

# **TEMPLES OF EARLY MEDIEVAL KERALA:**

A STUDY BASED ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND  
LITERARY EVIDENCES

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for the award of the degree of  
**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**IN HISTORY**

**ARYA NAIR. V.S**

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**  
**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**  
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Dr. V.V. HARIDAS,  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY,  
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT,  
KERALA, INDIA-673 635.

### **CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that this thesis *TEMPLES OF EARLY MEDIEVAL KERALA: A STUDY BASED ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY EVIDENCES*, submitted for the award of the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY of the University of Calicut is a record of bonafide research carried out by ARYA NAIR V.S (Reg. U.O. No. 6556/2015/Admn, dated 25/06/2015) at the Department of History, University of Calicut, under my supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted previously for the award of any degree.

Dr. V.V. HARIDAS  
(Research Supervisor)

Department of History  
.... / .... / 2020

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Arya Nair V.S, Research Scholar, Department of History, University of Calicut, has incorporated all the corrections and modifications suggested by the adjudicators of the PhD thesis titled "Temples of Early Medieval Kerala: A Study Based on Archaeological and Literary Evidences." The contents in the thesis and the soft copy are one and the same.



Dr. V.V Haridas  
Supervising Teacher  
Associate Professor and Head,  
Department of History  
University of Calicut

20/01/2021  
CU Campus

**Dr.V.V. HARIDAS**  
Associate Professor  
Department of History  
University of Calicut

ARYA NAIR V.S,  
RESEARCH SCHOLAR,  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY,  
UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT,  
KERALA, INDIA-673 635.

### **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis *TEMPLES OF EARLY MEDIEVAL KERALA: A STUDY BASED ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND LITERARY EVIDENCES* is a bonafide record of research work done by me under the supervision and guidance of Dr. V.V. Haridas, Associate Professor of History, University of Calicut and it has not previously formed the basis for award of any other Degrees.

ARYA NAIR V.S.

Department of History  
.... /.... / 2020



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Department of History

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## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A. N</i>	Akanānūru
<i>K.C.A.R</i>	Kerala Charitrattinte Aṭisthāna Rēkhakaḷ
<i>K.C.H.R</i>	Kerala Council for Historical Research
<i>I.C.H.R</i>	Indian Council of Historical Research
<i>Index</i>	Index to Cēra Inscription
<i>M.V.K</i>	Mūṣaka Vamśa Kāvya
<i>P. N</i>	Puṛanānūru
<i>Patir.</i>	Patirruppattu
<i>P.P.T.I</i>	Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index
<i>T.A.S</i>	Travancore Archaeological Series
<i>Tol. Porl.</i>	Tolkāppiyam- Poruḷatikāram

## INTRODUCTION

The temple had manifold roles in the socio-economic, cultural and political functions in early medieval and medieval Kerala society. The present study aims to survey the role of temple in the making of early medieval society of Kerala. As this work tries to contextualize the whole range of human activities in connection with the early medieval temples based on the available archaeological and literary source materials, we may not be able to give due emphasize on any particular aspect of the temple like it as a centre of agrarian relations, an axis of political entity, a focal point of arts and ideas, an institution of Brahmin traditions and Śaiva Vaiṣṇava Bhakti propagation etc. The temple is taken here as an institutionalized structure of worship with a multiple form of societal actions which developed in the agrarian villages of Kerala, especially in the midland area, in the early medieval period (600 to 1200 AD). This modest title may enable the present scholar to reproduce the historical elements embedded in the source materials and facilitate to situate the historical importance of the temples in the early medieval history of Kerala.

The historical period between 600 AD and 1300 AD has generally been considered as early medieval in the historical studies in the Indian subcontinent<sup>1</sup> and from 600 to 1200 AD in peninsular India.<sup>2</sup> This period was marked by integrative process that especially manifested themselves in sustained local and

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<sup>1</sup> B.D. Chattopadhyaya. *The Making of Early Medieval India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997; Upinder Singh (ed.). *Rethinking Early Medieval India-A Reader*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press paperback, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *The Political Structure of Early Medieval South India*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993.



regional state formation and the emergence of regional cultures.<sup>3</sup> However, the period between 7<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries AD marked substantial changes in the socio-economic and political structure in peninsular India. In the case of Kerala, it was a period of emergence of land grants to the religious institutions, formation of various land ownership rights and intermediary cultivation rights, expansion of multi-crop agriculture in the fertile zones of the catchment areas of the rivers, development of structural temples and Bhakti traditions, formation of a hierarchical society based on Varna ideology and caste system and the integration or consolidation of political powers based on the temple centered social order. Hence, the present study uses the 'early medieval' to denote the historical period from 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century AD.

### **Review of the studies on temple in Kerala**

Not many remarkable attempts are made to study the historical milieu of the early medieval temples in Kerala. The available studies on the temples can be classified into two, the surveys of the temple and the historical studies. The *Temple Architecture of Kerala* of K.V. Soundara Raja<sup>4</sup> and *An Architectural Survey of the Temple of Kerala* of H. Sarkar<sup>5</sup> are the two notable works on the survey of Kerala temples. Both Soundara Rajan and Sarkar used inscriptional evidences to substantiate the chronological phases of the architectural features of the temples. S. Jayasankar has conducted a district wise temple survey and edited a narrative account on all temples of Kerala.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Upinder Singh. *Op. cit.* p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> K.V. Soundara Rajan. *Temple Architecture in Kerala*. Trivandrum: Govt. of Kerala, 1974.

<sup>5</sup> H. Sarkar. *An Architectural Survey of Temples of Kerala- Number-2*. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1978.

<sup>6</sup> S. Jayashanker. *Temples of Kanoor District*. Thiruvananthapuram: Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2001; *Temples of Kasaragod District*. Thiruvananthapuram:

Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai is the pioneer scholar who made a historical investigation to interpret the role of temples in the early medieval Kerala society. He stated that the Bhakti movement of AD 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries caused the expansion of temples in Kerala.<sup>7</sup> He argued that the early cave temples developed with the reign of Mahēndra Varman, the Pallava King in South India, and its influence can be seen in the case of Kerala as well. The *Taḷi* and *Taḷi Adhikarikal* represent the early structural temples and the administrative faction of the temples respectively.<sup>8</sup> According to Elamkulam, the second Cēra period witnessed the emergence of many temples which received land grants from various groups including the *Nāṭuvālis* and the common people. The temple affairs were managed by the committee of Brahmins known in different names like *Pariṭa* and *Sabha* and one of the members of the Sabha was appointed as *Potuvāḷ* to look after the daily matters of the temple. The temple was overseen by the ruling authorities of the region and they had certain political right over the temple. He added that the supreme authority of the temple was *Kōyiladhikāri* who was either the relative of the ruling power or the junior prince.<sup>9</sup> Elamkulam considered the temples as the centre of the development of all cultural activities including performing arts, music, education and the martial arts.<sup>10</sup>

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Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2001; *Temples of Wayanād District*. Thiruvananthapuram: Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2002; *Temples of Malappuram District*. Thiruvananthapuram: Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai. “Taḷikaḷum Taḷiyātirikaḷum.” N. Sam (ed.). *Elamkuḷam Kunjan Piḷḷayute Tereṅṅeṭutta Kṛitikal*. Thiruvananthapuram: International Centre for Kerala Studies, 2005. p.510.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* pp.502-10.

<sup>9</sup> Elamkuḷam Kunjan Pillai. “Raṅṅām Cēra Sāmṛājyakālam,” *Ibid.* pp. 534-35

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* p. 535.

M.G.S. Narayanan has widely used the temple inscriptions to study the early medieval polity of Kerala and considered the centralized monarchical kingdom of Perumāl as the product of the expansion of Brahmin settlements and temple in the river valleys of Kerala.<sup>11</sup> According to him, the temples were developed as the focal hub of the dissemination of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti traditions and that “the temple culture gradually put its own stamp on the general culture of Kerala”.<sup>12</sup> In one of his later articles, he revised his earlier argument and stated that the Perumāl was only a ritual authority and the actual power was exercised by the Brahmin oligarchies who had ceremonial right over the temple.<sup>13</sup>

Rajan Gurukkal’s *The Kerala Temple and early Medieval Agrarian system* is, probably, the pioneering historical study that focused on the material milieu of the early medieval temples.<sup>14</sup> This work has unraveled the role of temple in the consolidation of agrarian society and the formation of temple as centre of the early medieval economy and polity in Kerala. He stated that the emergence of the temple and land grants resulted into the formation of hierarchical society structured by the dominance of agrarian relations in which the landlords were placed at the top, the lease holders, artisan-craftsmen group and the actual tillers were placed below in descending order.<sup>15</sup> According to him, the early Cēra King

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<sup>11</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Perumāls of Kerala Brahmin Oligarchy and Ritual Monarchy Political and Social conditions of Kerala under the Cēra Perumāls of Mākōtai (c AD 800 – AD 1124)*. Thrissur: Cosmo books, (1996), 2013.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* p.345.

<sup>13</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. “The State in the Era of the Ceraman Perumals of Kerala.” R. Champakalakshmi, Kesavan Veluthat, T.R. Venugopal (ed.). *State and Society in Pre-modern South India*, Trissur: Cosmo books, 2002. pp. 111-19.

<sup>14</sup> Rajan Gurukkal. *The Kerala Temple and Early Medieval Agrarian System*. Edappal: Vallathol Vidyapitam, 1992.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 50-67.

was an integrating force of contemporary agrarian settlements managed by the corporate bodies of Brahmanas.<sup>16</sup>

Kesavan Veluthat, who made a historical survey of the Brahmin settlements of Kerala<sup>17</sup> mentioned in the *Keralolpatti* text, has authored research articles on the role of temples in South India in general and Kerala in particular.<sup>18</sup> He argued that the Brahmanical temples were functioned as a state which operated the revenue and judicial administration and assumed the status of local chief.<sup>19</sup> He stated that the temples were not only a religious institution but was an integrating force of socio-economic, cultural and political elements of the society.<sup>20</sup>

### **Research Problem**

The above-mentioned historical studies have treated temple as the product of the formation of agrarian villages connected with the thirty-two Brahmin settlements in the river belts of Kerala and majority of them were developed from 9<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards or from the period of Second Cēra political power. The historical development of the Kerala society before 9<sup>th</sup> century AD is not surveyed well as part of the studies of early medieval temples. Rajan Gurukkal has attempted to study the formation of agrarian society antecedent to the temple society and argued that the Iron Age with Black and Red Ware were mainly an

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 69-82.

<sup>17</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Brahman Settlements in Kerala- Historical Studies*. Thrissur: Cosmo Books, (1978) 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. "The Temple and the State, Religion and Politics in Early Medieval South India", R. Champakalakshmi, Kesavan Veluthat, T.R. Venugopalan (ed.). *Op. cit.* pp. 96-110.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 104-05.

<sup>20</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *The Early Medieval in South India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press Paperback, 2009. pp. 61-82.

agrarian culture, which preceded the temple society. But at the same time, he ignored the possibility of the development of settled and organized society during the early historic period. Majority of the early medieval historical studies in Kerala have argued that the expansion of river valley agriculture was materialized due to the formation of Brahmin settlements and temples. They emphasized that temples and Brahmins managed the process of agrarian expansion in the river valleys. However, a perusal of the available epigraphical evidences from 9<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards makes it clear that the temples were formed in an already established agrarian society. The archaeological and literary evidences of Iron Age and early historical period hint at the formation of technologically advanced agrarian society before the period of Brahmin settlements.

Similarly, all these studies consider temple committee as a fully Brahminic body and ignore the possibility of the existence of non-Brahmin presence like that of land holders. Many inscriptions were discovered and published after the major studies on temple like *Kerala Temple* of Rajan Gurukkal. For example, the Cembra inscription refer the existence of *Ūr* as a non-Brahminic entity like the *Ūr* of Tamil country which created a temple-based Brahmin settlement through land grants.

The available epigraphs show that most of the lands were granted to the temples and a very few to the Brahmin. The temples were governed by a corporate body consisted of Brahmins and non-Brahmins and there is no common structure for these bodies which varied according to the nature of the existing land relations of the region of the temple. Some temples were very rich like Tiruvalla, Trīkkākkara, and Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi, which possessed a large amount of land and maintained a number of temple functionaries, but majority of the

temples were not rich but received land grants and had a significant role in the making of the contemporary social order and polity of the locale.

The lands granted to the temples were already under cultivation and probably transferred along with all occupational categories attached to the land to the temple. In fact, the land grants meant the transfer of ownership right to the temple trustee, which entrusted officials to oversee the production process of the land, and the processes of cultivation were operated by the actual cultivators attached to the land. The major change occurred in the agrarian economy during this period was the creation of a new intermediary tenant community who owned the cultivable right (*Kārāṇmai*) over the land received by the temple or Brahman. All these things lead us to fresh historical investigation on the temple in order to revisit the early medieval socio-political relations. Accordingly, the present study tries to study the evolution of temples and the temple-based society with Brahminic elements from the early historic period onwards and how it became the fundamental institution of early medieval social order and polity.

### **Objectives**

The present study aims to investigate the historical significances of the temples in the socio-economic, cultural and political scenario of the early medieval Kerala based on the available epigraphical, architectural, iconographical and literary evidences.

It tries to trace out the historical development of the pre-temple society that facilitated the process of the formation temples in the agrarian villages of Kerala based on the Iron Age early historic archaeological and literary evidences.

It focuses on the evolution of temple as a worshipping institution in the early medieval period which functioned according to the Brahmanic routine and with the political support.

It traces the role of temple in the making of early medieval social order and relations of production and exchange.

It also tries to locate the temple's role in the consolidation of early medieval political powers in Kerala.

### **Hypothesis**

The early medieval temples developed in the already established agrarian villages with the support of the existing political authorities of the region. The remnants of the well-organized pre-temple society with multi-crop agricultural production and surplus exchanges can be traced from the Iron Age and early historic period. The available epigraphs from 9<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards mention the grants of cultivated land to the temples along with the tilling communities and other elementary settlers of the land by various ruling powers of the region. The corporate committee of the temple was overseen the matters of the temple and therefore the Brahmins had corporate right over the temple land in the early phase of early medieval period, which gradually changed in 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.

The institutionalized temples were caused to the spread of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava Bhakti traditions and Varna ideology, which created a new social order in which the Brahmins and the ruling powers got the highest rank. The land grants created new land ownership rights like *Brahmaswam* and *Dēvaswam* which further resulted in to the formation of a middle-class agricultural population who owned the cultivation right called *Kārāṇmai*. This was actually resulted in to the formation of a hierarchical relations of production which further created a class of non-producing land ownership right holders and cultivation right holders and producing actual tilling communities who were attached to the land and survived at the will of the landlords. Thus, the early medieval period witnessed the 'formative phase of the feudal social relations' that developed due to the land

grants mainly to the temple and to some extends to the Brahmins and the temple functionaries.

The temple developed as an institution that integrated and consolidated the early medieval polities under the supremacy of Second Cēra power. Thus, the temple was developed as an institution which propagate the Varna ideology and established the role of Brahmins and Brahminic rituals in elevating the political rank of the ruling authorities of the region into the Kshatriya status. As an institution of the emerging Śaiva Vaṣṇava Bhakti traditions of South India in general and Kerala in particular, the temple had a significant role in mediating feudal cultural ideology and polity in early medieval and medieval Kerala society.

### **Methodology**

The present work is an analytical study on the evolution and role of temples in the early medieval Kerala society. Temples have been treated here as a ritualistic and powerful institution that had a significant role in the making of early medieval society and polity. Therefore, the present study attempted to reproduce historical setting of all direct or indirect signifiers embedded in the source materials, especially the epigraphs, on the early medieval Kerala society. It has attempted to unravel the whole range of human activities of the early medieval period. The evidences prove that the temples had crucial role in the contemporary human activities including production process, relations of production, exchange relations, social order and social stratifications, rituals and ceremonial functions, belief system, cultural dominations of Brahmins, ideological and political formation.



The temple developed as the significant component of the early medieval society through a long period. The historical process of the same can be traced from the geo-historical setting of the early historic period. As the present work focuses on the study of the totality of the human activities in association with the structural temples of the early medieval period, the present researcher has been used an interdisciplinary methodology that mainly uses the tools of regional history, epigraphy, archaeology, iconography, art and architecture, geography etc. The perspectives of materialistic interpretation of history<sup>21</sup> and the distinctive concepts and methods of *Annals*<sup>22</sup> have helped the present researcher to develop the methodological frame of the present work.

The MLA style format is adopted for giving citation as footnote and bibliography.

### Sources

The present study depends on both primary and secondary sources which are mainly classified in to two, archaeological and literary. The archaeological evidences include the material remains of the pre-temple society especially the Iron Age and early historic Megalithic burials, the excavated artifacts and features of early historic period at Pattanam, the temple architectures and

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<sup>21</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. *Selected Works* (Vol. 1). Moscow: Progress Publishers, (1969) 1977; Barry Hindess and Paul Hirst. *Mode of Production and Social Formation: An Auto-Critique of Pre - Capitalist Modes of Production*. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997; Zoya Berbeshina, Lyudmila Yaovleva, Dmitry Zerlin. *What is historical materialism*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, (1985) 1987. pp 60-63.

<sup>22</sup> Lucien Febvre. *A Geographical Introduction to the History*. London: Kegan, Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., LTD, 1925; Fernand Braudel. *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean world in the Age of Philip II*, English translation 2 volumes. London, (2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1966) 1972-3; Peter Burke. *The French Historical Revolution: The Annals School-1920-89*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Cambridge: Cambridge. 2005.

epigraphs of early medieval period, coins and iconographical evidences. The literary works include the early Tamil *Sangam* anthologies, Greek Roman classical works, *Mūṣakavamśakāvya*, works of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava saints etc. The secondary sources include the historical studies. The following part will give an overview of the nature of the source materials of the present study.

### **Archaeological Evidences**

Archaeological evidences are one of the important sources used in the present study. They include Megaliths, temples, inscriptions and coins, which are below discussed in detail.

#### ***Megalithic burial remains***

Though the Megaliths primarily enclosed the burial remains and goods associated with the dead person of the Iron Age and early historic period, they are the foremost evidences for proving the early permanent human settlements in the region under discussion. They indicate the formation of an agro-pastoral society with agricultural knowledge, iron technology, knowledge in climatic and environmental changes, mathematical skills, masonry skill and reciprocal production and exchange relations. The major typologies of the megaliths of Kerala include umbrella stone, cap stones, stone circles, rock-cut chambers, dolmens, cists, menhirs and urns.

The present study mainly depends on the published reports of the megalithic discoveries<sup>23</sup> and the studies on the megalithic cultures.<sup>24</sup> The

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<sup>23</sup> J. Babington. "Description of the Pandoo Coolies in Malabar." *Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay*, 1823. 3:324-30; Robert Sewell. *Lists of the Antiquarian remains in the Presidency of Madras*. Vol.1. Delhi: Indological Book house, 1882. pp. 238-61; A. Aiyappan. "Rock-cut Cave-tombs of Feroke, South Malabar." *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society* Vol. XXIII. reproduced in M.R. Manmathan (Ed.). *Archaeology in Kerala Past and Present*. Feroke College. Calicut. (1933) 2007. pp. 12-29; B.K. Thapar. "Porkalam 1948: Excavations of a Megalithic Urn Burial." *Ancient India*, vol. 8, Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1952. pp. 3-16; R.N. Mehta, & K.M. George. *Megaliths at Machad and Pazhayannur, Talappally Taluk, Trichur District, Kerala State*. Vadodara: M.S. University of Baroda, 1978; K.J. John. "Rock-cut Cave Tombs of Chitrari: Some new lights on the Rock cut cave tombs of Malabar." *Journal of Kerala Studies* 1(4). Thiruvananthapuram: Centre of Kerala Studies, 1974, pp. 383-86; K.J. John. "Perambra, 1979 New light on Kodakkals of Malabar." R.K. Sharma (ed.). *Indian Archaeology New Perspectives*. New Delhi: Agam Kalam Prakashan, 1982. pp. 148-54; K.J. John. "Unpublished excavation report of Naduvil, Kannur district." Calicut University: Department of History. 1990, cited in Manjula Poyil. *Death Funeral and Ancestors: cults of the dead and the Malabar tribe*. University of Calicut: Department of History. Ph.D thesis. 2006. pp. 94-95; T.Satyamurthy. *The Iron Age in Kerala: A report of the Mangadu excavation*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 1992. pp. 25-31; K. Krishna Raj. *Mārākkara Pātyam Cenkal Ulkhananangaḷuṭe Prādhmika Report*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala State Archaeology Department Government of Kerala, 2015.

<sup>24</sup> William Logan. "Finds of Ancient Pottery in Malabar", Jass. Burgess. *The Indian Antiquary A Journal of Oriental Research* Vol.VIII-1879. Delhi: Swasthi Publication, (1879) 1984. pp. 309-11; William Logan. *Malabar Manual*. New Delhi: Asian Education Services, (1887) 2010. pp.178-81; Clarence Maloney. "Archaeology in South India: Accomplishments and Prospects." Burton Stein (Ed.). *Essays on South India*. USA: University Press of Hawaii, 1975. pp. 1-40; B.K. Gururaja Rao. *Megalithic Culture in South India*. University of Mysore: Prasaranga, 1972. pp. 42-62; L.S Leshnik. *South Indian Megalithic Burials: The Pandukal Complex*, Franze Steiner Verlag GmbH, Weisbaden, 1974; A Sreedhara Menon. *A Survey of Kerala History*. Chennai: S. Viswanathana pvt. Ltd., (1967) 2003. pp.50-58; V.P. Devadas. *Archaeology of Eranad*. University of Calicut: Department of History, 1993. unpublished PhD thesis; Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Cultural History of Kerala*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publications Government of Kerala, 1999. pp.101-56; Udaya Ravi S. Moorti. *Megalithic Culture of South India*. Varanasi: Ganga Kaveri Publishing house, 1994; K. Rajan. *South Indian Memorial Stones*. Tanjavur: Manoo Pathippakam, 2000; K.K. Ramamurti. *Interim report*

preliminary excavation reports of Pattanam excavations<sup>25</sup> are also used for developing arguments on the pre-temple manufacturing skills and the internal and external exchange relations. These archaeological evidences are mainly using to investigate the formation of the pre-temple society of Kerala.

