receive a sound English education'.

Since its opening in 1862, the school has passed through many vicissitudes. The institution was affiliated to the Madras University as a second-grade college in 1891, and since then has done very well.

The management of the college was taken over by government in June 1919.⁶⁶

The college was located in Tellicherry, the headquarters of the northern division of Malabar province. A prominent social group of Tellicherry was the Thiyas, who were the exponents of cricket, circus and cake. Among the spectator-sports, cricket was the most popular game in Tellicherry. Tellicherry was generally considered as the cradle of Kerala Cricket and the cricket in Tellicherry has a long history. According to the cricket legends cricket was introduced in Tellicherry by Arthur Wellesley, first Duke of Wellington, during the early years of the 19th century when he came there to suppress the revolt of Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja against the English East India Company. According to another tradition, former England cricket captain Sir Colin Cowdrey's father, E.A. Cowdrey worked as a manager in the tea estates of Wayanad. He frequently came to Tellicherry and there his son learned the game.

The Principal's annual day report of the college magazine show the prominence of cricket in Tellicherry. 'Cricket and Hockey attracted a large number of students .'Cricket was the most popular game among the students

⁶⁵ *Almanack directory, Op.Cit.*, p.486.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

and utmost use made of the days on which ‘nets’ were possible. It was heartening to witness efforts of our budding cricketers to master the intricacies of the ‘straight bat’ or of ‘spins’ and ‘length’ and in their early enthusiasm, it looked as though we should need ,not one but half a dozen nets’ .⁶⁷The College magazine also had published detailed score lists of the cricket matches. Apart from participating in the various cricket tournaments the college also had organised cricket tournaments .⁶⁸The college followed the policy of “Catch Them Young”. Thus the college had a junior cricket team to promote the young talent in cricket.⁶⁹

The College magazines suggested the importance attached to the sports and games specially the physical activities of the girl students.

‘Women students have been provided with better facilities for games inside the quadrangle and it is our desire to give them exclusive use of play grounds for an all-the week play programme by shifting the men’s play courts to the public maidan where the government has been pleased to permit us to lay out a court for Volleyball and another for Basket Ball’⁷⁰

This points to the attempts of the college authorities to attain gender equality in physical education

“It is gratifying to note that students of the college and high school sections have, on the whole, evinced great interest in the sports and other athletic activities of this institution. Our Girl students did well in the Badminton and Tenekoit Tournaments ⁷¹ conducted by the West Coast

⁶⁷ *The Government Brennen College Magazine*, Tellicherry, 1937 Vol IX, No. 1, p.136.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *The Government Brennen College Magazine*, Tellicherry, 1938, p. 8.

⁷¹ Tennikot, also called ring tennis or tenniquoits, is game played on a tennis-style court, with a circular rubber ring hurled over a net separating the two players, with each

Committee. The Girls' Badminton team beat the local Mission High School in the preliminary round after which they visited Calicut to play in the finals. They were, however, beaten by the Christian College team after a well contested three games set. We dare say that, with improved facilities for games and more practice, our girl students will be able to give a much better account of themselves in future contests of this kind. This is the first occasion in the history of this college when girl students went to another station to take part in games. I congratulate the girl on their sportsmanship. We have also gone through a crowded programme of inter-class tournaments and track and field sports as also athletic competitions, in which girl students of the college and high school sections participated with great zest.”⁷²

The colonial education and educational institutions had created public places which were fulfilled by various types of public leisure and recreation in the form of sports and games. The creation of public places and public games also contributed to the upliftment of girl students who got enough space to develop to establish their gender identity, physical ability and find a space in contemporary male dominated society.

The popularity of sports and games of Govt College Brennen did not confine to the four boundaries of the college. The annual sports day of the college became a pretigious event of the locality and attracted large number of local people. The sporting events of the college was well covered by Mathrubhumi, a leading Malayalam newspaper.⁷³ The news pieces on sports and games of the college was published on two different days and the

endeavoring to catch and return the hurled ring into the opponent's court. The origins of tennikoit are unclear, with some sources caliming a German.

See Interview with *Prof. Charles Susheel Kumar*, Former Head of the Department, Physical Education, Malabar Christian College, 06/05/2021, Calicut

⁷² *The Government Brennen College Magazine*, Tellicherry, 1938, *Op.Cit.*, p.9.

⁷³ *Mathrubhoomi*, Calicut, 31-01-1934.

newspaper provided the entire list of winners of the annual sports.⁷⁴ This newspaper report clearly indicates the deep penetration of modern sports and games in centres of British power like Thalassery. This also points to the clear transformation, transformation from traditional culture to modern culture based on types of modern leisure and recreation. The newly emerged middle class of Malabar ,whose main centres were also the centres of British power, played a vital part in the popularity of modern sports and games.

The Victoria College, Palghat, started in 1860 as a “Rate School”. It was raised to a second grade college in 1888 under the management of the Municipal Council. The management of the college was taken over by the government in 1919 and raised to first grade college in 1925.⁷⁵

In Victoria College also ,sports and games and other forms of entertainment in the form of music and dance were very much part of the curriculum. According to the college notes, throughout the academic year the various teams of the college played a series of friendly matches with teams in the town and elsewhere. ‘Our participation in tournaments was useful in bringing our players into friendly contact with other teams-a fact certainly more important than winning the game.’⁷⁶

The college notes also point to the regular inter collegiate sports competitions. ‘In the West Coast tournament the college was eliminated in the first round in Football and Tennis. In Badminton and Basket-ball the college reached the finals and then lost’.⁷⁷ Victorian college team also took part in the various sporting events held outside the Malabar province.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ *Mathrubhoomi*, Calicut, 13-02-1940

“Brennen College Sports”

⁷⁵ *Almanack directory, Op.Cit.*, p.479.

⁷⁶ *The Government Victoria College Magazine*, Palakkad,1936, Vol.II, No. 3, p.170.

⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p.171.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*.

The college notes indicate that the college's sports calendar was really crowded with sports events and students were very busy throughout the academic year. Besides the official inter collegiate tournaments they also took part in the various local tournaments, inter class tournaments and annual sports, the most important part of the curriculum. The annual college day was also marked by various sporting events. Both the annual college day and sports days was the time of great festivity, entertainment and in a sense offered plenty of leisure time to the students of the college.

During the colonial period colleges became the main centres of spectator sports like Football, Hockey, Tennis Volleyball, Cricket, Basketball etc offered entertainment to those who were involved in it, directly or indirectly.

The college notes state that every student of the college plays some game or other.⁷⁹ The notes points to the systematic selection process of various teams and organisation of inter class tournaments. The lady students of the college often got involved in games like ping-pong, carrom, draughts, bagatelle, ludo and snakes and ladders⁸⁰

The Victorian college team regularly toured Tamil Nadu for inter collegiate matches. According to college notes, in Football ,college team met the Madura division champion in the semi-final round at Trichy. 'Our cricket team toured Ramnad, Sivaganga and Pudukkota during Michaelmas'.⁸¹

'Tennis was considered to be an expensive sport but it made great progress in the college. The college notes state that inspite of the European war (later came to be known as II world war) and higher prices of tennis balls,

⁷⁹ *The Government Victoria College Magazine*, 1937, Vol. iv, No. 1, p.53.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p.70.

⁸¹ *The Government Victoria College Magazine, Palakkad*, 1939, Vol.IV, No.2, p.102.

the college was able to provide one more tennis court, making a total of six tennis courts in all. As many as 75 students are playing tennis daily which is a record for the college. The lady students also entered into the game. Two lady students and fifteen members of the staff are members of the tennis club. The college annually organised number of sporting tournaments⁸²

The annual cricket tournaments held in various parts of central and southern Tamil Nadu actually were of pleasure trips to the participants or students as it is described in one of the articles published in the magazine.⁸³

The college authorities took great attention to protect the play grounds.⁸⁴ The local matches in which the college teams were involved were reported by the contemporary newspapers. The list of winners in the girl students tournament suggest that the collegiate education contributed to the involvement of girls in various sports and games.⁸⁵ Detailed list of tournaments in which the college teams are involved and number of sports events organised in the college in association with annual sports day point to the absorption of modern sports and games in the centres of education. Apart from sports and games like other contemporary colleges drama also developed into an art form and also a favourite recreation item of the students of the college.⁸⁶ Inter collegiate matches between Victoria college and

⁸² . Following were the important tournaments organised at the college

Mannadiar Foot-ball tournament

The Asher Hockey Cup

Victoria Tennis Cup for doubles

The Tennis singles

The Rukmini memorial Cricket Tournament

The Pappa Memorial Badminton tournament

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp.97-100.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *The Government Victoria College, Magazine, Palakkad, 1944, Vol X, p.47.*

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.56.

Kumbakonam college of Tamil nadu was very much highlighted by the contemporary newspaper.⁸⁷

Popularity of Sports and Games and contemporary Newspaper Calicut, the capital of Malabar province by the beginning of the 20th century had become a centre of various types of leisure and recreation activities. Public places were developed in the heart of the city provided various types of entertainment to the people. An official letter found in the Kozhikode regional archives provides glimpses of urban life in colonial Malabar/Calicut.⁸⁸

As noticed earlier numerous changes were evident in the colonial Malabar with the introduction of forms of entertainment and leisure in Malabar. The emerging middle class supported the new sports and games, entertainment, recreational activities and in short new types of leisure. Thus the so called colonial games propagated mainly as a tool of colonial apparatus by the colonial administrators and gained immense popularity mainly with the support of middle class. By the first half of the 20th century various British sports and games became very popular .

Numerous players had emerged and number of tournaments were organised even in remote areas of the district .These locally organised and contested matches and tournaments attracted huge crowds to the play grounds or maidans. They contributed largely to consolidation of public spaces and types of leisure and entertainment. The people of urban areas and rural areas got enough leisure time to enjoy the various sports and games as they provided variety of entertainment to them.

Various sporting clubs of Malabar organised tours to play the matches. The contemporary newspaper Mathrubhumi had provided the minute details

⁸⁷ *Mathrubhoomi*, Calicut, 30.08.1941

⁸⁸ RAK, *Revenue R.dis files*, B .no 78, S no. 26, 1909.

of these locally organised matches and tournaments.

There were many followers for the modern sports and games in Malabar and there were also good numbers of readers for the sports related news pieces. A significant part of the newspaper was set apart for the sports news. Sports news of the newspaper include international, national, regional and local. The international sports news ,not involving Indian teams, were also frequently published.⁸⁹ The matches of Indian cricket team⁹⁰ and the events related to the administration of Indian cricket was also highlighted by the newspaper.⁹¹ Sports and games that took place in various parts of Madras Presidency was also reported with importance showing the presence of plenty of readers for sports news.⁹²

During the first half of the 20th century numerous local tournaments were organised in the breadth and length of Malabar. A volleyball tournament was organised in Chavakkad board school near Guruvayoor.⁹³

⁸⁹ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,08-05-1938.

The newspaper quoted a report released Reuters an international news agency on a cricket match held between visiting Australian cricket team and Oxford. The match ended with the victory of Australia.

⁹⁰ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,13-05-1936.

The newspaper carried the report of Reuter on a cricket match held between visiting Indian cricket team and an English county team Somerset.

⁹¹ *Mathrubhumi*,Calicut,30-07-1941.

The newspaper carried two reports related to Indian cricket. According to the first report Dr.Subbarayan was elected as the president of Indian cricket control board. The report further stated that the president, one of the vice president and secretary were the natives of Madras. According to the second report the invitation of Ceylon to send a cricket team there in March 1942 was accepted by the Indian cricket control board.

⁹² *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 20-02-1935.

⁹³ *Mathrubhumi*,Calicut,31-01-1942

In the local sports tournaments we always find the presence of local elite in the form of British administrative officers like judges, police officers etc. The presence of these dignitarie gave official recognition to these local sports tournaments.

Along with Cricket, Football and Hockey a game that attained popularity in Malabar was Sevens' football.(Sevens' football consist of seven members in a team. Sevens' football is very much popular in north Malabar in modern districts like Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur, Kasargod etc). The Kallassery Youth League ,a prominent sports club of north Kerala, decided to organise a Sevens football tournament to celebrate its 50th anniversary .⁹⁴

The physical fitness of the police force, the military arm of the colonial rule in Malabar was considered to be very important. For the improvement of physical fitnees of the police men sports events were regularly organised. A special sports meet was organised for the police officers of Malabar at Kozhikode. The police meet was attended by police officers representing eleven police circles of Malabar, apart from few Circle Inspectors and Sub Inspectors.⁹⁵

Number of sport events were organised in and around Kozhikode. A local volleyball tournament was organised at Puthiyangadi in Calicut taluk and teams from neighbouring regions took part in it.⁹⁶ Apart from Calicut number of sporting events were conducted in centres like Thalassery and Kannur.. A tournament in memorial of Suthana Ayisha Bibi Memorial fives and single tournament was held at Arakkal police ground in Kannur.⁹⁷

Geographically Mahe was very much part of Malabar province .But politically it was a part of French India. Like in other parts of Malabar sporting events held in Mahe were marked by the presence of sports persons

⁹⁴ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,26.12.1936.

⁹⁵ *Mathrubhumi*,Calicut,03-02-1935.

The newspaper carried a report on Malabar police meet held at Calicut from 30-01-1934 to 02-02-1934.

⁹⁶ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,19-12-1934.

⁹⁷ *Mathrubhumi*,Calicut, 4-5-1943.

and teams of Calicut and Kannur⁹⁸ Friendly tournaments / matches were also regularly held between the sporting teams of different geographical areas. Thus the modern sports and games were used to idealise the existing social system and to promote friendship between various sections of the society⁹⁹ Regular matches were held in centres like Nileswaram located far away from Calicut, between the various sporting teams of Nileswaram and Payyanur.¹⁰⁰ It was usual for the sporting clubs of Malabar to visit other regions to play the matches. The Thalassery sports cricket club annually visited other regions to play matches. Besides playing cricket matches these tours were actually leisure trips.¹⁰¹

Inter training school sports events were organised in various parts of Malabar providing an opportunity for the youngsters to travel to various parts of the region to take part in the sporting events. Improvement in infrastructure encouraged the organisation of more and more inter training school sports events about which we find detailed reports in the contemporary newspapers.¹⁰²

Sports and games and tournaments were also organised in southern Malabar in the present-day districts of Malappuram and Palakkad. The central Malabar inter school tournament was organised in Kottakkal in 1945.¹⁰³ Inter collegiate matches crossing the limits of the 'state' was also very common. Thus, an inter collegiate match was held between government Victoria

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 12.11.1941.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 08-05-1936.

¹⁰² *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 31-1-1942.

¹⁰³ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 12-01-1945.

college Palakkad and St.Thomas college, Trissur. ¹⁰⁴Contemporary newspapers also published reports of the matches held in Kochi. ¹⁰⁵

Sports and games were also organised in association with meeting of various organisations ¹⁰⁶Great attention was given to sports activities of Malabar Special Police which always attracted the attention of the people and journalists. ¹⁰⁷A spectacular annual sports event known as Malabar district inter school sports event was organised at Cherupalasseri and the event was attended by officers from various parts of Malabar. All the 14 schools under the Malabar district board participated in the event and was attended by the local elite and British officers . ¹⁰⁸ This shows the massive influence of sports and games and even the traditional Rajas were coming under its influence.

Cinema Halls in Colonial Malabar

The British rule in Malabar was also marked by the development of amusement and entertainment industries in the form of modern cinema and drama. The most widely diffused agency for spending leisure among the inventions is the motion-picture. Almost all the towns have one or more permanent theatres. Temporary or touring talkies are great attractions to the villagers and people within a radius of two to four miles visit them. We have seen many tribal people attending cinema in groups. With such far reaching

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 06-01-1940
Champion Cup

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 03-03-1940.

¹⁰⁸ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 25-12-1940.

Among the dignitaries who attended the event include, the MSP of Malappuram, MSP Assistant Commandant, Rao Bahadur, Dr.P.K.Varrier, Nilambur Veraraya Illayaraja, Circle Inspector of Police, Perinthalmanna etc. After the event the Nilambur Raja presided over the closing ceremony. He distributed the prizes for the winners and spoke few words on the importance of sports and games and congratulated the winners

range of popularity the motion picture has struck deep roots in the life of the people as a pastime¹⁰⁹

The cinema halls/theatres and the places where dramas staged were developed into public places in the form of public amusement and entertainment industries and they provided the leisure to the general public irrespective of their caste, class and gender identities. In the 20th century, cinema halls were established in various centres of Malabar province pointing to the penetration of entertainment industry.

The first film screening in Kerala took place in 1905 during Onam season at Calicut. The screening was at Muthalakulam maidan. The initiative for the screening was taken by Paul Vincent, a native of Coimbatore. Vincent's screening that was able to accommodate only 25 people. One particular film screened at the tent depicted the moving train which terrified the ¹¹⁰ spectators and in fear they jumped out of the tent. The admission fee was quarter of a rupee. After screening of a moving cinema which lasted for five minutes there was an interval filled with a dance performed by girls. The people of Calicut referred to these film shows as kallikkal. Usually the film screening will last for 45 minutes. The entry fee was very high and it prevented the common man from entering the tent. Paul Vincent's first film screening at Calicut lasted for four days. From Calicut he moved to other parts of Madras Presidency, Mangalore and Mysore¹¹¹

Long before the establishment of cinema halls in Malabar we find the screening of bioscope ¹¹² by Joseph Kattukaran, ¹¹³ on behalf of his company

¹⁰⁹ M.S.A.Rao, *Op.cit.*, p.183.

¹¹⁰ M.Jayaraj, *Malayala Cinema Pinnitta Vazhikal*, Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikode, 2018, pp.41-42.

¹¹¹ Bioscope may refer to an early generic name for a movie camera

¹¹² Jose Kattukaran Varunny Joseph was the first man to screen the film in Kerala. his film screening centre in Trissur was known as Jose Electrical bioscope. The bioscope was

Jose electric bioscope. Bioscope was screened in various parts of South India. According to the records of Kozhikode regional archives, the first screening of Jose's bioscope that took place in 1913, seems to be earlier than the screening of Dadasaheb Phalke's Raja Harishchandra on 3rd May 1913.

These four cinemas were screened in temporary tents. The news of screening bioscope to the public was announced through megaphones. Usually the touring cinema were stationed at places for one or two months. Some of these touring cinema tents were later transformed into permanent cinema halls.¹¹⁴ Jose electric bioscope later came to be known as Ragam theatre, Trissur. United Electric Bioscope company was another touring cinema company. These touring companies screened many Hindi, Tamil and English movies. Touring bioscope performance was very common in Malabar during the early decades of the 20th century. For the performance of bioscope one has to get the permission from the district collector.¹¹⁵ Every cinema show such as travelling bioscope performance always transmits energy at a rate not exceeding 250 wats.

The three prominent cinema halls of Calicut during the colonial period were Radha picture palace, Crown Theatre, Shahjahan hall (later came to be known as coronation theatre) Radha picture palace and Crown theatre were established in 1925 and Shahjahan hall was opened in 1930. At that time there were hardly thirty cinema halls in Kerala and most of them were temporary sheds.¹¹⁶

presented to Jose by a British officer Paul Vincent and with this bioscope he conducted number of touring cinema shows.

¹¹³ Syed Muhammed.P.A.(ed.), *Kerala Charthram*, Kerala History Association, Ernakulam, 1974, p.1072.

¹¹⁴ T.B.Seluraj, *Kozhikkodinte Paithrukam*, Mathrubhoomi Books, Calicut,2011, p.255.

¹¹⁵ RAK, *B.no 195, S.no. 24, Proceedings of the Collector of Malabar, Calicut, 24th February 1916.*

¹¹⁶ Syed Muhammed.P.A, *Op.cit.*

Radha picture palace was established by Bhavani Rao, who was the owner of Mercede U.B,Dutta and Company, whose headquarters was at Calicut. Construction cost of the Radha picture palace was around Rs 20,000. Separate seating arrangements were made for women and there were women employees who accompanied women to their respective seats. It had a capacity of 1300 people. Usually one fourth of the theatre was filled by women. It was a neatly maintained cinema hall with two British flags ,Union Jack and the display of Union Jack was opposed by the local people .¹¹⁷ The movie screened at Radha picture palace on 4th April 1925 was based on an earthquake that took place in San Francisco in 1906. The advertisements of the movie displayed in the newspaper states, entertainment for you, help for the poor patients ¹¹⁸The special benefit film show was organised to raise fund for the eradication of leprosy. Similar benefit film shows were organised at Crown theatre with the collaboration of Malabar Christian College to raise funds for the benefit of poor students of the college. ¹¹⁹ These references show that cinema halls not only provided leisure and entertainment for the people, they were also involved in the social life of the people. Number of movies screened at Radha Picture Palace ¹²⁰

See Interview with Vinod A,Managing Partner,Crown Theatre,29/09/2021,Calicut

¹¹⁷ Haridasan K.P. *Cinema ethiya Vazhi,Kozhikkode Nagaravum Jeevithavum, Sivadasn.P* (ed.), Sahitya Pravartaka Co-operative Society, Kottayam, 2014, p.45.

¹¹⁸ Mathrubhoomi, Calicut,Kozhikkode,03- 24-1925, p. 6.

¹¹⁹ *Malabar Christian College Magazine,Calicut,1944-45, pp.11-12.*

The Annual Cinema show in aid of the Poor Boy's Fund was held on Wednesday, November 22,1944. The gross proceeds were Rs 2590-10-0. The college Principal express thanks to the Manager of the Crown Theatre for giving the benefit show.He also stated that it is the fifth year that the Crown theatre has helped the college to raise funds for giving a noon meal to the poor boys of the college.

¹²⁰ 1. Pathrasuravadham

2. Drapudiswayamvaram

3. The beat of paradise (America) 4.Rasakeeda 5.Indrajith 6.The Lionman (America)

Among these there were silent movies and sound movies. Most of them were made at Bombay and Madras and in foreign countries like America.¹²¹

The drama hall established at Calicut in 1920s by Hassaankoya later transformed into Crown theatre. Many European commercial establishments like Commonwealth Trust, Peirce Leslie, William Gudekkar, Endness etc were located very near the Crown theatre. Crown cinema hall was established mainly for the benefit of the Europeans of the city. Most of the movies screened at Crown theatre were English, French and Italian. The theatre was a favourite destination of the Britishers.¹²² But in course of time the common folk of the city got attracted to crown theatre and to the foreign movies. Thus the theatre helped the common people of the city to enjoy the foreign movies.

‘On the southern side of the Town Hall is the Crown theatre. It was started in 1930s as a theatre at a time of silent movies. A pianist who was placed near the screen played piano accompaniment looking at the scenes. There used to be a man who would loudly interpret the scenes. The theatre was in a sense a place which brought in harmonious relation between the different types of people who lived there, as much as 32 different communities settled there from outside the state and about ten communities from different small and big towns in the state, of course speaking different languages and practicing their own customs. The theatre brought in all these people and they enjoyed being seated among the rich and influential and also among the lowest of the low and poorest of the poor’¹²³

The movie ‘Balan’ was screened in Crown theatre on 19.01.1938. Elaborate programmes were arranged at Crown theatre on that day. The

¹²¹ Haridasan K.P., *Op.Cit.*, p.46.

¹²² *Ibid*

¹²³ K. Mohan, *A Tourist’s Guide to Calicut*, Grass Roots, Kozhikode, 2021, pp. 60-61.

screening of the movie was inaugurated by T.V.Krishnan Nair, sub Judge, Kozhikode. The detailed report on the movie Balan was published in Mathrubhoomi dated 21.01.1938. Apart from Crown theatre the movie was also screened at Gowdar picture palace, Palakkad.¹²⁴

The Shah Jahan Hall also known as Sreekrishna Talkies, located in Pavamani road in the heart of the city was originally a drama hall. Later it came to be known as Coronation theatre. Before the establishment of cinema theatre many art forms were exhibited at this theatre. The entertainment programmes include orchestra, throwing of swords, fireball etc. On 23rd May, 1936, M.R.Ry V.C. Rajulu, proprietor of Sreekrishna Talkies/Shah Jahan presented an application for a license to conduct talkies in the Shah Jhan hall.¹²⁵ It was a reapplication to get the fresh license for the talkies. Before this, talkies had existed from 12-02-1934 till 30-04-1934.¹²⁶

Another letter by V.C.Rajulu, addressed to the Additional District Magistrate, Malabar, gives us the seating capacity of the Sreekrishna/Shah Jahan talkies.¹²⁷ On September 30, 1938 'Balan', the first sound movie of Malayalam was screened at Coronation Hall. The advertisement of the movie states like this 'movie full of dances and songs, here comes Balan who sacrificed his life for the welfare of his sister'.¹²⁸ After 'Balan' a Tamil movie 'Sree Krishnadoothu' was released at the Coronation talkies on 04-05-1940 indicating the popularity of Tamil movies in Malabar. The main attraction of Tamil movies are its entertainment factors like dance and music.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ M.Jayaraj, *Op.cit.*, pp.41-42.

¹²⁵ RAK, Reenue R-Dis Files, B No 443, S No 11, 1936, Extracts from application.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ RAK, Reenue R-Dis Files, B No 443, S No 11, Letter dated 13-06-1938,

¹²⁸ Haridasan K.P, *Op.cit.*, pp.46-47.

¹²⁹ Mathrubhumi, Calicut, 04-05-1940.

The cinema theatres not only provided leisure and entertainment for the people but also developed into public areas which was against the caste ridden traditional society. Cinema halls were the palaces where people enjoyed the modern form of leisure cinema, irrespective of their caste, class, religion and gender identities. They were the most important rooms and forms of leisure and recreation in colonial Malabar.

The newspapers published from Travancore and Malabar carried advertisements of the movies. Thus it was a source of income for the newspapers. The advertisement of the first Malayalm talkie ‘Balan’ appeared in Mathrubhumi newspaper¹³⁰ dated 26.09.1937 and 03.12.1937. In order to screen the movie Balan the film producers collected Rs 25,000 from the theatres. A detailed review of the movie was published in Mathrubhoomi¹³¹ At that time only 30 theatres existed in Kerala. In Malabar there were theatres in Calicut, Thalassery, Kannur, Palakkad. These were the main centres of the Britishers and also the emerging centres of different types of public leisure.¹³²

The movie ‘Gnanambika’ was released in 1940, nearly two years after the release of the movie Balan. A huge advertisement of the movie which covered nearly three-fourth portion of the newspaper was published in Mathrubhumi. Another advertisement was published in the same newspaper after four months. Besides Trivandrum, Alappuzha and Kochi the movie was also released in Thalassery and Kannur.¹³³

During the early years the themes of movies were borrowed from epics and puranas. Following ‘Gnanambika’ another puranic movie ‘Pahlada’ was

¹³⁰ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 26.09.1937 and 03.12.1937.

¹³¹ *Mathrubhumi*, 21.01.1938, Calicut

See interview with P.V.Chandran, Managing Editor, Mathrubhoomi, 05/01/2022, Calicut

¹³² M.Jayaraj, *Op.cit.*, pp .41-42.

¹³³ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 06.04.1940.

released and its advertisement appeared on 16-08-1941¹³⁴ A review of the movie was published in Mathrubhumi and it was stated that Prahlada was a path breaking movie in Malayalam film industry .¹³⁵ The main attraction of puranic movies is its entertainment value which easily brought film lovers to the theatres.

Benefit film shows in aid of government schools were regularly organised in various theatres of Malabar. ¹³⁶ Thus, the younger generation got used to the new types of entertainment ,especially cinema.

In the 1940s the advertisement of heroine oriented ‘Yachakan’ was published in Mathrubhumi newspaper. ¹³⁷The photograph of the heroine of the movie K.C.Jalaja was very much highlighted, pointing to the fact that women were slowly establishing their identity in modern form of entertainment called cinema. ¹³⁸ By 1940s we find girls and women from even remote areas were breaking their shackles and entering into public arts and entertainment forms. During the closing stage of the colonial rule more heroine centred movies were made and they began to be enjoyed by the people .

¹³⁴ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 16-08-1941.

¹³⁵ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 19.09.1941.

¹³⁶ RAK, *Madras Revenue Records*, B.no 28, S. no.57.

The record is on the issue of exempting benefit cinema shows from payment of Entertainment Tax. The benefit film show was organised on 09-03-1945 by the local Rajaram Touring talkies. They allowed their first show on 09-03-1945 as a benefit show free of any charge whatsoever. 50 donor’s complimentary tickets without specifying the amount, 300 one rupee tickets and 400 eight anna tickets were printed free of charge. All the tickets were sold. Donations amounting to Rs 715/. The total amount received was 1215/-. The expenditure was conducting the benefit show Rs 628, leaving amount of rs 586-2-1 proposed to be spent on educational purpose. On 05-03-1945 exemption from payment of entertainment tax was applied .

After lots of discussions and deliberations the joint secretary ,Board of Revenue and Commissioner of Excise and the Commercial tax officer ,Malabar in an order dated 23-05-1945 exempted the balanced amount from entertainment tax.

¹³⁷ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 04.04.1943, Calicut, Advertisement of the movie-Yachakan

¹³⁸ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 15.05.1943, Calicut, the shangmookhananda Film companies Yachakan proudly presents their heroine Sreemathi K.C.Jalaja

By this time cinema developed into a popular form of entertainment and cinema theatres, an important form of public leisure and recreational space in Malabar. Almanack directory list the theatres of Madras presidency

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Theatres also sprung up in small centres like Koyilandy . Film lovers of urban centres enjoyed movies irrespective of its language .Apart from Tamil and Malyalam movies Hindi movies were also released .Film distributing companies were very active in various parts of Kerala and through these distributors Hindi and Tamil movies reached Malabar. Film distributing companies reguarly published advertisements of their forthcoming movies in the magazines ¹⁴⁰Hindi movies also found a place in the theatres of Kerala on festival days like Onam.¹⁴¹

Performance of Dramas

Apart from movies various types of dramas were also staged in colonial Malabar. The popular magazine Vidyaviondini sttes that 'These Malayalis are going crazy for two things. One for making drama and another for acting it'.¹⁴²In Malabar a new art form developed known as Vellari Natakam. This drama was performed and staged in the harvested paddy fields. After harvesting the rice, the paddy fields were used for the

¹³⁹ *Almanack And Directory, Op.Cit.*, p. 846.

Following were the important theatres of Malabar in 1935

1. Amity Hall,Palghat
2. Crown Theatre,Calicut
3. Gouder picture palace,Palghat
4. Jayaram cinema,Cannanore
5. Radha picture palace,Calicut
6. Sada cinema,Tellicherry

¹⁴⁰ Mathrubhoomi, 01.06.1947.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid*, Advertisement of a Hindi movie.

¹⁴² *Vidyavinodini*,Trivandrum, May(Edavam),1932, P.1.

cultivation of cucumber.¹⁴³ During this time the farmers were forced to conduct night watching to protect their crops from the attack of animals. The farmers produced and performed different kinds of art forms to reduce their pressure of night watching duties and passing time. During the course of time such paddy fields became the centres of cultural activities. The dramas produced in these fields known as vellari natakams. These vellari natakams reflects the common people's quest in theatre and performance.¹⁴⁴ Most of the vellari dramas had brilliant actors. The most popular vellari drama performed in the Peralasseri region was Devayanicharitham. Other popular dramas were Naishadham, Rughmaghada Charitham and Saranjinee Parinayam¹⁴⁵

Modern drama made its appearance in Malabar during the early twentieth century, under colonial influence when English plays were translated and staged. But generally there were no good local drama troupes, and it was the visiting Tamil troupes that made a lot of money in this region.¹⁴⁶ In northern Kerala Swami Brahmavathan took initiative to establish Utthara Kerala Lalith Kerala Kendram. This organisation was fundamental in making contributions for the development of Malayalam drama movement. He also took initiative for the popularisation of Kathaprasangam movement in northern Kerala. He popularised many poems of Kumaran Asan like Karuna, Chandaalabhikshuki, Duravastha in Kathaprasangam in the breadth and length of Kerala¹⁴⁷

Apart from Brahmavathan, Kuttamah Kuniyur Kunjambukurup, Kunju Krishna Kurup etc popularised the dramas in Malabar. Inspired by the

¹⁴³ Vellari is the Malayalam term for cucumber, so the drama developed by night watchmen of cucumber fields. They introduced this art form to avoid the pressure and toils of them during their duty. So this art form is popularly known as vellari natakams.

¹⁴⁴ Sajith Soman A, 'Dramas and Social Change in South Malabar', *International Journal of Analytical and Experimental Model Analysis*, vol 12, issue 2, February 2020, p.3.

¹⁴⁵ C.H.Kunhappa, *Smaranakal Matram*, The Mathrubhumi Press, Calicut, 1981, p.35.

¹⁴⁶ Sreejith.K, *The Middle Class in Colonial Malabar, Op.Cit.*, p.101.

¹⁴⁷ Premjith Kayamkulam, *Swami Brahmavathan, Jeevithavum Natakangalum*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society Ltd, Kottayam, 2011, p.15.

ideals of nationalism K. Nair also popularised the social dramas.¹⁴⁸ There is an interesting reference to the staging of drama, in Madhavikutty's memoir *Balyakalasmarnakal*, at Punnayurkulam, Ponnani Taluk, Malabar province in the early 1940s.¹⁴⁹

During the early decade of the twentieth century very few Malayalam dramas were staged. Of them the prominent were T.C. Achyuta Menon's *Sangheeta Naishadam*, *Saranjani Parinayam* and *Sadaram*. In 1909 for the promotion of dramas, under the ownership and control of P.S. Variyar and as a part of Kottakal Arya Vaidya Sala a drama company was formed at Kottakal, Paramavilasa Nataka Company. A temporary stage was established at Kottakal near the main building of Kottakal Arya Vaidya Sala. The famous drama *Rukamangdha* was staged in the same year.¹⁵⁰ P.S. Variar had translated many Tamil dramas and also wrote dramas taking themes from Sanskrit dramas. Apart from writing the dramas he took keen interest in the rehearsal and performance of the dramas. All these were done for the purpose of leisure.¹⁵¹

From Kottakal the drama company moved to other places of Malabar to stage dramas. In 1912 the company staged a drama at Tirur. After that the dramas were staged in Kozhikode and in various parts of Malabar, Kochi and Travancore.¹⁵² Their drama 'Harichandracharitham' was staged in Kannur in 1920.¹⁵³ The dramas were mainly prepared and staged to entertain the

¹⁴⁸ Vayala Vasudevan Pillai, *Malayalam Naataka Sahitya Charithram*, Kerala Sahitya Akademi, Thrissur, 2006, pp.27-29.

¹⁴⁹ Madhavikutty, *Balyakalasmarnakal*, D.C. Books, Kottayam, 2005, pp.48-50.

¹⁵⁰ Keezhedath Vasudevan Nair, *Vaidyaratnam P.S. Variar*, P.M. Variar Managing Trustee, Kottakal, 1953, p.95.

¹⁵¹ Vaidya Visarada P.K. Ramunni Menon, *Sreeman P.S. Variyarude Jeevacharithram*, Thrissivaperur Vidya Vinodini Press, Kottakal, 1929, p.134.

¹⁵² Keezhedath Vasudevan Nair, *Op.Cit.*

¹⁵³ C.H. Kunhappa, *Op.Cit.*, p.42.

spectators and they were well received by the drama lovers. The dramas in short provide entertainment and leisure and recreation to the people.

During the early stage the dramas were mainly staged at Victoria Jubilee Town hall in Calicut. But in 1923 P.S.Variyar found that it was not easy to get the town hall for rent. Thus at Calicut he decided to construct a public space in the form of a hall. Thus P.S.Variyar hall or P.S.V hall was constructed near the main building of Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala at Kallai, Calicut. The construction of the hall was completed in 1924. For a long time P.S.V.hall remained as a popular public space in Calicut.¹⁵⁴ Paramavilasa Nataka Company existed for thirty years, from 1909-1939. In October 1939 it was transformed into a Kathakali troupe 'P.S.V.Natyasangham'.¹⁵⁵

References to staging of dramas appear frequently in the memoirs and autobiographies of political activists, social personalities and writers. Dramas were organised by the reading rooms or Vayanasala, an important public centre where people especially youngsters meet and exchange their ideas. Dramas were organised not only for leisure purpose but also for the propagation of certain ideals and to eradicate the evils existing in contemporary society. Thus K. Kelappan wrote a drama addressing the social and economic issues of the period like poverty, unemployment, superstitions etc. Even this drama was staged to enlighten the people through entertainment.¹⁵⁶ There is a detailed description about the staging of a drama in Thikkodian's autobiography, in a remote village of Thikkodi, Vatakara taluk of Madras presidency.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Keezhedath Vasudevan Nair, *Op.Cit.*, pp.99-100.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p.103.

¹⁵⁶ Thikkodian, *Aranganatha Nadan*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2011, add passim.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.40.

During the early decades of the 20th century ,drama groups were formed even in remote areas of Malabar. In the autobiography of A.K.Gopalan there is a reference to the drama troupe formed by his father in Makkeri village, Chirakkal taluk in northern Kerala. This drama group travelled to Wayanad to stage the dramas. ¹⁵⁸ Dramas and music were very popular among the Muslims of Calicut. They were mainly centred around the coastal areas of the city.

During the last part of the 19th century ,the Muslims of Calicut came into close association with the dramas. Sayed Qadir Hussain’s drama troupe came to Calicut and enthralled the people. In 1909 a small group of muslims met at a house in Kuttichira and they went on to perform a hindustani drama “Indrasabha”.When this drama was staged at Calicut and its surrounding regions, it created lots of controversies. The controversy was due to the declaration of Mulla Koya Thangal, the then chief Qazi of Calicut, that drama is forbidden for the Muslims.¹⁵⁹ From the early days ,the staging of dramas was opposed by the orthodox section of the muslim society. But in spite of the opposition dramas became very popular . In 1936 Muhammed Yosuf’s Islamic Service Society which worked around Abdur Rahiman’s Al-Ameen lodge, staged number of dramas highlighting the patriotic spirit, in the muslim populated centres. ”Sultan Alauddin”, ‘Independent flag ‘etc were some of the dramas staged by the Islamic service society¹⁶⁰ In the 1940’s a number of young Muslim men came to the field of drama.On the occasion of Ramzan

¹⁵⁸ A.K.Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitakatha*, Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative society Ltd., Kottayam,1975, p. 10.

¹⁵⁹ P.P.Mammad Koya Parappil, *Kozhikotte Muslimkalude Charithram*,Vachanam books, Calicut, 2012, p.289.

¹⁶⁰ P.A.M.Haneef, '*Kerala Muslim Nataka Parambriyangal*',*Kerala Muslim History Conference proceedings*, Jameel Ahamed (ed.), Kerala Muslim heritage foundation, Kozhikode, 2015, p.500.

and other festivals they staged dramas in residential quarters and other public places..¹⁶¹

Emergence of Public Places in the form of maidans

During the colonial period we find the development of public leisure and recreation in the form of spectator sports .They were mainly played at public grounds or grounds which were accessible to general public irrespective of their class, caste, creed and gender identities. Besides Mananichara Maidan ,number of other public grounds developed in Calicut. The most prominent among them were West Hill ground, St.Joseph's Boys high school ground etc. Short history of the maidan is described in one of the official correspondence of the district Collector, Malabar.¹⁶²

During the first decades of twentieth century colonial administrators made efforts to make the ground suitable for games like cricket and football. Games like football and cricket was mainly limited to the military garrisons. But colonial administrators took all possible efforts to acquire and expand recreational space in the town. Mananchira maidan ,situated at the heart of the city was not enclosed and it remained open and native people were active spectators.¹⁶³ Municipal council of Calicut municipality had accepted the proposals for partial enclosure of the ground. Resolution passed by Municipal Council admitted the proposal from Mr.Rarichan, Moopan the joint secretary, Royal Visit Celebration Committee, Calicut requesting the Muncipal Council "to take charges when complete of the wooden railing by which a portion of the Mananchira Maidan will be enclosed,the enclosure being called as the

¹⁶¹ P.P.Mammad Koya, *Op.Cit*, p.290.

¹⁶² RAK, Revenue RD's Files, B.no.93, sl. no. 25, 1910.

¹⁶³ Anas Ali, *Football in Colonial Malabar; The Introduction of the "Beautiful Game" (1900-1940)*, pp.753-754.

‘Princess of Wales Park’.¹⁶⁴

Along with the efforts to acquire and expand the available spaces for recreational purposes colonial administrators also made attempts to make the spaces exclusively for sporting purposes. Situated at the heart of the city, Mananchira Maidan was a suitable location for holding other events like circus and weekly markets. Renting of maidan to circus companies and touring cinema halls actually filled the treasury. Rs 50 was collected from the circus company as exhibition fee . Realising the fact that such occasional festivals and mass gatherings would ruin the play ground ,government took measures to devote the ground exclusively for sporting purposes.

The efforts were initiated particularly after a citizen forum headed by Mr.Langley, owner of Pearse Lessly Company submitted a memorandum to the secretary ,Board of Revenue, Muncipal Council to prevent the usage of Manchira ground for any purposes other than sports. The immediate reason behind such a petition was the reported representation sent by a circus proprietor to the secretary to use the Mananchira maidan for circus which had been earlier refused by the Collector of Malabar.¹⁶⁵

The memorandum makes a collective demand in which Mr.Langley says “in protesting I believe I have behind me practically the whole European community of Calicut, all cricketers in Calicut (a large and growing number),that a very considerable body of general opinion in addition’ He is also pointing out his own individual efforts to make the ground suitable for sports and popularise various games in general among the public.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ RAK, *Resolution no 33 of the Municipal Council, 26th May 1906.*

¹⁶⁵ Anas Ali, *Op.Cit.*

¹⁶⁶ RAK, B no 93,S no 25,1910 *The Board of Revenue, Municipal & Local, 25th February 1910, . Memorandum, submitted by Mr.Langley to the Secretary*

The management of Mananchira maidan was always a contentious issue because of demand for the Maidan for multiple purposes. This is evident from a letter from H.Hadow for the Parry & Co addressed to the Chairman, Municipal Council, Calicut.¹⁶⁷ The ground was used for playing games like football, cricket and hockey and it was also needed for conducting military parades and drills. The solution was sought out through a public meeting called by the then district collector, Ivans in 1918. He took initiative to form a committee called Mananchira Committee in this regard.¹⁶⁸ As per the decision taken by the committee, the maidan was exclusively allotted for Police parade on Saturdays, cricket would be played on Friday and Sunday, Monday maidan will be set apart for medical and native school teams, on Tuesday and Thursdays for a club called 'Erly Crosses' and for 'Zamorin's College' on Wednesday.¹⁶⁹ These early legislations and correspondence would reveal to what extent colonial government attempted to provide quality recreational place for the public in the town.¹⁷⁰ They also made attempts to protect and safe guard the public place like Mananchira maidan.¹⁷¹

Colonial authorities paid attention even for minute things like grazing the maidan to make it fit for sports and games. This is evident from two letters of Mr.Langley addressed to the district collector.¹⁷² Another letter of Mr.Langely addressed to the district collector, Malabar, dated 14/12/1910 gives us information on day to day activities and rules and regulations related

¹⁶⁷ RAK, *abstract of a letter*, B. no.220, S no 55, 1918.

¹⁶⁸ Anas Ali, *Op.Cit.*, p.756.

¹⁶⁹ RAK, *B.no. 220, S.no. 55, Op.Cit.*

¹⁷⁰ Anas Ali, *Op.Cit.*

¹⁷¹ RAK, *Revenue R dis files*, B.no.17, S. no.30, 1905.

¹⁷² RAK, *Abstract of a letter*, B.no 93, S. no 25, 1910.

to the use of the maidan .¹⁷³ Mananchira maidan was a major centre of recreation where people of the city meet and spend their leisure time.¹⁷⁴

Mananchira maidan was the most attractive public space of Calicut/Malabar. Football matches between different clubs were regularly organised at the maidan.¹⁷⁵ Another important sports encounter organised at Mananchira maidan was the popular, annual inter collegiate matches organised mainly between the college teams of western coast, about which we find numerous references in contemporary college magazines. News about the thrilling ,exciting west coast matches occupied an important place in newspaper.¹⁷⁶

The notion of non productivity of recreational spaces led to acquire uncultivable and unproductive land for leisure time purposes in Calicut. St.Joseph's ground ,one of the major play grounds in Calicut,which was earlier known as Captain Tanks, was a big pond earlier, without having fencing. It was largely polluted and caused the spread of cholera in the region. The cholera in 1877-78 and 1919-20 was believed to be caused by the polluted water of captain tank. Petitions were submitted to cleanse the ground and the authorities of St.Joseph European Boys' School submitted a petition in April 1917 to District Magistrate .The petition states that 'the children studying in our school are lacking a proper ground and they are playing in the ground of Roman Catholic Church and Court Maidan.It would be beneficial if the unused Captain tank that is situated next to the school is converted to a

¹⁷³ RAK, *Revenue Rd's Files, abstract of a letter, 105, sl. no.5, 1911.*

¹⁷⁴ A.C.Govindan, *Mukha Parichayam*, K.R. Brothers, Kozhikode,1959, p.43.

¹⁷⁵ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,11.12.1934.

¹⁷⁶ *Mathrubhumi*,Calicut,12.11.1941.

The news reporter provided the eye witness account of the final match

playing ground and it would also be good to prevent the epidemics in the region'.¹⁷⁷

The petition was seeking the permission to acquire a highly polluted and “dangerous” space that can be used for exclusive recreational space for students studying in the school. The demand was accepted and the pond was cleansed in 1917 and transferred to the ownership of the school in 1921.¹⁷⁸ Maidans or play grounds were attached to the various schools. Most of the play grounds attached to the schools were also utilised by the general public. In Cochin Santa Cruz Maidan was set apart for the students of Santa Cruz High school. And also, for other young men for their recreational activities.¹⁷⁹

Colonial administrators always seek opportunities to convert the productive spaces into non-productive centres for the purpose of leisure or recreational activities. The archival record speak about the acquisition of lands for the creation of a race course at Varakkal ,Calicut in 1906¹⁸⁰The file records the correspondences held between the colonial officers and the district collector regarding the issue of acquisition of lands at Varakkal for the purpose of setting up of a race course¹⁸¹

Public places also developed in the form of meeting /conference halls. Paran square and Paran hall were the two important public areas that developed in Calicut during the colonial rule. Both Paran square and paran hall were set up by C.Krishnan in memory of his father late Paran. The general public used these spaces for public meetings and get together. These

¹⁷⁷ RAK, *Revenue Files, B.8, S 2, 1910-20, Petition submitted to district Collector, Calicut, April 14, 1917.*

¹⁷⁸ Anas Ali, *Op.Cit.*, p.752.

¹⁷⁹ RAK, *Madras Revenue Records, B.24, S.no.37.*

¹⁸⁰ RAK, *44/13, 1906.*

¹⁸¹ RAK, Extracts from the letter from J.S.Wilson, Executive Engineer, West Coast Division, dated 08.01.1906, addressed to the Collector, Malabar, Calicut.

spaces were used for political activities including the meetings of the Congress.¹⁸² Calicut beach was also an important public space of colonial Malabar used for various purposes like leisure ,public meetings etc .

Towards the latter half of the 20th century the major private institutions were looking for spaces for recreational activities. The Young Women's Christian Association¹⁸³ of Cochin applied for permission to use 59 cents of Cochin as a recreation ground for the members of the association and the requested was granted by the authorities.¹⁸⁴ The permission to the request was granted on the concept that women also should have public places for gathering, for their creative activities and leisure. Instead of male dominated games and entertainment places colonial rule created recreation centres without class, caste and gender discrimination. This was actually a change from male dominated social structure that had existed in pre-modern Kerala. Administrative reforms introduced by the colonial regime in Malabar created the notion of gender equality and enabled the women to enter into public places and involve in entertainment, recreation, leisure and social activities.

Development of Circus Industry in Colonial Malabar

One of the major amusement industries that developed in colonial Malabar was the adventure cum leisure form the circus, where we find a company of performers performing to entertain the crowds. In circus, various acts of men and animals were to provide entertainment. Thalassery came to be known as the cradle of Indian circus. Keeleri Kunhikannan is one of the most popular name associated with Thalassery circus. For a period of nearly five

¹⁸² C.K.PanikkarV.S. Keraleeyan, *Keralahinte Veeraputhran*, Kerala Sahita Academy, Thrissur,2013,passim

¹⁸³ The Young Women's Christian Association or Y.W.C.A is an international organisation working for the empowerment of the young women and girls.

¹⁸⁴ RAK, *Madras Revenue Files, permission letter granting recreation ground for, B. no. 22, Sl. no.65.*

years he worked as the physical instructor of BEMP school in Thalassery. At Thalassery he set up a circus training school and the school provided training to young artists

Number of circus companies came to be established in northern Malabar during the first half of the 20th century. Whiteway Circus established by Keeleri Kunhikannan, Westway Circus, established by Keelari Kunhikanna's brother in law O.K.Appa, M.Kanaran's Western Circus, M. Krishnan's Jubilee circus, Keeleri Raghavan's Imperial circus etc were the major circus companies that sprung up in Thalassery in the 1930's¹⁸⁵ Other major circus companies of Tellicherry were M.K.Raman's Star of India circus, Kalan Gopalan's Great Raiman circus, Krishnan master's south Indian ladies circus etc. With the animals, jokers, and, of course, the performing artists, circus had a great attraction in those days to the burgeoning middle classes who flocked to these shows on holidays with their kids.¹⁸⁶

Records from Calicut regional archives Kozhikode speak about the granting of license for "circus tents" under the Places of Public Resort Act.¹⁸⁷

The notice of the Karlekar Grand Circus actually signify the various aspects of circus industry, the type of entertainment provided to the spectators and its popularity as a type of leisure and recreation medium.¹⁸⁸ The Karlekar Grand circus was inaugurated at Tellicherry in the presence of M.R.Ry C.K. Rama Varma Valia Raja ,Chirakkal and Sulthan Abdul Rahiman Ai Raja ,Raja of Cannanore on 9th February 1938 at 9.30 pm. The circus proprietor might have brought these two local rajas to get the support

¹⁸⁵ Sreedharan Champad, *Circusinte Lokam*, Mathrubhumi Books, Waynad, 2008, pp.145-146.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.96.