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*of Ummichipoyil Megalithic excavation, Kasaragod District Kerala.* Trissur Circle: Archaeological Survey of India, 2002. unpublished report; Jenee Peter. *Dimensions of Megalithic Culture of Kerala in Relation to Peninsular India: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, Baroda: Department of Archaeology and Ancient History Faculty of arts, Baroda, 2002. Unpublished thesis; Jayasree Nair, K. “Rock-cut caves of Ummichipoyil” *Advances in Arts and Ideas*, Vol.4, Nos 1& 2. Trissur: Arts and Humanities Social Sciences, Department of History, St. Thomas’ College, 2008. pp. 13-29; Ajit Kumar. *Archaeology in Kerala: Emerging Trends*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 2011; K.N. Dikshit, Ajit Kumar (ed.) *The Megalithic Culture of South India*. New Delhi: Indian Archaeological Society, 2014; K.P. Rajesh. *Archaeology of Iron Age Burials of North Malabar, Kerala, India: A Cognitive Analysis, - UGC Minor Research Project Report*. NSS College Manjeri: Department of History, 2016; K.P. Rajesh. “Megaliths of North Kerala: Formation of Technologically Advanced Agro-Pastoral Iron Age and Early Historic Society”. *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 5 (2017). Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 2017. pp. 486-06.

<sup>25</sup> V. Selvakumar, P.K. Gopi and K.P. Shajan. “Trial Excavations at Pattanam: A preliminary report.” *Journal of Center for Heritage Studies*, vol.1. Trippunithara: Centre for Heritage Studies, 2005. pp.:83-88; P.J. Cherian (ed.) *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the First Season 2007*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 a; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Second Season 2008*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 b; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Third Season-2009*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 c; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Fourth Season-2010*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015d; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Fifth Season-2011*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 e; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Sixth Season-2012*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015f; *Interim Reports of the Pattanam Excavations/ Eplorations -2013*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 g. *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Eighth Season-2014*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 h; *9<sup>th</sup> Season Pattanam Excavation Report*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015i.

### ***Temple Architecture***

As the temples are subjected to continuous renovation process, it is too complex to fix the date of architectural features of the temples. Many of the early medieval temples have been renovated in the later period. It is believed that the temple with circular, apsidal, square and rectangle plans and the features like *Garbhagriha*, attached or detached *Namaskāra maṅṭapa*, *Praṇāḷa* without *Bhūta* figure, outer *Balikkal* etc. belonged to the early medieval period. The present researcher has carried out sampling surveys in all districts of Kerala based on the existing survey reports of A. Soundara Rajan,<sup>26</sup> H. Sarkar<sup>27</sup> and S. Jayashanker<sup>28</sup> and found many temples in dilapidated and ruined conditions.

### ***Epigraphs***

The epigraphs used for the completion of the present work are classified into three categories. The first type is the inscriptions dated before circa 5<sup>th</sup> century AD mainly in Tamil Brāhmi, early Vaṭṭeluttu and Pallava Grantha scripts discovered from the Edakkal cave,<sup>29</sup> Pattanam archaeological excavation site<sup>30</sup> and Neṭuṅkayam forest of Malappuram district.<sup>31</sup> The Pugalūr inscription in Tamilnadu, which mentions about the genealogy of Irumpoṟai lineage of early Cēra rulers is also used.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> A. Soundara Rajan. *Op. cit.*

<sup>27</sup> H. Sarkar. *Op. cit.*

<sup>28</sup> S. Jayashanker. *Op. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* pp. 188-98; Iravatam Mahadevan. *Early Tamil Epigraphy- from the earliest times to the sixth century AD.* Cambridge: Harward University, 2003. p.433-35.

<sup>30</sup> P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015 a. p. 18, 23, 50, 51, 74; *Op. cit.* 2015 e. p. 131, 140.

<sup>31</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* pp. 197-99.

<sup>32</sup> Iravatam Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* pp.405-21.

The second type is mainly in Vaṭṭeluttu script belonged to the Second Cēra period (800-1122 AD) which give plenty of information about the role of temples in the early medieval society and polity. The earliest inscription is Vāḷappalli (832 AD) and the later one is Kollam Rāmēśvaram inscription (1102 AD) and Tiruvancūḷi inscription (1122 AD). For the present study, the published inscriptions are mainly surveyed<sup>33</sup> and very few fragmented unpublished

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<sup>33</sup>Rao Bahadur H. Krishna Sastri. *South Indian Inscriptions (Texts)*. Vol. V. Madras: Government Press, (1925) 1986. pp. 333-41; T.A. Gopinatha Rao (Ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. I. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1908) 1988; T.A. Gopinatha Rao (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vols. II & III. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1908) 1992; K.V. Subrahmanya Aiyar (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. IV. part I & II. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1923) 1999; A.S. Ramanatha Ayyar (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. V. part I, II & II. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1923) 1999; A.S. Ramanatha Ayyar (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. V. part I, II & II. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1930) 2004; M.G.S. Narayanan. *Kerala Charithrathinte Adistana Silakal*. Calicut: Navakerala Cooperative Publication, 1971. pp. 69-136; M.G.S. Narayanan. *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1972. pp. 65- 97; M.G.S. Narayanan. “Index to Cēra inscription”. *Op. cit.*, (1996) 2013. pp. 435-501; K. Maheswaran Nair. *Epigraphia Malabarica*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1972; M.R. Raghava Varier. *Kēraḷeeyatha Charithramanangal*. Edappal: Vallathol Vidyapitam (1990) 2009. pp 96-133; K. Retnamma. *Pracheena Sasanangalum Malayala Paribhashayum*. Thiruvananthapuram: Cultural Publication Department Government of Kerala, 2005; Kesavan Veluthat. “Peruñchellur Chepped, Kollam 321, Kanni 21 (1145 September 22).” *AdhAram: A journal for Kerala Archaeology and History* Vol 1, Kottayam: Kerala Puratatva Samiti MG University, 2006. pp 75-82; Kesavan Veluthat. “A copper plate inscription from Peruñchellur, North Kerala, India: AD 1145,” *Indian History Congress 69<sup>th</sup> session souvenir*. Kannur University: Organizing committee Indian History Congress, 2008, pp 13-18; Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Kerala Charithrathinte Atistāna Rēkhakal*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Bhāsha Institute, (2007) 2011; M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat (ed.). *Tarisāppallippaṭṭayam*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Samgham, (2013), 2015.

inscriptions are also discovered as part of the present study.<sup>34</sup> Majority of these inscriptions are discovered from the temples and contained the details of land grants and such other offerings to the temple by the ruling authorities and the landed households. The right over the granted land was maintained by a corporate body of the temple committee which had right to entrust the temple duties to various functionaries and also to impose fine for the violation of such duties. The absence of *praśasti* or eulogy and the genealogical account of the ruling power, especially of the Second Cēra power, in the inscription is conspicuous. The content of the inscriptions shows that the Brahmins and the ruling powers established the temple as a dominant ritualistic and political institution. A very few inscriptions of the Āys of the Southern Kerala and the Mūṣakas of the Northern Kerala are also surveyed for understanding the role of temple in that political terrain as well.

The third type include the post Cēra inscriptions like Peruñcellūr inscription of 1145 AD and Vīrarāghava Paṭṭayam of 1225 AD. Some other important inscriptions from central and southern part of Kerala are also used in this study for understanding the post Cēra historical settings.

### ***Coins***

A very few coins discovered from Kerala and Tamilnadu are also used for the present study. It includes the Roman coins discovered from Vaḷḷuvaḷḷi, Eyyāl

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<sup>34</sup> Trikkalāyur inscription found in the courtyard of temple in a disturbed context by the present researcher. The script is deciphered by M.R. Raghava Varier on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2016. Varier is assisted by the present researcher, E. Sreejith and K.P. Rajesh. About 13 lines were noticed but not legible to read. It seems to have mentions about the functions of the *Potuvāḷs* in the temple. Based on the paleography Raghava Varier believed that the inscription belonged to 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century AD. The architectural features corroborated this date. Pullanur inscription is in *Grantha* script, but not legible.

and Kōttayam Poyil,<sup>35</sup> and also the early Cēra coins from Tamilnadu<sup>36</sup> and Pattanam.<sup>37</sup> They are mainly used to corroborate with other archaeological and literary evidences.

### ***Literary Evidences***

The earliest signifiers on the pre-temple social order and the emergence of Brahmin settlements and the temples are noticed in the early Tamil Anthologies mainly *Tolkāppiyam*,<sup>38</sup> *Akanānūru*,<sup>39</sup> *Puṛānānūru*,<sup>40</sup> *Patirrupattu*<sup>41</sup> etc. of the *Eṭṭutokai* collections. It has been used to corroborate the archaeological evidences and stated that the social order associated with the temple was developed from the pre-temple period.

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<sup>35</sup> P.L. Gupta. *The Early Coins from Kerala*. Trivandrum: Publication unit of the Department of Archaeology (1965) 1988; T. Satyamurthy. *Catalogue of Roman Gold Coins*. Trivandrum: Publication unit of the Department of Archaeology, 1992.

<sup>36</sup> Iravatam Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* pp. 405-411; Noboru Karashima (ed.). *A Concise History of South India-Issues and Interpretations*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014. pp.50-52.

<sup>37</sup> The copper and lead Cēra coins with bow and arrow symbols were found at Pattanam. P.J. Cherian (ed.) *Op. cit.* 2015a. p. 15, 50; *Op. cit.* 2015b. p.14; *Op. cit.* 2015c. p. 14, 37, 52; *Op. cit.* 2015d. p. 19, 29, 56, 87, 102, 127, 131; *Op. cit.* 2015e. p. 22, 57, 239; *Op. cit.* 2015f. p. 81, 88, 100, 131. *Op. cit.* 2015g.p. 31. *Op. cit.* 2015h.p. 36.

<sup>38</sup> L. Gloria Sundramathy and Indra Manuel (ed.) *Tolkāppiyam- Poruḷatikāram (An English Translation with Critical Notes)*. Thiruvananthapuram: International School of Dravidian Linguistics, 2010.

<sup>39</sup> Nenmara P. Viswanathan Nair (Tr.). *Akanānūru*, Vol. I. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1981; *Akanānūru*, Vol. II. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1983; *Akanānūru*, Vol. III. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1984.

<sup>40</sup> V.R. Parameswaran Pillai (Tr.). *Puṛānānūru*. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, (1969) 1997; Madhava Menon (Tr.). *The Puranaanuuru- Tamil Sangam Classic*. Thiruvananthapuram: International School of Dravidian Linguistics, 2011

<sup>41</sup> G. Vaidyanatha Ayyar (Tr.). *Patirrupattu*. Thissur, Kerala Sahitya Academy (1961) 1997.



The Greek-Roman classical literature including *Periplus of Eritrean Sea*<sup>42</sup> Pliny's *Natural History*, Ptolemy's *Geography*,<sup>43</sup> *Muziris Papyrus Record*,<sup>44</sup> etc. are examined for understanding the early historic exchange relations of Kerala and also to corroborate the archaeological evidences yielded from the megalithic burial contexts and excavation site at Pattanam.

*Mūṣakavamsākāvya*, the earliest Sanskrit historical court chronicle of Kerala, of 11<sup>th</sup> century AD<sup>45</sup> is used to analyze the role of political power in the establishment and renovation of temples and the dissemination of Brahminic culture. The references from the literary works of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava Bhakti traditions like *Perumāḷtīrumoḷi*, *Mukundamāla*, *Āścaryamañjari*, *Tapatīsamvaraṇam* and *Subhadṛadhanañjayam* etc. are also used for the present study.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Wilfred H Scoff. *The Periplus of the Eritrean Sea- travels and trade in the Indian Ocean by a merchant of the First century*. New York: Logmans, Green and Co, 1912.

<sup>43</sup> J.W. Mc Crindle. *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy*. New Delhi, 1884. *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*. Westminster, 1975.

<sup>44</sup> Frederico De Romanis. "Muziris Trade in the Roman Economy." *The living dead and the lost knowledge*. Papers/ Abstracts of the International Seminar on Muziris Heritage Project: Archaeological Research at Pattanam 2007 and 2008. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Culture, Department of Archaeology, 2008. pp. 41-43.

<sup>45</sup> T.A. Gopinatha Rao. *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. II & III. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of cultural publication Government of Kerala, 1920 (1992). pp. 87-113; K. Raghava Pilla. *Mushakavamsam*, (Sanskrit –English translation) Trivandrum: Department of Publications Kerala University, 1977; K. Raghavan Pillai. *Mushakavamsam* (Sanskrit-Malayalam translation). Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Publications Kerala University, 1983.

<sup>46</sup> Cited in M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.*, (1996) 2013. pp.382-385.

*Vaṅjēri Granthavari*<sup>47</sup> and *Kēralōlpatti*<sup>48</sup> tradition were also surveyed to understand the role of temples in the post Cēra period, especially in connection with the formation Brahmin *Sankētam*. The present researcher does not give much emphasize on *Kēralōlpatti* traditions to study the early medieval society as it contained mythical account on the history of the origin of pre-modern Kerala and produced ambiguous account on the early medieval part.

### Limitations

As this study focuses on the structural temples of early medieval Kerala, it may not represent the history of entire Kerala between Western Ghats in the east and Arabian Sea in the west, but mainly reproduce the history of midland areas in the river valleys where the profuse distribution of Brahmin settlements and structural temples are found. At the same time there are some instances in the study that helps to extend its scope through the study of exchange networks of merchant guilds, which appears in the temple inscriptions, in the hinterland area and also in the transmarine exchanges in the coastal zones. In that sense, the study did not blindly ignore the role of the routes and passes in the Western Ghats through which the long-distance exchanges must have taken place and the sea routes of Indian Ocean through which the merchant guilds like *Añcuvañṇam* and *Mañigrāmam* were actively involved in the overseas trade.

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<sup>47</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan (ed.). *Vaṅjēri Granthavari*. Calicut University: Department of History, 1987.

<sup>48</sup> Herman Gundert. *Kēraḷapazhama, Kēralōlpatti, Āyirattirunūru Pazhañcol*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society Ltd., (1868) 2014. pp. 109-65; M.R. Raghava Varier (ed.). *Keralolpathi Granthavari - The Kolathunattu Tradition*. University of Calicut: Department of History, 1984; Scaria Sacaria (ed.) *Keralaolpathiyum marrum*, Kottayam: DC Books, 1992.

As the evidences are mostly from the Brahmanic historical contexts, the present study will not be able to give much focus on the condition of women, actual tilling communities and common people outside the temple premises. Though the direct evidences are not enough, this work has not fully ignored the role of these section in the early medieval Kerala society and has made attempt to historicize the indirect signifiers in the inscriptions and architectural remains about such factions of society.

### **Thesis Organization**

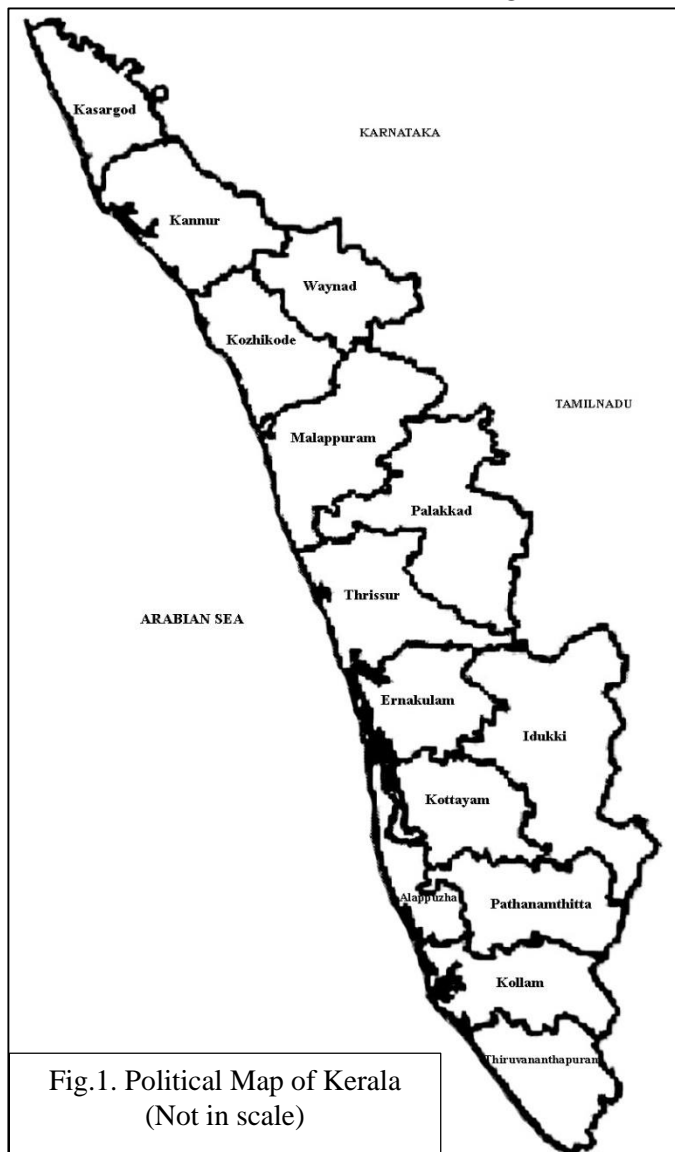
The present thesis consists of five core chapters excluding introduction and conclusion. The introduction presents the research problem and the way through which the selected problem will be resolved. The first chapter deals with the “Geo-historical setting of Kerala” and it tries to argue that as a political entity we have evidences on the existence of Kerala from 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC onwards and survived up to the early medieval period. The second chapter “Pre-temple society: Historical Antecedence” discusses the nature of pre-temple society in the Iron Age and early historic period and argues that the pre-temple society was well organized and stratified one. The third chapter “Evolution of Early Medieval Temples” explores the historical setting of the emergence of structural temples and temple organization in the early medieval Kerala. The fourth chapter deals with the “Temple and Early Medieval Social Order” discusses the formation of society based on the Brahminic temple culture in the midland areas of Kerala in the backdrop of the multi-crop agricultural production and exchange. The fifth chapter “Temple in the Early Medieval Political Structures” examines the role of temple in the early medieval political consolidation. The findings of the present study are summed up as conclusion.

All chapters contain necessary tables and maps for substantiating the arguments of the present research work. A detailed glossary to understand the terminologies of the early medieval society is also given. A separate list of the research publications and presentations of the present researcher during the period of the research is given as appendix. To support the arguments placed in the chapters, few photographs with titles related to the pre-temple and temple architectural forms are also given in the following part as figures. Finally, the detailed bibliography is also enclosed.

## Chapter I

### GEO-HISTORICAL SETTING OF KERALA

Kerala, as a democratic linguistic state, was formed on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1956 and now it has 14 districts stretching from Thiruvananthapuram in the south to



Kasaragod in the North (Fig.1). Before the formation of linguistic state, the region of Kerala was divided in to three main political segments such as Travancore, Kochi and Malabar. Travancore in the south and Kochi in the central part were remained as the princely states. The northern part, known as Malabar, was a British Colonial district under Madras Presidency.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the colonial intrusion (from 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century AD), the region was politically

<sup>1</sup> A. Sreedhara Menon. *A Survey of Kerala History*. Chennai: S. Vaswanathan printers and publishers PVT. LTD, (1967) 2003. p. 355.

fragmented and ruled by various matrilineal households called *Nāṭuvāli Swarūpam*.<sup>2</sup> It is believed that Kerala was a centralized political power under the Perumāḷs of Mahōdayapuram from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>3</sup> Before 9<sup>th</sup> century AD, Kerala was a part of ancient Tamiḷakam.<sup>4</sup>

As a separate geo-political entity of peninsular India, the region of Kerala has been variously referred to many historical contexts from the early historic to the early medieval period. However, an understanding of the geographical and historical settings of Kerala up to 13<sup>th</sup> century AD will be fruitful to historicize the evolution of temples. The political and geographical boundary of Kerala up to early medieval had a significant role in the evolution of temples. This chapter gives a sketch about the geo-historical setting of Kerala from the Iron Age-early historic to early medieval period and briefly explains how it transformed in the late medieval times.

### **Physiographic setting**

Geographically, Kerala is a narrow strip land lay in South Western part of Peninsular India (8°15'N to 12°45' and N 75° 52 E to 75°08'E) (see below, Fig.2). It covers an area of 38,854.97 km<sup>2</sup> that is 1% of India's total area. It has an undulated topography, which contained mainly five geographical areas -

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<sup>2</sup> K.N. Ganesh. *Reflection on Pre-Modern Kerala*. Thrissur: Cosmo Books, 2016. pp.72-73.

<sup>3</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Perumāḷs of Kerala Brahmin Oligarchy and Ritual Monarchy Political and Social conditions of Kerala under the Cēra Perumāḷs of Makōtai (c AD 800 – AD 1124)*, Thrissur: Cosmo books, (1996), 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. "Tamiḷakathinte Bhūmiśāsthram", "Kēralam Samgha Kālatu". N. Sam (ed.). *Elamkulam Kunjan Pillayute Tiranjetutha Kritikal*. Thiruvananthapuram: International Centre for Kerala Studies, 2005. pp. 3-18; Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Cultural History of Kerala*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, 1999. pp. 157-60.

mountain peaks, highlands, midlands, lowlands and coastal plains and lagoons.<sup>5</sup> The mountain peaks above 1800m within the Western Ghats constitute only 0.64% of the total area of the state.<sup>6</sup> The highland at altitude of 600-1800 m occupying 20.35% of the area of the state and the midland, which covers nearly 8.44% of the total area at altitude of 300-600, consisted of the undulating western fringe of the highlands and the laterite rocky spurs projecting westwards and part of the crustal breaks or passes.<sup>7</sup> Ānamuṭi of the Western Ghats is the highest peak in peninsular India and Kuṭṭanāṭu is the lowest land.<sup>8</sup> Western Ghats has a natural gap at Palakkad which connect Kerala with Tamilnadu. It contains many passes that connect Kerala with other neighboring regions like Periya, Tamarasseri,

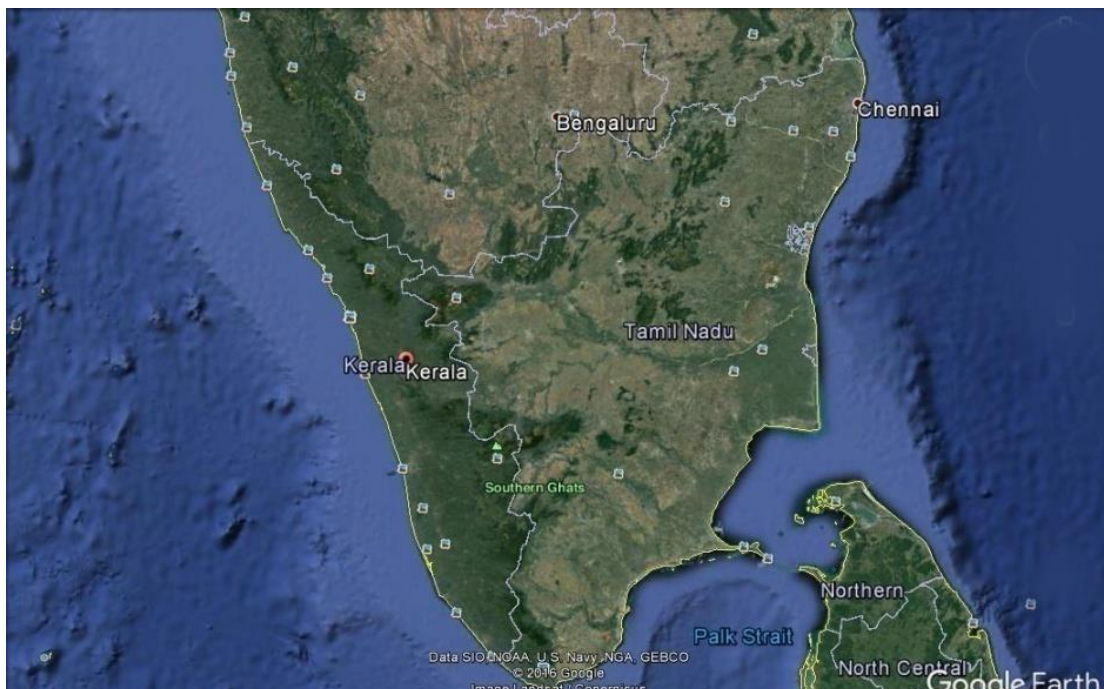


Fig.2. Physiographic features of Kerala Source- Google Earth

<sup>5</sup> *Resource Atlas of Kerala*. Trivandrum: Center for Earth Science Studies, 1984; K. Soman, *Geology of Kerala*. Bangalore: Geological Society of India, 2002. p.3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* pp.3-4.

<sup>8</sup> A. Sreedhara Menon. *Op. cit.* pp. 2-6; Rajan Gurukkal, Raghava Varier. *History of Kerala Pre-historic to the Present*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2018. pp.1-2.

Bodinaikkannur, Kampam, Ariyankavu, Aruvamoli etc. which connect Kerala with Tamilnadu and Karnataka.

The low land at altitude 10-300 m covers the maximum area of 54.17% consisting of dissected peneplains and the coastal plains and lagoons at altitude of below 10 m constitute 16.40 % of the area of the state.<sup>9</sup> The midland region, lying between the highlands and the low lands, has undulated hills and valleys. The available survey details show that the early medieval temples of Kerala are mainly distributed in the fertile multi-crop production zones of midland or *Itanāṭu* and also found in the low land. Its presence, meagerly, can also be seen in the highland and coastal zone.

There are 44 rivers, 41 west flowing reached at Arabian Sea and 3 east flowing reached at Sea of Bengal, in Kerala.<sup>10</sup> A number of tributaries and rivulets are also flowing in the region. A chain of backwaters running parallel to coastal line is the typical physiographic feature of Kerala. The human settlements of the early historic and early medieval Kerala were largely distributed in the catchment areas of these rivers and their rivulets. Almost all Brahmin settlements were formed in the valleys of these rivers and their tributaries.<sup>11</sup> Almost all early

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<sup>9</sup> K. Soman. *Op. cit.*

<sup>10</sup> West flowing rivers are (from north to South) - Manjeswar, Uppala, Shiriya, Mogral, Chandragiri, Chittari, Nileswar, Karingode, Kavvayi, Perumba, Ramapuram, Kuppam (Paḷayangadi), Valapattanam, Anjarakandy, Tellichery, Mahe, Kuttyadi, Korappuḷa, Kallayi, Chaliyar, Kadalundi, Tirur, Bharathapuḷa, Keecheri, Puḷakkal, Karuvannur, Chalakkudi, Periyar, Muvattupuḷa, Meenachil, Manimal, Pamba, Achankovil, Pallickal, Kallada, Ithikkara, Ayoor, Vamanapuram, Mamom, Karamana, Neyyar. East flowing- Kabani, Bhavani and Pambar. *Ibid.* 7-12

<sup>11</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan, *Op. cit.* pp.262-63; Kesavan Veluthat. *Brahman Settlement of Kerala-Historical Studies*. Trissur: Cosmo Books, (1978) 2015. pp. 43-44



medieval temples are developed in the surroundings of the fertile wet and garden lands in the catchment areas of these rivers or their rivulets.

Kerala enjoys two regular rainfall seasons; the South West (*Eṭavappāti*- June to September), and North East monsoons (*Tulāvaṛṣam*- October to December). The water levels of the rivers and other watercourses, the climate of the region, fertility of the production land and living environment of the region is mainly depending upon these monsoons.

The incessant rainy seasons of the region resulted in to the richness of the soils. The soils of Kerala may be classified into five types such as sandy soil, alluvial soil, red soil, peaty soil and forest red soil.<sup>12</sup> Among these soil types of Kerala, the lateritic soils are the most predominant, mainly distributed in the highland and midland.

The lowland is comparatively narrow and comprises of rivers, deltas and seashore. Geologically the area is mainly comprised of crystalline rocks of Archean group and consisting of charnockites, laterite and alluvium. The soil comprised of hard laterite in the mountain areas and hillocks, soft laterite in the hillock slopes and plains and riverine alluvium in the river valleys.<sup>13</sup>

The above description shows that the topography of Kerala is undulated with the highland, plains and low lands. It is getting regular monsoons. The water course and the climatic conditions of the region is very much depending on these monsoons. The passes of the Western Ghats show that it was not isolated from the other parts of the peninsular India and had cultural link with its northern parts. The undulated landscape and hospitable climatic condition of the land resulted

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<sup>12</sup> K.N. Ganesh. *Kerala State Gazetteer* vol. iii. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Gazetteers Department, Government of Kerala, 1989. pp. 27-30.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

into the formation of multi-crop agrarian based settlements from the early period. Arabian Sea in the west coast facilitated the land to develop as an emporium of foreign exchange from the early historic period. The resource potential of this undulated terrain enabled it to develop into a political entity from the early historic period onwards.

### **Historical locale**

The region of Kerala has been appeared in various historical contexts. In the Iron Age and early historic time, it was part of the ancient *Tamiḷakam* and existed as a separate political entity under Cēra along with the Cōla and Pāndya. The early medieval period (600-1200 AD) had witnessed two important historical developments in the region; (1) the proliferation of Brahmin settlements<sup>14</sup> and the formation of structural temples dedicated to Śiva and Viṣṇu,<sup>15</sup> and (2) the expansion of *Nāṭu* as grouping of agrarian villages<sup>16</sup> and the corresponding political consolidation of the region under the second Cēra rulers known as Kulaśekharas<sup>17</sup> or Perumāḷs.<sup>18</sup> It is believed that this centralized political scenario of early medieval Kerala disappeared after the second Cēra period

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<sup>14</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* pp. 263- 71; Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* pp. 33-59.

<sup>15</sup> H. Sarkar. *An Architectural Survey of the Temples of Kerala*. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1978.

<sup>16</sup> K.N. Ganesh. *Keralathinte Innalekal*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Bhasha Institute, (1990), 2011. pp. 22-45; Rekha E. *Nāṭus in the Age of Perumāḷ (800- 1122 AD)*. University of Calicut: Department of History, 2001. unpublished M.Phil. dissertation.; A.P. Greeshmalatha. *Historical Geography of Valluvanadu*. University of Calicut: Department of History, 2009. unpublished Ph.D. thesis.; K.P. Rajesh. *Historical Geography of Kolathunadu: A study of the regional formation in medieval North Kerala*. University of Calicut: Department of History, 2011. unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

<sup>17</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. *Studies in Kerala History*. Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1970. pp. 250-51; A. Sreedhara Menon. *Op. cit.* pp.131-67; N. Sam (ed.). *Op. cit.* pp.370-455.

<sup>18</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.*

during 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>19</sup> Thereafter most of the *nāṭu* became more powerful in Kerala and the political power was mainly detained by the matrilineal households called *Nāṭuvāḷi Swarūpam*.<sup>20</sup> This kind of political system continued till 18<sup>th</sup> century AD when the British power took over the political affairs of Malabar directly and Kochi and Travancore indirectly through the resident rule.<sup>21</sup>

## 1. Kerala as part of *Tamiḷakam* -Iron Age and Early historic period

### (Circa. 6<sup>th</sup> century BC to 6<sup>th</sup> century AD)

Kerala was an independent geo-political entity from the Iron Age and early historic period. Kātyāyana, the Sanskrit grammarian of fourth century BC refers to three Tamil kingdoms of south such as Pandya, Cēra and Cōla.<sup>22</sup> The

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<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Raghva Varier. *Keraleeyatha Charithramanagal*. Edappal: Vallathol Vidyapidham, (1990) 2009. pp.118-33; Raghava Varier and Rajan Gurukkal. *Kerala Charithram*. Edappal: Vallathol Vidyapitam, 1992. pp.244-52; K.N. Ganesh. “Structure of Political Authority in Medieval Kerala.” P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Perspectives on Kerala History*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Gazetteers Department, 1999. pp 222-27; M.R. Raghava Varier. “State as Svarupam: An Introductory Essay.” R. Champakalakshmi, Kesavan Veluthat and T.R. Venugopal (Ed.). *State and Society in Pre-modern South India*. Trissur: Cosmo Books, 2002. pp.120-30; S. Raju, “Political Organization of Medieval self-forms: Svarupam and Muppu Valca.” *Lateral Studies Series* No.15, M.G. University, Kottayam: School of Social Sciences, 1998; V.V. Haridas. *King Court and Culture in Medieval Kerala- The Zamorins of Calicut (AD1200- 1767)*. Ph.D. Thesis. Mangalore University, 2003; K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2011; V.V. Haridas *Zamorins and the Political Culture of Medieval Kerala*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan Pvt. Ltd, 2016; K.N. Ganesh. *Op. cit.* 2016. pp. 72-96.

<sup>21</sup> After 16<sup>th</sup> century AD, the colonial powers were considerably involved in the political rivalry between the *Nāṭuvāḷis* of Kerala. The colonial powers, in association with these *Nāṭuvāḷis*, were fought each other for the political supremacy in the region and finally all these political incidents led to the development of English East India company as supreme colonial power in Kerala especially in Malabar by 1792 with the defeat of Tipu Sultan. See for details, A. Sreedhara Menon. *Op. cit.* chapters 15-25.

<sup>22</sup> K.A. Nilakanta Sastri. *Cultural Contacts Between Aryans and Dravidians*. Bombay: Manaktalas, 1967. p.62. Accessed from <https://ia600600.us.archive.org/30/items/in.gov.ignca.59646/59646.pdf> on 18/4/2018

2<sup>nd</sup> Rock edicts of the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka of 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, which refers to *Kēraḷaputṛa* or *Kēṭalaputṛa* along with the other South Indian kingdoms like Cōla, Pāndya and Satiyaputṛa<sup>23</sup> proves the existence of Kerala as a separate political entity in South India during the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The Mauryans must have made expedition into Tamil region in about the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC.<sup>24</sup> *Akanānūru* mentions about the southern expedition of the *Mōṛiyar*<sup>25</sup> with the backing of *Vaṭukar*,<sup>26</sup> the warrior from Telugu speaking areas,<sup>27</sup> through the rocky mountain areas. It shows that Kerala had a significant space in the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> century BC

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<sup>23</sup> D.C. Sircar. *Inscriptions of Asoka*. New Delhi: Publication Division ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, (1957) 1975. pp.41-42; Romila Thapar. *Asoka and the Decline of Mauryas*, revised edition. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997. p 251.

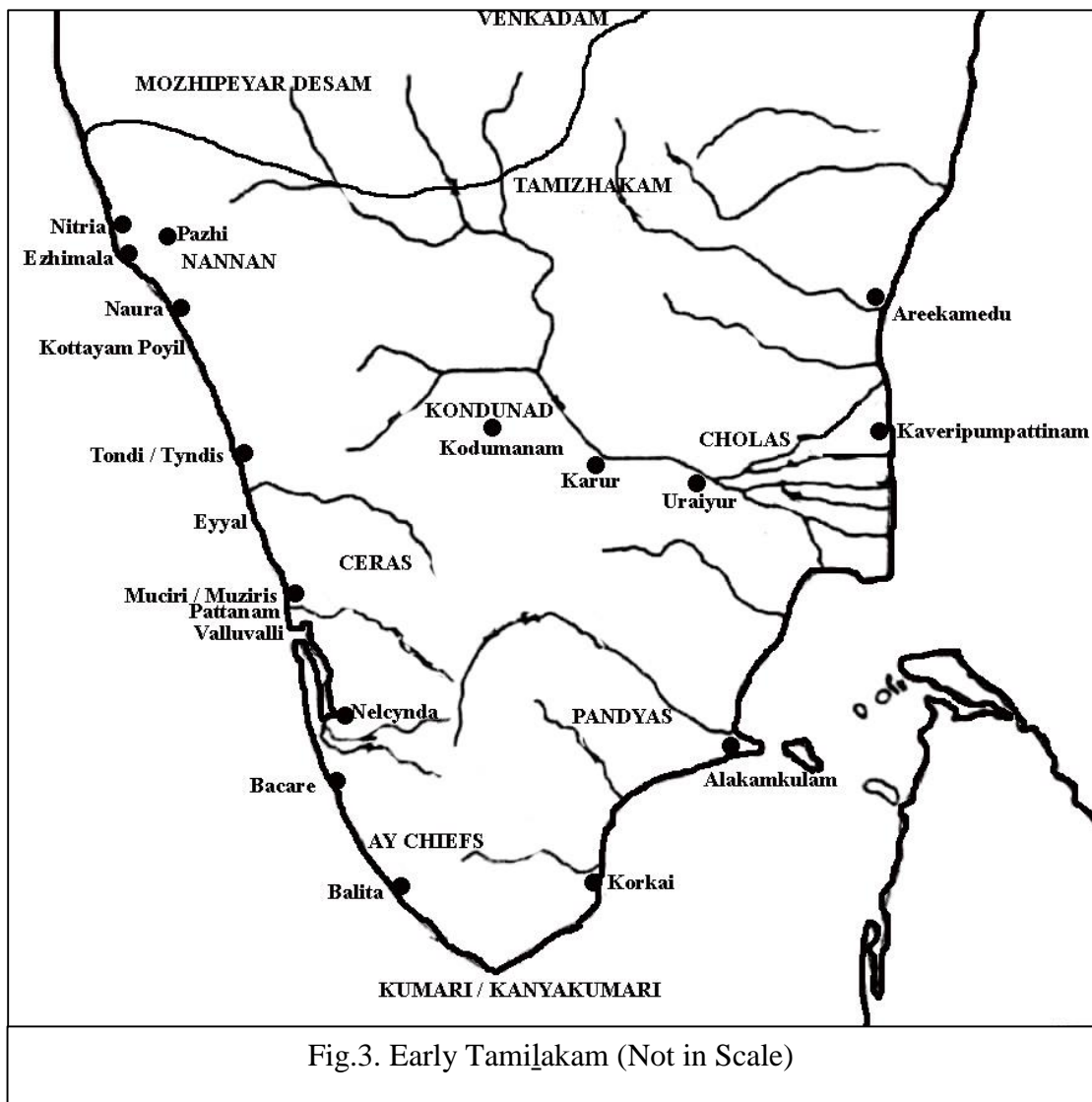
<sup>24</sup> George Hart. *The Poems of Ancient Tamil- their milieu and Sanskrit counterpart*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1999. pp. 14-15.

<sup>25</sup> Nenmara P. Viswanathan Nair (Tr.). *Akanānūru*, Vol. I. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1981. *Akanānūru*, Vol. II. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1983. *Akanānūru*, Vol. II. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1984. Song 69 line10. (Hereafter *A.N.* 69-10) “veṅporu neṭuvarai iyal tēr mōṛiyar;” *A.N.* 251-12. “Vampa mōṛiyar;” V.R. Parameswaran Pillai (Tr.). *Puṛānānūru*. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, (1969) 1997. Song175 line 6, (Hereafter *P.N.*-175-6). “viṅporu neṭunkuṭai koṭitēr mōṛiyar.”

<sup>26</sup> *A.N.* 281-8, 9 “muraṅmiku vaṭukar munnuṛa mōṛiyar tenṛicai mātiram munniya varaviṅku.”

<sup>27</sup> S.V. Subramanian. *Grammar of Akanaanuuru with Index*. University of Kerala: Department of Tamil, 1972. p. 313.

political affairs of India. It was considered as the significant political territory of South India during Mauryan period. During this period Kerala was part of



Tamilakam, a cultural and linguistic zone in Peninsular India which covered the area of the present Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamilnadu as well (Fig.3). According to *Tolkāppiyam*, an early Tamil grammar text of 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, and *Cilappatikāram*, a post *Samgam* epic, Tamilakam extended east and west from sea to sea, north and south from the Tiruppati hills or Venkaṭam to Cape

Comorin.<sup>28</sup> It is argued that Tamiḷakam consisted of four political units namely Tondaināṭu, Cōlanāṭu, Pāndināṭu and Cēranāṭu.<sup>29</sup> Among these four, the last three were the political units of three chieftains called *Mūvarasar* or *Mūvēntar*.

The region of Kerala is referred to as separate geo-political unit of Tamiḷakam under the sway of Cēras and two minor chiefs called Nannan of Ēḷimala in the north and Āys in the south. Cēras, one among the three *Vēntar* chiefs (*Mūvēntar*- Cēra, Cōla and Pāndya) of Tamiḷakam, ruled the central part of Kerala that extended to the parts of Kongunāṭu (the present Coimbatore region), Cēras are the only line of *Vēntar* chieftains who had a collection of eulogizing songs called *Patirrupattu*, which shows the eminence of Cēras in the early historic political scenario of Tamiḷakam.<sup>30</sup> The *Patirrupattu* and *Puṛanānūru* refer to two Cēra lineages; *Utiyan* and *Irumporai*.<sup>31</sup> The contemporary Tamil- Brahmi inscriptions from Kerala and Tamilnadu have also proved the historical entity of the Cēras in the ancient Tamiḷakam. An inscription from Edakkal cave refers to certain *Kōvātan* means chieftain *Ātan*<sup>32</sup> or king *Ātan*<sup>33</sup> which is dated in AD 2<sup>nd</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> centuries based on paleographical features. Another one refers to *Kaṭumiputta Cēra*, means the son of the Cera ruler Katumi.<sup>34</sup> The Brahmi inscription from Pugalūr in the Tiruchirappalli district of

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<sup>28</sup> M. Srinivasa Aiyangar. *Tamil Studies*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1986. pp. 8-9, George Hart. *Loc.cit*.

<sup>29</sup> Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai. "Tamiḷakaththinte Bhūmiśāsthram." N. Sam (ed.). *Op. cit*. pp.1-18.

<sup>30</sup> G. Vaidyanatha Ayyer. *Patirrupattu*. (Tr.). Trissur: Kerala Sahithya Academy, 1961

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*. p. 20. P.N- 5, 8, 17, 20, 22, 50, 53, 74, 229.

<sup>32</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op.cit*. 1999. pp.191-92.

<sup>33</sup> Iravatham Mahadevan. *Early Tamil Epigraphy from the earliest times to the sixth century AD*. London: Harvard University Press, 2003. p. 118

<sup>34</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op.cit*. 1999. pp. 193-194.

Tamilnadu mentions three Cēras of Irumporai line (*Celliruporai*, *Perunkaṭuṅko* and *Kaṭuṅko*). The Pugalūr inscriptions of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD refer to the grants of the Irumporai line of Cēra dynasty ruling from Karūr in Tamilnadu.<sup>35</sup> The core area of the Cēra chief in the Kongunāṭu was Karuvūr or Karūr.<sup>36</sup> Muciri was another important centre, which was a flourished port city of the west coast of ancient Tamiḷakam, of the Cēras.<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, the Greek-Roman classical literatures of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD also refer to geo-political entity of Kerala during the early historic time. It refers to *Damica* as the territory of Tamil speaking people.<sup>38</sup> Pliny mentioned the region as *Cērobōṭra*, which is translated as *Cērapuṭro* or *Kēraḷapuṭro*.<sup>39</sup> It was applied to the name of the ruling territory as well as the dynastic name or royal title.<sup>40</sup> *Periplus of Eritrean Sea* mentioned about a number of prominent port cities of Kerala coast including Muziris, Nelcynda and Tondi etc.

The Cēras had issued coins with the elephant symbol on the obverse and bow and arrow on the reverse sides made of copper and lead. Recently a good number of copper and lead coins of early Cēra with their symbols; elephant and bow and arrow, unearthed from the early historic archaeological layers from Pattanam. About forty coins were unearthed at Pattanam,<sup>41</sup> which could be the

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* p.117.

<sup>36</sup> Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai. “Tamiḷakattinte Bhūmiśāstram”. N. Sam (ed.). *Op. cit.* pp.7-8.

<sup>37</sup> Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai. “Keralathile Paḷaya Paṭṭaṅgal.” *Ibid.* pp. 225-27.