¹⁸⁷ RAK, *Revenue Folded Files*, B.268, Sl.no.5, 1900.

¹⁸⁸ RAK, *Karlekar Grand Circus Notice* (1938), S. no. 8680, 1906.

of both the communities, The Hindus and the Muslims. This also reveals that the modern type of entertainment , the circus influenced even the traditional rajas. The circus shows provided variety of entertainment which include dance, adventurous shows involving wild animals and fun shows performed by the clowns. The request letter of R.M.Kulkarni,the camp manager of Karlekar grand circus, to get permission for the circus at Tellicherry suggest that circus shows had became regular feature of urban life in colonial Malabar.¹⁸⁹

Hunting

Hunting was a favourite past time of colonial Malabar. This past time was enjoyed not only by the elite class and British officers but also by common people. M.P.Sivadasa Menon narrates the various types of hunting and rules and regulations associated with hunting.¹⁹⁰

The colonial administrators allowed the shooting of rogue elephant. William Logan states that both Nairs and Mappilas were experts in elephant capturing ¹⁹¹ . He also describes the techniques and methods to capture the wild elephants. Different types of hunting had prevailed .They include the hunting of the British officers, the hunting organised by the colonial government to capture the man eating animals, the hunting by the local people in the name of their rituals and ceremonies etc.¹⁹² The colonial administrators allowed the shooting of rogue elephant¹⁹³.There are malayalam short stories of the colonial period set in the background of hunting and contemporary

¹⁸⁹ RAK, *Arakkal Records,List* , No1. Sl. No.80,1938

¹⁹⁰ M.P.Sivadasa Menon, *Malabarile Sikkaru*, Udaya Publishers, Palghat,1959, ad passim.

¹⁹¹ William Logan,*Malabar Manual (Malayalam)*, Mathrubhui Books, Calicut,2014,p 49

¹⁹² Vinil Paul, *Mrugaya Keralathinite Nayattucharithram*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2022, p.101.

¹⁹³ RAK, *Revenue RD's Files, Shooting rules of wild animals (1924)*, B. no.279, S.no. 4.

malayalam literature also speak about the various types of hunting¹⁹⁴. Sarecy was also attributed to the hunting¹⁹⁵

Shooting developed into a recreational activity in colonial Malabar. Thus Rifle ranges aimed at providing training to police and military men in shooting were established in various parts of Malabar. There are references to rifle ranges at Chevayur, Vythiri, Varakkal in archival records.¹⁹⁶ Apart from establishing the rifle ranges they tried to expand them by acquiring new lands.¹⁹⁷ There is a reference to Golf course and the reference to Golf is found in S.K.Pottekkat's novel 'Oru Desathinite Katha'¹⁹⁸ Several references about modern games are also found in O. Chandu Menon's novel *Indu Lekha*.¹⁹⁹

Musical performances became an accepted form of leisure and recreation activity in colonial Malabar. It was a usual practise for the contemporary elite and affluent people to maintain musicians and to conduct

¹⁹⁴ Vinil Paul, *Op.cit.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ RAK, *Revenue RD'a Files, B. no 16, Sl.no 34, 1905.*

Madras Railway, Calicut Azhikkal Extension, Plan of extra land required for extension of Rifle range at Chevayur in Kavur Amsham Kavur Desam.

¹⁹⁷ RAK, B. 44, S. no.21, 1906.

Letter from G.A.Anderson, consulting Engineer for Railways, dated 10.05.1906 addressed to the district collector of Malabar is related to the acquisition of land in Kovur amsam required for the extension of the rifle range at Varakkal. They tried to develop the rifle range at Varakkal. But the lands required for the extension were in the hands of the railway. So they dropped the project and tried to develop Chevayur rifle range

¹⁹⁸ S.K.Pottekkat, *Oru Desathinite Katha*, D.C. Books. Kottayam, 2017, p.220.

Around the poothaparamba the Britishers have made number of 'crab'holes with the help of metal stick the white man will put the balls into these crab holes. The scene of white man chasing the balls by holding the metal stick in their armpit is really funny. The holeball game of the white people is known as golf.

¹⁹⁹ O. Chandu Menon, *Indulekha*, National Publishing House, Calicut, 2001, p.14.

Madhavan, the hero of the novel was very much interested in English sports like Lawn tennis, Cricket etc.

musical performances in their residential quarters for their private functions. This led to the emergence of musicians into a professional group. The performance of musicians in various social gatherings are attested by archival records. Even in private gatherings performance of music became very essential²⁰⁰ The Arakkal royal family had maintained their own musicians.

Throughout the history of the universe we find musicians being patronised by the ruling class and elite. But during the colonial period in urban centres of Malabar in the small gatherings people enjoyed their leisure time by listening to the music performance of professional musicians. This shows the breaking up of traditional caste oriented social fabric which prevented the mobility and socialisation of the people and the development of secular gatherings

Apart from dramas, music was a popular form of entertainment of the Muslims of Calicut. During the first half of the 20th century many Hindustani singers from north India came to Calicut. It was a common practise for the rich people to invite hindustani singers to Calicut and to organise their musical concerts .Thus many small musical gatherings had existed in various parts of the city. Ustad Sadakuthulla, Abdul Kareem Khan, Bangalore Abdur Razak, Guljan Muhammad, Gul Muhammad etc were some of the prominent Ghazal/Hindustani singers who regularly visited Calicut for their musical concerts. Besides the Gahazal/Hindustani concerts Qawali, Kessu Pattu, Rasul Madhah were the other favourite musical forms of the Muslims of Calicut²⁰¹

Music schools were established in various parts of Malabar. They were opened to provide learning in classical music. Since music was a form of

²⁰⁰ RAK, *Arakkal List No 1, Sl.no. 8151*, the letter written by I.I.Hussain ,Civil Surgeon, Tellicherry,expressing thanks to Nwab Sahib Bahadur (honorofic title of Ali Raja) for permitting his musicians to perform for his party at Tellicherry on 23-09-1936.

²⁰¹ P.P.Mammad Koya, *Op.Cit*, p.290.

entertainment it also provided employment opportunities. Mathrubhoomi published report on the opening of a music school at Chalappuram in Calicut.²⁰² Popularity of music as a prominent form of leisure led to the formation of many organisations. The Fine arts society, Calicut was one of them. On August 20,1944 the fine arts society organised a spectacular music concert of N.C.Vasanthakumari Kokilam and party.²⁰³ Similar musical organisations had existed in other areas of Malabar. Kannur Indian music academy was one such organisation. The annual programme of the music academy was well organised.²⁰⁴ Musical concerts, especially concerts in classical music were regularly organised in the urban centres like Calicut and were mainly enjoyed by the elite sections of the society. For ex colonial officers, business people etc.²⁰⁵

Along with musical performances, dance performances also became main forms of entertainment. Numerous dance forms were developed and dance programmes were regularly organised. The dance programmes had attracted large number of people in it's venues. Like the musical programmes dance items and programmes were mainly organised in the British administrative centres like Kozhikode. Along with various dance programmes Kathakali was also organised.²⁰⁶ The dances of men and women in decorative dress accompanied by rhythmic dance and comedy skits attracted the middle

²⁰². *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,15.05.1943.

²⁰³ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,16.08.1944.

At Chalappuram a music school of M.T.John Bhagavathar has been opened at Sree Narayana Bhajna Mattam.The music school was officially inaugurated at a meeting by Smt A.V.Kuttimalu Amma. The meeting was presided over by Mrs.Suryanarayana Iyer. The inauguration ceemony was followed by the musical performance of sri V.R. Viswanatha Bhagavathar and John Bhagvathar.

²⁰⁴ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,01.01.1943, The purpose of the Indian music academy was to popularise the greatness of Indian music and to provide training in various musical instruments.

²⁰⁵ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut,24.12.1940.

²⁰⁶ *Mathrubhumi*,Calicut, 10.12.1940.

class and common folk to these centres. A dance benefit show was organised at Calicut in 1946 to raise fund for the mid meal fund of the poor students of Zamorin's college, Calicut. It was a massive programme organised under the patronage of Mahakavi Sri. Vallathol Narayana Menon. The dance programme was organised for two days on 02-11-1946 and 03-11-1946. On the last day special show was organised only for the students²⁰⁷

European Spectator Sports and Games in Malabar

The feeling of watching a game on the field rather than playing is more interesting in the competition level for the spectators, as those who have never been on the field cannot understand such types of entertainment.²⁰⁸ Cricket, Football, Hockey, Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton, Tennis and Golf were the modern European games which were introduced in Malabar along with the British rule. Cricket was first played in India in the late eighteenth century imported by British soldiers and sailors. It remained a British preserve till the middle of the nineteenth century, when the Mumbai Parsis first played the game²⁰⁹

In South India locals initially saw cricket as a means of assertion against the British. V. Ramnarayan argues 'cricket was born of desire to meet the Englishman on equal terms on the cricket ground and try to vanquish him'²¹⁰. According to Boria Majumdar 'Even when cricket had spread to the industrial centres of Victorian Britain and to the various parts of the British Empire, its literary image remained an overwhelmingly rural one. The rural cricket field, imaginatively at least, could be transported to the most alien

²⁰⁷ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 31.12.1946.

²⁰⁸ Md Abu Nasim, *Op. Cit.*, p.5.

²⁰⁹ Boria Majumdar, *Twenty-Two Yards to Freedom*, A Social History of Indian cricket, Penguin, New Delhi, 2004, p.3.

²¹⁰ V. Ramnarayan, *Mosquitoes and Other Jolly Rovers: The Story of Tamil Nadu Cricket*, Chennai, East West Boos, 2002, p.24.

urban and colonial environment to fulfill its cultural work',²¹¹ As We noted earlier schools and colleges and British centres of Malabar like Kozhikode, Thalassery, Kannur etc became breeding ground of this complex Anglican sport.

Although Football became a popular sport in Malabar as elsewhere in the world, Malappuram later went on to become the core area of sevens football. The regular matches between the football teams of Malabar Special Police, Malapuram and locals immensely contributed to its popularity. All Star Fivels, Somerset left Infantry, Doorset Regiment etc. were the football clubs of Calicut. In the 1930s and 1940s many football clubs were formed in Kannur. Luckystar football club was formed in 1938, Spirited Youths in 1941 Brothers in 1942-43, Kannur Gymkhana in 1944-45 etc were the early football clubs of Kannur²¹²

The rules and regulations of modern hockey were first codified or formulated in the late 18th century in England and Scotland. The first hockey club, the Blackhealth club was also formed in England ,in London in 1861 .Like other British games , Hockey was also introduced in Malabar by the British officers. Hockey became a popular sport of schools and colleges as it is indicated by the regular inter school/ collegiate matches .The earliest exponents of hockey in Malabar were the British soldiers of Kannur regiment. During the first half of the 20th century military teams like Maratha regiment, Punjab regiment etc regularly visited Kannur to play friendly matches with Kannur regiment. 'Kannur Black and White ' was one of the earliest hockey club to be formed in Kannur. It consisted of Anglo -Indians

²¹¹ Boria Majumdar, *Op.cit.*

²¹² Sanil P.Thomas, *Kayikakerala Charithram*, current Books, Kottayam, 2001, pp.120-121.

and low caste natives²¹³

Basketball and Volleyball were non-British sports. But they were introduced in Malabar by the British officers. Basketball was invented by a Canadian, James A. Smith at Springfield College, Massachusetts. Soon after the invention the game reached in England through Y.M.C.A. The game was introduced in England by Birkenhead, the then president of Y.M.C.A. Through the British soldiers the game was introduced in various corners of the British colonies

. Like Basketball, Volleyball also had its origin in America. It was inexpensive and a sport of the working class. The game was exported to Europe by Americans during the first world war.²¹⁴ Badminton, another popular British sport It was inspired by an Indian game, Poona²¹⁵ All these spectator sports became popular in Malabar mainly due to patronage extended to them by the colonial authorities. Articles and reports on sports personalities became a regular feature of the magazines of the contemporary period. Mathrubhumi weekly had a regular column on physical fitness and exercise. Mathrubhumi weekly dated 04-07-1932 carried an article on Mr. N. K. Nair, popularly known as walking champion of Bombay.²¹⁶

Golf never became a popular sport in Malabar like the other sports events. . A palpable sign of the once-existent golf course is the Golf Link Road running through Chevarambalam and Chevayur and which joins the

²¹³ *Ibid*, p.427.

²¹⁴ Anthony Bateman and Jeffrey Hill (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Cricket*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 2011, p.270.

²¹⁵ Sports, *The Complete Visual Reference*, QA International, Montreal, 2000, p.152.

²¹⁶ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, Calicut, 04-07-1932

The article was published with the photograph of athlete Mr. R. G. Nair. The article states that physical fitness and mental stability of the athlete was due to the morality, punctuality, discipline which he preserves in the life... Mr. Nair is a native of Trivandrum and he belonged to a highly respected family.

main road at Chevayur junction²¹⁷ Tennis, every where in British Raj was the game of British army and Civil service officers. Tennis was a favourite pastime of the clubs attached to the plantations.

The colonial period saw the birth and tremendous success of novels like Indulekha. Number of Malayalam journals and magazines were very popular in Malabar and there were many readers for them.²¹⁸ These publications carried variety of articles on subjects like history, world affairs, emancipation of women etc. With the growth of individualism, reading too had taken an individualistic turn.²¹⁹ Almanack and Directory of Madras and southern India list newspapers and magazines published from Malabar²²⁰ Improvement in transportation system made the pilgrimage tours and excursion tours happen. Even the pilgrimage tours were regularly conducted in Malabar and they became leisure trips. The advertisement of a special excursion train was published in the Mathrubhumi weekly.²²¹

²¹⁷ RAK, *Madras Reveune records*, B.no. 25, Sl.no. 24, 1942

(A) According to archival records the golf course existed in Calicut Taluk, Mayanad desom, R.S.Nos.4/1. According to the records the lands granted to the measures 93.15 acres and their estimated value is rs 27,951/

(B) Anima.P,A. place to tee, *The Hindu*, Calicut, 15-11-2013

²¹⁸ Following are the popular journals/magazines of colonial Malabar

Aatmaposhini, Dharmaprabha, Gurukulam, Gurunathan, Kairali, Mangalodayam, Mathrubhoomi, Mitavadi, Murali, Sanjayan, Unni Namuthiri, Vijayan, Viswaroopam, Vivekodayam.

²¹⁹ K. Sreejith, *Op.Cit.*, p.107.

²²⁰ *Almanack and Directory*, *Op.Cit.*, p.602.

List of newspapers and magazines published from Malabar. 1. Al-Ammen (malayalam, Bi-weekly) 2. Chandrika (malayalam weekly) 3. Deepika (malayalam, monthly) 4. Dharma Prabha (malayalam magazine) 5. Gajakesari (malayalam, weekly) 6. Gramodharakan (malayalam, monthly) 7. Manorama (malayalm, bi-weekly) 8. Mathrubhumi (malayalam, illustrated weekly) 9. Mathrubhoomi (malayalam, daily) 10. Murali (malayalam, monthly) 11. Narajeevan (malayalam, weekly) 12. Prabhatham (malayalam daily) 13. Punchiri (malayalam monthly) 14. Mitavadi (anglo-malayalam, weekly) 15. West-coast Reformer (english) 16. West Coast Spectator, english bi-weekly) 17. Yuvakavi (malayalam, monthly) 18. Yuvakesari (malayalam, monthly) 19. Yuvalokam (malayalam)

²²¹ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, Calicut, January, 1933, p.20.

Along with the flourishing of modern types of leisure and recreation, many local games and types of leisure still prevailed in remote villages of Malabar. Hunting and Fishing were favourite past times of the well to do people. Thalapanth, Panthedi, Karakalli etc. were the popular games of the children .Kolkali was a popular form of entertainment. It starts in the evening and will usually last till night.²²²

Fairs and festivals were very common in colonial Malabar. They provided enough entertainment to the people. They were organised under the supervision of the government and gave enough resources to the state. Archival record point to the interest shown by the government in the organisation of fairs and festivals.²²³

The working culture developed in colonial Malabar gave enough time for the people for leisure activities. There were many government declared holidays which gave the citizens the time for leisure and recreational activities .The government declared holidays actually legalised the practise of leisure .²²⁴ List of Holidays declared by the government include commercial holidays, general holidays, sectional holidays and special local holidays. General holidays include Ascension Day (one day) Easter (two days) Empire day (one day) and Christmas (three days)²²⁵ The development of modern working schedule was due to the introduction of capitalist system by the

²²² C.H.Kunhappa, *Op.Cit.*, p.33.

²²³ RAK,*Board Proceedings No 85, S. no.44,20.262, Circular Memorandrum, dated 17.02.1872*

The returns of Fairs and Festivals for the year 1872 have received only from five districts (Bellary, Chingleput, Madurai, Tanjore, South Arcot) The collectors of the other districts are particularly requested to expedite their transmission .They sought to have reached the Board's office before the end of January last.

²²⁴ Almanack and Directory of Madras and southern India, *Op.Cit.*, p.4.

In addition to the already legalised holidays under the negotiable instruments Act, All Sundays, New Year's Day, Christmas Day and Good Friday, the Government are pleased to direct the following days to holidays under the said act.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

British rule .In the traditional caste ridden society there was no concept of holidays.

The colonial rule and its policies fundamentally changed the lives of the native people. The ambit of this inquiry, however, is limited to its impact on leisure in Colonial Malabar. The foreign rule shifted leisure from its agricultural, seasonal realisation to a modern, industrial production schedule. As such, the impact on leisure has been far more profound in the urban societies than in rural, agricultural societies. In the late colonial period, formal and standardised leisure activities were more in vogue as the colonialists introduced new sports and games bound by rules and regulations. Another important aspect of colonial leisure was the emergence of the secular public spaces where people intermingled without the caste and religious restrictions:-

'Cultural colonialism' also called 'cultural imperialism' generally refers to the extension of colonial state power through cultural activities and cultural knowledge. It is a type of internal domination by the colonizers over the colonized through the culture and ideology of the former .²²⁶ The most obvious effect of cultural colonialism could be seen on the clothing, medicine, housing, family, social Institutions, recreation and sports activities. As it is a type of internal domination the subjugated people may not be aware of the actual colonial motives, while they assume and accept the activities newly introduced by the colonizers.

In Malabar, the 1930s and 1940s witnessed a new boom of cultural activities with the support and encouragement of the British authorities as a part of leisure time activities in the form of sports, games and various cultural activities in the educational institutions, cinema halls, theatres, stadiums and other public spaces. Knowingly or unknowingly the natives perceived and actively participated in these activities and utilised these arenas as a part of

²²⁶ For detailed discussion on cultural imperialism of the West over the East - Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, Vintage Books, New York, 1994.

their leisure time activities. It could be considered as a form of passive aspect of cultural colonialism, where the colonized people were made to believe that the Western culture is superior to Eastern one. It should be noted that the anti-imperialist struggle was gathering momentum through out India during the 1930s and 40s. Malabar was no exception. On the one side the people of Malabar were actively participating in the freedom struggle against the British, while on the other side they were co-operating with the same authorities in the leisure and recreation activities. This is the contradiction between political colonialism and cultural colonialism. The ideological underpinnings of cultural colonialism remain seemingly outside the terrain of political colonialism

It could be assumed that the colonial policy and approach had significant impacts on leisure activities in Colonial Malabar. It shifted leisure times from a seasonal structure based on agriculture to one based around 'modern' production schedules. As such, the impact of leisure has been far more profound in the urban areas than rural agricultural dominated societies. In the late colonial period formal and standardised leisure activities became more common as the colonialists introduced new sports and games with strict rules and regulations. Another important aspect of colonial leisure was the emergence of secular public spaces where people intermingled without the caste and religious restrictions or identities.

The next chapter of this thesis is a case study of the Delhi durbar of 1911, primarily reconstructed on archival sources. This case study has been taken as a special section to strengthen the general argument of the present researcher on how the colonial government was legitimizing its rule in India by the persuasion of the Indian self, of leisure and recreation activities to be a part of the colonial hegemony. The state sponsored leisure was the deliberate attempt of the colonizer to impose its cultural hegemony over the colonized through the discursive and non-discursive practices of its governmentality.

Chapter Six

STATE SPONSORED LEISURE AND RECREATION IN COLONIAL MALABAR: A CASE STUDY OF MALABAR DURBAR OF 1911

A Proclamation published in the Gazette Extraordinary of the 22nd March 1911 announced the intent to hold an Imperial Assemblage at Delhi.¹ 'Gunfire was nothing new in Delhi. Cannons or muskets- fired in war or in peaceful celebration wouldn't have evoked much surprise in the people's minds. On the morning of 7th December 1911, the thundering guns continued firing for long, rather extraordinarily. People would soon realise of the arrival of the British emperor in their city. Despite the number of monarchs rising and falling, arrival of the British King was a novelty. King George V had

¹ *Coronation Durbar, Official Directory with Maps*, Superintendent Government Printing, Calcutta, 1911

"Whereas upon the death of our late Sovereign of happy memory, King Edward, upon the sixth day of May in the year of Our Lord one thousand, nine hundred and ten, we did ascend the Throne under the style and title of George the Fifth by the Grace of God King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India; and whereas by Our Royal Proclamations bearing date the nineteenth day of July and the seventh day of November in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ten, in the first year of Our Reign, we did publish and declare Our Royal intention by the Favour and Blessing of Almighty God to celebrate the solemnity of Our Royal Coronation upon the twenty-second day of June, one thousand nine hundred and eleven; and whereas it is Our wish and desire to make known to all Our loving subjects within Our Indian Dominions that the said solemnity has so been celebrated, and call to Our Presence, Our Governors, Lieutenant-Governors and others of Our officers, the Princes, Chiefs and Nobles of the Native States under Our protection, and representatives of all the Provinces of Our Indian Empire, now we do by this Royal Proclamation declare Our Royal intention to hold at Delhi on the twelfth day of December one thousand nine hundred and eleven an Imperial Durbar for the purpose of making known the said solemnity of Our Coronation, and We do hereby charge and command Our right trusted and well beloved counsellor, Baron Hardinge of Penshurst, Our Viceroy and Governor-General in India, to take all necessary measures in that behalf." Given at Our Court at Buckingham Palace this twenty-second day of March in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eleven and in the first year of Our Reign."

announced his decision to hold the Coronation Durbar in their city. The Emperor would make historic announcements at the Durbar, one of which was the shifting of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi'²

The concept of state sponsored leisure could be considered as an important aspect of the cultural domination of the colonial power over its colonies and its people. It is a deliberate and calculated act of psychological manipulation of the colonial authorities, in the process of the legitimization of their rule by developing a sense of loyalty among the natives of the colonies. The Delhi durbar of 1911 was a unique example of this process of persuasion enunciated by the British authorities over the minds and consciousness of the Indians. The state sponsored leisure is quite different from the other types of leisure such as individual leisure, family leisure, public leisure etc. All these forms of leisure are experienced as almost voluntarily, influenced by voluntary satisfaction of the individual or individuals, the state sponsored leisure could only be characterised as the one which is skillfully and deliberately imposed upon the people. In general, leisure involvement is related with leisure satisfaction, but the case of state sponsored leisure is entirely different in the concept and practice.

The theoretical explanation of state sponsored leisure as a part of cultural power or hegemony could be related to the Gramscian concept of hegemony who considered it as the domination maintained through ideological or cultural means.³ It is usually achieved through social institutions which allow those in power to strongly influence the values,

² Sunil Raman, Rohit Agarwal, *Delhi Durbar 1911, The Complete Story*, Roli Books, New Delhi, 2016, p.78.

³ Antonio Gramsci; *The Modern Prince and other Writings*, International Publishers, New York, 1957

(Also see Joseph V. Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought; Hegemony, Consciousness and the Revolutionary Process*, Oxford University Press, 1981.)

norms, ideas, expectations, world view and general behaviour of the society. The term hegemony is an analytical concept to show how state sponsored leisure by the colonial government was used to hegemonise the native people culturally, not by force but by ideology. State sponsored leisure was an organised act as a means to social cohesion by channelling people to an aura of unrestricted loyalty to the British Raj.

Delhi Durbar, or the Court of Delhi, refers to the mass royal assemblies staged at the Coronation Park in Delhi to mark the coronation of the King or Queen of Britain. Delhi has been the scene of three great historical Durbars.⁴ The Delhi Durbars were the coronations of the English monarchs as Emperors or Empresses of India: Queen Victoria in 1877, King Edward VII in 1903, and King George V in 1911. Each of these massive events lasted two weeks, and in addition, they required months of strenuous preparation.⁵ The first Durbar was conceived and executed by the then Viceroy of India, Lord Lytton. It was held on 1st January 1877 to mark the proclamation of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) as the Empress of India. The second Durbar was organised by Lord Curzon who was the then Viceroy of India, and was held on 1st January 1903 to commemorate the coronation of King Edward VII (1901-1910) in England.⁶ The third Imperial Durbar of 1911 was held in a different manner than the earlier two durbars to celebrate the coronation of the Emperor George V and his visit to India, in a grand, elaborate and much more expensive way.⁷

⁴ RAK, *The Durbar Honours*, Sl. No. 3937, No.175, Appendix xxiii 1237, Government of Bengal, Calcutta, 1912.

⁵ Julie F. Codell (ed.) *Power and Resistance, The Delhi Coronation Durbars 1877, 1903, 1911*, The Alkazi Collection of Photography, Mapin Publishing Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, 2019, p. 17.

⁶ INTACH Delhi Chapter, *Coronation Park and Mughal Gardens in North Delhi*, Delhi Heritage, Delhi, 2012, passim

⁷ Bernard S Cohn, 'Representing Authority in Victorian India', Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.) *The Inventions of Traditions*, Canto Publishers, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 187-188.

With the third Durbar a new chapter in the history of Delhi was announced by his Imperial majesty and the old capital became once more new. The foundation stones of the new Delhi were laid by the then imperial majesties in the presence of the ruling chiefs and the leading dignitaries of British India and the king Emperor assured his Indian subject that the new Delhi shall be a great and glorious city and worthy of its proud position as capital of British India.⁸

The Imperial Durbar of 1911 was magnificent and a gesture to proclaim the power of the British Raj at its high point.⁹ It had a mix of Mughal ceremonies with English customs. At the end of the Imperial Durbar, on 12 December 1911, Delhi was announced as the capital of British India.¹⁰ The British were keen to project themselves as the successors of the great Indian dynasties. Bitter memories of 1857, when the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was arrested and pensioned off to Rangoon in Burma were sought to be forgotten. The King-Emperor was also clear that, on his visit, he would undo the 1905 partition of Bengal and win back the support of the Indian populace.¹¹

In order to celebrate the Delhi Durbar of 1911, the District administration of Malabar arranged various programmes in different parts of the Malabar District such as Calicut, Kannur, Mananthavady, Malappuram, Ottapalam, Kollengode etc. The programmes were organised by the local administration in accordance with the instructions of the District Collector. A variety of sporting events were organised at various centres to celebrate the Imperial Durbar. The details of the programme give us an idea about the development

⁸ RAK, *The Durbar Honours*, *Op.Cit*

⁹ Nayana Goradia, *The Delhi Durbar, 1911 Last Hurrah of the Raj*, India International Centre, New Delhi, 2020, p. 2.

¹⁰ INTACH, *Op.cit*.

¹¹ Sunil Raman, *Op.Cit.*, p.31.

of the public sphere in colonial Malabar and the popularity attained by the modern British sports and games. They developed into modern forms of public leisure. Celebrations in Malabar to mark the Imperial Durbar were well supported by the local elite who were closely associated with the colonial administration. The supporters also included religious leaders and native rulers. At the Malabar Durbar of 1911 Khan Bahadur P.M. Muthu Koya Thangal of Mambram mosque received certificate of honour and M.K. Raman Unni Muppil Nayar of Mannarghat was a prominent supporter of the event.¹²

Many of today's most popular sports and games including Cricket, Football, and Tennis, were organised and codified by the British in India in the 19th century. The motivations behind this vast programme of sports dissemination remain relatively unexplored or under-explored. The propagation of sports was in fact imperialism acting on the cultural front. It provided an opportunity for the British to take cultural control of their empire, as they set out to 'civilize' the native population.

When an exported sport gained popularity in colonies, the colonies incur a cultural debt, so to speak, to their colonisers- Native sports and games were systematically wiped out as novel sports and games of the colonisers supplanted them. By the beginning of the 20th century, with the help of the local elite, the British colonial power brought about fundamental changes in the taste, entertainment and leisure of the colonised people, after their own fashion. Their policies and programmes in the colonies went on to create growing public spheres. In the case of colonial Malabar, the reforms found support of the rising middle class who were closely associated with the colonial administration.

Archival records refer to the organisation of Queen's Durbar held on

¹² RAK, *The Durbar Honours, Op.Cit.*, p.303.

1st January 1877, Monday at Calicut.¹³ An order was issued by the then District Collector of Malabar, William Logan dated 25th December 1876 regarding the conduct of Queen's Durbar at Calicut. The special instructions of the District Collector attest to the intent on the part of the State to channelize the leisure activities of its subjects and to the opening up of public spaces. At the Durbar pandal on 01.01.1877 a 'Feu-De-Joie' would be fired by the British troops. Following this the national anthem of Britain would be sung by the school children.¹⁴ Such gestures helped colonial rulers consolidate their influence in the cultural field. Any way, they provided entertainment to those who assembled at the Durbar pandal. Traditional means of celebration like illumination and fireworks and the organisation of sports and games are also found referred in the official records.¹⁵ Mananchira tank and the adjacent maidan were illuminated and fireworks and acrobatic feats exhibited. Residents in that locality were solicited to join in this part of the demonstration. Sporting events were announced to be held on the 2nd of January at 3 pm on the soldiers' playing ground near West Hill which would be open to all comers.¹⁶ Involving common people suggests some popularity for modern sports in Malabar in the early 20th Century. The Durbar was attended by erstwhile rajas of Malabar, who had been subjected to the power of the Empire.¹⁷ They also got a taste of new modes of entertainment and leisure from these celebrations.

¹³ RAK, *Queen Durbar 1877*, B.no.8, sl.no.5, Revenue folded files.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Following is some of the important rajas of Malabar who attended the Queen Durbar 1. Zamorin Rajah of Calicut 2. Valluvanad Rajah 3. Rajah of Palghat 4. Rajah of Parappanad 5. Rajah of Beypore 6. Rajah of Chirakkal 7. Rajah of Kurumbranad 8. Rajah of Cannannore

Selected records from the Calicut Regional Archives¹⁸ give an insight into the rise of modern sporting events in the Malabar region. It is associated with the arrangement for celebrations on the occasion of the Delhi Durbar in 1911.¹⁹ This political ritual was utilized by the British government to lend legitimacy and popularity for their rule in India²⁰ They wanted consolidation of power and popular support to perpetuate it. Also, they wanted to render their rule lawful in international perspective. Establishing their rule of law also meant doing away with the prevalent native forms of law enforcement and justice and de-legitimation of all forms of pre-colonial authority.²¹

The durbars were well organised events in which the authority of the State was exhibited. The seating arrangement for the Imperial Durbar in Delhi was well planned and shows the desire of the colonial authorities to accommodate a group of local elites within their administrative machinery and to create a sort of ambience of congeniality among the conquered citizens.²² The fact that in the celebrations everywhere, impressionable school children were given special attention attests to the desire of moulding the

¹⁸ RAK, *Selected Records 201*, 1911.

¹⁹ Shumais.U, 'Local Forms of Colonial Domination: The Coronation Durbar of 1911 in Kozhikode', *Rantam Kerala Charithra Conference Prabandhangal*, Kottayam, 2015, p.474.

²⁰ Alan Trevithick, 'Some Structural and Sequential Aspects of the British Imperial Assemblages at Delhi 1877-1911', *Modern Asian Studies*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1990, Vol-24, No. 3, p.561.

²¹ Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, *The Colonial State*, Primus Books, New Delhi, 2016, p. 58.

²² RAK, B. No.107, S. No. 27, *Imperial Coronation Durbar at Delhi* (1911)

At the Durbar there will be an amphitheatre (a) in which the chief officials of Government, the Ruling Chiefs and the representatives invited to the provincial camps will be seated, and behind them place for all privileged spectators, European and Indian will be provided.

There will also be a spectators' round (b) facing the amphitheatre, to accommodate 50,000 persons. One-third of the places on this will be reserved for persons holding cards of admission, and for the remainder no tickets will be required. Five thousand of the reserved places will be assigned to school children and the balance (approximately 11,000) to persons having cards of admission.

future generations according to their needs.

A District-level durbar was conducted in Calicut, the headquarters of Malabar District, for six days, from 7th to 12th December 1911. Durbars were also held at the Taluk level and also at *Amsams* etc.²³ Preparations for the celebration of the Delhi Durbar in Malabar had started from September. A meeting of the executive committee associated with the celebration of the Delhi Durbar was held at the Collector's *cutchery* in Calicut on 22 September 1911, and was attended by the high-ranking British officers and the local elite.²⁴

From the proceedings of the executive committee, the following information is notable:

(1) The committee resolved that; sports be added to the list of entertainments to be provided during the coronation week.

(2) A letter dated 19th September 1911, from the Secretary, District Inter-School Sports Committee Calicut, suggesting that the District Inter-School Sports planned to be held at Calicut in December be made part of the Coronation Celebration and that it might be conducted and financed under the auspices of the Coronation Committee, was read at the meeting.²⁵

The meeting decided to form various sub-committees to carry out the various parts of the programme. One of the sub-committees formed at the meeting was the Sports Committee for the smooth conduct of various sports and games.²⁶

²³ Shumais.U, *Op.Cit.*

²⁴ RAK, 201, *Selected Records, 1911.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ Following were the members of the sports committee

The Sports Committee mainly consisted of high-ranking British officers as well as the wealthy and influential local elite who enjoyed considerable status in the society. The latter also had close associations with the British and enjoyed the fruits of colonial administration. The presence of the local elite in the sports committee and their interest to promote the English sporting events point to their acceptance of the cultural symbols of colonial power and their mutually beneficial collaboration with the British authorities.

Other committees like the Pandal and Town Decoration Committee, Fireworks Committee, Illumination Committee, and the Procession Committee were formed at the meeting. As in the case of the Sports Committee, these also included the British officers and the local elite. All these committees were formed to provide leisure and entertainment to the general public at a public space called Mananchira maidan.

The State, through the district administration of Malabar, selected certain days for public leisure. The celebrations associated with the Delhi Durbar had as their main parts sports and games, and other modes of entertainment mixed the traditional and modern. While the State-sponsored leisure in the form of sports and games, processions, illumination, fireworks, and the staging of dance and drama etc. were apparently organised to provide entertainment and festivities to its citizens, we can now see that they had the

W.L.Bruce

J.G.Ferguson

W.O.Wright

W.E.Hoare

M.R.Ry.A.Raja Rama Iyer

O.Krishnan

G.Zachariah

C.M.Rarichan Moopan

Rao Sahib Vidyanatha Iyer

K.Langley, Secretary of the sports committee

additional reason of idealising the imperial rule which thrived on the exploitation of resources from this land.

Special arrangements were made to involve the students. A separate committee was formed for this purpose at Calicut. The main task assigned to the committee was to arrange the supply of tea and other beverages for the students. The meeting decided to organise general sports on 11 December 1911. It was also decided that on the concluding day of the Durbar, the entire town of Calicut would be illuminated from 6.30 PM onwards, and that it would conclude with fireworks starting from 8.30 PM onwards.²⁷ Mananchira maidan, till now a non-productive public space, was used for this purpose. Various sporting events were held at the West Hill Maidan on 11 December.²⁸

The following events were organised at the West Hill Maidan:

- (A) Pole Jump
- (B) High Jump
- (C) Long Jump
- (D) *Chatty* Race
- (E) Half-Mile Bicycle Race
- (F) Half-Mile Flat Race
- (G) Obstacle Race
- (H) Jutka Pony Race
- (I) Tilting
- (J) Tug of War.²⁹

Pole Jump is an early form of Pole Vault. Pole jumping competitions were popular among the ancient Greeks, Cretans and Celts. The origins of

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

pole vault can be traced to antiquity. This is the only jumping event that involves the use of a tool to achieve the desired height. A long, slender, rounded piece of wood or metal was used as the pole, and was typically used by placing its one end on the ground as a support. This flexible pole was used to clear a bar set as high as possible. It became an official event in 1812 during the first Track-and-Field meet in England, and was included in the Cambridge University championships in 1857.³⁰ It has been a full medal event in the Olympic Games since 1896 for men and since 2000 for women.³¹

In the Durbar of 1911 in Calicut, the Pole Jump event lasted for a total of 20 minutes from 3 pm to 3.20 pm,³² and was organised for ‘Schools, Regulars and Volunteers’³³ Although not specified on record, it is likely that the Pole jump was a male event. The term “Regulars”, indicates professional sportsmen or women. The organisation of specific sports competitions for Regulars indicates the penetration of European sports and games in the Malabar region. “Volunteers” refer to the people who were involved in the running of these events. What comes out of the records is that sports and games were well organised and the colonial administrators were keen on organising and popularising them.

In the High Jump event, the contestant has to jump over a horizontal bar without knocking it down, using only the strength of one’s body. The Celts are known to have conducted High Jump competitions hundreds of years ago, though it became an official event in Britain only in 1840. The rules of this sport were written in 1865 and in 1896 the High Jump became a part of the Athens Olympics. The first women’s competition took place in

³⁰ Karine Delobel(ed.), *Sports, The Complete Visual Reference*, QA International, Canada, 2000, p.32.

³¹ *Sports, The Complete Visual Reference, QA International, Montreal, 2000, p 32*

³² RAK, 201, Selected Records, 1911, *Op.Cit.*

³³ *Ibid.*

1895 in the United States, and women competed in the Olympics in this event for the first time in 1928 at Amsterdam.³⁴

The Long Jump consists of covering the greatest horizontal distance possible by making an energetic jump at the end of a high-speed sprint. As long ago as 2000 BC., the event was part of some Celtic games. The first record, 6.92 meters, was established by Chionis, a Spartan athlete, at the Olympics in 656 B.C. The Long Jump was included in the first Track-and-Field competitions at Exeter College at Oxford in 1850, and has been an Olympic event since the first modern games in Athens in 1896. The women's Long Jump has been a part of the Olympic Games since the 1948 Games in London.³⁵

The Half-Mile Bicycle Race was yet another competitive item. The invention and use of the bicycle in the late nineteenth century contributed to revolutionary changes in urban social life which were felt even in the second half of the twentieth century. When compared to steamships, railways, and motor-transport, the bicycle has not attracted any considerable attention of the historians and scholars engaged in the study of the role of technology in reformulating social life.³⁶

The Christian missionary groups, especially the Basel Evangelical Mission in Malabar, used the bicycle for their various activities for broader outreach. In the course of time, the elite people and even the youth belonging to the lower classes began to acquire bicycles, despite prevailing caste restrictions. The popularity of the bicycle reached its peak in places where the

³⁴ Karine Delobel (ed.), *Op.Cit.*, p.30.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.34.

³⁶ P. Sivadasan, '*Wheels of Social Transformation: The Bicycle in Early Twentieth Century Kerala*', *South Indian History Congress*, Puducherry, 2016, p. 1177.

colonial culture had deeper penetration.³⁷ This could be the main factor which influenced the colonial authorities to introduce the Bicycle Race.

The Half-Mile Flat Race is very similar to the 800-meter race. The 800 M and 1500 M races are considered middle-distance races.³⁸ The men's 800 M race has been a part of the Olympic athletics programme since 1896, and the women's 800 M event was first held in 1928, making it the first distance-running event for women.

The Obstacle Race is a sport in which a competitor, moving on foot, has to overcome various physical challenges in the form of obstacles. Many obstacles used in this event are similar to those used in military training. They are employed throughout the course to test the endurance, strength, speed and dexterity of the athlete. The Obstacle Race is very similar to the Hurdles event and the 3000 M Steeplechase race. The most prominent Hurdles events in the modern Olympic Games are the 110 Meters Hurdles for men, 100 Meters Hurdles for women and the 400 Meters Hurdles for both sexes. The 3000 Meters Steeplechase is an obstacle race for men, and derives its name from the Horse Racing Steeplechase. It became a medal item in the Olympics since the 1920 Antwerp Games.³⁹

The *Chatti* Race was another competitive item which was purely local. The word "*chatti*" refers to a clay-pot, an essential utensil for cooking and storing food, a thing of daily life for the common people. The *Chatti* Race was open to all the people who were interested in competing. The race was about the competitor balancing a pot on the head, or carrying it, or picking it up and reaching the finish line with the pot intact. It seems the race enjoyed some popularity. The festivities associated with the Delhi Durbar seem to

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.1180.

³⁸ *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Volume 1, U.S.A, 15th Edition, 1974, p. 669.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

have had as a main purpose popularising the colonisers' ways of leisure/entertainment/sporting etc. which could naturalise the alien rule in the eyes of the natives. Purposefully or not, they showed some inclusiveness with regard to native sporting events, as evident from the local games like *chatti* race.

The *Jutka* Pony Race was a competition that involved horses/ponies. Horse carriages, known as the *Jutkas*, at that time were an important medium of transport. According to the quality of the *jutkas* they were classified into Class A and Class B⁴⁰. The Tug-of-War seems to have been the most celebrated sporting item in the 1911 Durbar celebrations at Calicut. The Tug-of-war was a part of the Summer Olympic Games from 1900 to 1920. The origin of this sport is uncertain but it was practised in Cambodia, ancient Egypt, Greece, India and China. This is played in almost every country in the world. However, only a few countries have set up a national body to govern this sport. Even today, the Tug-of-War is perhaps one of the most popular sporting events in Kerala. In this event, two teams with equal number of players line up on each side of a line marked on the ground and take hold of a long, thick, and strong rope. Each side tries to pull the other side towards the centre line. The team which is made to cross the centre line loses the game.⁴¹ The Tug-of-War was held in four categories - A, B, C and D. In category A the competition was between the Police and Salt and Abkari Department. In category B the competition was between the Regulars and the Volunteers and in category C it was between the Hindus and the Muhammadans and in category D it was between the Mukkuvas (fishermen caste) and the Mappilas (coastal Muslims who seems to be the descendants of traders from the Middle

⁴⁰ T.B. Seluraj, *Kozhikkodinte Paithrukam*, Mathrubhumi Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd., Calicut, 2012, pp. 233-234.

⁴¹ *The World Book, Encyclopedia*, Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, Volume - 7, Chicago, 1957, p. 21.

East). There is not much information about the caste group which represented the Hindu team in the Tug of War event. Whether it was a team consisting of single caste or whether it combined members of various castes is not known. Among the Muslims of Malabar, Sunnis were in majority. By the 18th century, a split occurred among the Muslims of Malabar. Kondotty Thangal and his followers came to be known as Shias.⁴² Sunnis being the majority may have represented the team of Muhammadans in the competition. The Tug-of-War is a game which requires stamina and patience and involves strong competitive spirit among the teams. Dividing teams on religious lines couldn't have but created strong unity within the team and rivalry along religious lines. In this sense, it wouldn't be hard to see a tinge of the colonial policy of divide and rule. With this infamous but regular and effective stratagem, the British could keep the vast and diverse region of the Indian sub-continent under subjugation. Organising teams on the basis of religion might have helped the foreign rulers to create mutual distrust among religion and thus slow down the growth of a sense of nationalism in colonial Malabar.

While looking into the history of Indian sports, communalism looms large all through the colonial period and even later. Cricket for example had communal factors from its very inception in India. The Pentangular Tournament is a clear indicator. The Presidency matches of the 1890s were initially played between the Europeans and the Parsis, which gradually grew to include the Hindus in 1907, the Muslims in 1912 and the 'Rest', comprising mainly Christians and Anglo-Indians in 1937.⁴³

In the early 1940s, the issue of communalisation of the game of Cricket was discussed by Mahatma Gandhi as follows:

⁴² Ward and Conner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, Kerala Gazetteers, Government of Kerala, Trivandrum 1995, p. 104.

⁴³ Boria Majumdar, *Twenty-Two Yards to Freedom*, A Social History of Indian Cricket, Viking, New Delhi, 2004, pp. 226-227.

‘I would like the public of Bombay to revise their sporting code and erase from it communal matches. I can understand matches between Colleges and Institutions, but I have never understood the reason for having Hindu, Parsi, Muslim and other Communal Elevens. I should have thought that such un-sportsmen like divisions would be considered taboos in sporting language and sporting manners’.⁴⁴

Gandhi’s words are a pointer to the feeling among the nationalists about the communal menace, detrimental to the unity of the nation, being cultivated in the field of sports. Such abuse of sports and games which should have been used to improve the physical and mental health of the people being used to create communal division is visible even in the Delhi Durbar celebrations at Calicut. This was to the advantage of the colonial administration which could easily thwart any chance of a combined local resistance rising against its appropriation of the resources of the native people.

On the final day of the Durbar at Calicut, there were such events as a procession, band march, firing of cannons, poetry recitation, and above all, the school children’s choir singing the national anthem of Great Britain. “The Durbaris will assemble at the Huzur at 11.30 and will proceed in procession to the pandal, at 11.45...The band in attendance near the pandal will commence playing as soon as the procession starts and will continue playing until the Durbaris are seated...At one minute to 12 the band will receive special intimation on which the music will be concluded with a flourish of trumpets...As soon as the words “God save the King-Emperor” have been pronounced by Mr.Vurgese, the choir of school children will sing the National Anthem...A Royal Salute of 101

⁴⁴ Ramachandra Guha, *A Corner of a Foreign Field*, The Indian History of a British Sport, Picador, London, 2001 p. 271.

kadinas will then be fired”⁴⁵ The entire programme schedule is prepared by the then Collector C.A. Innes.

Vellathol Narayana Menon and Oduvil Kunhikrishna Menon recited poems.⁴⁶ Clearly, the State was appropriating cultural symbols for its purpose. The report of the Honorary Secretary, Coronation Celebration Committee, addressed to the District Collector, Calicut, dated 19.02.1912 gives us details of Delhi Durbar festivities at the district headquarters. Notable here are the State’s active patronage of the entertainment/leisure and the appropriation of cultural symbols as a means of legitimising the colonial rule.

Sporting events described above were held in the afternoon at the West Hill Maidan on the 8th and 11th of December, 1911. Besides the invitees, large crowds from the town turned up and enjoyed various events.⁴⁷ The starters, referees, and judges for the sporting events consisted mainly of British officers and the native elite.⁴⁸ The presence of the general public as spectators

⁴⁵ *Ibid*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

The arrangements for the District Inter School Sports which were held on the 1st day were made by the Inter School Sports Committee with Rao Sahib Vaidyanatha Iyer as secretary and those for the General Sports with K.P. Raman Menon as secretary.

⁴⁸ Starters

1. W.O.Wright

2.E.J. Rowlandson

Referee

Christie

Judges

1. C.A.Innes (The District Collector, Malabar)

2. A.Edgington

3. D.Rose

4. Captain Willcocks

5. O. Krishnan

6. A. Rajarama Iyer

indicates the rise of popular interest in the colonisers' sports. Both the Mananchira maidan and the West Hill maidan were developed into public spaces, marking the evolution of non-productive public spaces for leisure. Such spaces for recreation/leisure were essential elements in the urban colonial space and were instrumental in the formation of a new culture sponsored and propagated by the colonial State.

Karl Marx in his *Notes on Indian History* had stated that colonialism would lead to the modernisation of the society and the emergence of new classes. In many ways, the establishment of colonial rule in Malabar opened up the traditional, closed social structure and brought about drastic changes. Along with the consolidation of colonial administration, we also find the emergence of public spaces. Thus across India, public spaces in the form of *maidans* (*maidanam* in Malayalam, meaning public grounds) emerged in urban centres. These *maidans* served as spaces for socialisation and were the breeding grounds of modern forms of sports and games which formed a major part of the modern public leisure.

The *maidans* like the Mananchira Maidan, West Hill Maidan (Calicut), Fort Maidan (Cannanore), Police Parade Ground (Malappuram) etc were the hotbeds for many non-natives and team-sporting events like Football, Cricket, Hockey were introduced there. One might even say that they did the role of Ideological State Apparatuses since they were centres of leisure not only for colonial bureaucracy but also for the emerging middle class who were the mainstay of the colonial rule.

-
7. Captain Higgins
 8. W.E. Hoare
 9. K. Imbichunni
 10. Rao Bahader G.T.Vargese
 11. C.M. Rarichan Moopan
 12. K.C. Manavikraman Rajah

The huge *pandal* (*shamiana*) built at Mananchira Maidan for the Durbar (200x100x45 Ft; with a capacity to accommodate 3000 people)⁴⁹ wouldn't have had many precedents and tells us about the participation which was very significant considering the caste and religious divisions prevailing. That couldn't have been possible but for the emergence of a public space that cut across those divisions, though not to an extent encompassing the whole of the society. It is worth quoting this

‘On the 7th December, 1911 the procession started at 6 PM from the Mananchira Maidan with six elephants decked with gay trappings, two of them carrying large portraits of the King Emperor and the Queen Empress, and with torches and music and fireworks at intervals, and accompanied by an immense crowd of people. It took a long route along the Travellers Bungalow Road, the Beach and the Big Bazaar roads, and returned to the Maidan at 9 PM. The whole route had been beautifully illuminated. It was an imposing spectacle enjoyed by all who took part in it’⁵⁰

Public amusements such as rope-dancing, *Ottamthullal*, and theatricals were also performed on Durbar days except on 10th December, which was a Sunday.

On 12th December 1911, the whole town was illuminated. The Mananchira tank and the buildings around it were ablaze, and the myriads of lamps reflected on the smooth surface of the water to beautiful effect.⁵¹ The

⁴⁹ The total cost of construction including the decoration and the fitting up was Rs. 2261,12,5.