<sup>38</sup> Cited in, Wilfred H Scoff. *The Periplus of the Eritrean Sea- travels and trade in the Indian Ocean by a merchant of the First century*. New York: Logmans, Green and C,1912. p. 205.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* pp.208-09.

<sup>40</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>41</sup> P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the First Season 2007*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015a. pp.15, 50; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Second Season 2008*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala

part of ancient Muziris.<sup>42</sup> The punch marked Cēra coins that refer to the name of Cēra rulers discovered from Tamilnadu as well.<sup>43</sup> These coins have evidently attested the existence of the Cēra as a political power, who had control over the economy of the contemporary society.

In short, Kerala developed as an independent geo-political entity in the southwestern edge of peninsular India under the sway of Cēra during the Iron Age and early historic period and was dominant as the early Cōla, and Pāndya.

## **2. Early Medieval period (6<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> century AD)**

The name Kerala prevailed during early medieval period (c. 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> century AD) as well to denote the political territory of the second Cēra Kingdom. It is argued that the first political consolidation of Kerala occurred during the early medieval period under the reign of Cērās of Mākōtai or Second Cēras, or

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Council for Historical Research, 2015b. p.14; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Third Season-2009*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015c. pp.14, 37; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Fourth Season-2010*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015d. pp. 19, 29, 56, 87, 102, 127, 131; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Fifth Season-2011*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015e. pp. 22, 57, 239; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Sixth Season-2012*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015f. pp. 81, 88, 100, 131; *Interim Reports of the Pattanam Excavations/ Explorations -2013*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015g. p.31; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Eighth Season-2014*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015h. p. 36.

<sup>42</sup> K.P. Shajan, P.J. Cherian and V. Selvakumar. “Pattanam Muziris Thanneyo?”. *AdhAram- A Journal for Kerala Archaeology and History Vol. 1*. Kottayam: Keraleeyam Purathattva Samiti, M.G. University, 2006. pp 50-59.

<sup>43</sup> Iravatam Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* p.118; Y. Subbarayalu. “Early Tamil Polity”. Noboru Karashima (ed.). *Concise History of South India- Issues and Interpretations*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014. pp.47-55; Y. Subbarayalu. “The Inscribed Coins of Early Historic Tamilakam.” M. Nisar and C.A. Anaz (ed.). *Epigraphical Society of India & Place Names Society of India-Souvenir*. Calicut: Farook College, 2018. pp.18-22.





Perumāḷs of Mahōdayapuram between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>44</sup> The Perumāḷ Kingdom was extended from Vēṇāṭu in the south to Kōlathunāṭu in the north (Fig.4).<sup>45</sup> During this period Kerala comprised of 14 provinces called *Nāṭu* ruled

<sup>44</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 177-204.

by *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*.<sup>46</sup> The process of the state formation has been studied most recently in detail and argued that the consolidation of Cērā power over Kerala was completed during the time of King Bhāskara Ravi (11<sup>th</sup> Century AD).<sup>47</sup> It has been stated that the Cērās developed into a political authority of the entire Kerala, stretching from Kōlathunāṭu in the north to Vēṇāṭu in the South (i.e. from Kasargode to Thiruvananthapuram), by 11<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>48</sup>

The literary and epigraphical evidences of the period under discussion refer to the term Kerala as geographical unit and political territory of the Cēra on different occasions. The rulers of the second Cērās had various titles as Perumāl, Kulaśēkhara etc and the rulers like Stāṇu Ravi Kulaśēkhara (circa. 844 AD- 883 AD) and Kōta Kōta (circa 913 AD - 943 AD) had coronation name as <sup>49</sup> *Kēraḷakulacūṭāmaṇi* and *Kēralādhinātha*<sup>50</sup> and *Kēraḷakēsari*<sup>51</sup> respectively. According to the Sanskrit plays like *Subhadradhanañjaya* and *Tapatīsamvarana*, Kulaśēkhara Varman, who has been identified with Stāṇu Ravi Kulaśēkhara (circa 844 AD – 883 AD),<sup>52</sup> describe himself as *Kēraḷakulacūṭāmaṇēh Mahōdayapuraparamēśvarasya* (the King of the Kerala lineage as ‘Supreme lord of the City’) and *Kēralādhinātha* (Overlord of Kerala).<sup>53</sup> According to Kesavan

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<sup>46</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>47</sup> Rekha E. *Formation of State in Early Medieval Kerala*. University of Calicut: Department of History, 2012. unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *The Political Structure of Early Medieval South India*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993. pp.192, 222

<sup>50</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* p.213; Kesavan Veluthat. *Early Medieval in South India*. Oxford University Press: New Delhi, 2009. pp.191-95.

<sup>51</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* p.27.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid* p. 213.

<sup>53</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* 2009. pp. 191-95; Kesavan Veluthat. “History and Historiography in Constituting a Region: The Case of Kerala in India.” Sebastian Joseph

Veluthat, in the title *Kēralakulacūṭāmaṇi*, Kerala stands for the lineage and in the *Kēralādhinātha* it stands for the dynasty.<sup>54</sup> However, based on these literary evidences, it has been argued that Kerala got identified as separate geographical unit and political territory of the Cēra state by the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>55</sup>

The Ṭrikkākkara inscription of 10<sup>th</sup> century AD refers to the grants made by certain *Kērala Kēcariperumāl* to the Ṭrikkākkara temple.<sup>56</sup> The *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*, the semi mythical and historical court chronicle of Mūṣaka lineage of North Kerala of 11<sup>th</sup> century AD, has also referred to the region of Cēra as *Kēraḷam*.<sup>57</sup> The medieval *Maṇipravāḷam* text like *Anantapuravaṛṇanam* mentions the King of Mahaōdayapura as the protector of the land of Kerala.<sup>58</sup>

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(ed.). *On Present (in/g) Histories- Selected papers from Second Kerala History Congress*. Kottayam: DC Book, 2017. pp 122-23.

<sup>54</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* 2009. pp.193-94.

<sup>55</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* 2017. pp.122-23.

<sup>56</sup> T.A. Gopinatha Rao (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol II, Trivandrum: Department of Cultural Publication, (1908), 1992 No.35. pp.161-69; M.G.S. Narayanan. “Index to Cēra Inscriptions”, *Op. cit.* (1996) 2015. No. A. 25. pp. 446-47; Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Kerala Charithrathinte Adisthana Rekhakal* (Second edition). Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Bhasha Institute, (2007) 2011. p 39.

<sup>57</sup> “*Atha kēraḷam prati sa cola-  
Nrpatimahiyātumuthitam I  
Sāhyakrtamatiramum valabham  
Prajighāya rāmaghatamūsikēsvarah II.*”

“When the king of Kerala rose in order to attack the Cola king Ramaghata Mushaka was desirous of assisting him and so, he sent Vallabha” translation by K.P.A. Menon. *Atulakavi’s Musikavamsa maha kavyam*. Nag Publishers: Delhi, 1999.p 385; Atulan. *Mūshakavamsa Kāvya*, Canto XIV-7. T A. Gopinatha Rao. (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. V. Trivandrum: State Archaeology Department,1920. pp 87-113.

<sup>58</sup> Kesavan Veluthat, *Op. cit.* 2017. p.123.

However, in the absence of genealogical account like *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* for the Cērās of Mahodayapuram, it is difficult to make concrete statement about the political boundary of the Kingdom. The references in the literature and epigraphs as well as the existing studies have shown that, during the early medieval period, as geographical unit and political territory, the region under Cērās is known as Kēraḷam. Even after the decline of the Cēra in *circa* 1122 AD, some of the post-Cēra *Nāṭuvālis* were also appeared with the coronation title ‘Kerala’; for instance, the Vēṇāṭu rulers like Kōta Kerala Varma (1122-1124 AD), Rama Kerala Varma (1205-1125 AD) and Ravi Kerala Varma (1225-1251 AD).<sup>59</sup> Kōta Kerala Varma appears in the inscriptions like *Aḷakiya Pandya Puram* (1124),<sup>60</sup> *Cōḷapuram*<sup>61</sup> and *Suchīndram*<sup>62</sup> as the Vēṇāṭu ruler. Kēraḷapuram inscription (1316 AD) also refers to the name *Srī Vīra Kēraḷa Īcavarattu mātēvar*.<sup>63</sup> These evidences proved that Vēṇāṭu rulers were used the term Kerala to recognize the territory under their political supremacy.

However, except *Kēraḷōlpatti* traditions no other historical accounts are given indication about the geographical extension of Kerala. There are different versions of *Kēraḷōlpatti* texts<sup>64</sup> and all of them are narrating the legendary origin and the development of Kerala as a socio-political unit with the immense persuade of Brahmin traditions. It is argued that “*Kēraḷōlpatti* exhibits a sense of

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<sup>59</sup> A. Sreedhara Menon. *Op. cit.* pp. 171-73.

<sup>60</sup> Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Op. cit.* p.184.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* p.185.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 186-87.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* p. 236.

<sup>64</sup> Herman Gundert. *Kēraḷōlpatti (The Origin of Malabar)*. Mangalore: Stolz & Ruther, Basel Mission Press, 1868; M.R. Raghava Varier. *Keralolpatti – Kolathunadu Tradition*. Calicut University: Publication divisions, 1984; Scaria Sacaria (ed). *Keraolpattiyum Marrum*. Kottayam: DC Books, 1992.

History in as much as there is in it a consciousness of past events, which events are relevant to a particular society, seen in a chronological framework and expressed in a form which meets the needs of that society”.<sup>65</sup> The *Kēraḷōlpatti* tradition has given the medieval consciousness about the geographical boundary and history of Kerala. Accordingly, the legendary hero Paraśurāma created the land of Kerala and distributed to the Brahmins as remorse to his act of Kshatriya massacre. He created the land stretching from Kanyakumari to Gokaṇṇam (*Kanyākumāri Gōkaṇṇa Paryaṅtam*). According to Herman Gundert’s version, which has widely cited in historical studies, there were mainly three phases in the history of Kerala; i.e. the *Age of Paraśurāma* (the legendary creator of the land), the *Age of Perumāḷs* (Cēras) and the *Age of Tampurāns* (*Nāṭuvāḷis*) and add some details about arrival of European powers.<sup>66</sup> Thus, the *Kēraḷōlpatti* incorporate the history of Kerala from the commencement of Brahmin settlements to the time of Portuguese influx by the end of 15<sup>th</sup> century. However, *Kēraḷōlpatti* has represented the medieval political atmosphere of Kerala when the *Nāṭuvāḷis* like Vēṅāṭu, Zamorins of Calicut and Kōlattiri became dominant political power.<sup>67</sup> Accordingly they used the *Kēraḷōlpatti* traditions to legitimate their political power over *Nāṭu* based on the legendary story of Paraśurāma’s land creation, generated by the Brahmin, and the division of Kerala by the last Perumāḷ before his pilgrim to Mecca. It has revealed that the ruling powers, after the Perumāḷ

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<sup>65</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. “The Keralolpatti as History.” K. N. Ganesh (Ed.). *Culture and Modernity: Historical Explorations*. University of Calicut: Publication division, 2004. pp. 19-38. Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* 2009. p. 134.

<sup>66</sup> Herman Gundert. *Op. cit.*

<sup>67</sup> The dominant *Nāṭuvāḷis* were created their own version to legitimate their political position over the political territory. The Kolathunadu tradition of *Kēraḷōlpatti* is the best example for the same. M. R. Raghava Varier (ed.). *Op. cit.* 1984.

period, must have patronized the scribes to collect and incorporated the details about the antecedent historical legacy of the region.

Though the *Kēraḷōlpatti* traditions have been treated as the record compiled after 15<sup>th</sup> century or later, some of the content of the same seems to have pushed back to the medieval time. The texts give an idea about the boundary of the region of Kerala through its narration of the distribution of 32 traditional Brahman settlements in the river valleys. Accordingly, ten settlements were distributed between river Perumpuḷa and Karumanpuḷa, twelve settlements arranged between river Karumanpuḷa and Cūrni and the last ten settlements were spread between river Cūrni and Kanyakumari.<sup>68</sup> After the decline of Cērās of Mahōdayapuram in 12<sup>th</sup> century AD, the region was politically fragmented and most of the Nāṭu were ruled by powerful matrilineal households called *Swarūpam*. The *Kēraḷōlpatti* traditions were generated by the medieval Nāduvālis. The *Kēraḷōlpathi* traditions begin with the legendary origin of the land from Paraśurāma and go through the story of the distribution of Brahmin settlements and its administration by establishing the power of Perumāḷs. Finally, when the last Perumāḷ went to Mecca after embracing Islam religion, the Perumāḷ Kingdom was divided and distributed among the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*. By narrating such a story, the medieval *Nāṭuvāli Swarūpams* were given a common legacy from Paraśurāma and the Cēramān Perumāḷ to their political system and also made close affinity with the Brahmin settlements.<sup>69</sup>

The *Kēraḷōlpatti* traditions were given a socio-cultural boundary to pre-colonial Kerala based on the description of the distribution of Brahmin villages

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<sup>68</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* pp. 262-63.

<sup>69</sup> K.N. Ganesh. *Op. cit.* 2016. p 15.

and the matrilineal households including major *Swarūpams* and minor *Dēśavālis* and the dominant landed households as well. In fact, *Kēraḷōlpattis* have two dimensions; first, it made a conceptual boundary for Kerala from Gōkarṇa to Kanyakumari for placing the Brahmin settlements and political power under the Perumāḷs during the early medieval time. For this time the name Kerala stood for the political locale rather than a geographical unit. In another word, until the decline of Second Cēra reign the name Kerala remained as political territory ruled by Cēras (early Cēra and later Cēra). Second, it signified the breakup of that conceptual boundary after the decline of Perumāḷs and continued as different political power units like Vēṇāṭu, Perumpaṭappu, Neṭiyiruppu, Kōlattunāṭu, etc.

Interestingly, the term Kerala did not frequently appears in the accounts of medieval or late medieval travelers, instead the term Malibār and Malabār, which is more a name denote the undulated geography with the dominance of hillocks,<sup>70</sup> is frequently occurred. The region between Mangalore or Manjeswar and Cape Camorin is referred to as Malabar, which was ruled by many kings, in the medieval travelers' record.<sup>71</sup> It can be pointed out that Kerala or Kēraḷam was a term used for denoting the political unit controlled by Cēras until 12<sup>th</sup> century AD and Malabār was a term used for geographical identification of the undulated

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 13-15.

<sup>71</sup> Armando Cortesao (Tr.). *The Suma Oriental of Tomes Pires and The Book of Francisco Rodrigue*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services. 1990. pp.65-66, 73-74; H.A.R. Gibb (Tr.). *Ibn Battuta-Travels in Asia and Africa 1325- 1354*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services. 1997. pp.231-39; Arthur Coke Burnell and P.A. Tiele (Ed.). *The Voyage of John Huyghen Van Linschoten to the East Indies Vol.1*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1997. pp.65-74; Philip Badaeus (Ed.). *A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East- India Coast of Malabar and Coromondal Coast and also of the Isle of Ceylon*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 2000. pp.621-37. This work mentioned that “the whole country of Malabar is divided into five kingdoms like Canannor, Calicut, Cranganor, Cochin and Coulang” (Quilon).

hillock region lay towards the west of Western Ghats from the ancient period onwards. The early travelers and traders called this region as *Malaināṭu* or *Malaimaṇḍalam*.<sup>72</sup> Cosmas Indicopleustes, an Egyptian monk visited Kerala during 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, refers to the region as Male (Malabār), where the pepper grows and reports the existence of a church.<sup>73</sup>

From 13<sup>th</sup> century to 20<sup>th</sup> century the region was mainly divided in to three political segments; Travancore, Cochin and Malabar.<sup>74</sup> As mentioned earlier, Travancore and Cochin remained as princely state ruled by monarchs and Malabar ruled by various *Nāṭuvālis* and later came under the direct control of British East India Company. After 13<sup>th</sup> century AD, the name Kerala appears to denote a unified political territory only during the time of freedom movement and *Aikya Kērala* movement in modern times. Between 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the region was politically fragmented and ruled by different independent power units called *Nāṭuvāli Swarūpams* and *Dēśavālis*. Herman Gundert in his Dictionary published in 19<sup>th</sup> century cited Kerala, which is derived from the word Cēra, as the name equal to Malabar and described his works *Kēraḷamahātmyam*, *Kēraḷōlpatti* and *Kēraḷapaḷama* as the history of Malabar.

## **Conclusion**

Kerala, the narrow strip land located in the south western edge of peninsular India is an undulated fertile terrain often getting two monsoon

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<sup>72</sup> K.N. Ganesh. *Op. cit.* 2016. p.13. “The Malabar Coast may be roughly located as between Eḷimala to Kanyakumari and the term Malaimandalam is a vague in its geographical identity” pp. 13-14.

<sup>73</sup> J.W. Mc Crindle. (ed.). Cosmas Indicopleustes *The Christian Topography of Cosmas, an Egyptian Monk Translated from the Greek, and Edited with Notes and Introduction*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. pp.119, 366.

<sup>74</sup> A. Sreedhara Menon. *Op. cit.* pp.168-354.



seasons. Geographically, it situates between Western Ghats in the east and Arabian Sea in the west and sumptuous with rivers, rivulets and back waters. Topographically, the region is mainly divided into three; highland hillock area, middle land plains and coastal zone, where the multiple subsistence forms were practiced from the beginning of human settlements, including the hunting and food gathering, multi-crop production, craft making, fishing and salt making, which will be discussed in the forthcoming chapters in detail.

The above discussion reveals that until 12<sup>th</sup> century AD Kerala has been prevailed as a political unit controlled by early and later Cērās. As the Vēṇāṭu rulers received *Kerala* title to elevate their ascendancy over their political locale, to some extent it seems to have continued up to 13<sup>th</sup> century to define the political territory in the South. After that the region is termed as Malabār, a term that shows that undulated topography of the region between Mangalore to Cape Camorin, is generally used to denote the region of Kerala. The period between 13<sup>th</sup> century and 20<sup>th</sup> century AD, the period of Kerala State formation, the region of Kerala remained as a geographical unit called Malabār which was ruled by many small and big kingdoms.

However, the period between 600 AD and 1200 AD witnessed the migration of Brahmins from the Tamil and Karnataka regions to the midland areas of Kerala. It is corresponded to various changes in the society, especially in the worshipping pattern as well as the development of institutionalized structural worshipping centers which give due emphasize on the Śaiva - Vaiṣṇava Bhakti traditions. By 12<sup>th</sup> century AD, the structural temples were developed as institutionalized worshipping centre in the river valleys of the midland of Kerala.

The newly developed temples got substantial amount of land as grants from the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* and other local landlords. Most of the granted lands were

agrarian localities and transferred along with labour forces. The details of land grants in the Vāḷappaḷi inscription, the earliest inscription of early medieval Kerala so far discovered, itself has signified to the possible existence of a flourished agrarian society in Kerala before the Brahmin migration and the development of structural temples. Therefore, there should be a discussion about the nature of society antecedent to the society related to the structural temples of early medieval period. The next chapter will serve this purpose and focus to the early socio-political formation of society prior to the growth of structural temples in Kerala.

## Chapter II

### **PRE-TEMPLE SOCIETY: HISTORICAL ANTECEDENCE**

The structural temple, as an institutionalized form of worshipping centre, emerged in South India with the establishment of Brahmin settlements and Brahmin traditions. It seems to have developed in South India around 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> century AD; i.e., in the last phase of the early historic period. The evolution of *Bhakti* traditions, both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, had a crucial role in the establishment of temples throughout South India.<sup>1</sup> This period witnessed a remarkable shift in the worshipping pattern of Kerala as well. The institutionalized edifices for worship were established after 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. The epigraphical evidences proved that 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards the institutionalized Brahminic temples developed in Kerala. However, the temple architecture of early medieval Kerala is different from other parts of South India. The magnificent structural temple types, which is the salient feature of the Pallava, Pāndya and Cōlas, are not common in Kerala. The early medieval and medieval temples of Kerala were built with granite, laterite, and wood, for the base and superstructure respectively. The available epigraphs from the temples have shown that most of these temples were developed between 9<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century AD. H. Sarkar classified the period of the evolution of temple architecture in Kerala between 9<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century AD into two phases; Early (800-1000 AD) and Middle (1001-1300 AD),<sup>2</sup> which will

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<sup>1</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan and Kesavan Veluthat. "Bhakti movement in South India." D.N. Jha (ed.). *Feudal Order*. Delhi: Manohar, (2000) 2002. pp. 385-410.

<sup>2</sup> H. Sarkar. *An Architectural Survey of the Temples of Kerala*. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India. 1978. pp. 95-101.

be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Before examining the evolution of temples and the material setting of the early medieval temple society in these phases, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the nature of the pre-temple society. It is essential to realize the material culture of the early medieval society.

A period up to 9<sup>th</sup> century AD is considered here as the pre-temple period of Kerala. For convenience of the present study, this period is further divided into prehistoric, Iron Age and early historic and transitional phases. As these areas have already been studied,<sup>3</sup> the present discussion tries to place some problems in the existing historical knowledge on ancient Kerala and tries to argue that the pre-temple period had witnessed the formation of settled agro-pastoral and well organized society. The pre-temple society was stratified.<sup>4</sup> It consisted of farmers, cattle herders, anglers, various specialized occupational groups who involved in skilled labour, traders, ritual performers, forms of political powers, warriors, plunderers, etc. It was the period of technological development, especially metal, masonry, pottery and bead manufacture, weaving, memorial stone structures etc., and the techno-economic specialization and diversification.<sup>5</sup> Various structural

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<sup>3</sup> The pre-historic part of Kerala is well studied by P. Rajendran. *The Prehistoric cultures and environment (A case study of Kerala)*. New Delhi: Classical Publication company, 1989. The Iron Age and early historic and the transition part is discussed in the edited volume of Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Cultural History of Kerala, Vol.1*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Govt. of Kerala, 1999. pp.101-274.

<sup>4</sup> The present scholar has depended on the cultural and social anthropological theoretical aspects. Peter B. Hammond. *An Introduction to Cultural and Social Anthropology*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971. pp. 201-219.

<sup>5</sup> Peter. B. Hammond considers the technological development and the techno-economic specialization and diversification as unique feature of social stratification. *Ibid.* pp. 202-203.

forms with regard to the burial traditions can be seen as the prototype of the temple architectures as well. The architectural traditions of early medieval times must have continued from the Iron Age and early historic period.

### **Primordial Communities**

The human involvement in the undulated topography of Kerala started from the pre-historic period. The archaeological evidences of Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods have been recovered from various parts of Kerala and evidently substantiated the foundation of pre-historical culture in Kerala.<sup>6</sup> Robert Bruce Foote, who discovered Paleolithic evidence from Pallavaram near Madras in 1863, was the harbinger of the study of pre-history in South India.<sup>7</sup> He placed a wrong hypothesis about Kerala that due to the absence of quartz, the incessant rain and thick forest, Kerala was an uncomfortable zone for the Stone Age people.<sup>8</sup> However, K.R.V. Todd's discovery of microliths from Chevayur near Calicut disproved the hypothesis of Foote. Subsequently, Kerala witnessed the many discoveries of Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic tools and Mesolithic rock art paintings, which have shown the active human involvement in the prehistoric environment.<sup>9</sup> Most of the prehistoric finds are from the surface context. However, the stone tools were unearthed from the excavated archaeological layer as well. Recently, about two dozen microliths in quartz were unearthed from the below Iron Age layer in a trial pit at Anakkara (2008),<sup>10</sup> and

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<sup>6</sup> P. Rajendran. *Op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* p.1-10.

<sup>8</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>9</sup> For details. Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* pp. 57- 100.

<sup>10</sup> A trial pit was laid down in order to understand the pre-Iron Age layer in the Megalithic site at Anakkara and surprisingly found about 24 microliths at a depth of around 2 m. below the Iron Age layer. Rajan Gurukkal. *Unpublished Report of Anakkara excavation.* Kottayam: M G University, 2008.

a few from Kinalur (2015)<sup>11</sup> and Feroke.<sup>12</sup> These finds have evidently substantiated the stone age human occupation in the region.

The discovery of rock shelters, having pre-historic carvings, arts and painting at Edakkal,<sup>13</sup> Tovari, Tenmala, Ankode and Marayur<sup>14</sup> have represented the material environment of the pre-historic, especially of Mesolithic, society of Kerala. The Marayur paintings depict the horse, bull, elephant, seated saint like human figures with arm raised, impressions of palm, seemingly auspicious symbols, ritual dancers and ceremonial scenes.<sup>15</sup> The available pre-historic evidences from Kerala, which include the stone tools, art and painting at various rock shelters, have hinted at the development of a kinship social groups, who gave importance to various ritual forms as well in their savagery life.

However, all these evidences proved that Kerala had a pre-historic society that actively involved in the hunting, food gathering in the Palaeolithic stage and subsequently moving ahead with the artistic manifestations in the Mesolithic period. The pre-historic period had witnessed the long period of savage life and its subsequent transition from hunting and food gathering stage to the food-producing phase along with animal husbandry.<sup>16</sup> The development of ceramic

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<sup>11</sup> Microliths were discovered along with the burial urn from Kattadi and Puvampayi near Kinalur. Department of History, Govt. Arts and Science College Calicut, 2015. Report not published.

<sup>12</sup> Microliths were discovered from Nallur, near Feroke along with the Burial urn, not found inside the urn, but from the pit line outside the urn. Information gathered from K. Krishnaraj, field archaeologist, State Archaeology Department Museum, West Hill, Calicut.

<sup>13</sup> F. Fawcett British Colonial Superintendent of Police, discovered the Edakkal site in 1894. F. Fawcett. "Notes on the Rock Engravings in the Edakkal Cave, Wynad." Richard Carnac Temple (ed.). *Indian Antiquary- A Journal of Oriental Research*. Vol. XXX-1901. Delhi: Swati Publications, 1985. pp. 409-21.

<sup>14</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* pp. 77-98.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 81-85

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* p. 57-58

technology and the beginning of sedentary habitation were also the peculiarity of this phase.<sup>17</sup> The Neolithic period witnessed the emergence of food production, pottery making tradition and animal husbandry.<sup>18</sup> The engraving of wheeled cart at Edakkal and boats at Pallad, and Marayur have hinted at the importance of exchange of goods through land and water ways during Mesolithic and Neolithic phase. The formation of ritual chiefs, who must have had control over the primitive social groups, was also significant in the Kerala context. The engravings of Edakkal proved the possible existence of the chieftains during the prehistoric times.

The Stone Age society, especially Mesolithic and Neolithic people, had beliefs and rituals and the Neolithic people predominantly had the belief in the fertility cult.<sup>19</sup> The artistic representations have also shown the transition from the Stone Age phase to the metal age. The studies on Rock art of Kerala revealed that the archaic rock arts of Kerala belonged to three phases; the first and second phases belonged to the late Mesolithic and Neolithic phase and the third phase mixed with the megalithic period of Iron Age.<sup>20</sup> The rock arts were also represented the changes occurred in the life pattern of the primordial society.

### **Survival of Stone Tools and the Absence of Bronze Age**

However, the above discussion has shown that the pre-historic people were involved in sedentary agriculture and animal husbandry, pottery making

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* 57.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 74-77; L.A. Krishna Iyar. *Kerala Megaliths and Their Builders*. Madras-5: University of Madras, 1967. pp. 36-42.

<sup>19</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier, *History of Kerala—prehistoric to the present*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2018. p.35.

<sup>20</sup> Yashodhar Mathpal. *Rock Art in Kerala*. New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts and Aryan Books International, 1998. pp. 41-46.

along with the hunting and food gathering. This period witnessed a transition from the nomadic life to a settled agrarian life based on kinship. The occurrence of pre-historic tools in the megalithic context proved the survival of Stone Age technology during the Iron Age phase as well. The discovery of microliths, which mentioned above, and the potteries with Neolithic stuff<sup>21</sup> from the megalithic context proved such survival. All these have pointed to a transition phase. But unfortunately, there is no clarity about the cultural layer between the Stone Age and Iron Age in South India in general and Kerala in particular. There is no evidence on a Chalcolithic or Bronze Age period in Kerala. At the same time, few bronze artifacts were unearthed from the Megalithic context. It include a bronze vase and unidentified tool from Naduvil (Kannur- Stone Circle with Rock cut Chamber),<sup>22</sup> a highly polished bronze-vase from Perambra (Calicut-Umbrella stone),<sup>23</sup> copper bangle from Arippa (Kollam- Urn),<sup>24</sup> a bronze lamp

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<sup>21</sup> K.K. Ramamurti. *Interim report of Ummichipoyil Megalithic excavation. Kasarcode district Kerala*. Thrissur: Archaeological Survey of India- Thrissur Circle, 2002. Unpublished; Jayasree Nair, K. "Rock-cut caves of Ummichipoyil" *Advances in Arts and Ideas*, Vol.4, Nos 1& 2. Trissur: Arts and Humanities Social Sciences, Department of history, St. Thomas' College, 2008.pp. 13-29.

<sup>22</sup> K.J. John. "Unpublished excavation report of Naduvil, Kannur district." Calicut University: Department of History, 1990. cited in Manjula Poyil. *Death Funeral and Ancestors: cults of the dead and the Malabar tribes*. Calicut University: Department of History, 2006. pp. 94-95. unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

<sup>23</sup> K.J. John. "Perambra, 1979 New light on Kodakkals of Malabar." R.K. Sharma (ed.). *Indian Archaeology New Perspective*. New Delhi: Agam Kalam Prakashan, 1982. pp. 148-54.

<sup>24</sup> P. Rajendran and C.S.P. Iyyer. "A preliminary report on the characterization of copper and gold ornaments of the Arippa megalithic culture in Kollam district, Kerala, South India." *Man and Environment* 22(2):61-66; P. Rajendran. "A note on the Megalithic Cultural remains from the Cist burials at Arippa in Kollam district of Kerala, South India". *CURRENT SCIENCE* Vol. 68, No.7.10. Bangalore, April 1995. Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. pp.133-37.



from Wayanad (Urn),<sup>25</sup> a corroded bronze image, probably of a human being from Thalakkod (Kannur- Urn),<sup>26</sup> etc. It is argued that the copper based alloy metallurgy was developed indigenously and its antiquity can be traced from the Iron Age Megalithic phase in peninsular India, which survived later as well.<sup>27</sup>

These evidences prove that the bronze technology was familiar to the Iron Age society. As the copper or bronze weapons or tools are conspicuously absent and majority of the finds are associated with household utensils and other luxury, the bronze technology seems to have developed along with the Iron Age technology and they might have represented an advanced stage of human settlement. In short, based on the available antiquities, it can be seen that there was no separate phase of Bronze Age in Kerala, as it found in the North Indian context, but the bronze appeared as technology, most probably along with the Iron Age technology. Therefore, the precedent culture of the Iron Age in Kerala was the Neolithic that represented the beginning of agriculture, animal husbandry and craft production especially pottery. The earliest kin based human settlements were emerged during the Neolithic period.<sup>28</sup> However, the major antiquities that represented the ancient societies of Kerala are getting from the Iron Age and early historic contexts.

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<sup>25</sup> This object discovered from a burial urn near Pulpally by Ajesh. C.A, Assistant Professor in History, Government Arts and Science College, Calicut. cited in K.P. Rajesh, *Muthumakkathali*. Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Cooperative Society, National Book Stall, 2014. p.96.

<sup>26</sup> K. Krishnaraj. *Viyur Rock-cut cave excavation: Preliminary report (in Malayalam)*. West hill: State Archaeology Department- Calicut Office. 2018.

<sup>27</sup> Sarada Srinivasan. "Megalithic and Continuing Peninsular High-Tin Binary Bronzes: Possible Roots in Harappan Binary Bronze Usage?", *Trans Indian Inst Met DOI 10.1007/s12666-013-0291-5*, Indian Institute of Metals, 2013. <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/10.1007%252Fs12666-013-0291-5.pdf> accessed on 12/12/2018. Online.

<sup>28</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 2018. pp. 34-38.

## **Iron Age and Early Historic Society**

In the case of Kerala, it is difficult to differentiate the cultural layer between Iron Age and early historic period. The major archaeological remains belonged to this cultural phase are burial monuments, generally called Megaliths,<sup>29</sup> which stretched a long period from Iron Age to the early historic period. Based on the available scientific dating, the Iron Age and early historic period of Kerala has been dated to around 1000 BC - 500 AD.<sup>30</sup> The other materials including literature, inscriptions etc. belonged to early historic phase. Based on the literature and inscription, it has been argued that the early historic period is from 4<sup>th</sup> century BC to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>31</sup> However, these dates have revealed the complexities about the study of Iron Age or early historic period as separate phases in the formation of ancient society of Kerala. Megaliths, the major source for the study of these period, were not only created in the Iron Age and they were also built during the early historic period and even continued till medieval times.<sup>32</sup> Therefore, this part analyses the long-term development of Kerala society until 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. The discussion made in the previous chapter has revealed that during this period Kerala was part of the Tamilakam, a cultural and linguistic zone, and at the same time existed as a separate political entity

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<sup>29</sup> The term megalith, which is derived from two Greek words *mega* means big and *lithos* means stone, means the huge stone is coined by a British Antiquarian Algernon Herbert in his work *Cyclops Christianus: Or an Argument to Disprove the Supposed Antiquity of the Stonehenge and Other Megalithic Erections*. United States: Kessinger Publishing, (1849) 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p.128.

<sup>31</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 2018. p.51.

<sup>32</sup> V. Selvakumar. "Iron Age and Early Historic Graffiti and symbols in South India: Some Observation." Ajith Kumar, Rajeh S.V. and Abhayan G.J. (ed.) *Kailashnathu Hetu (Essays on Pre-history, Proto history and Historical Archaeology –Festschrift to Sri Kailashnath Drikshid*. New Delhi: New Bharatiya Book Corporation, p. 304.

within Tamilakam. Therefore, it is assumed that the cultural elements embedded in the source materials belonged to Iron Age and early historic period seems to have represented the socio-political settings of Tamilakam, mostly Tamilnadu and Kerala. The material evidences and literary references have evidently proved the formation of the flourished agro-pastoral society with multiple subsistence forms in the pre-temple period. In order to understand the nature of pre-temple society it is necessary to come across the available evidences of Iron Age and early historic period.

### **Traces of the Pre-Temple Society**

Megaliths are the foremost archaeological evidence for the understanding of the socio-cultural aspects of the pre temple society of Kerala. Megaliths are the huge monolithic and structural sepulchers built to commemorate the ancestors of the Iron Age and early historic society in Peninsular India. They have represented the socio-economic settings, ideology, workmanship and architectural knowledge of the Iron Age and early historic society.<sup>33</sup> There are different typologies of megaliths in Kerala made of laterite, granite and in both materials as well and terracotta (see below, Table.1).

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<sup>33</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 101-15; K.P. Rajesh. “Megalithic of North Kerala, formation of technology advanced agro-pastoral iron age and early historic society”. *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 5. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 2017. pp. 486-506.

**Table 1. Megalithic Typologies of Kerala**

<b>Megaliths in Laterite</b>	<b>Megaliths in Granite</b>	<b>Megaliths in Laterite and Granite</b>	<b>Megaliths in Terracotta</b>
<i>Kodakkallu</i> (umbrella stone)	Cist	<i>Kodakkallu</i> <sup>34</sup>	Urn
<i>Toppikkallu</i> (cap stone)	Dolmen	Stone circle	Sarcophagus
Rock-cut Sepulcher	Stone circle	<i>Menhir</i>	
Stone circle	<i>Menhir</i>		

The material evidences unearthed hitherto from the megaliths of Kerala include various types of potteries (Black and Red Wares, Black wares, Red slipped Wares, Legged Jar, various types of lids, stands, Russet Coated Painted Wares etc.), Iron objects (trident, sword, dagger, knife, sickle, ploughshare, spear head, arrow head, hanging lamp, tripod, etc.), stone beads (etched carnelian, agate, quartz, amethyst, steatite, beryl etc.), gold ornaments and bronze objects in very few quantity and bone fragments. Another set of material evidences about

<sup>34</sup> An umbrella stone with dressed laterite clinostat and flat rectangular granite orthostat found at Paṭṭarkulam, Near Manjeri, Malappuram district, Kerala. Reported with illustration by William Logan. *Malabar Manual*. Madras: Government Press. 1951. Illustration No. II between pp. 182-83. Accessed from <https://ia801902.us.archive.org/21/items/MalabarLogan/Malabar%20Logan.pdf> on 06/07/ 2019.

the early historic Kerala are from Pattanam<sup>35</sup> and Viḷinjam<sup>36</sup> excavations, which have evidently recognized the development of well-organized material culture in connection with the internal and external exchanges and also hinted at the existence of stratified society in the west coast of Kerala from Iron Age and reached at apex during early historic period.

The early Tamil literature, popularly known as *Sangam*, is another set of data that furnishes umpteen traces of the pre-temple society. It includes *Tolkāppiyam*, a grammar text of *Tolkāppiyar*, three corpuses of literatures - *Eṭṭutokai*, *Pattupāṭṭu* and *Patinenkīlkaṇakku* - that cover a period from 300 BC to 500 AD.<sup>37</sup> The post *Sangam* works like *Cilappaṭikāram*, *Maṇimēkhalai*, *Kīlkaṇakku* etc. are also included in this category. *Tolkāppiyar* divided the

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<sup>35</sup> V. Selvakumar. P.K. Gopi and K.P. Shajan. “Trial Excavations at Pattanam, Paravur Taluk, Ernakulam district, Kerala: A preliminary report. *The Journal of the Centre for Heritage Studies* Vol. 2. Trippunithara: Centre for Heritage Studies, 2005. pp.57-66; P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the First Season 2007*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 a; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Second Season 2008*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 b; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Third Season-2009*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 c; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Fourth Season-2010*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 d; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Fifth Season-2011*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 e; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Sixth Season-2012*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 f; *Interim Reports of the Pattanam Excavations/ Explorations -2013*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 g; *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the Eighth Season-2014*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 h; *9<sup>th</sup> Season Pattanam Excavation Report*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015 i.

<sup>36</sup> Ajit Kumar, Rajesh S.V., Abhayan G.S., Vinod V. and Sujana Stephen. “Indian Ocean Maritime Trade: Evidences from Viḷinjam, South Kerala, India.” *Journal of Indian ocean archaeology* no. 9, 2013. pp. 195- 201.

<sup>37</sup> R. Champakalakshmi. *Trade Ideology and Urbanization: South India 300 BC to AD 300*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996. pp. 175-76.

subject matter of all poetry or human emotions into two broad categories namely *Akam* (inner) and *Puram* (outer).<sup>38</sup> It is a thematic classification; *Akam* deals with the pre-marital and marital life and *Puram* deals with the military and non-love themes.<sup>39</sup>

Some of the early epigraphs in Tamil Brahmi, Grantha and Vaṭṭeḷuttu<sup>40</sup> and coins from Kerala<sup>41</sup> and Tamilnadu<sup>42</sup> have also used for the study of this part. By analyzing these source materials, the following part tries to trace the pre-temple social formation of ancient Kerala.

### **Inhabited Landscape**

It is not easy to find archaeological proof for the habitation space of the early society from Kerala, the undulated region getting two incessant monsoon seasons and witnessed the continuous occupation. The distribution of megaliths in the high land of Western Ghats and the hillocks, its slopes and valley of midland and coastal area of Kerala have shown the possible spread of the dispersed settlements of a populous society during Iron Age and early historic period.<sup>43</sup> As mentioned earlier, Megaliths, the burial or commemorative

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<sup>38</sup> K. Kailasapathy. *Tamil Heroic Poetry*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968. pp. 4-5.

<sup>39</sup> K. Sivathamby. "Early South Indian Society and Economy: The Tinai Concept" *Social Scientist*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (Dec., 1974), 20-37. Accessed from <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/10.2307%252F3516448.pdf> on 18/4/2018. pp. 20-21. Online.

<sup>40</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. pp. 188-199. Iravatam Mahadevan. *Early Tamil Epigraphy- from the earliest times to the sixth century AD*. Cambridge: Harvard University, 2003. pp.433-35.

<sup>41</sup> P.L. Gupta. *Early Coins from Kerala*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Kerala, (1965) 1988.

<sup>42</sup> Iravatam Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* pp. 62-63.

<sup>43</sup> T. Satyamurthy has given a list of megalithic sites in Kerala as appendix. T. Satyamurthy. *The Iron Age in Kerala, A report of the Mangadu excavation*. Thiruvananthapuram: 1992; Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p. 110; Jenee Peter. *Dimensions of Megalithic Culture of Kerala in Relation to Peninsular India: An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Baroda:

monuments, were not used for the residential purpose. In Tamilnadu, many burials cum habitation sites were excavated and most of the burial sites were discovered in the nearby areas of the habitation sites.<sup>44</sup> However, in the case of Kerala, until now no habitation sites of Iron Age are reported. Recently, a thin Iron Age cultural layer found in the excavation trench at Pattanam, which proved the presence of Iron Age population in the west coast of Kerala.<sup>45</sup> It was from the coastal zone and not associated with the burial. However, even in the absence of habitation remains, the burial sites have signified to the possible spread of human settlements in the nearby areas of burial grounds during the Iron Age and early historic period.<sup>46</sup> The available distribution pattern of the Megaliths has shown the presence of human involvement in different landscapes including the highland, slopes, midland areas and coastal zones as well.<sup>47</sup> The megalithic people largely used the locally available materials including laterite, granite and terracotta for the preparation of different types of burial monuments. For instance, cists and dolmens are largely distributed in the area where granite is locally available, the rock cut sepulchers are found in the laterite plains of

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Department of Archaeology and Ancient History Faculty of arts, 2002. pp. 144-166. unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

<sup>44</sup> Porunthal in Tamilnadu is the best example of the habitation cum burial site. K. Rajan. *Archaeological Excavations at Porunthal*. Pondicherry: Pondicherry University, 2009; Amarnath Ramakrishna, Nanda Kishor Swain, M. Rajesh and N. Veeraraghavan. "Excavations at Keeladi, Sivaganga District, Tamil Nadu (2014- 2015 and 2015 - 16)." *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 6. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 2018. pp. 30-72.

<sup>45</sup> Pattanam excavation also furnished umpteen evidences about the early historic social formation in connection with the coastal exchanges the west coast of Kerala. P.J Cherian. (ed.) *Op. cit.* 2015a-i.

<sup>46</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2017. Even now the burial grounds are located not far away from the habitation sites in Kerala.

<sup>47</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p. 110.

northern part of Kerala only, the urns are found in the loose soil terrain and coastal zones. They must have accessed the clay locally. Such patterns have indicated the possible spread of human occupation in that locale. All these pointed towards the probability of the formation of permanent settlements in the surroundings of the burials. Besides these archaeological signs, the ancient Tamil literature, namely *Sangam* literature, furnish many hints at the human involvement in the Iron Age and early historic landscape of Tamiḷakam.

According to *Sangam* poems, the people of Tamiḷakam were involving in different form of occupations in their living landscape. *Tolkāppiyam* refers to the existence of seven types of geo-eco zones in which the middle five are significant.<sup>48</sup> *Akanānūru* songs are arranged on the basis of *Tinai* or *Aintinai*.<sup>49</sup> It is argued that *Tinai* landscape classification, which was also considered as the inhabited landscape, was peculiar to early Tamil poetry.<sup>50</sup> The five *Tinai*, which represented five types of geo-eco cultural systems; *Kuṟiñji* (mountain forest tracts), *Mullai* (pastoral tracts in the hillock slopes), *Pālai* (parched zone),

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<sup>48</sup> “.... Makkal nutaliya akanain tinaiyum...” L. Gloria Sundramathy and Indra Manuel (ed.). *Tolkāppiyam- Poruḷatikāram (An English Translation with Critical Notes)*. Thiruvananthapuram: International School of Dravidian Linguistics, 2010. *Poruḷatikāram-Akattinaiyiyal* 57. (Hereafter *Tol. Porl. Akat.* 57); K. Kailaspathy. *Op. cit.* p. 5.