⁵⁰ The arrangements were made by the procession Committee and its Secretary T.K Kannan. The total expenditure on this account was Rs 755,15,0.

⁵¹ The cost of Fireworks was Rs 974,9,4. The fireworks were all made in Calicut chiefly by K.V. Kuryan, an expert from Trichur. The arrangements were made under the supervision of G. Zachariah.

fireworks were let off on the beach opposite to the Customs House and were witnessed by a large crowd.

The Delhi Durbar in Cannanore: Organisation of Sports and Games and Various Forms of Entertainment

Cannanore, now Kannur, is a straggling coastal town of the Northern Kerala. During the British rule, Kannur was part of the Malabar District in the Madras Presidency. The colonial rulers called the town Cannanore. There is no agreement on the origin of the name ‘Kannur’ and one version is that it is a derivation of “Kanathur”, an ancient village.⁵² During the third Anglo-Mysorean war, in a battle that took place on 17th December 1790, the British army’s HM 77th Regiment led by General Robert Abercromby defeated the combined forces of Mysore and Kannur and captured the fort of Sultan Ali Raja at Cannanore. It remained the military headquarters of the East India Company on the west coast until 1887. Kannur consists of two different areas- Cannanore proper (locally known as old town), and the cantonment. Between these two, commanding the old town, is Fort St. Angelo. Adjoining the fort is the Brigade Parade Ground, a very extensive piece of land used for parade and other military purposes, with the barracks of the European regiment and the little village of Barnacherry on the outskirts. At a short distance north from the Brigade Parade Ground, lies another ground which was used by the Native Infantry regiment.⁵³

The city of Cannanore was marked by the presence of Sepoy barracks and Fort Maidan, the most important public space in the city of Cannanore. Durbar celebrations were organised at Fort Maidan.⁵⁴ The Fort Ground, locally known as the *Kota Maidan*, is situated close to the historic fort St.

⁵² <https://kannur.nic.in/en/> , Official website, Government of Kerala, Kannur district.

⁵³ William Logan, *Malabar vol.2*, Low Price Publications, Delhi, 2009, p.ccixi.

⁵⁴ RAK,201, Selected Records, 1911, *Op.Cit.*

Anglo built by the Portuguese in the 16th century and was once the hotspot of local sports events.⁵⁵

Cannanore was one of the important centres of colonial sports and games, especially Cricket. The region's association with cricket is believed to have begun two centuries ago, when it was introduced at Thalassery by Englishmen of the East India Company. The Englishmen and the military personnel, over time, popularised the game. The establishment of Cricket clubs at Kannur kick-started a competitive rivalry between the clubs in the two neighbouring towns. The Cannanore Cricket Club, Brothers Club, Fort Club, and the Manor Club were the popular local clubs. The Fort Ground played a vital role in developing the sporting culture in the area.⁵⁶ Now the property of the Ministry of Defence, it is fenced off from the public who can only have nostalgic memories of the one-time hubbub there.

Cannanore also witnessed festivities associated with the Delhi Durbar with sporting as a main attraction⁵⁷. Both individual and team-sports were organised in six categories at Fort Maidan: (a) British Troops (b) Native Troops (c) Volunteers (d) Police (e) General public (f) School Boys. British troops had three kinds of races⁵⁸ and for the native troops, it was events like Chinese Flag Race, Tug-of-War and Half-Mile Race⁵⁹. Three different races were organised for the volunteers- the Half-Mile Race, Three-Legged Race, and the Blindfolded Race.⁶⁰ In the Three-Legged Race, the right leg of one person is tied to the left leg of another person, and the two run together as if

⁵⁵ C.P. Sajit, 'Kannur pines for a cricket ground', *The Hindu*, 18.02.2020.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ RAK, 201, *Selected Records*, *Op.Cit.*

⁵⁸ The exact date is not mentioned. These events seem to be organised between 07.12.1911 -12.12.1911.

⁵⁹ RAK 201, *Selected Records*, *Op.cit.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

on three legs.⁶¹ This is not a native sport, and it seems that this game was introduced by the British as it was a popular sport among the British army men. That the event was part of the programme suggests to what extent the foreigners' pastimes had been incorporated into the native lives. In the Blindfolded Race, the runners perform blindfolded and their balance and bearings are tested.

The Police force could compete in three events: One-Mile Race, Half-Mile Race and the 100 Yards Race.⁶² Four events were there for the general public, and they included One-Mile Race, Obstacle Race, "Best Turned-Out Pair Of Bullocks", and "Best Costume".⁶³ "Best Turned-Out Pair Of Bullocks" was a local item and attracted the local population more than any other event, it seems.

School boys' competitions were in nine events- 100 Yards Handicap Race, Three-Legged Race, Piggyback Race, Throwing the Cricket Ball, Blindfold Race, *Chatti* Race, 200 Yards Handicap, the 440 Yards Handicap, and the Leap-Frog. The last event was for little boys but age was not specified.⁶⁴ In the Handicap races, the runners would start at different points; in the Piggyback race, the runner had to carry a person on the back; and the Cricket Ball Throw was to determine who could throw the ball the farthest.

All these events, except those for the school boys, had cash prizes. The biggest cash prize of Rs 90, was for the team event organised for the British troops.⁶⁵ Of course, it was an added attraction to the games.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

Records mention sporting events for the girls meant for the students of three girls' schools- the Government Girls' High School, The Convent School and the Parochial School.⁶⁶ Though meagre in their presence, the girls were certainly entering the public space, taking part in sporting events and asserting their gender identity, which until then was forbidden under the rigidity of the tradition. The colonial rule certainly was making dents on the age-old social structure and enabling the girls to get rid of the restrictions imposed upon them.

On 11 December 1911, the penultimate day of the Durbar, dramatic plays or *natakams* were staged at Fort Maidan with open entry to all. On 12 December, the concluding day of the celebration grand entertainment programmes consisting of procession of the elephants, illumination and fireworks were organised, providing a visual treat for the local people.⁶⁷

The Delhi Durbar Celebration by the Vengail Tarwad

The land-revenue policies of the British created a group of rural elites who were their supporters and collaborators throughout India. The “Vengail Tarwad” was one such family in northern Kerala which enjoyed considerable social status and material benefits due to their association with the British. The Delhi Durbar gave them a chance to express their loyalty towards the British Crown. The special report prepared by Vengail Kunhi Raman Nayanar,⁶⁸ gives us the details of the programmes organised at the Vengail Tarwad to celebrate the Delhi Durbar:

‘The processions arranged by the Tarwad proved a picturesque and impressive feature, which I believe, enabled the significance of the

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

celebrations to be well realised by the masses in and about the locality. There was a special procession, with two elephants, for the Panapuzha tenantry, specially arranged by nephew Chathukutty Nayanar. A large procession went from Kanayi to Anacherry. A large procession of school children, with five richly caparisoned elephants marched from Anacherry to Payyannoor, covering a mile and a half. The children carried flags and bannerettes, and sang patriotic songs specially composed for the occasion. All our tenants, responding to the efforts of the Tarwad, white-washed and florally decorated their cottages, so that all the villages wore a truly holiday appearance.⁶⁹

Vengayil Kunhiraman Nayanar (born 1860), who wrote this report, was a trendsetter in Malayalam literature, as well as a very wealthy landlord. The “Nayanars” were *naduvazhis* (landlords). Three “Nambiar” families (Erambala, Varikkara, and Vengayil) were known for their wealth and power in North Malabar. The Nayanar family, which hailed from South Canara, then part of the old British Malabar District, had a three-hundred-year history. Their *Tarwad* (ancestral home) was called “Kodoth Vengayil”, which originally hailed from the Kerala town of Guruvayoor.⁷⁰ In 1892, Nayanar began his public career as an elected Member of the District Board and won another election in 1907. In 1913, he was elected to the Madras Legislative Council from the Malabar-South Canara constituency, representing the landlords. The fact that he was accepted by the British administration to be the representative of the landlords and given a special award for the commemoration of the coronation of King George V did not deter him from criticising the shortcomings of their administration. He passed away in 1914

⁶⁹ RAK, Selected Records, 1911, *Op.Cit.*

⁷⁰ Vappala Balachandran, *A Life in Shadow, The Secret Story of ACN Nambiar, A Forgotten Anti-Colonial Warrior*, Roli Books, New Delhi, 2016, p. 12.

after suffering a massive heart attack while speaking in the Legislative Assembly in Madras.⁷¹

Archival records attest to the celebration of the Durbar by Vengail Tarwad. The rural gentry had ample leisure at their disposal for celebrations and they were united in their display of loyalty to the powers that be. Unlike the traditional festivals, they had to whip up a euphoria, which they did efficiently, wielding their power. Ironically, people were made to sing paens for the empire that only added to their misery.

The Delhi Durbar in Malappuram: Organisation of Sports and Games and Various Forms of Entertainment

Malappuram (literally a hilly area as the name suggests), was a military station about 7 miles from Manjeri and 31 miles from Calicut. It developed into a modern township during the peak of British rule. It was the seat of the Special Assistant Collector, of the Assistant Superintendent of Police, the Special Police Force, and of the Sub-Registrar of Assurances. It also boasted Post and Telegraph offices, a public bungalow, a D.P.W. Halting Shed, barracks for European troops, a Chapel, two Christian cemeteries, a small bazaar, and a weekly market.⁷² Even so, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, Malappuram figured in the annals of British rule as a place where of recurring insurgencies from the Mappilas culminating in the Malabar Rebellion.⁷³

The report prepared by K. Kunhi Raman, Revenue Divisional Officer, Malappuram, addressed to the Collector of Malabar, gives us a picture of the

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p.14.

⁷² William Logan, *Op.Cit.*, p.ccclvii.

⁷³ C.H. Sharafunnissa, 'City Life in Colonial Days, the case of Malappuram Town, 1800-1947', *Socialscapes and Locality*, T.Muhammedali (ed.), centre for Social History, Farook College, Calicut, 2017, p.38.

organisation of festivities on the occasion of Delhi Durbar. Excerpts from the report state:

‘The Delhi Durbar Celebration of the Coronation of Their Imperial Majesties King George V and Queen Marry was carried out at Malappuram. The celebrations lasted 6 days beginning from 7th December to 12th December 1911. All these days were crowded with events’⁷⁴

A number of sports events were organised at the Police Parade Ground, Malappuram, from 7th December, 1911 to 10th December, 1911, commencing with a Cricket match between the Detachment of European Troops and the Malabar Special Police.⁷⁵ Malabar Special Police, widely known as MSP, is still stationed at Malappuram town as a remnant of the colonial past. Malappuram saw several revolts by Mappilas, and in the aftermath of the revolts of 1841, 1843, 1849 and 1851 when native troops were thought not up to the job of effectively containing the insurgency, a detachment of European troops began to be stationed at Malappuram from 1852. The Malabar Special Police was established as a punitive force in the revolt-prone area temporarily in 1885 and became a regular force in 1897. Initially, it was known as the “Malappuram Special Force”, due to its having been quartered at Malappuram, and was seen as a symbol of colonial oppression by the disgruntled native people.⁷⁶

The arrangements and proceedings of all the functions connected with the Durbar bore a distinct military flavour. This was only natural, given the strong affinity with the military service amongst the British residents. The army in India at the time of the Durbar comprised of three distinct

⁷⁴ RAK, Selected Records 1911, *Op.cit.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ Sharafunnisa C.H, *Op.Cit.*, p.43.

components: the first was the Indian Army, the force recruited locally and permanently based in India, together with its expatriate British officers; the British Army in India, consisting of British Army units posted to India on a tour of duty, which would then be posted to other parts of the Empire, or back to the UK; and the armies of the native states i.e., the forces maintained by the princely states, which, when deployed on behalf of the Crown, were designated as the Imperial Service Troops.⁷⁷ The Detachment team which played Cricket against the Police consisted of members of the British Army. The match was organised for a day, and this seems to be the first one-day match organised in Kerala. Seven races and a Tug-of-War were organised on 8th December 1911 at the same venue. The events included the Mixed-Clothing Race, Quarter-Mile Race, Relay Race, Veterans' Race, Potato Race, Affinity Race, and the Children's Race. The Veterans' Race was only for the Europeans having at least 12 years of service. The final item of the day was the Tug-of-War.⁷⁸

On 9th December, sports events were organised for the Police. The races for the Police included the Alarm Race, Quarter-Mile Race, Relay Race, Veterans' Race, Half-Mile Race, Tug-of-War, and the Children's Race. Both the Police and the Military were the backbone of the State apparatus. Special attention was given to organise various forms of sports and games for them.

Throughout Malabar, the colonial administration organised a number of events for the children, especially for the schools. British government was intent on inculcating a culture fitting their interests in the impressionable minds of the children. On 10th December, 1911, sports events were organised for the school boys. The races included Quarter-Mile Race (Handicap) Duck Race, Three-Legged Race, Potato-Race, High Jump, Long Jump, Tug-of-War

⁷⁷ Sunil Raman, *Op.Cit.*, p.31.

⁷⁸ RAK, 201, *Selected Records 1911*, *Op.Cit.*

(for two teams of eight each) etc.. The Durbar Pandal which was designed to accommodate 1,000 persons was rectangular, measuring 135 x 45 feet at its base.⁷⁹ A gathering of that magnitude suggests the administration's interest in ensuring people's participation.

The main function related to the Durbar was held on 12th December 1911. On that day, portraits of the Imperial Majesties beautifully decorated with flowers and garlands were exhibited at a conspicuous spot on the dais.⁸⁰

Never in the annals of Malappuram has any event called forth such a large concourse of people, inspired alike with feelings of mirth and loyalty, and never has any event appealed directly and so strongly to the heart of the masses as was the case on this occasion.⁸¹

A report about the Illumination and the fireworks that took place on 12th December, 1911 is as follows:

'Towards evening, Malappuram bazaars (both lower and upper), houses and public offices in the town were illuminated. The whole length of the road from Kottapadi to the Durbar pandal was also illuminated. This, together with the illuminated military buildings, the police lines and quarters, afforded a picturesque scene quite a feast to the eyes. A torch-lit procession starting from Kottapadi was followed by a pyrotechnic display which was greatly appreciated by the public. Mappat Manakkal Nambudripad of Trikadiri placed his dramatic troupe at the disposal of the celebration committees, and the troupe gave two performances during the course of the week'⁸²

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

Celebration of the Delhi Durbar in Southern Malabar

The Delhi Durbar at Valluvanad Taluk

An administrative order issued by K.R. Narayana Iyer, Tahsildar, Valluvanad taluk, dated 9th December, 1911 was on the arrangement for the celebration of the Durbar in the taluk. The order was meant to be served to all the government officers of the taluk. Valluvanad taluk is bounded on the North by Ernad taluk and a portion of Nilgiri district, on the East by Coimbatore district, on the South by Palghat taluk, Cochin State and Ponnani taluk, and on the West by the Ponnani and Ernad taluks.⁸³

The Tehsildar ordered his subordinate officers to inform the public about the celebration of the Durbar at various *amsams* and towns. The order stated that the day of the Delhi Durbar 12th December, 1911, would be a public holiday and that the government activities would be suspended on that day.⁸⁴ Detailed instructions related to the organisation of the Durbar in Valluvanad were also issued by the same officer.⁸⁵ Special instructions were as follows:

1. Specially tuned Sanskrit musical hymns in praise of the emperor should be recited at various places. School or college students with good physical appearance can be selected to recite the hymns. If the region is inhabited predominantly by the Mappilas, the songs should be rendered in Persian. If possible, arrangements should be made to translate the Sanskrit and Persian songs into Malayalam
2. Students of the nearby schools should be present for celebration. Sweets should be distributed among them.

⁸³ William Logan, *Op.cit.*, p.cccxxxi.

⁸⁴ RAK, 201, *Selected Records, Op.cit.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

3. At the end of the ceremony, specially composed songs should be sung praising the British Emperor, praying for his health.
4. At the end of the celebration, fireworks should be arranged.
5. Following the main event of the celebration, sports and games can be organised for the children.
6. On the final day of the Durbar, on 12.12.1911, lamps should be lighted as on the occasion of Deepavali or Karthika and fireworks display also can be organised.⁸⁶

The Delhi Durbar at Kollengode

Kollengode is an important village in Padinharathara *amsam*, situated about 12 miles South of Palghat (Palakkad). The environs of Kollengode are very beautiful, and the abundant rain aids in the growth of rice.⁸⁷ It had a Police station and a Travellers' Bungalow, and was formerly noted as being the seat of a local chieftain named Venganatti Nambidi, who reigned in these parts (called Vengunadu after Vemgamatti), before the British came to power.⁸⁸

The schedule of the celebration of the Delhi Durbar at Kollengode, the headquarters of Vengunadu is also available from the records. The schedule (in Malayalam) lists different forms of games to be held on 10th December, 1911, from 12 PM to 6 PM, with native games scheduled from 12 PM to 3 PM, and games for the students from 3 PM to 6 PM. On 11th December, plays (*natakam*) of the students would be staged from 5.30 PM to 8 PM. Elaborate events were to be held on 12th December, the final day of the Durbar. Public

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ Francis Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras Through the Countries of Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1999, p. 346.

⁸⁸ William Logan, *Op.Cit.*, p.cccxciii.

entertainment had to include performance of musical instruments at 1 PM, procession from 3 PM to 7 PM, and fireworks from 7.30 PM to 8.30 PM.⁸⁹

The Delhi Durbar at Ottapalam

Ottapalam is located four miles East of Vaniamkulam on the Old Trunk Road. Ottapalam deserves to be referred to as a small town which had the characteristics of a colonial settlement, with the headquarters of the Deputy Tahsildar, District Munsif's court, Sub-Registrar's office, Police Station, Post Office, High School, Travellers Bungalow, and a Railway Station.⁹⁰ The report on the celebration of Delhi Durbar at Ottapalam is available from the report of T. Govinda Poduval, Secretary, Coronation Durbar Celebration Committee Ottapalam, dated 20th December, 1911, addressed to the Collector of Malabar District. Following are the extracts from the report:

‘Before I enter into the details of each item of the celebration, I have to state generally that there was much excitement in the public mind actuated by the loftiest sentiments of loyalty to the British Throne, and consequently, there was some sort of celebration every day, from 7th to the 12th, the celebrations of that date being the grandest that the Ottapalam public ever witnessed’⁹¹

Another extract is as follows:

‘On 7th December in the morning, exactly at the time Their Imperial Majesties entered Delhi, the Union Jacks and the Royal Standard flags were hoisted up the pandal put up in front of the court house, and 16 *kathinas* were fired in honour of the royal entry into the Town of

⁸⁹ KRA, Selected Records, *Op.Cit.*

⁹⁰ C.A.Innes, F.B.Evans (ed.), *Malabar District Gazetteers*, Madras, 1951, p.498.

⁹¹ RAK, Selected Records, *Op.Cit.*

Delhi. In the afternoon between 2 PM and 6 PM, the school children's sports were conducted in the Ottapalam High School playground. But, before the sports began, there was a Gramophone performance in the local High School, which attracted a large gathering of people. This being over, the actual sports started, under the supervision and management of the President, the District Munsiff, the Treasurer, the Deputy Tehsildar, the *vakeels* of the local Bar, all the masters (male teachers) of the High School, and the members of the Executive Committee including the Secretary. Many excellent feats were performed by the students which drew forth shouts of applause from the spectators and merited prizes also.⁹²

In the morning of 08.12.1911, *kathinas* were fired in the court compound and in the afternoon, a special procession with photos of Their Imperial Majesties placed on a dogcart started from court home, accompanied by the local officials, *vakeels*, and a regular batch of student-volunteers organised for the purpose, with union Jacks and Royal Standard flags, and reached the high school at 3 PM. About 700 students were present and it was really a sight to see how the young children enjoyed the treat.⁹³

On 09.12.1911, besides the usual number of *kathinas* fired in the morning, a carriage procession (four carriages drawn by horses) started, consisting of the President, the Treasurer, the Secretary, and two other committee members, half-a-dozen student volunteers with flags, and went over to the Mulanhur Panchama School, the only school of the kind in this taluk. On the night of the same day, there was a drama staged in the High School Hall, and it was well acted. The

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

crowd of people that had gathered to witness the drama was so large that the hall was crowded to suffocation.⁹⁴

On the morning of 10.10.1911, as usual, 16 *kathinas* were fired, and in the evening, there was an elephant procession with the emperor's photo. The procession moved through a part of the town. In the night, there was a Kathakali performed in the court compound, and a Drama was staged in the High School Hall.⁹⁵ In the morning of 11.12.1911, the usual number of *kathinas* were fired, and the local public displayed unusual energy and enthusiasm in preparing for the final celebrations on the 12th, by getting every building (public and private) decorated and fitting it for the illumination on the next day. Roads, and road margins, and even lanes were cleaned well,⁹⁶

According to the Secretary's report, the last day of the Durbar, 12th December, 1911 was crowded with various activities and programmes. The morning of the Durbar Day, for which the public was in eager expectation, dawned with a continued firing of a number of *kathinas* and the public began to pour in. By 10.30, the invited guests, and the public general, came to the pandal, and music was played on the pipes. Then came a procession of students and masters, with a batch of student-volunteers, properly organised, and with an equally well-organised batch of students in front, singing the National Anthem, specially composed and which was agreeably suited to the occasion.⁹⁷

A significant detail here is that the young girls of the Kanniampuram Girls' School sang before the audience one or two songs which were well

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

received.⁹⁸ The entry of young girls into the public spaces was clearly a break with the tradition. Establishment of girls' schools allowed the girls to acquire Western education, and the attainment of education enabled them to break the shackles of the caste-ridden traditional social structure which very much restricted the mobility of girls and women. With a free distribution of betel leaves and betel nuts, limes, flowers, garlands, and the sprinkling of rose-water, and the Nagaswaram pipers playing, the day's proceedings in the pandal came to a close. A procession with pipes and drums, accompanied by elephants carrying large portraits of the Emperor and the Empress, followed.⁹⁹

Before the main procession started from the pandal in the court house compound, there were 3 or 4 minor processions which were managed by the *adhigaris* (a petty officer, usually, administering a village) of the neighbouring *amsoms* of Kanniyampuram, Vaniamkulam, Trikamgode, Chunangad and Palapuram. These were also well organised with caparisoned tuskers carrying His Majesty's portrait and accompanied by the usual batch of drummers and pipers and a large concourse of people of different castes and creeds.¹⁰⁰

This detail is significant in that a free mix of people irrespective of caste and religion would have been unthinkable earlier. Now we see public space, new pastimes, new forms of entertainment and leisure undivided by tradition.

There were also sets of *Kolattam* and *Parisamuttu* performers plying their art accompanied by songs and displaying their skills, forming part of each procession, besides a number of male dancers properly appalled. These *adhigaris* started their processions from their *Amsoms* after the Royal

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

Proclamation was read. There was the occasional firing of *kathinas* as the procession marched on, and it suffices to say that each *adhigari* vied with the other in making his procession more dazzling.¹⁰¹ Large numbers of people from different *amsoms* gathered for the processions. The crowd of people became so huge that the progress of the procession was slowed down but the local police managed to maintain the order.¹⁰²

Various types of procession had existed in Kerala from ancient times. There is a reference to *Pakalvilakku* in Jewish Copper Plates dating back to 1000 CE. It referred to people carrying lighted lamps of the traditional type while moving in a ceremonial procession.¹⁰³ By the colonial period, we find the processions organised by the State. But they involved people belonging to various sections of the society, indicating the expansion of public spheres. The processions were actually a new form of leisure which provided entertainment to both the participants and spectators. So, we might say that processions evolved into a State-sponsored leisure.

The whole town of Ottapalam, including every building (both public and private), was beautifully decorated and illuminated, the illumination in the court house building, in the pandal and in the bazaar being the most splendid. Nearly 1500 lights were used in the court building and pandal, in addition to three Washington lights specially brought and put up to burn through the whole night.¹⁰⁴ According to the Secretary, the whole court building and its surroundings looked like “a Fairyland in miniature”. There were also illuminations in all places of religious worship.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ M.G.S. Narayanan, *Perumals of Kerala*, Cosmo Books, Thrissur, 2013, p. 281.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*

Immediately after the procession closed, a number of *kathinas* were fired, and then began the display of all kinds of fireworks, such as firing of rockets of different sorts, burning of coloured lights, and other different kinds of shots being discharged, lasting for nearly three quarters of an hour and amusing the crowded public.¹⁰⁵

Fireworks and pyrotechnic shows existed as a form of royal entertainment in many medieval Indian kingdoms during festivals, events and special occasions like weddings.¹⁰⁶ Fireworks are also an integral part of major festivals such as Diwali and Vishu. By the eighteenth century, fireworks began to become *de rigueur* in a grand scale in the Diwali entertainments organised by rulers. In the Mughal period, fireworks are depicted in the context of royal weddings, *Shab-e-barat*, as well as in Diwali. Abul Fazal, who constantly used the metaphor of divine light, mentions both these festivals in their association with lights in *Ain-i-Akbari*.¹⁰⁷ By the late Peshwa period, when the Mughal empire was breathing its last, and the British East India Company was afoot realising its designs in India, the knowledge of different fireworks was very common.¹⁰⁸ So, it is only natural that during the Durbar celebrations, grand spectacular fireworks were organised by the district administration in various parts of the Malabar District as elsewhere. These fireworks could have served the purpose of impinging the popular psyche with the might of the empire.