<sup>49</sup> About 400 songs are in the *Akam* collection. The present scholar mainly depended on the three volumes of *Akanānūru* (Vol. I- songs 1-120, Vol. II. songs 121-280 and Vol. III songs 301-400), translated into Malayalam by Nenmara P. Viswanathan Nair (Tr.). *Akanānūru*, Vol. I. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1981; *Akanānūru*, Vol. II. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1983; *Akanānūru*, Vol. III. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1984. (Hereafter *A.N-song's Number*).

<sup>50</sup> In *Tolkāppiyam* the term *Tinai* is used in two different senses, ‘human’ and ‘region or landscape’, perhaps in the extended sense of ‘inhabited landscape.’ Y. Subbarayalu. “A Note on Grammatical Knowledge in Early Tamiḷakam”. *Indian Journal of History of Science*, 51.1 (2016) 125-130. Accessed from [https://www.insa.nic.in/writereaddata/UploadedFiles/IJHS/Vol51\\_2016\\_1\\_Art15.pdf](https://www.insa.nic.in/writereaddata/UploadedFiles/IJHS/Vol51_2016_1_Art15.pdf). on 18/07/2018.



*Marutam* (wet land plains) and *Neital* (coastal areas). Both love and military affairs of *Akam* and *Puram* songs respectively are related to these ecological regions.<sup>51</sup>

Unlike other *Tinai*s, *Pālai* was the dry zone that formed due to the aridness of either *Kuṛiñji* or *Mullai* tracts. K. Sivathamby, based on a reference in the *Cilappadikaram*, categorically states, “*Mullai* and *Kuṛiñji* are transformed into distress giving arid region (*Pālai*) by the excessive heat of Sun. *Mullai* and *Kuṛiñji* have taken the shape of *Pālai*, with the rainfall the shape could be transformed to the original *Kuṛiñji* and *Mullai*. It would, therefore, be appropriate to treat *Pālai* as seasonal change.”<sup>52</sup> A number of references occur in the *Akam* literature about the presence and movement of people including itinerant merchants and robbers in the *Pālai* region. Comparing to other *Tinai* songs, the substantial increase in the *Pālai* songs in the *Akam* literature have pointed to the possible spread of *Kuṛiñji* or *Mullai* tracts in the early *Tamiḷakam* than the other eco-zones.

However, the poetic allusions about the five eco-zones have shown that the people were settled in different landscape and involving in different type of livelihood during the early historic *Tamiḷakam*. The people must have settled in the hilly tracts, slopes, valleys, arid zones and coastal areas. Many terms are frequently occurring in the songs especially in the *Akam* poems like *Nāṭu*, *Ūr*, *Kuṭi*, *Cēri*, etc. in connection with the expansion of settlement areas. They have hinted at the growth of population as well. The wide distribution of megaliths in

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<sup>51</sup> K. Sivathamby. “Early South Indian Society and Economy: The *Tinai* Concept.” *Social Scientist*, Vol. 3, No. 5 (Dec., 1974), 20-37. Accessed from <file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/10.2307%252F3516448.pdf> on 18/4/2018. pp. 20-21.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* p.26.

the hilly tracts, midland plains and coastal areas also pointed towards the existence of a populous society.

### **Formation of Society**

Iron Age was the formative phase of the agro-pastoral social formation in Kerala, which subsequently advanced during the early historic period. This period witnessed the formation of a society with multiple forms of subsistence with a sound base of multi-crop agriculture which resulted into the formation of various specialized occupation groups, including skilled and professionals, and their organized settlement areas. The unearthed iron implements and iron objects from the megalithic burials of Kerala and the *Sangam* literary works have represented the multiplicity of the social formation in the Iron Age and early historic period. The society was flourished with the internal and external exchange. Many authentic data including archaeological, literary and numismatic have validated the dynamic exchanges and trade contact of the west coast of Kerala with the northern part of India and abroad through inland and overseas. The period also witnessed the materialization of different layer of political leadership, possibly hierarchical in nature, with the higher position of *Vēntar Cērās*. However, the subsequent part will explore the social formation of the pre-temple period of Kerala.

### ***Agro-Pastoral Subsistence Supplemented with Hunting***

The Iron Age and early historic period had witnessed the formation of agro-pastoral economy with the persistence of primordial subsistence forms. The people practiced multiple subsistence forms including hunting, food gathering, cattle keeping, shifting and slash and burn cultivation, and wetland cultivation. These ages witnessed the profuse use of iron tools and weapons, which had been used for hunting and agricultural purposes.

### ***Hunting and food gathering***

Hunting and food gathering, the primitive mode of human subsistence, was continued in the Iron Age and early historic period as well.<sup>53</sup> The discovery of iron weapons from the megalithic burial including spearheads, arrowheads, trident, sword have evidently proved the hunting subsistence strategy of the contemporary society.<sup>54</sup> The occupants of *Kuṛiñji* zones were mainly depended on hunting and food gathering.<sup>55</sup> The hunters lifted cattle as well from their

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<sup>53</sup> A.N- 58:3 “...kāṭutērvēṭṭattu viḷiviṭam...”, Indicates the camping place after hunting process. A.N- 63:17. “...vēṭṭakkaḷavar viciyuru kaṭuṅkaṅ...” Along with hunting, the hunters were plundered the cattle. A.N-78:7 “...tēmpīḷi naravin kuṛvar munriḷ...” Kuravar, the inhabitance of *Kuṛiñji* zone, collected honey and toddy.

<sup>54</sup> From the first Megalithic excavation at Chettapparamba near Feroke, Calicut district of J. Babington in 1819 to the recent excavation at Viyyur, Koyilandy, Calicut district unearthed a number of Iron weapons. J. Babington. “Description of the Pandoo Coollies in Malabar” *Transactions of the Literary society of Bombay*, 1823. 3:324-30; Robert Sewell. *Lists of the Antiquarian remains in the Presidency of Madras.Vol.1*. Delhi: Indological Book house, 1882. pp. 238-61; A. Aiyappan. “Rock-cut Cave-tombs of Feroke, South Malabar”. *Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society, Vol. XXIII*. Reproduced in M.R. Manmathan. *Archaeology in Kerala Past and Present*. Feroke College. Calicut. (1933) 2007.pp. 12-29; B.K. Thapar. “Porkalam1948: Excavations of a Megalithic Urn Burial” *Ancient India*, vol. 8, Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, 1952. pp. 3-16; R.N Mehta, and K.M. George. *Megaliths at Machad and Pazhayannur, Talappally Taluka, Trichur District, Kerala State*. Vadodara: M.S. University of Baroda,1978; K.J. John. “Rock-cut Cave Tombs of Chitrari: Some new lights on the Rock cut cave tombs of Malabar” *Journal of Kerala Studies* 1(4). Thiruvananthapuram: Centre of Kerala Studies, 1974, pp. 383-86; K.J. John. “Perambra,1979 New light on Kodakkals of Malabar”. R.K. Sharma (ed.). *Indian Archaeology New Perspectives*. New Delhi: Agam Kalam Prakashan, 1982. pp. 148-54. K.J. John. “Unpublished excavation report of Naduvil, Kannur district”. Calicut University: Department of History. 1990. cited in Poyil, Manjula. 2006. *Death Funeral and Ancestors: Cults of the dead and the Malabar tribe*. University of Calicut: Department of History. pp. 94-95. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis; T. Satyamurthy. *The Iron Age in Kerala-A report of the Mangadu excavation*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 1992. pp. 25-31; Krishna Raj. *Mārākkara Pātyam Ceñkal Ulkhananañgaḷuṭe Prādhmika Report*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala State Archaeology Department Government of Kerala, 2015.

<sup>55</sup> A.N-78.

neighboring zones.<sup>56</sup> Cattle lifting was also the part of the subsistence of the *Kuṛiñji* population. The wild honey was collected from the forest tracts.<sup>57</sup>

### ***Cattle Wealth***

The Archaeo-Zoological evidences from the Megaliths of South India have shown the details of domesticated animals, which include, cattle, buffalo, sheep, goats, pig, horse, ass, dog etc.<sup>58</sup> Owing to the absence of such evidences from Kerala, it is difficult to provide archaeological evidence for the domestication of livestock. But at the same time there are many references in *Sangam* texts about the domestication of animal and cattle wealth of the contemporary society. The poetical reference on the cattle of *Nāṭu* and *Kāṭu* has revealed the domestication of cow.<sup>59</sup> The milch cow were the part of the wealth of the *Nāṭu*.<sup>60</sup> The *Kōvalar* or herdsmen grazed the cattle<sup>61</sup> and procured water for them by digging the parched pond in the *Pālai* tracts.<sup>62</sup> Many artificially made ponds with slopping steps, where the megalithic burials also found, were noticed in the pastoral tracts of North Malabar area and argued that the ponds were made

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<sup>56</sup> A.N-63:17.

<sup>57</sup> A.N-94: 1-2. “tēmpaṭu cimayappaṅkar”

<sup>58</sup> R.K. Mohanty and V. Selvakumar. “The Archaeology of the Megaliths in India: 1947-1997” S. Settar, Ravi Korisettar. *Indian Archaeology in Retrospect PREHISTORY Archaeology of South Asia*. New Delhi: ICHR, Manohar, 2002. pp. 324-25.

<sup>59</sup> V.R. Parameswaran Pillai (Tr.). *Puṛānānūṟu*. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, (1969) 1997. Song 166. T. Madhava Menon (Tr.). *The Puranaanuuru- Tamil Sangam Classic*. Thiruvananthapuram: International School of Dravidian Linguistics, 2011. (Hereafter P.N-166).

<sup>60</sup> A.N-155: 7 “payanirai cērnta pāṇāṭṭāṅkaṇai” The *nāṭu* which has prosperity of the milch cow.

<sup>61</sup> A.N- 14:7; A.N- 54:10; A.N- 74:15; A.N- 124:14; A.N- 214:12; A.N- 219:15; A.N- 253:12; A.N- 264:4; A.N- 293:11; A.N- 311:9; A.N- 321:7; A.N- 354:5; A.N- 399:11.

<sup>62</sup> A.N-155:8 “kōvalar kūva rṛōṅṭiya.” The herdsmen dug pit.

by the pastoral community for cattle.<sup>63</sup> The cattle herds were usually plundered or recovered at the occasion of predatory marches of chiefs and *Maṛavars*.<sup>64</sup> The milk and milk products from the *Mullai* tracts were also distributed.<sup>65</sup> Both men and women were involved in the cattle rearing.<sup>66</sup>

### ***Cultivation***

The agricultural practices have been started from the Neolithic period onwards. It became the main base of the livelihood of the society during Iron Age and early historic period. Hunting and food gathering were also practiced along with cultivation.<sup>67</sup> The finding of sickle from the megalithic burials<sup>68</sup> and iron ploughshare from Kuppakkolli in Waynad,<sup>69</sup> Kuruvattūr<sup>70</sup> in Calicut and iron hoes from Arippa<sup>71</sup> in Kollam, etc. have hinted at the process of reclamation of forest tracts and the development of iron plough based advanced form of cultivation techniques. Though the megaliths are mainly distributed in the non-productive plains, most of them are found in the nearby areas of the cultivable

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<sup>63</sup> K.P. Rajesh. “Iron Age Megalithic Burials of Perumba, Kuppam, Valapattanam and Pazhayangadi River Belts, Kannur District, North Kerala, India.” *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology* 2. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 2014a. pp. 383-404.

<sup>64</sup> *A.N-* 63:12 “...kaṛavai taṅta kaṭuṅkāl maṛavar...”

<sup>65</sup> *P.N-* 33:3 “tayir koṭuvantatacumpu niṛaiya”, the pot full of curd; *P.N-* 215: 3 “veṅṭayir” white curd”.

<sup>66</sup> *P.N-* 215:4 “āymakaḷ”,

<sup>67</sup> Hunting and food gathering practiced in Kerala even in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was part of the life of the people, especially in the hilly areas of the region.

<sup>68</sup> T. Satyamurthy. *Op. cit.* pp. 14, 21, 23.

<sup>69</sup> Rajan Gurukkal. “Historical Antecedents.” P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Perspectives on Kerala History- The Second Millennium*, Vol. II Part II. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala State Gazetteers, Government of Kerala, 1999. p. 26

<sup>70</sup> K. Krishnaraj. *Op. cit.* 2015. pp. 14-15.

<sup>71</sup> P. Rajendran *Op. cit.* 1995:684

plots.<sup>72</sup> There are different argument about the livelihood pattern of the megalithic society, which include settled agrarian community,<sup>73</sup> the nomadic pastoral society<sup>74</sup> and a mixed economy based on agro-pastoral production.<sup>75</sup> Based on the Urn burials excavation at Mangadu in Kollam district, T. Satyamurthy argued “the occurrence of large number of agricultural implements and the location of the monuments overlooking arable land show that the builders of these megaliths were primarily agriculturalists.”<sup>76</sup> However, the makers of the advanced form of burial structures, especially the rock-cut sepulchers, umbrella stones and stone circles, must have a strong economic base. The paddy husk remains from the megaliths must have represented the staple food of the contemporary society.<sup>77</sup> As almost all megaliths of Kerala, where occur highly precipitative two monsoon seasons, are found in a disturbed and highly weathered contexts, we cannot expect more botanical evidences to study the contemporary bio diversity. But the different types of pottery unearthed from the megaliths, including bowls, plates, cooking pots, storage jars etc. have represented the settled agrarian society in the iron age and early historic times.

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<sup>72</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2014a. p. 401.

<sup>73</sup> B.K. Gururaja Rao. *Megalithic Culture in South India*. Mysore: University of Mysore, 1972. pp. 298-99; K.S. Ramachandran. *Archaeology of South India- Tamil Nadu*. New Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan, 1980. p. 68; T. Satyamurthy. *Op. cit.*

<sup>74</sup> L.S. Leshnik. *South Indian Megalithic Burials: The Pandukal Complex*. Weisbaden: Franze Steiner Verlag GmbH. 1974. cited in R.K Mohanty and V. Selvakumar. *Op. cit.* p. 330-31.

<sup>75</sup> Udaya Ravi S. Moorti. *Megalithic Culture of South India*. Varanasi: Ganga Kaveri Publishing house, 1994. p. 44.

<sup>76</sup> T. Satyamurthy. *Op. cit.* p. 21.

<sup>77</sup> Rajan Chedampath. *Investigations into the megaliths and early historic periods of the Periyar and Ponnani river basins of Kerala*. University of Pune: Department of Archaeology, 1997. p 271. unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

More details of the early agricultural practices in various landscapes are occurring in the *Sangam* texts. It included the shifting agriculture of the hilly forest tracts (*Kuṟiñji*), the slash and burn cultivation in the pastoral plains (*Mullai*) and wet land cultivation by using cattle wealth as well at wet fields (*Marutam*). Such tracts were also termed as *Vanpulam* and *Menpulam*.<sup>78</sup> The *Kuṟiñji* and *Mullai* tracts are considered as *Vanpulam* and the wetland cultivated areas of *Marutam* termed as *Menpulam*.<sup>79</sup> The slash and burn millet cultivation was practiced in the *Kuṟiñji* zone.<sup>80</sup> The dry cultivation area was also known as *Punpulam*.<sup>81</sup> The open pastoral tracts were also termed as *Viyampulam*.<sup>82</sup> The cultivated areas of the *Kuṟiñji* zones were known as *Nāṭu*. The earliest references on the cultivated lands or *nāṭu* were occurred in the *Kuṟiñji* zone.<sup>83</sup> There is reference about the ploughing the land within the forest tract by using ox and applying cattle dung to prepare the land for cultivation.<sup>84</sup> As these references occur in the *Kuṟiñji* song, it can be assumed that the early settled agrarian population were developed in the hilly areas. The term *nāṭu* stands for such cultivated and occupied land. There is a depiction of poet Kumattūr Kannanār about the expansion of agrarian settlements in the reclaimed forest areas at the

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<sup>78</sup> *P.N-* 42:17-18. “vanpulakkēlir̥kku varuviruntayarum menpulavaipin nannaṭṭu poruna”. Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p. 174.

<sup>79</sup> N. Subrahmanian. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*. Madras: University of Madras, 1966. p. 709. (Hereafter *P.P.T.I-* 709).

<sup>80</sup> *A.N-* 88: 1-2. “mutaiccuval kalitta mūriccentinai ōṅkuvaṇaṟ pperuṅkural uṇī īya pāṅkar”, *A.N-* 288: 5-6. “eritin kollai yīraiñciya ēnal yavvaṅkūriya vaikalum varuvōy”

<sup>81</sup> G. Vaidyanatha Ayyar (Tr.). *Patirrupattu*. Thissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, (1961) 1997. 6<sup>th</sup> Ten- Song 8 line 15. “punpulam vittum...” (Hereafter *Patir.* 6<sup>th</sup> Ten- 8:15). *A.N-* 394:16 “punpula..”

<sup>82</sup> *A.N-* 14:7. *P.N-* 339:1.

<sup>83</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier, *Op. cit.* 1999. p. 174.

<sup>84</sup> *A.N-* 262:1-4. “mutai paṭu pachuṅkāṭṭariṟpavaṟ mayakki ppakaṭu pala pūṇṭavulavuṟu ceñcey Iṭumuṟai nirampi ākuvinai kkalittu pācilai yamṇa payaṟa pukkenna”

time of Imayavarampan Nedumcēral, the early Cēra ruler.<sup>85</sup> The reference of *Nāṭu* and *Kāṭu*<sup>86</sup> imply the distinction between the occupied cultivated zones and unoccupied resource areas. It also refers that *Nāṭu* was developed within the *Kāṭu* or in other words, *Nāṭu* formed as a result of the reclamation of forest tracts and the beginning of agriculture in such tracts. Both the production and resource accumulation were part of the economy of the *nāṭu* in the *Kuṟiṇṇi* zone,<sup>87</sup> which was also known as *kunṟunāṭu*<sup>88</sup> or *malaināṭu*,<sup>89</sup> meaning the agrarian settlement in the hillock. Hence, the *nāṭus* are clearly distinguished from hills and forests, obviously implying that it denoted the inhabited and productive space. The references on *Nannāṭu* testify to the existence of prosperous agrarian settlements.<sup>90</sup> Paddy and millets were cultivated in the hilly forest tracts of *Kuṟiṇṇi* and pastoral *Mullai* tracts.<sup>91</sup>

The pastoral subsistence of the inhabitation of the *Mullai* zone was supplemented with shifting and slash and burn cultivation.<sup>92</sup> There are references about the plough channel of yoked bullock in the red soil (probably laterite soil) and the seed grown in that plough channel of the pastoral tracts of *Mullai* zone.<sup>93</sup> Such references have shown the possible spread of cultivated land in the pastoral

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<sup>85</sup> *Patir*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten-3:20-24. “kātē kaṭavuḷ mēna puṟave Onniḷai makaḷiṟoṭu mannar mēna āṟē yavvanai taṇṟiyu ṇjālattukkūlam pakarṇar kuṭipuraṅtara akkuṭi puṟaṅtarunar pāramōmpi”

<sup>86</sup> *P.N* -166 :19. “Kāṭeṇra and Nāṭeṇrāṅ” *P.N*- 187 :1. “...Natā konṟo kāṭakonṟo...”

<sup>87</sup> Mixed crop pattern and the availability of resources of the *nāṭu* is clearly depicted in the poem *A.N*- 2.

<sup>88</sup> *A.N*-182: 8.

<sup>89</sup> *A.N*-272: 19.

<sup>90</sup> *A.N*- 83:10. *P.N*- 229:14.

<sup>91</sup> *A.N*-78:15-19.

<sup>92</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. pp. 168-70.

<sup>93</sup> *A.N*- 194:2-5. “ēriṭam paṭutta iṟumaruppūlippuṟamāṟu petta pūval Īrattu ūnkiḷittana ceṅcuval netuṅjcāl vittiya maruṅkin vitaipala nāri...”



zone as well. There is reference about *Koḷuvaṇikan* or the professional merchant who must have sold plough in the first century BC Tamil Brahmi inscription in Tamiḷakam.<sup>94</sup> It further indicates the demand of plough and also the expansion of plough based cultivation in Tamiḷakam. *Uḷavar*, the occupants of the *Kuṟiṇṇi tinai*, often used best oxen for ploughing the field.<sup>95</sup>

The wet land cultivation zones located in the valley of the *Kuṟiṇṇi* and *Mullai* tracts and river belts are referred to as the *Marutam* or *Menpulam*. The term *Uḷavu*<sup>96</sup> or ploughing or *Uḷātu* or without ploughing often appears in the poem in connection with cultivation.<sup>97</sup> There is reference to the preparation of new plot in the swampy areas of *Neital* zone by slashing the plants and burnt it for dry crop millet cultivation.<sup>98</sup> All these references have shown that the millet (*tina*) and paddy (*nellu*) were cultivated in all zones of early Tamiḷakam. The plough-based agriculture prevailed in the hilly, pastoral and wet tracts and even in the muddy areas of coastal zones.

The literary allusions emphasized on the mixed crop pattern in the agriculture. Besides the millet and paddy cultivation, there was the cultivation of sugarcane in the wet field<sup>99</sup> and coconut plant<sup>100</sup> in the garden land. The pepper

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<sup>94</sup> The Aḷagarmalai inscription of Tamilnadu refers to plough share merchant. Iravatam Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* pp. 368-84.

<sup>95</sup> A simile mentioned in the *P.N-* 289:2-4. “.. nallerutu nōkki viṟu viṟāyu muḷavan pōlappīṭuperutol kuṭippāṭu palatāṅkiya..” means, though the field is wet, the *Uḷavar* selects the best from his oxen for the plough.

<sup>96</sup> *A.N-* 91:11, 262:2

<sup>97</sup> *Patir.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten-3:2 ‘ēṟuporuta ceṟuvuḷātu vittunavum...;” *A.N-* 140:2.

<sup>98</sup> *A.N-* 140: 11-13 “...itai muyal punavan pukai niḷaru kaṭukkumāmu taḷḷalaḷuṅṅiya.”

<sup>99</sup> *Patir.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten -3:13. “viri pūṅkarimpin kaḷani...;” *A.N-*217:4-5.

<sup>100</sup> *Patir.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten -3:7.

vines were widely grown in the hillocks and garden land.<sup>101</sup> Pepper was one of the major spices for which the *Yavanar*, the traders from Ionian sea in the Mediterranean world, reached at Muziris in the Kerala coast.<sup>102</sup> As the pepper had great demand in the contemporary fairs, the pepper must have been cultivated in the hilly tracts and garden lands.<sup>103</sup> The jack fruit, banana, toddy from the coconut and palm tree etc. were also part of the contemporary economy.<sup>104</sup> There is a direct indication about the nature of garden land or *parampu* where the bamboo rice, jack fruit, tuber and honey were naturally grown without the involvement of cultivators.<sup>105</sup> The garden land surrounding a residence is mentioned in the literature as *Paḍappai*.<sup>106</sup> Such references have shown that the early societies were involved both in production and resource accumulation in the garden land.

### ***Fishing and Salt making***

Geographically, the western part of Kerala has a long coastal zone. This zone refers to as *Neital tinai* in the literature. In the early historic times, the people were actively involved in two major occupations - fishing and the making of rock salt - in this zone. The coastal zone was also significant with regard to the

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<sup>101</sup> A.N- 2:6 “kaivaḷar cāntamēṛal.,” A.N- 112:14. “kaṛiyivar cilampin.,” A.N- 149:10; A.N- 182:14; P.N-168:2; P.N-343:3

<sup>102</sup> A.N- 149: 10.

<sup>103</sup> A.N- 2:6; A.N- 112:14; A.N- 182:14; P.N-168:2. Dineesh Krishnan. *Iron Age and Early Historic Cultures of Central Kerala: An Investigation into the Settlement Patterns*. Thanjavur: Department of Epigraphy and Archaeology Tamil University, 2017. pp. 158-163. Unpublished PhD thesis.

<sup>104</sup> A.N- 2:1-9; A.N- 8:7-8; A.N- 182:3.

<sup>105</sup> P.N- 109: 1-7.

<sup>106</sup> A.N- 204:12; A.N- 256: 15; A.N- 326:10; P.N- 140; P.N- 197; P.N- 375; Subrahmanian, N. *Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index*. Madras: University of Madras, 1966. p. 522 (hereafter *P.P.T.I*: 522).

overseas exchange of the period under discussion. The term *Vaippin* appears to denote the coastal zone in the seacoast and riverbank.<sup>107</sup> The major occupation of the people in the coastal zone was rock salt (*Kalluppu*) making.<sup>108</sup> This zone was occupied by *Paratavar* or fishermen who were involved in fishing in the Sea, and *Umaṇar* or salt makers cum merchants.<sup>109</sup> The fishermen were also known as *Vēṭṭuvar*.<sup>110</sup> The salt was exchanged with paddy, which shows the exchange of produce from different *tinai* in the streets as well.<sup>111</sup>

### **Exchange Networks**

The available evidences, including archaeology, epigraphy, numismatic and literary, underlined the wide networks of the internal and external exchanges in the pre-temple society. The wheeled cart engraving at Edakkal cave in Wayanad<sup>112</sup> and the engraving of a cart on the pottery at Anakkara<sup>113</sup> must have pushed back the antiquity of the movement of goods in Kerala to the pre-historic and iron age early historic period respectively. Apart from vague picture of the exchanges in the pre-historic phase, the Iron Age and early historical evidences furnished more concrete proof to substantiate the development of internal and external exchange contacts of ancient Kerala.

The unearthed nonlocal potteries like Russet Coated Painted ware, which also known as Andhra ware<sup>114</sup> and semi-precious stone beads like etched and

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<sup>107</sup> Vaippin is another term for *Neital*. *P.N-* 42: 18. *Patir*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten-3:9.

<sup>108</sup> *A.N-* 140:3. “veṅkalluppin Koḷḷai cārri”

<sup>109</sup> *A.N-* 140:1. “perumkaṭal vēṭṭattuṅṅiṅṅi kuṭi pparatavar,” *A.N-* 140:5 *Umaṇar*, *A.N-* 295:9.

<sup>110</sup> *A.N-* 270: 3. “ inamīn vēṭṭuvar.”

<sup>111</sup> *A.N-* 140:7. “...nellinēre veṅkalluppane ccēri vilai maṟukuṟalin...”

<sup>112</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p. 92. Fig-21.

<sup>113</sup> Rajan Gurukkal. *Op. cit.* 2008-2009.

<sup>114</sup> Anakkara excavation yielded a large quantity of Russet coated painted ware. *Ibid.*

non-etched carnelian beads,<sup>115</sup> amethyst,<sup>116</sup> quartz,<sup>117</sup> etc. from the megaliths and the bead manufacturing wastes of carnelian, amethyst, quartz, beryl, chalcedony, topaz, onyx etc. from Pattanam excavations<sup>118</sup> have attested the possible development of exchange contacts of Kerala with its northern part of India during Iron age and early historic period. The mentions of *muttu* or *maṇi* in the *Akanānūru*<sup>119</sup> has represented the availability of beads in the contemporary society. It refers to gems or all precious stones in general, but sapphire and the ruby specially and of the two the sapphire particular.<sup>120</sup> The beryl, carnelian, amethyst etc. were available at Kodumanal region all other semi-precious stones were available at Maharashtra area. The wide availability of the beads in the megaliths substantiated their contact with the outside areas of Tamiḷakam.

The references on *Moḷipeyaṛ tē enterumār*,<sup>121</sup> the area where people spoke another language (non-Tamil) and the *Vaṭukar*,<sup>122</sup> people from northern parts, have testified to the movement of people from northern parts of Tamiḷakam who must have engaged in exchange of goods. The mentions of *koḷu vaṇikan* (plough merchant), *panita vaṇikan* (toddy merchant) and *aruvai vaṇikan* (textile merchant) in the early Tamil Brahmi inscription found at Aḷagarmalai in

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<sup>115</sup> J. Babington. *Op. cit.* B.K. Thapar. *Op. cit.* Rajan Gurukkal. *Loc. cit.*

<sup>116</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2014. pp. 98-99.

<sup>117</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>118</sup> About 1062 semi-precious stone debitage found at Pattanam during the 2007-2014 excavations. P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015h. pp. 30-31.

<sup>119</sup> A.N- 5: 25. A.N- 8:15. A.N- 25:6. A.N- 13:1. A.N-14: 3-4. A.N- 66:14. A.N- 105:5. A.N- 213:14. A.N- 225:12. A.N- 236:1. A.N- 240:3. A.N- 242:3. A.N- 304:13.

<sup>120</sup> *P.P.T.I* - 629.

<sup>121</sup> A.N- 67-12.

<sup>122</sup> A.N- 107-11. “kalla nīṇmoḷikkatanāy vaṭukar.,” A.N- 213-8. “vāl niṇa ppukavin vaṭukar tē ettu.,” A.N- 253-18. “nerāvanrōḷḷu vaṭukar perumakan.”

Tamilnadu<sup>123</sup> has also emphasized the formation of professional merchants and the specialization in the exchange activity based on commodity during the early historic times.

The mode of exchange was goods for goods. The paddy and salt were the standard medium in goods for goods exchange.<sup>124</sup> The salt merchants transported the salt by using cart.<sup>125</sup> The bullock cart was also used for transporting the goods.<sup>126</sup> Toddy was one of the major items and it was exchanged with paddy in the local exchange<sup>127</sup> and the place of its exchange was indicated by a flag.<sup>128</sup>

The discovery of early Cēra coins and the early punch marked coins have shown that the early historic society was familiar with the money exchange or the purpose of coins in the contemporary economic transactions. The coins of early Cērās, with elephant on obverse and bow and arrow on reverse, were discovered at Pattanam<sup>129</sup> in Kerala and with symbols and Tamil Brahmi legend discovered from Tamilnadu.<sup>130</sup> As the name of the Cēra ruler was imprinted on the coins, it is clear that the Cērās minted coins. We are not sure whether it was minted for circulation or to validate the political entity of Cēra power. The coins from Pattanam site were made in copper and lead. It seems to have been circulated in the coastal town or Pattanam. At the same time, we have unearthed Roman gold coins from Valluvally, Eyyal and Kottayam Poyil, which prove that

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<sup>123</sup> Iravatam Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* pp. 369-83.

<sup>124</sup> A.N- 60-4 “uppunoṭai nellin mūral.,” A.N- 140:7 “ nellin nēre kalluppena.”

<sup>125</sup> A.N- 395:9-10.

<sup>126</sup> A.N- 295:10. “uyanku pakaṭu...”

<sup>127</sup> A.N.- 61:10 “naṟavunoṭai nellin nāṇmakiḷ.”

<sup>128</sup> A.N- 196:1-2. “neṭuṅkoṭi nuṭaṅkum naṟavumali pākkattu.”

<sup>129</sup> P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015a. p. 15, 50. 2015b.p. 14. 2015c. p. 14, 37, 52. 2015d. p. 19, 29, 56, 87, 102, 127, 131. 2015e. p. 22, 57, 239. 2015 f. p. 81, 88, 100, 131. 2015g. p. 31. 2015h. p. 36.

<sup>130</sup> Iravatam Mahadevan, *Op. cit.* pp. 62-63.

the Romans brought coins for exchange purposes. Ptolemy, the early Roman writer, complains the drain of Roman gold due to the greed of Romans for pepper and other spices of the Malabar coast. The references on *ponkācu*<sup>131</sup> or *maṇikkācu*<sup>132</sup> have also proved the familiarity of the gold coins, probably the Roman gold coins, in the contemporary society. Such coins were not circulated in the early historic society, but the references indicate that they were modified or fashioned as ornaments.<sup>133</sup> However, all these indicate that the contemporary society was not completely ignorant about the usage of coins. The unearthed Cēra coins with legends and symbols from Kerala and Tamilnadu further indicate the involvement of the existing political leadership in the coin minting process and the advanced development of economic transaction as well.

According to the literatures, there were many port towns like Nauṛa, Tyndis (Tondi), Muziris (Muciṛi), Bacare, Nelcynda, etc. in the west coast of Kerala.<sup>134</sup> Among these, Muziris or Muciṛi, located on the bank of Cullī (Periyar) river, is referred to as a prosperous city of Cērās, where the *Yavanar* arrived with gold and went back with pepper.<sup>135</sup> The *Yavanas* were the traders from Ionian Sea (Mediterranean), mainly Greeks and Romans. Muciṛi is mentioned as the city where fish has been exchanged for paddy and the pepper heaps were stored in

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<sup>131</sup> A.N- 269: 15-17; A.N- 363:8; P.N-353:2.

<sup>132</sup> A.N- 293: 7.

<sup>133</sup> A.N- 75:19; P.N-353:1-4.

<sup>134</sup> Wilfred H Scoff. *The Periplus of the Eritrean Sea- travels and trade in the Indian Ocean by a merchant of the First century*. New York: Logmans, Green and Co, 1912. pp. 201-21; Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. “Keralathile Paḷaya Pattanangal,” N. Sam (ed.). *Elamkulam Kunjan Pillayute Terenjeththa kritikal*, Part 1, Thiruvananthapuram: International Centre for Kerala Studies, University of Kerala, 2005. pp. 224-38.

<sup>135</sup> A.N-149:7-11. “Cēralar culliyam pēriyārru veṅṅurai kalaṅka Yavanar taṅta vinaimāṇan kalam Ponnotuvaṅtu kariyoṭu peyaṛum Vaḷaṅkeḷu muciri”

houses and boats.<sup>136</sup> It refers that the pepper packed in bags has been kept next to the houses.<sup>137</sup> The same poem also mentions the gold items brought in the ships are brought to the shore in lighter boats (*kalitōṇi*).<sup>138</sup> The people who brought gold to the Muziris coast must have been the *Yavanar*<sup>139</sup> and they reached at the city under the political sway of Kuṭṭuvan, the Cēra ruler who adorned with gold.<sup>140</sup> They collected the resources or products from land and sea<sup>141</sup> and went back to their home land. The product from Kerala coast must have included the spices, semi-precious stones, iron etc. Pepper was one of the major profitable items of trade between India and Rome during the time of Roman Empire.<sup>142</sup> The Indian semi-precious stone, especially carnelian and agate, products had great demand and were highly prized in the Mediterranean countries.<sup>143</sup> Pliny mentioned that pepper was one of the expensive cooking items in Rome and also one of the items of offering of Roman Emperor Constantine to the Church under St. Silvester.<sup>144</sup> Pliny indicated that the best iron of Cēra region was exported to

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<sup>136</sup> *P.N-* 343:1-3. “mīnoṭuttu neṟkuvai i Miceiyampiyin manimaṟukkuṇtu Manaikkuvai iya kaṟimūṭaiyār.”

<sup>137</sup> *Lo. cit.*

<sup>138</sup> *P.N-* 343: 4-6.

<sup>139</sup> *Yavanar* were mentioned in connection with Muciri in *Akanānūṟu* also. *A.N-* 149:9.

<sup>140</sup> *P.N-* 343:8-10.

<sup>141</sup> *P.N-* 343: 7 “malaitāramum kaṭarṟāramum.”

<sup>142</sup> Wilfred H Scoff. *Op.cit.* p. 214.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.* p. 193.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* p.214.

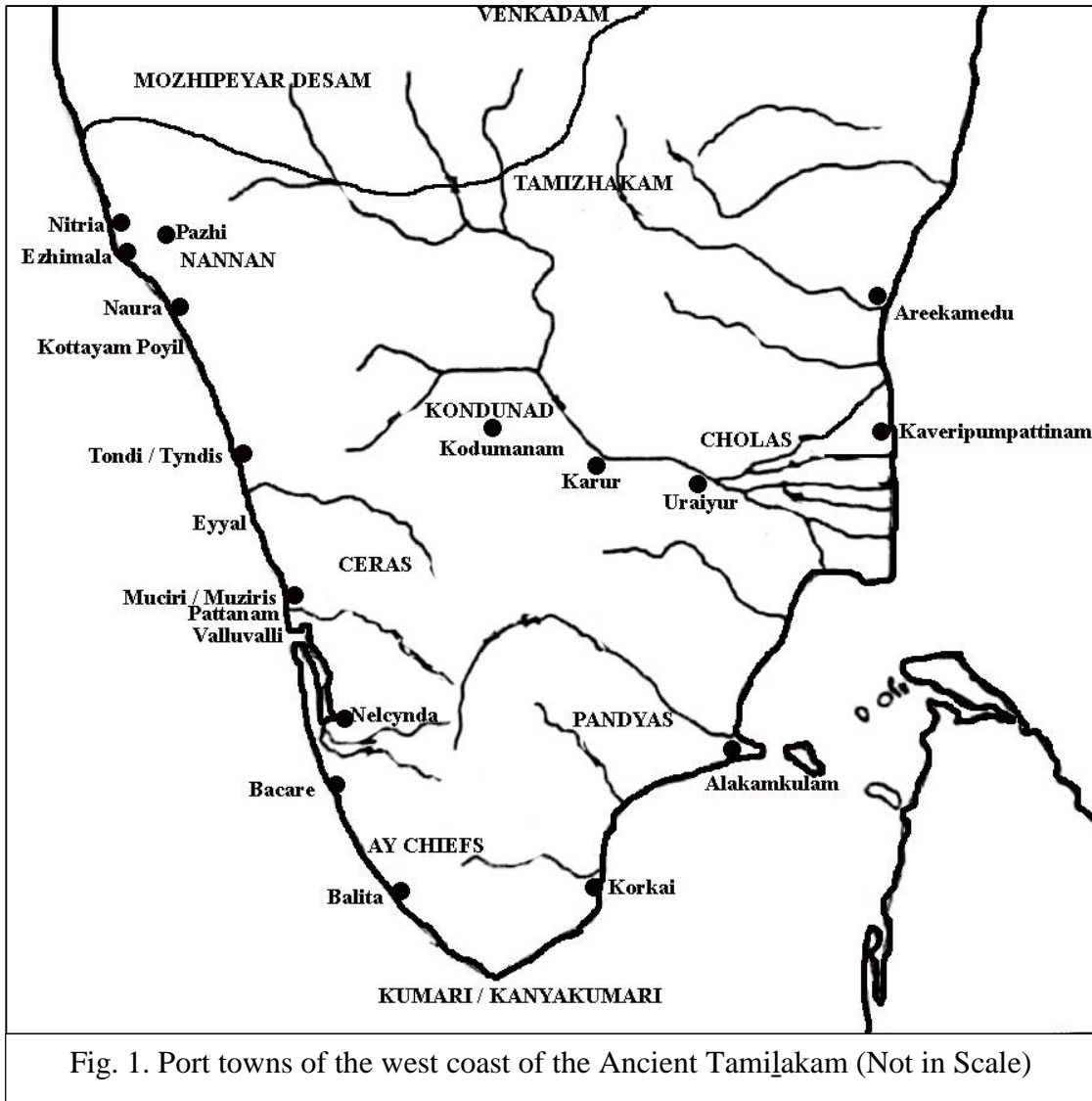


Fig. 1. Port towns of the west coast of the Ancient Tamilakam (Not in Scale)

Rome.<sup>145</sup> As mentioned earlier, the reference of the professional skilled iron working personal known as *Kollan* of Tamilakam in the literature and the profuse discovery of wide variety of iron objects from megaliths also prove the mastery of iron working in Kerala.

The archaeological evidences so far unearthed from the west coast of Kerala, especially at Pattanam, have firmly stated the active trade contact of Kerala coast with the Mediterranean and west Asian countries. The Roman

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* p. 209.



evidences yielded at Pattanam, which could be part of the ancient Muziris, include the fragments of Roman Amphora<sup>146</sup>, Mediterranean and West Asian glass fragments,<sup>147</sup> Terrasigillata,<sup>148</sup> carnelian inlay object with the image of Greek Goddess Tyche or Roman Goddess Fortuna<sup>149</sup> etc. The amphora jars were the container of Roman wine. There is a direct indication on the cool fragrant wine in precious jar brought by *Yavanar*.<sup>150</sup> Most recently, about 7.5 kilogram pepper was discovered in a terracotta jar, probably made at Kerala coast, at Berenice in Egypt.<sup>151</sup> Berenice, probably the home of the author of *Periplus of Eritrean Sea*, was a leading port of the Egypt for the eastern trade at the time of Periplus.<sup>152</sup> The Pattanam site also yielded a number of West Asian ceramic like Torpedo,<sup>153</sup> Turquoise Glazed Painted (TGP)<sup>154</sup> ware etc. that stated the trade relation of ancient Muziris with the west Asian countries. The archaeological data unearthed from Vilinjam, probably the part of ancient Balita, have also accentuated on the trade contact of the west coast of Kerala with the Mediterranean and West Asian countries. All these evidences have shown that

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<sup>146</sup> About 9017 Amphorae shreds were found at Pattanam during the 8<sup>th</sup> seasons excavations from 2007-2014. P.J. Cherian. *Op. cit.* 2015h. p. 40.

<sup>147</sup> About 906 glass fragments including Roman pillared bowl were found at Pattanam during the 8<sup>th</sup> seasons excavations from 2007-2014. *Ibid.* p. 29.

<sup>148</sup> About 171 Terrasigillata were found at Pattanam during the 8<sup>th</sup> seasons excavations from 2007-2014. *Ibid.* p. 40.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>150</sup> *P.N-* 56: 18. “Yavanar nankalantanta taṅkamaḷ tēṛal.”

<sup>151</sup> Steven E. Sidebotham. *Berenike and the Ancient Maritime Space Route*. London: University of California Press, 2011. pp. 226-227.

<sup>152</sup> Wilfred H Scoff. *Op. cit.* p 55.

<sup>153</sup> About 398 Torpedo jar shreds were found at Pattanam during the 8<sup>th</sup> seasons excavations from 2007-2014. P.J. Cherian. *Op. cit.* 2015h. p. 25.

<sup>154</sup> About 412 TGP were found at Pattanam during the 8<sup>th</sup> seasons excavations from 2007-2014. *Ibid.*

Kerala had exchange and trade relation with its northern part and abroad especially with the Mediterranean and West Asian countries during the early historic period. The contemporary ruling powers seem to had some mechanism to facilitate the internal and external trade.

### **Technology and Specialized Groups**

Many skilled and professional occupational groups were developed in connection with the above said subsistence forms and exchange networks of the pre-temple society. The skilled craft making, pottery making, bead manufacturing, masonry, stone cutting, fishing, salt making occupation etc. were developed in this society. The prosperous multi-crop agro-pastoral economy corresponded to the formation of various specialized occupational groups. The megalithic burials and the excavated archaeological remains from Pattanam and the available *Sangam* literary works have furnished ample evidences to establish the development of various skills and techniques of Iron Age and early historic society. They had skills and mathematical knowledge for manufacturing potteries, metal tools and objects, bead and other craft goods.

### ***Pottery Manufacture***

The megalithic builders of Iron Age and early historic period were well versed in the pottery manufacturing technology. Both handmade and wheel made potteries were manufactured.<sup>155</sup> The huge burial urns were handmade and poorly burned, but the handmade huge storage jars were fairly burned. Such type of storage jars was unearthed from the early historic cultural layer at Pattanam.<sup>156</sup> They also made sarcophagus and terracotta coffin, those types discovered from

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<sup>155</sup> K. K. Ramamurti. "Pottery" a chapter in T. Sathyamurti, *Op. cit.* 1992. p.16.

<sup>156</sup> P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Pattanam Excavations Interim Reports of the First Season 2007*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Council for Historical Research, 2015a. pp. 33-48.

Chevayur, Cheliya, etc. The associated grave potteries are wheel made. The important pottery types yielded from the megalithic burials are Black and Red Ware, Red Slipped Ware, all Black ware, Red Slipped Legged Jars and Russet Coated Painted ware.<sup>157</sup> A Neolithic pinkish ware discovered along with the Megalithic assemblages from Citrari.<sup>158</sup> A channel-spouted vessel typical of the Neolithic in dull red ware was discovered from the rock cut sepulchers at Ummichipoyil. Both these evidences pointed towards the survival of Neolithic potteries in the Iron Age or early historic phase. The megalithic potteries have represented the ritual and domestic purposes of the potteries in the contemporary society. It is argued that the common types of pottery found in the Megalithic burials are household utensils like bowls with flat bases and jars.<sup>159</sup> The associated grave earthenware is all wheel turned and made of well processed clay. The other potteries so far discovered from Kerala are from the excavated coastal urban and habitation sites at Pattanam.<sup>160</sup> The mentions of pottery manufacture are available in the literatures as well.