¹⁰⁵ The secretary expressed special thanks to V.P. Govinda Menon of the local bar, for his having safely managed the display of fireworks along the March of the procession.

¹⁰⁶ *The Indian Express*, New Delhi, 14.11.2020.

¹⁰⁷ Ruchika Sharma, 'Discovering *Jashin-e-Chiraghan*, the Mughal Festival of Lights', *The Wire*, 27.11.2018.

¹⁰⁸ Nandhini Rathi, *Op.Cit.*

Coronation Durbar Celebrations at Manantoddy

Manantoddy, now Mananthavady, is in Wayanad district, at 2,558 feet above the sea-level, and is located 80 Kilometres from Tellicherry (Thalassery) and 16 Kilometres from the Mysore frontier. It is the headquarters of the taluk, with offices of the District Forest Officer of North Malabar, the Deputy Collector, the Tehsildar of Waynaad, the Sheristadar-Magistrate and the Sub-Registrar stationed here. Famous for pepper and spices, the British realised the commercial importance of the place and started Coffee, Tea, and Rubber plantations widely. During the first-half of the nineteenth century, Manantoddy was a military station, and it was on this hill that the troops were cantoned,¹⁰⁹ due to the fact that Wayanad was the epicentre of the revolts by Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja (1793 CE-1805) and the Kurichiyas (1812 CE).

The records sourced in this study give an interesting description of the celebration of the Delhi Durbar at Manantoddy/Mananthavady which was held on 12th December, 1911. The Durbar was held in the open space in front of the taluk office in a large pandal measuring 90 x 30 feet, flanked by two turrets. The start of the day was announced by the firing of 31 *kathinas* at 6 AM. At 11 AM, the students of the three schools in the town, and the senior boys of the neighbouring Kellur and Payingatri schools came in procession to the Durbar pandal bearing portraits of the King-Emperor, banners, Union Jacks, and flags. On the march, they sang the National Anthem, Rule Britannia, and other patriotic songs. The pandal, despite its size couldn't accommodate all the public assembled and people had to stand outside. The European and native ladies of the station graced the occasion by their presence. Special accommodation was provided for the latter, this being the first occasion in Wayanad when native ladies, several of whom were

¹⁰⁹ C.A.Innes, *Op.Cit.*, pp.503-504.

Brahmins and Nairs, came out of their seclusion to attend a public function.¹¹⁰ This marks a shift in social mobility, however little it was, since women generally had never enjoyed any public space in the caste-ridden male dominated society.

At 11.45 AM, the portraits of Their Majesties were borne in procession from the Wayanad Deputy Collector's office, and preceded by loud music. Then followed action songs, recitation, and *Kummies* and *Kolattam*, which were especially well rendered by the team of children representing the schools, as the schools had vied with each other to show up.¹¹¹ At 4 PM, a crowd of about 2,000 people assembled near the King's Ferry to witness the sports events. Provisions were made not only for the general public and the school children (boys and girls), but also for the *Paniyas* and the Kurichiyas (tribal communities).¹¹²

The Durbar celebrations in this particular town was unique in the sense that nowhere else in the Malabar District had so many diverse people of varied ethnic origins congregated in one place to pay homage to the British monarch. In the larger picture, celebration of the Durbar all over the sub-continent itself was unique in the history of British empire as no precedent had been there of the celebration of Emperor's ascension so vastly spread across such breadth of land and among such a variety of nationalities and ethnicities. From Peshawar to Pudukkotai, from Bannu to Benares, and across the lands in Burma, Bhutan, and Sikkim, the news of the celebrations of the coronation of King George V travelled, reinforcing the perception that the

¹¹⁰ RAK, 201, *Selected Records, Op.Cit.*

¹¹¹ According to the report, the children of all the schools were then entertained by Mr. K. Achutha Kurup, Taluk Board Member, who also arranged to similarly entertain the children of the other schools in the taluk.

¹¹² The report gives credit to a police inspector "Great credit is due to Sub Inspector Rebeira for the excellent arrangements made which enabled a large and varied programme to be gone through punctually and without a hitch."

British rule in India was secure, and that the Sun would never set on the British Empire. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Motilal Nehru, Sachidanand Sinha, R.N.Mudholkar, Sivaswami Aiyar, and C.Sankaran Nair were some of the prominent Indians and members of the Indian National Congress who were present at the Durbar. Native rulers wielding various amounts of power were conferred titles and privileges, and they pledged complete allegiance to the British King.¹¹³

State-festivals or State-sponsored festivals, were integral part of the ancient and medieval Indian political system, and were mainly organised by the king/ruler. The earliest such State-festivals were performed in the Chola kingdom after the asterism of the Chola kings (850 CE-1178). The Chola rulers enhanced their public image through conspicuous patronage of the religious festivals, which eventually turned into State-festivals. The *Dasara* was celebrated by the later Vijayanagara rulers with great pomp. It served them to purposes like lending legitimacy for their political authority and winning the Brahmins to their side. Akbar and the later Mughals celebrated a variety of festivals. All of these festivals had this trait in common; they served to validate the rule in the public eye and effect a level of peaceful coexistence among different ethnicities so that possible insurgencies could be forestalled.

To sum up, the Delhi Durbar celebrations in Malabar was such a State-sponsored festival of a scale that was never witnessed in the land. All over the Malabar District the event was celebrated with great pomp and public participation of a scale that had never been seen, not only in urban centres but also in places where the British interests concentrated. In Calicut, the headquarters of Malabar, Cannanore and Malappuram (both cantonments), the presence of British officers was remarkable. Other major centres of

¹¹³ Sunil Raman, *Op.Cit.*, pp.168-169.

celebration were Ottapalam, an important centre of Valluvanadu, Kollengode, a forest area located far from the headquarters, and Manantoddy, a hilly region important for political and economic reasons. Calicut was the capital of the erstwhile native rulers, the Zamorins. After the defeat of Tippu Sultan in the Third Anglo-Mysorean war, Calicut fell into British hands and became the headquarters of the Malabar District, growing into the most important urban centre in colonial Malabar. Being the headquarters of the District, Calicut was very crucial for the British.

The Empire State itself was creating leisure and entertainment for its subjects. In the celebrations connected with the Durbar, the subjects were being treated to some grand scale entertainment as munificence from the emperor. A section of the subjects who were rigidly divided into various castes and religion over centuries were being transformed into an amalgamated mass of general public which was a precursor to them being citizens. The entertainment, or rather the leisure-space, was spectacular, filled with modern sports and games, illumination, processions and grand fireworks. These forms of entertainment were instrumental in creating a public sphere where leisure was being commonly enjoyed. The native forms of celebrations and festivals were not wholly left out as the State was careful enough to exploit their appeal, too. The State machinery used the support and collaboration of the local elite to this purpose. It could achieve some success in seeking to 'legitimise' or 'idealise' the foreign rule by adopting local symbolisms of power, creating local elites, and patronising them into working for the British State. They were in fact giving shape to a new culture which was essentially modern.

Chapter Seven

CONCLUSION

Leisure is universal and it is as old as humanity. Under ordinary circumstances everyone experiences some of it in different forms even if they know it or not. Time available for leisure varies from one society to another and from one age to another. The ancient man tended to have significantly more leisure time than the people in their later periods. Ancient people did not make sharp distinction between work and leisure. Later societies set aside different periods for work and leisure.

In the modern period leisure practices began to be seen as a part of the wider social problem. Leisure was thus conceptualized not only in terms of individual aspects but of the economic, social and cultural environment. Individual leisure refers to activities that a person voluntarily engages in, when he or she is free from any familial or social responsibilities or work. The individual attains leisure satisfaction as a result of engaging in leisure activities. Family leisure can be defined as time spent together as a family in free time. A related concept is social leisure which involves leisurely activities in different social settings largely determined by different material activities.

It is necessary to provide a historical background of the evolution of leisure to have a clear understanding of the role of leisure in modern society. When we trace the origins of many of our contemporary leisure activities, it is identified that they are directly or indirectly related to the ancient cultural traditions and practices. The history of leisure is a rich complexity of people,

places, events and social forces showing the role of their arts, sports, pastimes and other amusements.

Leisure is simply the free time spent away from work and other necessary activities such as even eating and sleeping. It is a quality of experience. It is done for its own sake and for social correlations. It can be a non-purposeful activity also. Leisure as a purposeful activity is generally classified as recreation leisure. However, for the purpose of this thesis the concept of recreation is embedded in the term leisure.

The present researcher has made an attempt to contextualise the colonial articulations of leisure and recreation in the traditional society of Malabar and its impact upon the social, economic and cultural life of the native people, who were intertwined in the hierarchical structure of the traditional caste system. It has also been tried to analyse the penetration of colonial modernity into the existing social fabrications through European leisure concept and leisure activities, along with the adaptation and assimilation of indigenous leisure and recreational activities.

Although leisure and recreation had existed along with the very beginning of human history, only recently have these been addressed by systematic research efforts. Till recently leisure and recreation were not considered by scholars as a serious discipline to be explored in the realm of historical research. It has been in this context, a research attempt that has been taken up to explore the vistas of leisure and recreation in colonial Malabar in the larger context of the world and India. The concept and meaning together with the historical evolution of the term leisure and its different connotations in changing historical contexts are examined in this part.

‘Evolution of leisure and recreation in historical contexts’ being the first chapter is an attempt to reconstruct the evolution of the concept and practice of leisure and recreation in human history in a universal context, beginning from the pre-historic societies to the modern period through the different stages of world civilisation. The transformation of leisure from the pre-historic societies, where leisure was not separated from daily life, to the historic societies, where leisure began to be separated from work and other activities and to the specification of leisure time in the later societies has been examined. It is specifically concluded in this chapter that towards the modern period, leisure was separated from the working hours and also the diversification of leisure activities were underlined. The fixation of leisure time and diversification of leisure activities are the conscious efforts of the industrial society in Europe, which was gradually transmitted to the other parts of the world during the period of colonial onslaught.

The evolution and growth of the leisure in Kerala in general and in Malabar in particular is enquired in the second chapter ‘Leisure in pre-modern Kerala’. This enquiry is carried on in the light of literary and epigraphical evidences derived from various sources available. The leisure activities of Malabar in the pre-modern, pre-colonial period was compartmentalised as per the rigid rules and practices of the hierarchical caste system. The caste system, in fact played a significant role in formulating the leisure activities of people belonging to different castes in the pre-modern period.

Another important aspect of leisure time activities of pre- Colonial Malabar, specially taken into consideration and assumption, was its relation to the religious activities. The community leisure as a form of social leisure was related to religious rituals and festivals, that too within the broad frame of caste ridden traditional society. The lower caste people were not allowed to

participate in the leisure activities connected with religious rituals and festivals, by the all powerful upper caste people, who had dominated the social, economic and cultural realms of the society during this period. While leisure activities thus remained as mere entertainment as far as the upper castes were concerned, the lower caste people perceived their leisure time activities as a relief from the relentless hard work. Their social leisure was at the mercy of the upper castes and often curtailed and restricted at the pleasure of the dominant sections in the society.

The third chapter ‘Leisure and recreation in Colonial Malabar: Historical Contours’ critically analyses the political, social, economic and cultural changes introduced in Malabar after the colonial occupation of the region, which prepared the broad frame work for the changes in leisure time activities. The material changes introduced and implemented by the colonial authorities especially in the realms of land system, trade and industry, roads and canals, transportation and communication, western education, etc. prepared the background for the changes of leisure activities in Malabar in the 19th century. Thus, it was in this historical contours that the British colonialism introduced new varieties of European leisure activities in this part of India. This was the marking of the traditional stage from political colonialism to cultural colonialism.

The opening up of several public places in various parts of Malabar attracted the newly emerged indigenous middle class, a colonial construct, to these public places where colonial social leisure and recreational activities were conducted. The Thiyyas and Keyi Muslims were the important two communities in Malabar to be more loyal to the colonial authorities in the beginning who willfully participated in the newly introduced leisure activities. This period is also assumed as the beginning of the administration of the leisure activities in Malabar in the early 20th century.

The different types of leisure and recreational activities including sports and games and other recreational activities introduced by colonialism is critically analysed in the fourth chapter, 'Types of leisure and recreation in Colonial Malabar'. Private and public spaces were prepared and utilised for the conduct of the newly introduced cultural activities along with sports and games. The educational institutions played a significant role in popularising the colonial leisure and recreational activities in Malabar especially during the early decades of the 20th century. By this time it could be seen that the traditional leisure activities in Malabar have almost been replaced by the newly introduced European colonial sports and games, to which more and more natives were attracted.

The entire scenario of leisure time activities in Malabar had undergone drastic changes according to the needs and requirements of colonial modernity. The democratisation of leisure activities provided more and more chances to the lower caste people to participate in the colonial sports and games, as they found it a way to shatter the rigid controls of the caste system. Separate public places like maidans, play grounds, cinema halls etc. provided further opportunities for the natives to be a part of colonial cultural construct. Consciously or unconsciously the natives became a part and parcel of the cultural domination of colonial authorities. Thus, in a way cultural colonialism turned out to be a supplementary aspect to the political colonialism of the British in Malabar. It was a part of the ideological submission of the colonized people to the colonizers in their attempt of imposing colonial hegemony.

The fifth and last chapter titled 'State sponsored leisure and recreation in Colonial Malabar :A case study of Malabar Durbar of 1911' is a specific case study of the state sponsored leisure of the British government in 1911 in Malabar in the wide context of the famous Delhi durbar, organised by the

British Raj, in connection with the coronation ceremony of King George V and Queen Mary in Britain to proclaim both as 'Emperor and Empress of India'. The grand affair of the Durbar was conducted throughout India including Malabar with a variety of cultural and recreation activities. The entire programme was conducted throughout the country at the orders of the British government.

The Grand Durbar could be considered as the culmination of the deliberate interferences of the colonial government in the life and ideology of the people of India as part of the colonial governmentality. The discursive factors, supported and carried on by the British Raj in India finally helped the colonizers to impose their cultural hegemony over the colonized. The colonial government used the term 'darbar', a Persian/ Urdu word that had been generally used by the native rulers of pre-colonial India to denote the royal court or public reception, deliberately to celebrate the coronation ceremony of their rulers in order to legitimise the colonial rule in India. By conducting the Durbar, the colonial government could succeed in legitimizing the intervention in the tradition of leisure activities and thereby westernizing the leisure and recreation of the Indians including the people of Malabar.

The transformation and westernisation of the leisure and recreation activities of the people of Malabar was thus deliberately carried out by the colonial authorities through a series of discourses as a part of the imposition of colonial cultural hegemony of the British in India.

GLOSSARY

<i>Adhigari</i>	- <i>Local officer of Adhikari</i>
Aksa	- Dice
Alliyam	- Dance form of the Sangam period
Ammanai	- Playing with ball
Amsam	- An administrative unit
Apana and Panagoshthi	- Technical terms for drinking
Arangu	- The place where drama was performed
Ashtapada	- Sixty four squares
Athiyayau	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
Bhagavadajjuka	- A Sanskrit Drama
Birjas	- A popular game of the Abbasid Caliphate
Cakkai or Chakyar	- Male actors in the temple
Canarihara	- Strolling in the pleasure garden
Chaturangam	- The game closer to modern chess
<i>Chatti</i>	- A clay-pot
Chaturanga	- Four corps
Cheenakkuda	- A kind of umbrella
Chembavu	- Brown rice
Chenda Melam	- Instrumental musical forms associated with the temples

Cherumar	- Lower cast people
Cheruparai	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
Eru Panth	- Dodge ball
Falconry and Hawking	- Traditional sports of Persia
Gajaventekara	- Elephant t-hunter title adopted by Vijayanagara King Devaraya II
Goti Kali	- A popular traditional game
Illams	- Residences of the Nambuthiri Brahmins
Jalakrida	- Sporting in water
Jambavati Kalyanam	- A Sanskrit drama ,its authorship is attributed to the emperor Krishnadevaraya
Jenmi	- Land owner
<i>Jutkas</i>	- Horse carriages
Kadina	- Fireworks
<i>Kali</i>	- Play or game
Kamavel	- A festival in honour of Kama
Kanakkar	- Supervisors of the lands
Kanduka	- A game of high-born girls, to play with balls
Kanni	- Malyalam month (September-October).
Kararyiyan	- Names of different rice
Perariyan	
Kasthakan	

Modaka

chennai

karinchennai,

katthakapootthada,

Nalikan

Kanjirakkottan

Kadinjolanaran

Peradan

Karinjoran

Veliyan

Vayakan

Kavungin pootthada

Ennakkuzhamban

Ponkilivalan

Karthika

- Popular festival of the Sangam period

Karumalippady

- Name of a paddy field

Kattappattu

- Song of sheaves of grain

Kavyagoshthi

- Poetical assembly

Keyis

- Mappila Muslim merchants

Kokkara kora kora

- A rhythmic chant

Kolamthullal

- A magical folk art form

Kolattam

- An art form

Kolattam

- An art form

Kolu

- A bat like wooden piece

konda	- A metric unit of capacity
Koodiyattam	- A sort of koothu performed in group.
<i>Kota Maidan</i>	- Fort Ground
Kothamooriyattom	- A folk art form of Kerala
Kottikal	- The drummers
<i>Krishippattu</i>	- Songs sung during agricultural operations
<i>Kummies</i>	- A art form
Kunjalechi	- Addressing a young woman
Kunnatthu Kochali	- A feminine name
Kuravaikoothu	- Dance form of the Sangam period
Kuttaci	- The Temple maid
Kutti	- A small wooden piece
Kuzhal	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
Lavaka	- Little Indian the fierce quail
Mahamagam or Mamangam	- Famous river valley festival of pre-modern Kerala
Maidan	- A public place for leisure and recreation
Malayankettu	- A magical folk art form
Mambulli, Chembora	- Names of bull tied to a cart
Mannmuzhai	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
Mappilas	- Muslims
Mattavilasa Prahasana	- A Sanskrit Drama

Mizhavu	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
Mukkuvas	- Fishermen caste
Nambiar	- Upper caste
Nangiarkoothu	- Performed by women
Nangiars	- The women of Nambiar families
Nanna	- The Temple maid
Nauroz	- The Persian festival
Nayanars	- Upper caste
Njaveli Thamburan	- The mythical King Mahabali, considered to be one of the greatest kings to have ever ruled Kerala and a symbol of prosperity.
Oalval Amala	- Dance form of the Sangam period
Odakuzhal	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
Omala	- Names of the workers in the paddy field
Chenthila	
Mala	
Cheru	
Kannamma	
Kaali	
Karumbi	
Chatthan	
Chadayan	

Omala	- Addressing a woman from Cherumar caste
Padalai	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
<i>Pakalvilakku</i>	- <i>Day lamp</i>
Pambinthullal	- A magical folk art form
Panchyavadyam	- Instrumental musical forms associated with the temples
<i>Pandal</i>	- <i>Shamiana</i>
Parayar	- Lower cast people
<i>Parisamuttu</i>	- <i>An art form</i>
Pookkaitha	- A fragrant plant
Pooppadathullal	- A magical folk art form
Poorakkali	- A folk art form of Kerala
Pulayar	- Lower cast people
Puliathram	- Tamil variation of Chaturanga
Rack	- Distilled alcoholic drink
Rani al-Nushshab	- Archery of the Abbasid empire
Sahapiti and Sahapanaka	- Drinking in company
Samana	- The term used for festivals in Vedic literature
Samasya Krida	- The play referred in Kamasutra
Subhadra Dhananjayam	- A Sanskrit Drama
Tabtab	- A popular game of the Abbasid Caliphate

Tapatisamvaranam	- A Sanskrit drama
Tarwad	- Ancestral home
Tevaticci	- The Temple maid
Thaipuyam	- A one day river festival
Thalapanthukali	- A traditional native game
<i>Thampuran</i>	- <i>Landlord</i>
Thanamai	- Equal to mridangam, referred in Sangam works
Thayambaka	- Instrumental musical forms associated with the temples
The game of tabtab	- A popular game of the Abbasid Caliphate, similar to Polo
<i>Thekkupattu</i>	- The songs of peasants who lift water from wells and ponds for irrigating the fields
Thinanthinatho thaka	- A rhythmic chant
Thottam Paattu	- Hymns of the Theyyam performers
Thunagaikoothu	- Dance form of the Sangam period
Uddalaka-puspa-bhanjika	- A festival
Uvaccakal	- The drummers
Vallikoothu	- Dance form of the Sangam period
<i>Vanchippattu</i>	- Boatmen's songs
Vattu Kali and Kilithattu	- A local game usually played by girls with stones
Vattu Kalli or Akkadi	- A local game

Vattu	- A kind of ball, was a favourite game of the children.
Vedivattom	- Idle talks
Verumpattakkar	- Actual cultivator
Virana-puspa-pracayika	- A festival
Xiu Xian'	- Free or Unoccupied
Yazhai	- Musical instrument referred in Sangam works
Yeru Thazhuvathal	- Bull fighting
Zajl or Zijal	- Pigeon-flying

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Appendices

Appendix 1

A. Hymn on various art forms performed at Nava Mukunda Temple, Tirunavaya

കുന്നലേശാന്തികെ നാവാമുരാരിതന്
സന്നിധൗ സർവ്വകാമ്യാർത്ഥം ദിനംപ്രതി
ചാക്യാന്മാർ കൂത്തുവാദ്യങ്ങളാട്ടങ്ങളും
സാക്ഷിദ്വിജവരപാഠകോക്തങ്ങളും
ഭാഗവതാദിപുരാണപാഠങ്ങളും
ഭാഗധേയാബ്ധികളു് ചോദ്യോത്തരങ്ങളും
കൃഷ്ണനാട്ടങ്ങളും രാമനാട്ടങ്ങളും
കൃഷ്ണഭക്തന്മാർ ചരിത്രപാഠങ്ങളും
മാനുഷസിംഹ വേഷങ്ങളാട്ടങ്ങളും

B. This song shows the exploitative character of landlordism.

നേരത്തിലേറെപ്പുലരും മുന്വേ
തമ്പുരാൻ വന്നു വിളിക്കുന്നേ
ചീനക്കുടയും കുറക്കിപ്പിടിച്ചു
തമ്പുരാൻ വന്നു വിളിക്കുന്നേ
പിള്ളയുള്ള കള്ളികളേം
പെണ്ണാളേം വിളിച്ചിറക്കി
മുട്ടിക്കൂനം മുതുകികളും
എല്ലാരും വിളിച്ചിറക്കി
ചീനക്കുടയും കുറക്കിപ്പിടിച്ചേ
തമ്പുരാൻ വന്നു വിളിക്കുന്നു.'

നേരം പുലരും മുന്വേ വിളിച്ചുണർത്തിക്കൊണ്ടു പോകുന്നത് കൊല്ലാക്കൊല്ലം
ചെയ്യിക്കാനാണ്. എല്ലാമുറിയെ പണിയെടുപ്പിക്കാനാണ്.

C. The song express protest against feudal hegemony and exploitation

നേരം പോയ് നേരം പോയ്
പൂക്കൈത മറപറ്റി
നേരം പോയ നേരത്തും
കൊല്ലാക്കൊല കൊല്ലണിയോ
അരമുറികരിക്കും തന്നെ!
കൊല്ലാക്കൊല കൊല്ലണിയോ!
അരക്കൊണ്ടു കള്ളം തന്നേ
കൊല്ലാക്കൊല കൊല്ലണിയോ!
ഏനിവിടെ വന്നേപ്പിന്നെ
കെട്ടാപ്പുര കെട്ടിച്ചേ
നേരം പോയ് നേരം പോയ്
പൂക്കൈത മറപറ്റി

D. In North Malabar the Pulluvar, a caste of singers who wander with their lyre sing a song called *kattappattu* (literally ‘song of sheaves (of grain’) during the harvest in the month of Kanni (September–October).

മുമ്പില് പിറന്നു ജനിച്ചു വരിനെല്ല്
കാരാരിയന് നല്ല പേരാരിയന് വിത്ത്
കാസ്തുകന് മോടകന് ചെന്നല് കരിംചെന്നല്
കാത്തകപ്പുത്താട, നാളികന് വിത്തുമേ
കാഞ്ഞിരക്കോട്ടന് കടിഞ്ചോല നാരനും
പേരാടന് കരിഞ്ചോരന് വെളിയനും വായകന്
നല്ല കവുങ്ങിന് പുത്താടയുമങ്ങനെ
എണ്ണക്കുഴമ്പനും പൊന്കിളിവാലനും
പൊന്നിന്നിടയോന് പൊന്നാരിയന് വിത്ത്

E. The song express the joy of peasants over a good harvest

കുന്നത്തെ കൊച്ചാളി, കൊച്ച കൊച്ചാളി
 കരുമാലിപ്പാടത്ത് കൊയ്ത്തായി പെണ്ണെ
 ഉള്ളാട്ടാളും മണിയാളും കൊയ്തേ
 പത്താളും പിന്നെ പണത്താളും കൊയ്തേ
 കൊക്കറാ-കൊറ-കൊറാ-കൊയ്തങ്ങാ കേറിയേ
 കുന്നത്തു കൊയ്യാളീം കൊയ്തങ്ങാ കേറിയേ
 കറ്റ മുറുക്കനെ കൊണ്ടങ്ങൊരുക്കം
 കറ്റ പെറുക്കി മരമ്പേലും മെച്ചേ
 കറ്റച്ചൊമട് തൊടങ്ങക്കളിഞ്ഞേ
 കറ്റേങ്ങാ ചുമ്മി കളഞ്ഞേലടുക്കിയേ
 തമ്പിരാം തീർപ്പു കൊടക്കണതൊണ്ടേ
 ചീനിപ്പറമ്പിലെ വെളമ്പിയെളാമ്മേ-
 ലത്താളക്കഞ്ഞിക്കരിയിങ്ങാമേണേ
 തീർപ്പങ്ങാലൊന്നൊന്നെടുത്തേടി കൊച്ചേ
 പിന്നലത്ത-ത്താളക്കഞ്ഞീടെ കടമങ്ങാ മീട്ടിയേ

F. Songs of the Pulayas

കൂഞ്ചാരം കണ്ടത്തില്
 ഞാര് നടാന് പോയപ്പോള്
 തമ്പുരാന് തന്നൊരു വെറ്റില തിന്നേന് വെറ്റില തിന്നപ്പോള് പത്തും
 തികഞ്ഞേ!"
 മറ്റൊരു കൃഷിപ്പാട്ട്:
 "തിയ്യോ തിന്നന്തോ തിന്നതിന്നന്തോ തക
 തീയ്യോ തിന്നന്തോ തിന്നതിന്നന്തോ...
 മൂന്നായി നെല്ലിനരക്കണ്ടം കൊയ്തണ
 പൊന്നാരംപാടത്തെ കഞ്ഞെളച്ചി
 (തിയ്യോ)

G. Songs of the Pulayas

ചെമ്പാവു കൊയ്യണ കുഞ്ഞളച്ചി

(തിയ്യോ)

വെറ്റുമുറുക്കണ ചുണ്ടുമേലേയൊരു

ചെമ്പാവിന് ചോറിന്റെ ചേകലാണേ

(തിയ്യോ)

ഇന്റെ മടിയിലിരിക്കണ വട്ടിയി-

ലൊന്നു ചവക്കാനിരിക്കണൊണ്ടോ?

(തിയ്യോ)

ഞാറു പണിക്കണോരക്ഷണ നേരത്ത്

ഞാവേലിത്തമ്പുരാന് വന്നല്ലോ

(തിയ്യോ)

ഒന്നു നിലക്കു നീ നിന്നോളു ബാക്കീളള

പാട്ടിന്റെ കൂട്ടത്തില് നിന്നോളു

(തിയ്യോ)

നോക്കിയെടുക്കുമ്പോ ചോതിക്കണേ തമ്പ്രാന്

കെട്ടോ കെട്ടിയോളാക്യോന്ന്"

(തിയ്യോ)

കൃഷിപ്പാട്ട് ഒന്നുകൂടി.

"തെയ്യോ തിനന്താ തിനന്തിരം താരോ

താരാ തിനന്താ തിനന്തിനം താരോ

നമ്മുടെ കണ്ടെത്തിച്ചു കണ്ടെത്തില്

നാളെ നമുക്കൊരു വിത്തിടീലുണ്ടേ

(തെയ്യോ)

ചക്കുകണ്ടത്തിന്റെ ചന്തം കണ്ടോളേ

ചക്കിച്ചു നിക്കും കറവിപ്പെണ്ണാളേ

(തെയ്യോ)

H. Songs of the Pulayas

പുട്ടണ കാള പൊതഞ്ഞെങ്ങു പോയേ
പുട്ടണ ചെക്കൻ പൊതിഞ്ഞെങ്ങു പോയേ
(തെയ്യാ)

കാള വലിക്കും കലപ്പക്കൊഴുപ്പും
നീളത്തിലോടും കൊലക്കൊമ്മാരും
(തെയ്യാ)

മാമ്പുളളിക്കാള വലത്തും നിരന്നേ
ചെമ്പോരക്കാളയെടത്തും നിരന്നേ
(തെയ്യാ)

I. A harvest song

ഒരു ഞാറ്റുപാട്ട്:
"മാരിമഴകള് ചൊരിഞ്ഞേ- ചെറു
വയലുകളൊക്കെ നന്നുണ്ടേ.
പുട്ടിയൊരുക്കിപ്പറഞ്ഞേ - ചെറു
ഞാറ്റുകള് കെട്ടിയെറിഞ്ഞേ
ഓമല, ചെന്തില, മാലാ, ചെറു-
കണ്ണമ്മ, കാളി, കുറമ്പി
ചാത്താ ചടയന്മാരാം ചെറു
മച്ചികളെല്ലാരും വന്നേ
വന്നു നിരന്നാവര് നിന്നേ കെട്ടി
ഞാറെല്ലാകെട്ടിപ്പകത്തേ
ഒപ്പത്തില് നട്ടു കരോനാവര്
കുത്തിയെടുത്തു കുനിഞ്ഞേ
കണ്ണച്ചെറുമിയൊന്നപ്പോള്- അവള്
ഓമലയെന്നു വിളിച്ചേ
പാട്ടൊന്നു പാടീട്ടുവേണം നിങ്ങളുള്
നാട്ടു കരക്കങ്ങു കേറാന്
അപ്പോളൊരു തത്തപ്പെണ്ണ് അവള്-

മേമരമേറി

മേപ്പോട്ടു നോക്കിപ്പറഞ്ചെ-കൊച്ചു

ഓമലക്കുട്ടിച്ചെറുമി

തത്തമ്മപ്പെണ്ണേ നീയിപ്പോള്

ഇക്കെ വന്നൊരു കാര്യം ചൊല്ലൂ."

Appendix 2

Map of Malabar District, Madras Presidency



Appendix 3

Primary Sources

1. Regional Archives, Revenue R- Dis Files, B no 78, S no 26,1909

The letter showing the penetration and consolidation of modern forms of leisure and recreation in Calicut

19 APR 1909
MALABAR

Calicut, 29th April 1909.

From
F. Vels,
Manager of Basel Mission Weaving Establishment,
C A L I C U T.

To
The Collector and District Magistrate,
M A L A B A R.

Sir,

1 I beg leave to bring the following grievance before you and trust you will be good enough to consider my case and do the needfull to stop my above mentioned grievances.

2 Since some time performances of various groups are being given almost every night in the town hall. Such entertainments usually last till late at night and very often till 3 o' clock in the morning. Not only are the constant tom-toms and the loud yells and shouts of the audience great nuisances to the public in the neighbourhood but crowds of people usually gather round the town hall yelling and shouting till the performance is over.

3 When the audience leave the premises late at night or early morning at 2 or 3 o' clock the people yell and shout and cry as much as they can.

4 From this above statement you will please see that these night entertainments are awful nuisances to the public and especially so, to me and those occupying the building called the Mission shop. It is impossible to find any sleep during such nights. This being the case I must strongly pray your Honour to give immediate orders to those responsible for the nuisance to keep order and the nights quite after ten o' clock as I believe this is the existing rule.

5 Further I pray that no circus or other similar group should be granted permission to play on the maidan later than 10 or 11 P. M. The maidan is in the midst of the town surrounded by several european houses, the occupants of which are greatly dis-

2
turbed if permission is granted to play longer.

6. I may mention that complaints were sent several times without much effect and as it is simply an impossibility to do work without rest and sleep at night and I shall have to seek the protection of Government should this my complaint remain again without the desired result.

I have the honour to be

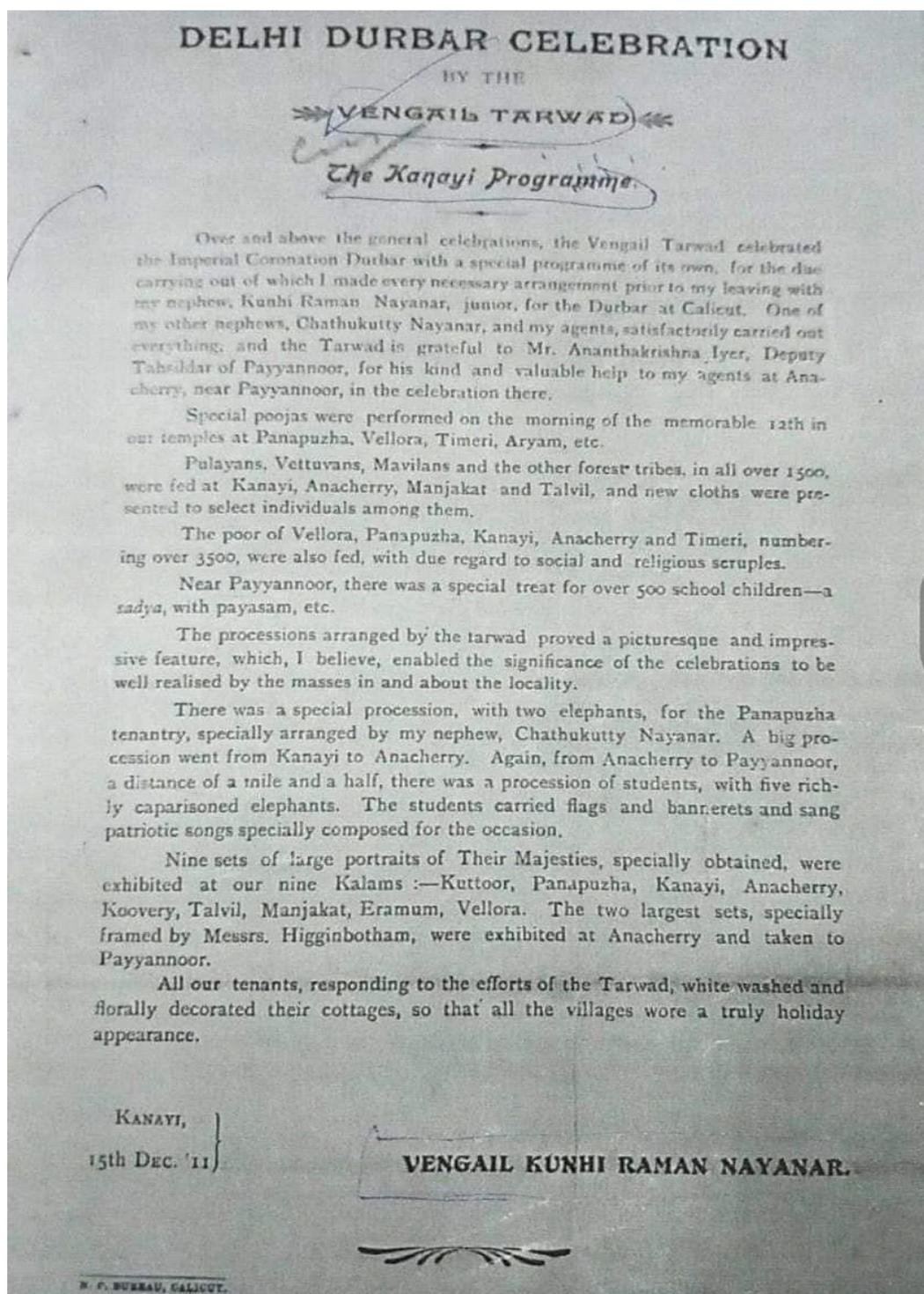
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

Friedr. W. H.

2. Regional Archives Kozhikode, Selected Records 201, 1911

The special report prepared by Vengail Kunhi Rama Nayanar gives the details of the programmes organised at the Vengail tharavad to celebrate the Delhi Durbar



3. Regional Archives, Kozhikode, Selected Records, 1911

Many sporting events were held at the West Hill Maidan on 11 December 1911 in association with Delhi Durbar

PROVINCIAL DURBAR CELEBRATIONS, CALCUTTA
Programme of Events of the Sports,
West Hill Maidan
Monday 11th December 1911. 1 P. M.

Events	To whom open	Prize	Time
Pole jump	Schools, Regulars, Volunteers.	Rs. 5, 4, 3	3 P. M.
High jump	Do.	Rs. 5, 4, 3	3-27 P. M.
Long jump	Do.	Rs. 5, 4, 3	3-35 P. M.
Obattu Race	All comers	Rs. 4, 3, 2	3-50 P. M.
Half Mile Bicycle race	Do.	Rs. 5, 4, 3	3-55 P. M.
Half Mile Flat race	Do.	Rs. 5, 4, 3	4-5 P. M.
Obstacle race	Do.	Rs. 5, 4, 3	4-15 P. M.
Jukka pony race (bare back)	Bona fide Jukka drivers.	Rs. 7, 5, 3	4-30 P. M.
Tilting	All comers.	Rs. 6, 4, 3	4-35 P. M.
Tug of 1	(a) Police vs. Salt and Abkari. (b) Regulars vs. Volunteers. (c) Hindus vs. Muhammadans. (d) Mukuvas vs. Mappillas.	Rs. 12, 16 Rs. 12, 16 Rs. 12, 16 Rs. 12, 16	5 P. M.

Starters—Mr. W. O. Wright
 " E. J. Bowlandson
Referee—Mr. J. Christie
Judges—Mr. C. A. Innes
 " A. Edgington
 " D. Rose
 Captain Willcocks
 Mr. A. Campbell
 " O. Krishnan
 " A. Rajarama Iyer
 Captain Higgins
 Mr. W. E. Hoare
 " K. Imbichunn, Nair
 Rao Bahadur G. T. Vargese
 Mr. C. M. Rarichan Moopan
 " K. C. Manavikraman Rajah

bye course—Dr. Stokes
 Mr. W. L. Bruce
 Lt. Whittal
 Mr. K. Langley
 Rao Sahib S. V. anatha Iyer
 Mr. S. V. Rangami Iyengar
 " G. Zacharia
 " J. Gnanamurti

Recorder—Mr. P. V. Kuruvila

B.—Entries for all events open to Schools Volunteers and Regulars should reach the Secretary Sports Committee by the 3rd December 1911.

Calicut,
 21-11-11.

J. G. FERGUSON,
 Hon. Secy.

K. P. STELLER, CALCUTTA.

4. Regional Archives, Kozhikode, Selected Records, 1911

The itinerary of the celebration of the Delhi Durbar at Kollengode, the headquarters of Vengunadu

KOLLINGODE
12-1-1911.

ശ്രീ.
 മലബാറിലെ നവാബികൾ പ്രധാനസ്ഥലമായ കൊല്ലങ്കോട്ടിൽ വെച്ചു
 ഇന്ത്യയിലെ വിവിധ ഭാഗങ്ങളിൽനിന്നു കേന്ദ്രിതരായ
 പട്ടാളങ്ങൾക്കു കോട്ടയ്ക്കൽ
 തിരുനെൽവേലൂർ.

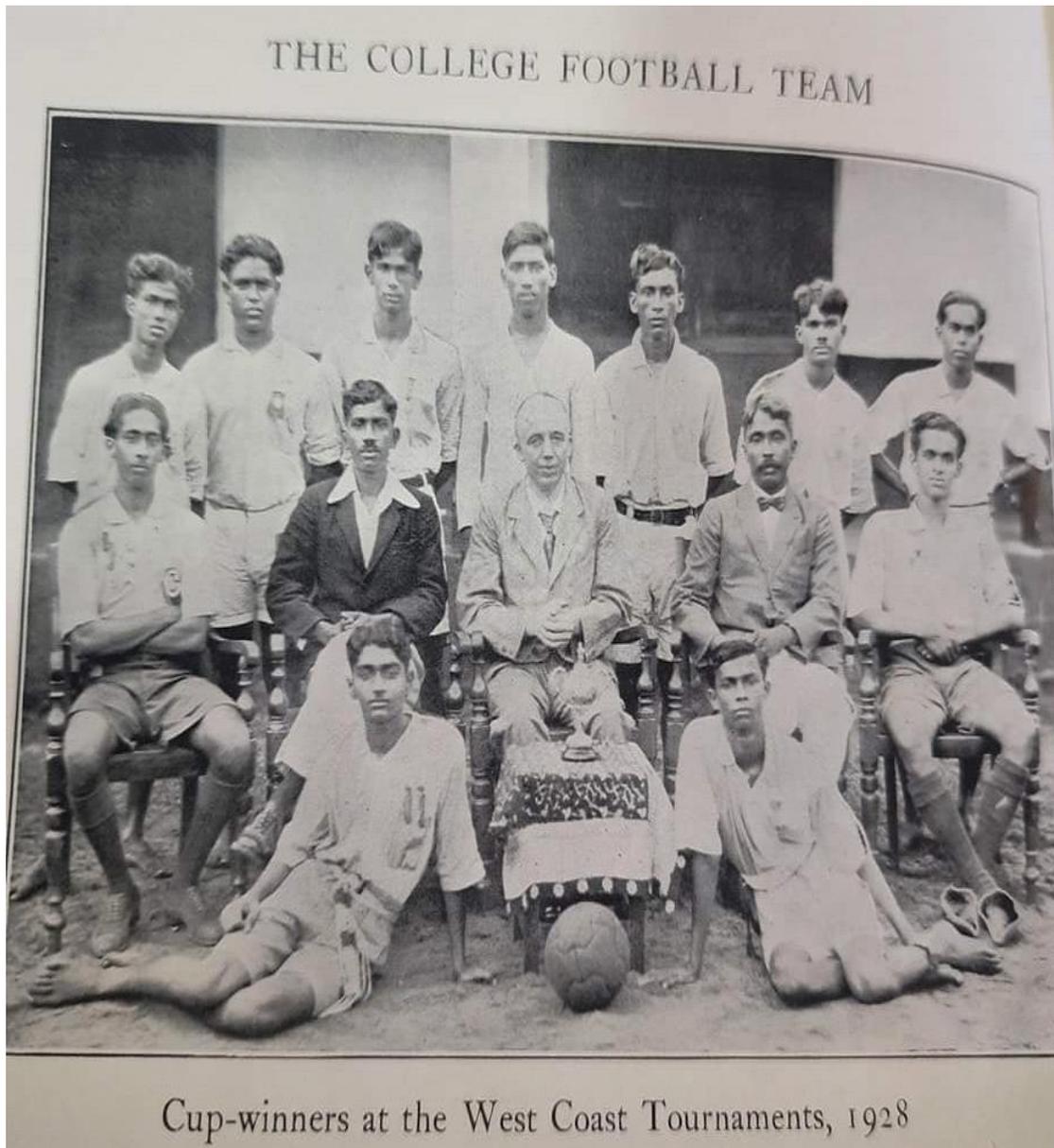
10-12-1911.	സ്വദേശീയ വിനോദകളികൾ	...	...	12 മണിയുതൽ 3 മണിവരെ
"	വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ കളികൾ	...	...	3 " 6 "
11-12-1911.	സാധാരണ മേൽക്കൂട്ടം കോട്ടയ്ക്കൽ	...	...	9 " 2 "
"	വിദ്യാർത്ഥികൾക്കു പലഹാരം കോട്ടയ്ക്കൽ	...	...	2-30 " 5 "
"	വിദ്യാർത്ഥികളുടെ നാടകം	...	...	5-30 " 8 "
12-12-1911.	പന്തലിൽ സദ്യുത്	...	...	11 മണിക്ക
"	സംഗീതവും സംസ്കൃതത്തിൽ മംഗളശ്ലോകവും	...	...	11 " 11-50 "
"	വിളംബരം വായന	...	...	12 മണിക്ക
"	പ്രാർത്ഥനയും സംഗീതവും	...	...	1 " 1-30 "
"	സമുദായ സഭ	...	...	2 മണിക്ക
"	മദ്യപാനത്തിൽ മംഗളപത്രവായനയും മംഗള ശ്ലോകങ്ങൾ ചൊല്ലലും	...	...	2 " 2-20 "
"	മലയാളത്തിൽ ഒരു പ്രസംഗം	...	...	2-20 " 2-50 "
"	താഴ്വരം കോട്ടയ്ക്കൽ	...	...	3 മണിക്ക
"	മോഷ്ടയാത്ര	...	...	3 " 7-30 "
"	കളിമത്സര പ്രായോഗ്യം	...	...	7-30 " 8-30 "

“മമ്മിക്കുട്ടി പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നു.”

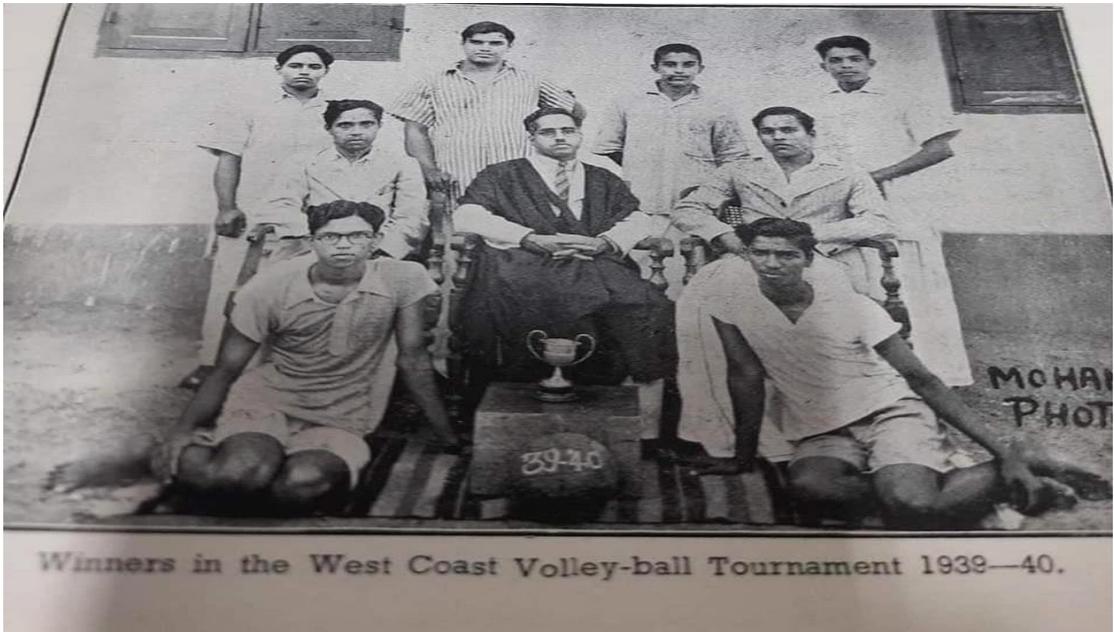
Mookambika Press, Alatur.

5. Malabar Christian College, Annual Magazine, 1929

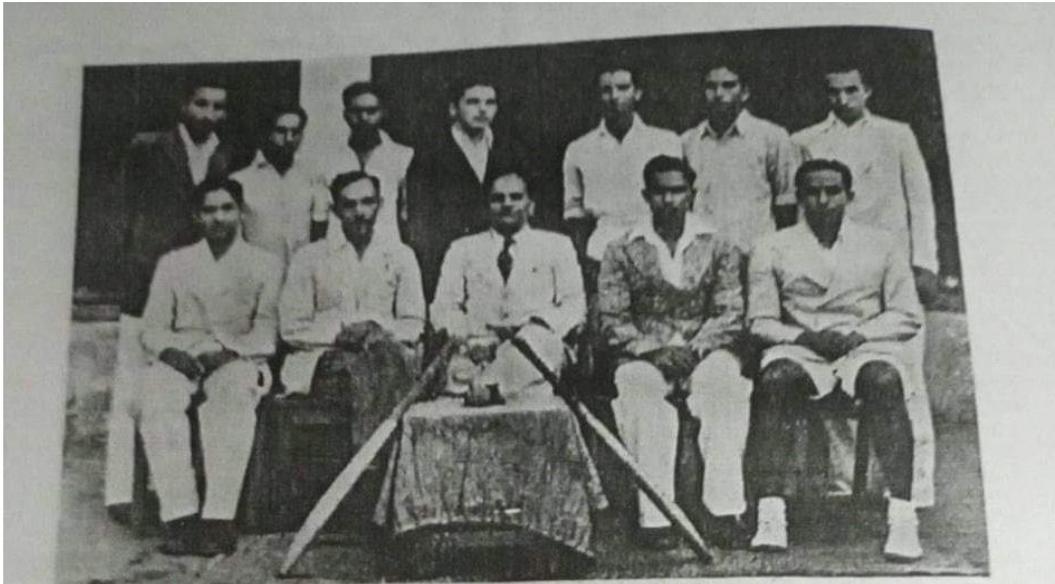
Various European sports and games became very popular among the youth in the modern educational institutions like colleges



6. *The Zamorin's College Magazine, Calicut, 1940*



7. *The Government Brennen College Magazine, Tellicherry, 1938*



THE COLLEGE CRICKET TEAM



8. Victoria College Magazine, 1941



Pole-Vault.



Long Jump.



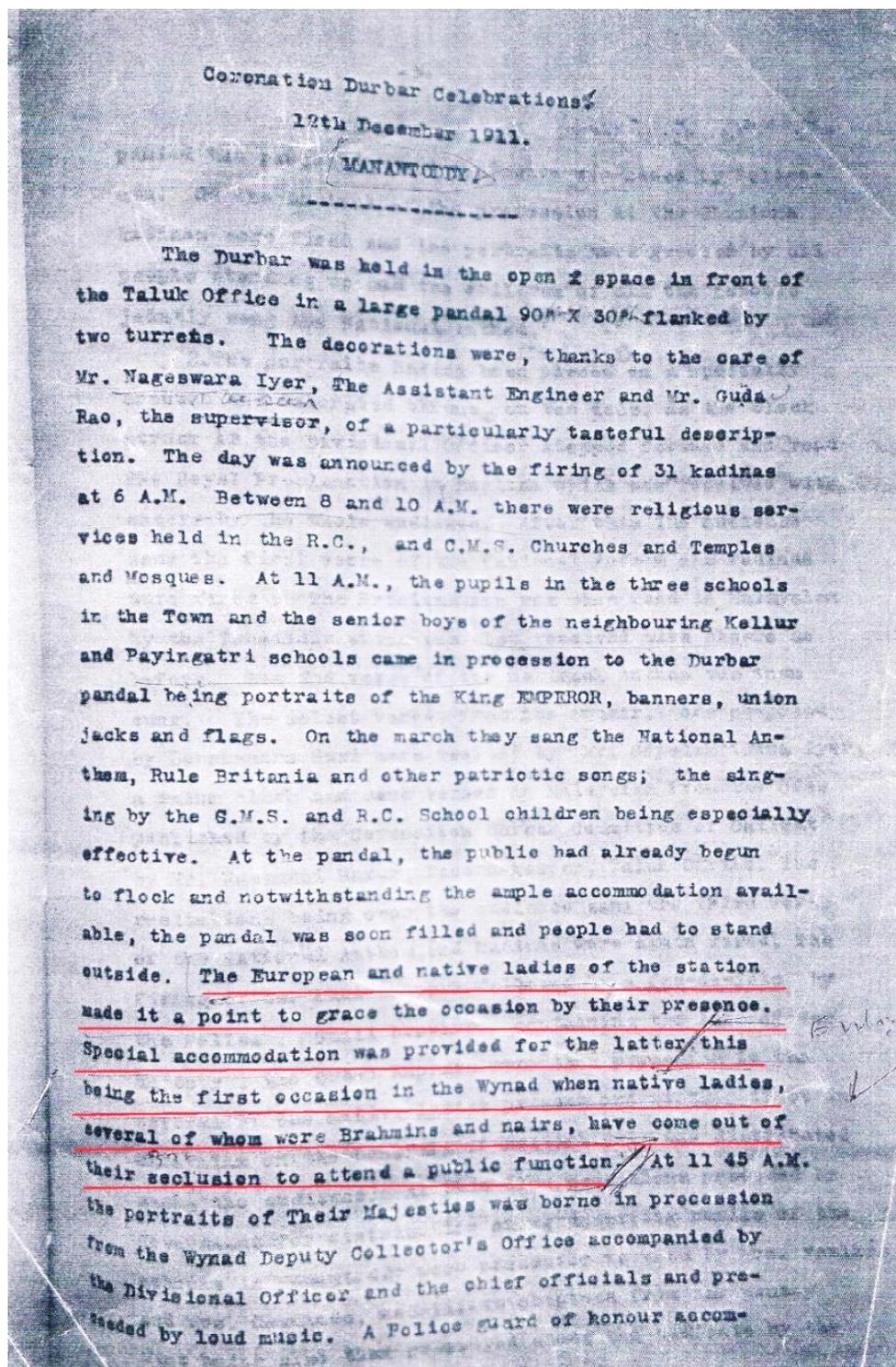
Hurdles Race.



**Victoria College
Magazine,
February 1941**

10. Kozhikode Regional Archives, Selected Records 201, 1911

"This being the first occasion in the Wayanad when native ladies, several of whom were Brashmins and Nairs, have come out of their seclusion to attend a public function"



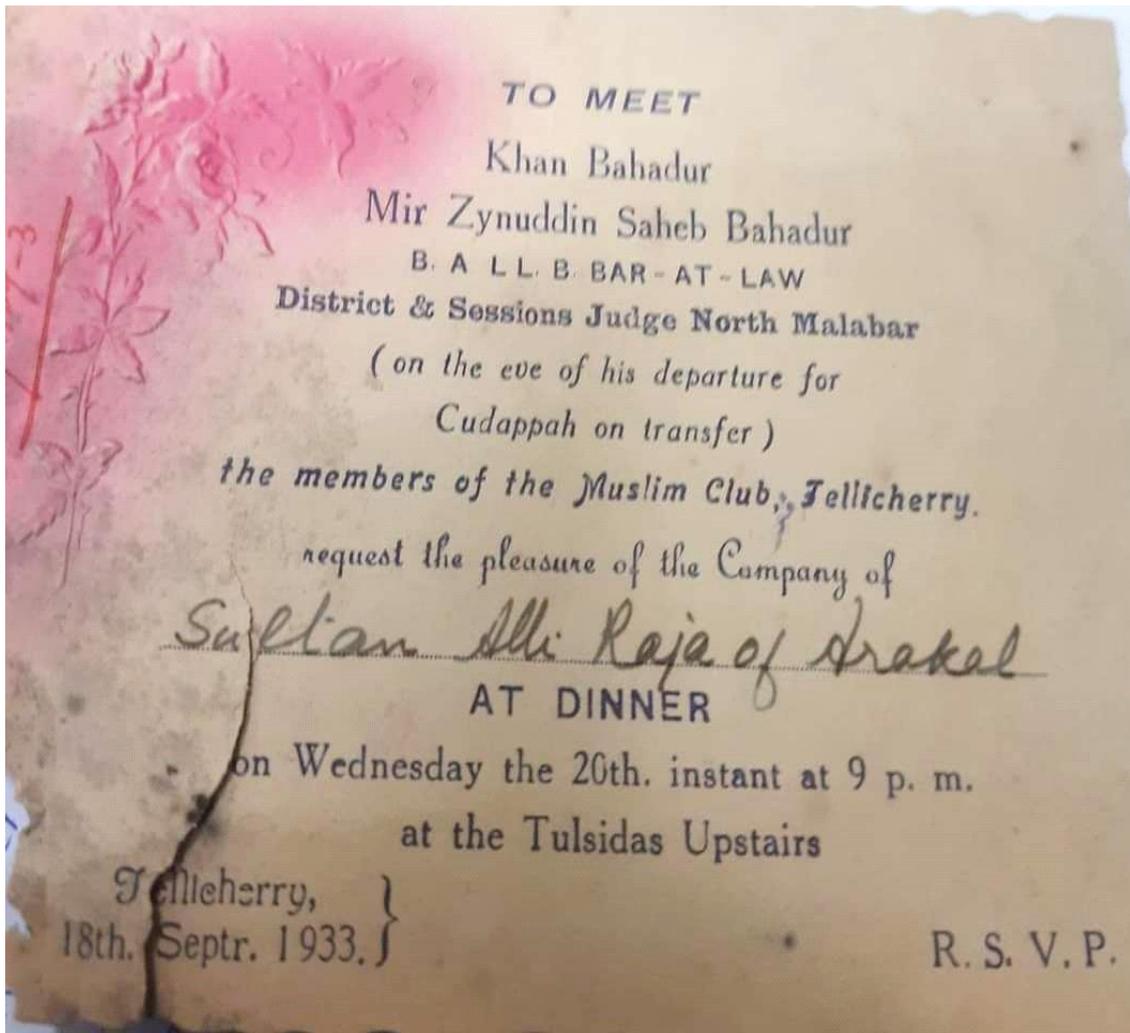
11. Kozhikode Regional Archives, Selected Records 201,1911

A number of girl schools were established in various parts of colonial Malabar. The Malabar durbar of 1911 brought the girl students of these schools to the public places like maidans.

27. Government Moyan Training School.	27. Government Moyan Training School.	200	Mr. J. G. Ferguson.
Chalapuram Hindu Girls' School.	28. Chalapuram Hindu Girls' School.	125	* Mr. T. M. Appu Ned
Chalapuram Mission Girls' School.	29. Chalapuram Mission Girls' School.	140	* Dr. Stokes. Mr. C. M. Karieban M
B. G. M. Congregation.	30. B. G. M. Congregation.	250	Mr. T. K. Kannan.
B. G. M. Girls' High School.	31. B. G. M. Girls' High School	325	* Miss Metzger, (Headmistress)
Tiruvannur Girls' School.	32. Tiruvannur Girls' School.	107	Mr. A. V. Govinda M
Guzeratti School.	33. Guzeratti School.	100	* Ramadass Ranchor
Bilathikulangara Girls' School.	34. Bilathikulangara Girls' School.	100	Mr. A. Campbell.
Town Panchama School.	35. Town Panchama School.	67	Manjeri S. Ramaier.
At the residence of Khan Bahadur Muthu Koya Thangal Sahib Bahadur.	1. Nagaram Moplah School.	110	Khan Bahadur Mu
	2. Kuttichira " "	150	Tangal Sahib Ba
	3. Kundungal " "	80	B. V. Imbichimann
	4. Byragikulam " "	70	Bahadur.
	5. Moplakandi " "	70	Mr. W. O. Wright.
	6. Chakrayam Vilappa " "	75	
	7. Moplas of other schools.	50	

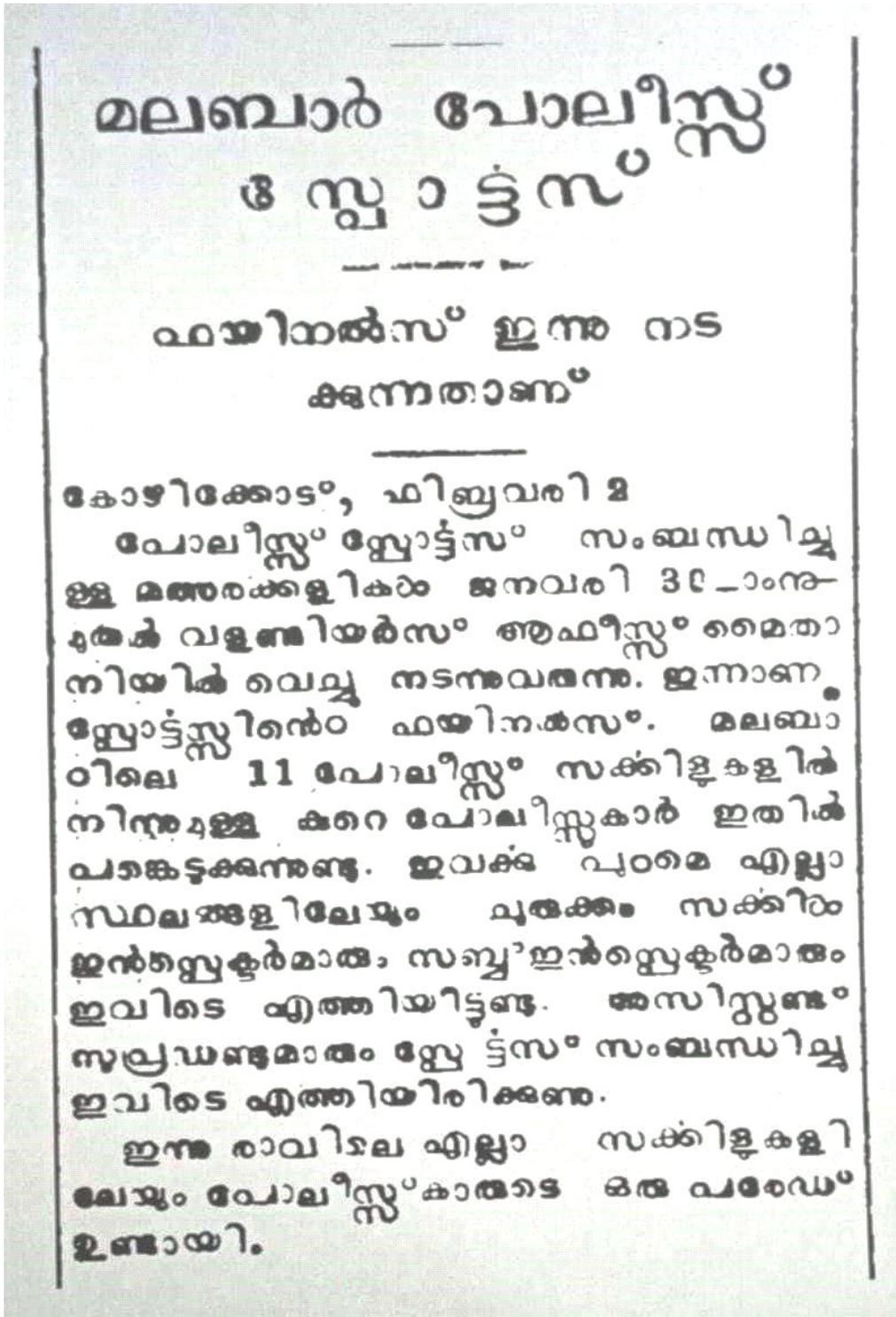
12. Regional Archives, Kozhikode, Arakkal Records, List No 2,S No 7506,CA/1109/33,1933

In colonial Malabar a number of clubs,an important centre of leisure and recreation, had emerged. Muslim club ,Tellicherry was one of them.



13. MATHRUBHOOMI, Kozhikode, 03-02-1934

Mathrubhumi newspaper carried a report on Malabar police meet held at Calicut from 30-01-1934 to 02-02-1934. Main exponents of European sports and games were the police and the army



15. Regional Archives, Kozhikode, Karlekar Grand Circus Notice, S no 8680,1938

Circus was a popular form of leisure and recreation for the emerging middle class in urban centres of colonial Malabar

GRAND OPENING NIGHT ON 9-2-'38 AT 9-30 P.M.

under the kind and distinguished patronage and immediate Presence of
M. R. Ry. & K. Rama Varma Vallu Raja, Chirakkal & Sulthan Abdul Rahiman Ali Raja, Raja of Cannanore.

9-2-'38 Our Stay only 6 Days.

Original Prof. Shanker Rao's
Karlekar Grand Circus
 (and Biggest) ROYAL MENAGERIE (Everseen)
 (After a Lapse of 20 Years.) (Established Since 44 Years)

110 WELL TRAINED WILD ANIMALS 110
 (30 LIONS & TIGERS, 6 ELEPHANTS, 20 HORSES etc., etc.)
 75 EUROPEAN & INDIAN ARTISTES 75

Location:- Munsiff Court Maidan, Cannanore.

Prof. SHANKER RAO, the Wild Animal Monarch. Awarded and Patronised 400 Gold Medals by The Viceroy, The Governors, The Maha Rajas, Rajas and Notables of India will exhibit 5 Tiger Groups at a time (Never seen before) Two Cheetas, Two Bears and a Monkey riding on the Goat. Drinking Milk (Real Fun) GUN SHOT by Tiger (Thrilling) Royal Dinner, Tiger, Goat, Ratna and Bull (Peacefulness of good olden and golden days)

Mr. KERA SAI will exhibit Elephants acts. Horses acts, Monkeys, Goat, Bears, Parrots etc. (Hearful by.)

Mr. ZIKIN, Mrs. ZIKIN, and Mr. KARIGAN of RUSSIA will exhibit FLYING TRAPEZE act at the high of 50 feet and width of 40 feet in the MID-AIR putting 5 mar Sault, Passing Crossing, Twisting and lastly 5 S-mar Saults by Mr. ZIKIN to the net from 50 feet above.

Miss. VEERA will exhibit balancing Trapeze marvellously and Dances beautifully.

Do you like to see the difference in Lions Training? (you have already seen the sweet training by Prof. Shanker Rao)

NOW — COME — & SEE

The Great A-yogga the Acrobats Master NARAN

MUTHUJ, Rope Dance by Mr. NANDAN.

Silver wire by Miss Kalyani and Miss Devaki

The most dangerous act by Master Chavikattu — What? Rolling Bamboos on shoulder.
 [These programme is subject to alteration.]

Our Clowns Mr. Udu Bros., a Speciality.
 (Don't Laugh too much and sick yourself!)

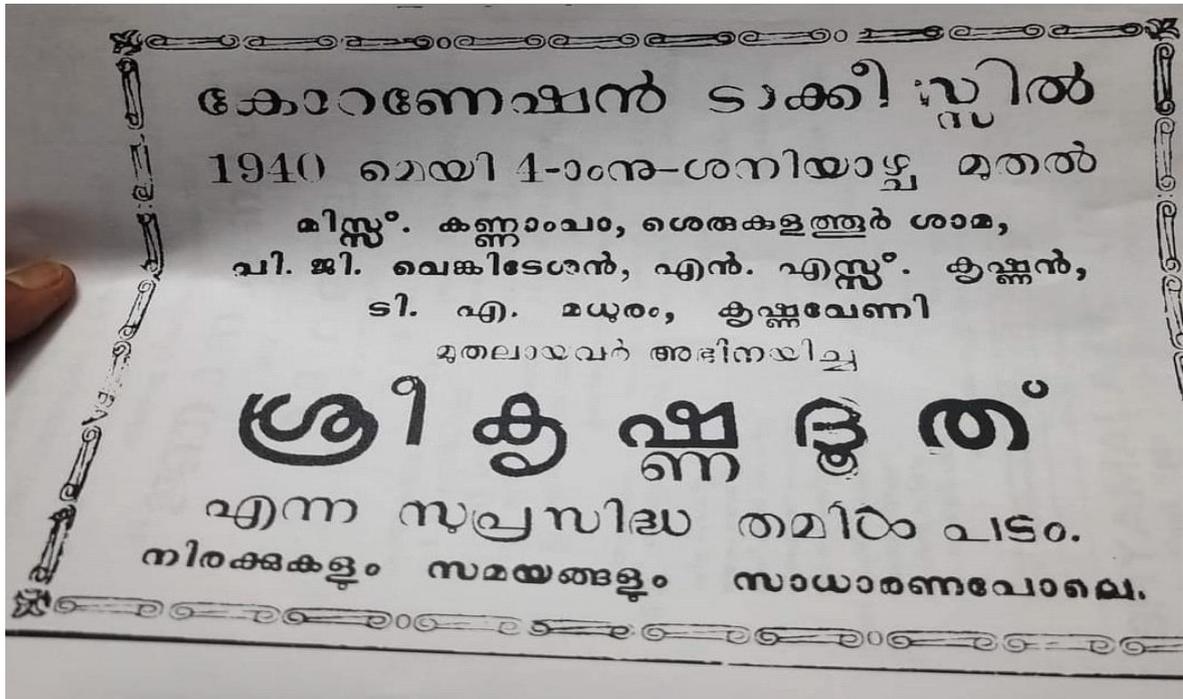
Rates: (Including Tax) 1st Class 2-4-0 2nd Class 1-2-0
 Carpet Gallery 0-9-0, Gallery and Ground 0-4-0

60 Seats reserved in advance at the Circus Pavilion.

Our Zoo opens between 7 a. m. to 6 p. m. Daily. Tickets 6 Ps

16. Mathrubhumi, Kozhikode, 04-05-1940

One of the film advertisements published in Mathrubhumi newspaper. This shows the popularity of cinema, a modern form of leisure and recreation



17. Mathrubhumi, Kozhikode, 16-08-1941

One of the film advertisements published in Mathrubhumi newspaper. This shows the popularity of cinema, a modern form of leisure and recreation

നാളെ മുതൽക്ക്
 താഴെകൊടുത്ത സ്ഥലങ്ങളിൽ

തിരുവനന്തപുരം	—	സ്മൃതിയേറ്റർസ്സ്
കൊല്ലം	—	സ്വാമി ടോക്സിസ്സ്
കോഴിക്കോട്	—	കോറനേഷൻ
എറണാകുളം	—	മേനകടാക്സിസ്സ്
കോട്ടയം	—	വിജയാടാക്സിസ്സ്

തൃശ്ശൂർ — രാമവർമ്മ
 ആഗസ്റ്റ് 21-ാംനാൾ മുതൽ

മദ്രാസ് യൂണൈറ്റഡ് ആർട്ടിസ്റ്റസ്
 കാര്യപ്പോസ്റ്റലർ തയ്യാർ ചെയ്തു

മലബാർ സിനിമാ കമ്പനി

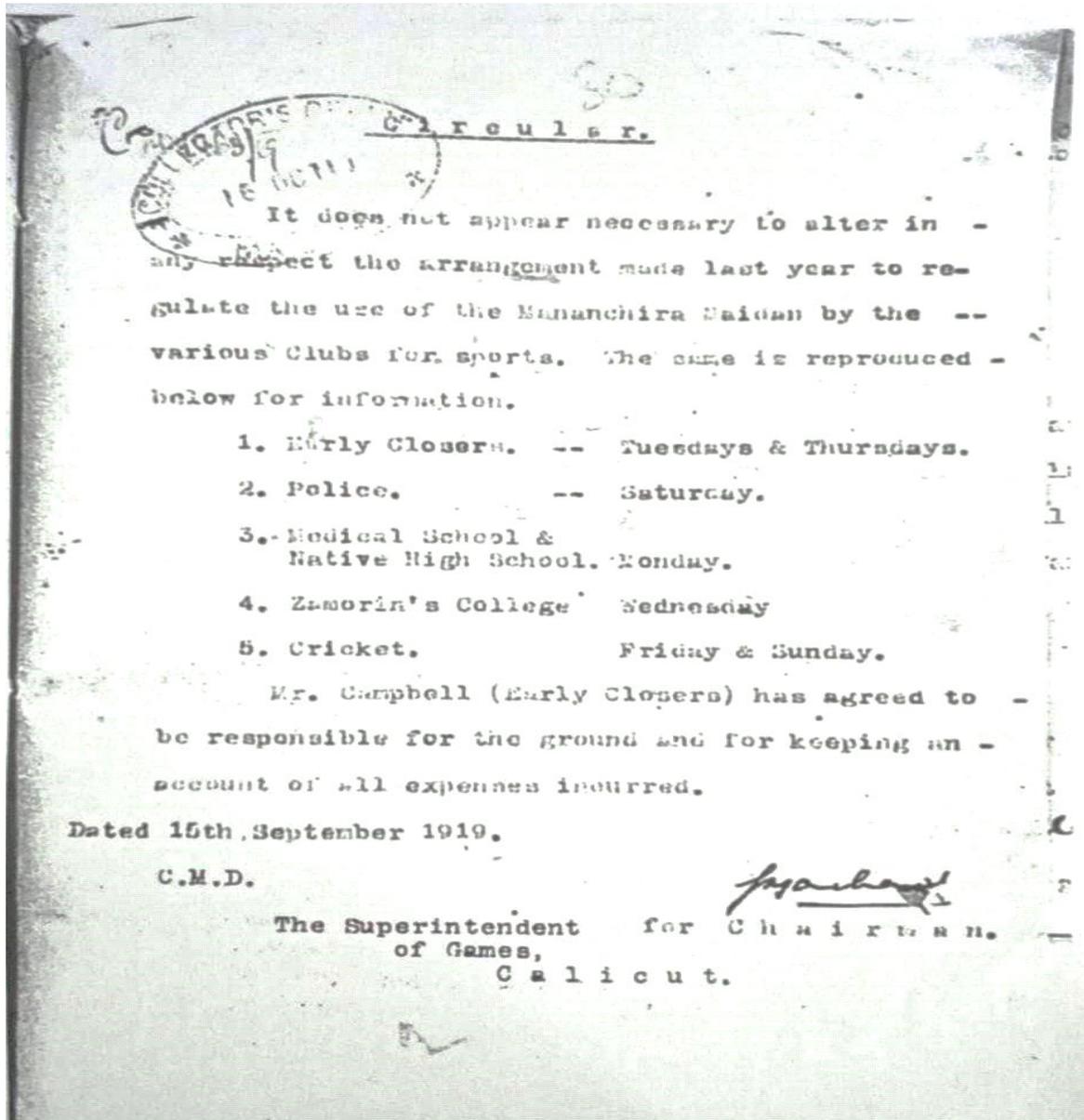
ഗോപിനാഥ് തങ്കമണി കഥാരി ലക്ഷ്മി

പ്രജ്ഞാ
 ലേയാളപ്പടം

വെലർകൾ:
 ശ്രീ. സുബ്രഹ്മണ്യം,
 ഫി. കെ. ജി. എസ്.

18. Regional Archives Kozhikode, Manchira files, Revenue R.Dis files, B No 220, S No 55,1918

Emergence of public places in the form of maidans in colonial Malabar-Files associated with Mananchira maidan, the most important leisure and recreation place in Calicut



Appendix 4

Photos



Malabar Christian College, Calicut



Zamorin's Gurivayoorappan College, Calicut



Manachira Maidan, Calicut



Crown Theatre, Calicut



Former Collector's Bungalow, Calicut



Cosmopolitan Club, Calicut