The literary evidences also corroborated the archaeological evidences. *Puranānūṟu* poem refers to the existence of the potters (*kalam cey kōvē*) who prepared huge urn (*tālī*) for the burial purpose and their settlement area where

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<sup>157</sup> B.K. Gururaja Rao. *Op. cit.* p. 257.

<sup>158</sup> John, K.J. "Rock- cut chamber Tombs of Citrari: Some new lights on the Rock cut cave tombs of Malabar." *Journal of Kerala Studies*, 1(4). Thiruvananthapuram: International Centre for Kerala Studies, 1974. pp. 383-86.

<sup>159</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Vaier. *Op. cit.* pp. 137-41.

<sup>160</sup> About 300930 body sherds, 55935 Rim sherds, 5801 Decorated Pottery, 581 Edge ground pottery, 9 Spout, 1,586 fragments of Lid, 61 pot sherds of Organic impressed, 20 Handle sherds, 103 Pottery base were found at Pattanam during the 8<sup>th</sup> seasons excavations from 2007-2014. P.J. Cherian. *Op. cit.* 2015h. pp. 21-23.

always spread the smoke from the kiln (*cūlai*) and formed as cloud in the sky.<sup>161</sup> The potters who make huge burial urn (*tāli*) appears in another poem as well.<sup>162</sup> Both these songs are corroborated by the wide discovery of burial urn from almost all parts of Kerala and Tamilnadu. The wide distribution of the urn also proved that *tāli* was the typical burial form of iron age and early historic phase.

However, all these evidences have confirmed that the Iron Age and early historic people have acquired advanced form of ceramic technology. The available megalithic assemblage includes the rough made urns and fairly burned fine quality pots have revealed the growth of both handmade and wheel made technology. The application of techniques was based on the purpose of the pot. For burial purpose, they made rough pots, but for the storage, it was burned in kiln. The Black and Red Ware, the typical Iron Age pottery manufactured with inverted burning process, demonstrated the highly developed form of burning techniques. The potteries had different functions. It must have used for all household purposes including cooking, storage, serving, etc. It was used for burial ritual purposes as well. The potteries must have locally produced and a group of people must have specialized in pottery making. The well fired potteries including black and red ware, red slipped ware and black ware indicated that they were well versed in wheel techniques and prepared kiln for the making.

### ***Metallurgy and manufacturing skills***

The megalithic builders were very much familiar with the metal technology, especially in iron and copper-based alloy. The gold work was also

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<sup>161</sup> P.N- 228: 1-4. “Kalañcey kōvē kalañcey kōvē Iruṭiñintanna kurū uttirāṭ parū uppukai Akaliruvicumpinūñcūlai Nanañtalai mūtūrkkalañcey kōvē.”

<sup>162</sup> P.N- 256:1-7. Kalañcey kōvē kalañcey kōvē Accuṭaiccakoṭṭāram poruñtiya Ciṟuvenṅ pallipōlattannoṭu Curampalavāntavemakkumarūḷi Iyanmalarakan polilīmattāli Akalitikavanaimō Nanañtalai mūtūr kalañcey kōvē.”

known to them. The unearthed megalithic metal assemblages have signified to the development of advanced form of metal technology during the Iron Age and early historic period. The largest amount of metal was iron. The other metals like bronze, copper, and gold are very few in number.

The megaliths have represented the formation of a technologically advanced society with various skills related to the iron working, including locating the iron deposit, iron quarrying, smelting, manufacturing different implements and objects. Many sites have yielded Iron slag<sup>163</sup> that shows the process of iron smelting. They have manufactured different tools according to various purposes and needs of the contemporary society. The following table will show the nature of Iron objects unearthed so far from the Iron Age burials (Table 2).

**Table.2. Iron Objects from the Excavated Megaliths<sup>164</sup>**

<b>Object</b>	<b>Megalithic type</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Trident, Tripod, lamp, about 21 types of iron instruments	Cap stone-Urn	Chataparampu Feroke - 1819 Calicut dist	Babington 1823: 3: 324-330
A bill hook of Iron, a number of small iron chisels, scraper of iron, bill hooks or weapons, and a	A Multi-chambered Rock cut cell	Challil Kurinyoli (Patinyatumuri) Calicut dist.	William Logan Logan 1984 [1879] : 309-311

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<sup>163</sup> It is argued that the iron object discovered from Machad, Paḷayannur in Thrissur district, Kuppakkolli in Wayanad hinted at the iron smelting process. Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1992. p. 62. There is a hill called Kīṭakkunnu (means hills of iron ore, slag) in Palakkad district with a number of cist burials. Recently, the Kinalur excavation also produced the remains of Iron Slag.

<sup>164</sup> The table contained the details of the excavated site only.

double iron hook for suspending a lamp			
One tripod and one dagger	Rock cut cave	Feroke 1931	A. Aiyappan 2007 (1933): 12-29
Three iron implements	Urn burial	Porkalam 1948 Trissur	B.K.Thapar Thapar 1952:3-16
Daggers, chisels, hooks and nails	transected cist	Machad and Pazhayannur	R.N. Mehta and K.M. George, 1978
Tripod, lamp and double-edged dagger	Umbrella Stone	Perambra Calicut	K J John 1982: 148-153
Iron ploughshare	Cist	Kuppakkolli Waynad	M.R. Raghava Varier and Y Subbarayalu
1. Four arrowheads, two lamps with hooks, two tripods, a hook, knife, sickle and rod 2. Four rods, three ring stands, two arrowheads, two lamps with hooks and a sickle	One Stone circle with three Urn pits. Two pits contained Iron objects	Cheramangad Thissur	Madras Circle of ASI 1990
Iron sword, iron dagger, tridents, knives, chisels, iron saucer lamps, iron tripod	Stone Circle with rock cut chamber	Naduvil Kannur	K.J. John 1990
Wedges, long cutting knives, sickles, tanged knife and blades.	Urns	Mangadu Kollam	Satyamurthy 1992

Dagger, sickles, hoes, rods and knives	Cists	Arippa Kollam	P Rajendran 1995: 684
Sword, chisel, wedges, tripod, tanged knife, ploughshare and tweezers	Rock cut cave Calicut district	Kuruvattur 2006	The State Archaeology Department (Krishnaraj 2015: 14-15
1. One dagger, chisels, hoes, leaf shaped knife, sword and an object with hilted handle on one end and carved projection on the other end, a long spear. 2. Chisel, battle-axe, dagger knife, ladle, a long spear type implement and two implements having edges on four sides	Three cist burials Two contained Iron objects	Kadanad 2008 Kottayam	Nambirajan and C Kumaran 2011:123-128
Trident, tripod, dagger, sword, Arrow heads, rods	Stone Circles, Umbrella Stone	Anakkara Palakkad dist.	Rajan Gurukkal 2008-09

The multiplicity in the object types itself have shown the multiplicity of the social needs. The varieties of the object have also hinted at the cleverness of the metalworkers. The object included tools for hunting and agrarian purposes like spear heads, arrowheads, tridents, dagger, sickles, hoes, plough share etc.

The objects like iron tripod and lamp, which was enclosed in the burial as part of the death ritual, must have used for the household purposes. The lamps are signified to the growth of permanently settled household system as well. The above table shows that the majority of the tools are associated with the subsistence forms of the megalithic builders. The number of weapons like swords is comparatively less.

As mentioned earlier, the bronze alloy technology was also developed along with the iron technology. The bronze objects including bronze-vase,<sup>165</sup> bronze lid portion<sup>166</sup> and bronze pipe lamp<sup>167</sup> represented an advanced form of household life of the megalithic builders. As the bronze is an alloy of copper and tin, it established the sophisticated skills of the megalithic builders in the alloy making. Though the number of copper and gold ornaments is less, it exposed the development of copper and gold-based technology in the contemporary society. It is suggested that the gold ornaments from Puliur exhibit a high degree of workmanship.<sup>168</sup>

The literature mentions the iron working of the specialized ironsmiths known as *irumpucey kollan*.<sup>169</sup> The fire sparking due to the blowing through pipe from the forge of a blacksmith<sup>170</sup> has shown the iron workmanship of the contemporary society. The red-hot iron prepared by the big handed blacksmith,

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<sup>165</sup> K.J. John. *Op. cit.* 1982. pp. 148-54; K.J. John. *Op. cit.* 1990.

<sup>166</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Vatakkal Malabar Samuhavum Charithravum*. Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Cooperative Society, 2014 (2014a). pp. 25-26.

<sup>167</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2014. p.96.

<sup>168</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Vairer, *Op. cit.* 1999. p 134.

<sup>169</sup> A.N- 72:4-6. “ponneri pitirir cutara vānkikkerumpi keṇṭum peruṅkai ērai irumpucey kollenattōṅrum.”

<sup>170</sup> A.N- 96:6 “ūtulai”; A.N- 202: 5-7 “...kollan kuruku ūtu mitiyulaippitirvir ponṅkicirupan minmini pōla...”



probably means the master blacksmith, in his workshop is depicted in another poem as well.<sup>171</sup> Such master blacksmiths seems to have manufactured various implements and objects for the contemporary society. There is reference on the making of sharpened axe which was used for slashing trees and plants by the master blacksmith.<sup>172</sup> Another poem refers that the making of arrow or arrowhead for the hero was also the duty of blacksmith.<sup>173</sup> All these references have corroborated with the iron axe and arrowheads unearthed from Iron Age burials. Pliny mentioned that Cēras sent the best iron to Rome.<sup>174</sup> This reference has underlined the superior quality of the iron from the region of Cēras.

The evidences of gold ornaments including pendants, ring, thread probably used in cloth switching etc. from Pattanam excavation<sup>175</sup> and gold ornaments from the megaliths of Naduvil (Kannur)<sup>176</sup> and Arippa (Kollam)<sup>177</sup> have shown the expertise of the iron age and early historic society in gold working. There is mention about the jewelry works in the literature as well. *Puṛaṇānūru* mentions the immaculate jeweler (*ācil kammiyan*) or gold smith who

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<sup>171</sup> *P.N-* 21:7-8 “karuṅkaikkollan ceṅṅimāṭṭiya irumpuṅṅīrinu mīṭṭer karitena”; *P.N-* 36:6 “karuṅkaikkollan...”

<sup>172</sup> *P.N-*36:6-8. “karuṅkaikkollannaraṅceyavvāy neṅṅuṅkainaviyam pāyṅṅalinilaiyaṅṅiṅṅu vīkamaṅṅ...”

<sup>173</sup> *P.N-* 312:3 “vēṅṅvaṅṅittukkoṅṅuttal kollaṅṅ kukkatanē”

<sup>174</sup> Cited in Wilfred H Scoff. *Op. cit.* p.209.

<sup>175</sup> P. J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015a. p. 17,37; *Op. cit.* 2015b. p. 21,22,26,28,43,74; *Op. cit.* 2015c. p. 26,28, 43,74; *Op. cit.*2015d. p. 26, 39, 40,41,53, 56,58,60-62,76,88,92-94,100,102,123; *Op. cit.*2015e.p.26,34-36,38,49-51, 60-61, 68,93,100,122; *Op. cit.*2015f. p.40-41,44,48,54-55,58,59-60,63,65-66,88,90,92,95,107,131,152; *Op. cit.*2015g. p. 27-28, 45,81,101,115,130,158; *Op. cit.*2015h. p. 34,38; *Op. cit.*2015i. p. 43 (around 178 gold objects including ornaments and manufacturing wastages are found at Pattanam during 9 season excavation from 2007 to 2015)

<sup>176</sup> K.J. John. *Op. cit.* 1990.

<sup>177</sup> P. Rajendran and Iyyer. *Op. cit.*; Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p.136.

fashioned a girdle with many gold coins (*pal pon kācu*) for the beautiful maiden.<sup>178</sup> The discovery of gold coins at Valluvalli, Eyyal and Kottayam Poyil<sup>179</sup> corroborated the accessibility of Roman gold coins in the contemporary society. The early Tamil Brāhmi inscription of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD refers to *pon kolavan*, possibly indicated the gold smith.<sup>180</sup> The discovery of gold bead<sup>181</sup> and gold foiled glass beads<sup>182</sup> from the early historic archeological layers at Pattanam show two types of gold working; the actual gold ornaments making and the making of imitation.

They must have skilled in Bronze technology. As the bronze age was absent in the South Indian context, it is believed that the bronze technology developed along with the Iron Age. The discovery of bronze evidences from various megaliths include Naduvil, Perambra, Chakothuparamba, and Wayanad have shown the development of bronze technology in iron age and early historic period. The available evidences prove that the bronze was used for the manufacture of ornaments, craft goods, household utensils etc. It was not used for the manufacture of weapons or implements.

### ***Architectural Knowledge***

The megalithic builders and early historic society acquired various knowledge and skills associated with the multiple forms of occupations. As

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<sup>178</sup> P.N- 353: 1-3.

<sup>179</sup> P.L. Gupta. *Op. cit.*; T. Satyamurthy. *Catalogue of Roman Gold Coins*. Trivandrum: Publication unit of the Department of Archaeology, 1992.

<sup>180</sup> Iravatam Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* p. 369.

<sup>181</sup> P. J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015d. p. 54, 93; P. J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015f. p. 54, 88,95; *Op. cit.* 2015h. p. 34, 38, 258, 439.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid* 2015e. p.22,37,45,80,92,97,98-100,111; *Ibid.* 2015f. p. 40,42, 44, 54, 55, 64, 90,100; *Ibid.* 2015g. p. 94, 193,194,206, 208,209,215,222,226, 249, 254; *Ibid.* 2015i. p. 193-194, 198.

mentioned earlier, it was a stratified society with sound base of agro-pastoral subsistence and craft production. The archaeological and other contemporary evidences indicate that the pre-temple society acquired a sophisticated knowledge and skill in the execution of various architectural forms. It includes, mainly the burial tombs made in granite and laterite and the remains of the burned brick structures from Pattanam excavations. The available evidences proved that the pre-temple society were skilled in masonry and developed elegant architectural plan and had system of its tidy execution. The laterite and granite burials have exemplified the multiplicity of the skills in the preparation of various architectural plans according to the nature of materials and the requirements of contemporary society. Though the megaliths made of granite blocks are found all over Kerala, the laterite structures, especially rock-cut chamber carved in the laterite plateaus, are confined to the northern parts of Kerala, mainly distributed in the present Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod and only one site is so far reported from Wayanad district as well.

The rock-cut chambers are one of the major architectural types of the megalithic builders. The different types of chambers so far discovered in Kerala are as follows:

1. Port hole chamber: the cave carved out in a laterite surface with a port hole at the top of the dome size structure and often has a lid for covering the hole. The inner surface of the tomb is circle and some type have a laterite platform or bench type elevated portion. Some of the chambers had laterite hooks on the roof. It has a pretty entrance with door-jambes, which often covered with a dressed laterite stone. In front of the entrance, it has a long passage as well (Fig. 2).

2. Pillared chamber: this type is very much similar to the earlier one. The only exception is the absence of port hole. In place of port hole, there will be a rounded pillar (Fig. 3).
3. Chamber with square or rectangular inner surface and Pillar: all other architectural features are similar to the previous types. Such type found at Paithoth, Calicut district (Fig. 4).<sup>183</sup>
4. Multi-chamber: two or more chamber with square or rectangular inner surface and two entrance and single passage. Such types were found at Menachur and Panunda of Kannur district (Fig. 5).<sup>184</sup>
5. Chamber inside the stone circle. Rock-cut chamber found as part of laterite stone circle. Normally found multi chambers inside the stone circle. Such type excavated at Naduvil <sup>185</sup> and Anakkara (Fig.6). <sup>186</sup> There were three rectangular chambers at Anakkara and all had laterite platform and hook. The chambers had doors and a common passage.

The multiplicity in the architectural type itself have signified to the expertise of the megalithic builders. They must have used sophisticated iron tools for the carving purposes. Chisels were found in the megaliths. The chisel marks are very much visible in the inner wall of the rock-cut caves. Interestingly there are references about the iron *Uli* or chisels in the *Sangam* literature as well.<sup>187</sup>

We are not fully aware about the criteria for the fixation of the plan of burial monument. The discovery of an unfinished rock cut cave to the north of the excavated rock cut cave at Citrāri in Kannur district pointed to the method of

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<sup>183</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2014a. pp. 23-24.

<sup>184</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2014. pp. 395-97.

<sup>185</sup> K.J. John, *Op. cit.* 1990.

<sup>186</sup> Rajan Gurkkal. *Op. cit.* 2009.

<sup>187</sup> A.N- 33-10, 55-3, 210-2, 343-7. *P.P.T.I-* 146.

cave carving adopted by the megalithic builders.<sup>188</sup> This unfinished cave must have been discarded by the megalithic builders owing to the inappropriateness of the plot for the cave, which had further signified to the cleverness of the builders to select the plot based on the quality of the laterite or material. However, the fixing of burial type could be based on the availability of material, the societal grandeur and the political status of the dead person and also the economic base of the builder.

However, the similarity occurred in the structural plan of the port hole or pillared circular or rectangular rock cut chamber of the megalithic period and the circular or rectangular structural temples of the early medieval period have revealed the possible continuity of the local architectural knowledge and technology from the pre-temple society to the temple society. The rock-cut chambers can be considered as the proto-type of temple architecture. It is observed that “the use of pillar and door-jambes in the rock cut caves that are monolithic structures shows the rock-cut architecture to be the proto-type of what had been evolved in wooden architecture.”<sup>189</sup> The splendid architectural plans of the megaliths proved their mastery in the masonry in the architectural plan and its execution and also represented the extensive use iron implements. The same knowledge must have survived with some additional modification according to the early medieval social needs and setting, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

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<sup>188</sup> K.J John. “Rock-cut Cave Tombs of Citrari: Some new lights on the Rock cut cave tombs of Malabar” in *Journal of Kerala Studies* 1(4). Thiruvananthapuram: International Centre for Kerala Studies, University of Calicut, 1974. pp. 383-86.

<sup>189</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p.141.

Umbrella stones, popularly known as *Kodakkal*, are another type of monuments which represented the proficiency of megalithic builders in the laterite work (Fig. 7). These types are mainly confined to the northern part of Kerala, especially distributed towards the north of the present Thrissur district and extended up to Kasaragode district. This type also epitomized their creative thinking process to protect the monument from the incessant rainy seasons.

The early historic site Pattanam, North Paravur, Ernakulam district, Kerala, unearthed cherished archaeological evidences to expose the engineering skills of the ancient Kerala society. The discovery of brick wharf structure, remains of the walls, room structure, and huge quantity of the debris of the brick structures etc.<sup>190</sup> have indicated the advanced phase of masonry in the early historic period (Fig. 8). The presence of post holes in the brick floor or wharf structure connoted the possible erection of wooden super structure. The discovery of roof tile, which had holed portion for fixing the nail, and the iron nails offered supporting database to substantiate the engineering knowledge of early historic society.

However, all these evidences have emphasized the development of architectural knowledge of the pre-temple society and its continuation in the later period. The integration of the monolithic iron age and early historic technology associated with the rock cut chamber and the technology of inter-locking alignment of laterite slabs of the dolmen and dolmenoid cist and the brick bond technology of early historic Pattanam structures can be seen in the temple structures as well. Both laterite and granite are extensively used for the temple construction, which will discuss in the next chapter.

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<sup>190</sup> P. J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015a. pp. 42-93; 2015b. pp. 37-72.

### ***Textile and leather works***

The discovery of terracotta spindle whorls from the Pattanam excavations<sup>191</sup> have obviously substantiated the weaving tradition of the early historic society of the west coast of Kerala. Many references about the *uṭai* or dress and dress materials have occurred in the *Sangam* texts,<sup>192</sup> which prove the prevalence of dressing tradition of the early historic society. The *Cirukarōṭan* appears as the leather worker.<sup>193</sup> The reference of various drums made of leathers that played at various ritual occasions like *muraṣu*, *tudi*, *para*, *muḷavu* etc. also have hinted at the leather working tradition.<sup>194</sup>

### ***Technology related production***

There are few indications on the application of technology in the production process as well. They used plough share for tilling purposes. Both archaeological, epigraphical and literary indications are available for the historical entity of the plough-based agriculture. The references of pounding grains indicate the possible use of mortar and wooden pestle. The reference of the preparation of fishing nets was also occurred in the literature. An interesting reference on the use of machines for sugarcane processing is found in

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<sup>191</sup> P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.*2015a. p. 40, 54; P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.*2015b. 19, 24, 45, 55,69; P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.*2015c. p.14, 26, 29, 54; P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.*2015d. p. 29, 30, 33, 39, 46, 53, 54, 59, 68, 70, 86, 95; P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.*2015e. p. 25, 28, 36, 61, 65, 79, 81, 100, 121,128; P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.* 2015f. p. 58, 59, 66-67, 90, 95, 98, 101, 111,156, 165 (spindle whorl with needle); P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.* 2015g. p. 33, 45, 111-112, 115, 130, 139; P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op.cit.* 2015h.pp. 36-37, 39 (about 70 spindle whorls were yielded between 2007 and 2014 excavations), 96, 159, 177-178, 181, 238, 246, 260, 265, 281, 297, 241, 251.

<sup>192</sup> A.N- 7: 19 “...uṭaimāṇalku..”, 54: 10 “koṭumaṭiyuṭaiyar kōrkakai kōvalar”

<sup>193</sup> A.N -1:5.

<sup>194</sup> A.N- 23:2. A.N- 159:9. A.N- 155:14.

*Patirrupattu*.<sup>195</sup> The mentions of *Maṅṭṛila* in the *Akam* literature shows the presence of mirror manufacture and also the technical skills and technology of the mirror production acquired by the contemporary society.<sup>196</sup>

### **Settlement Forms and Social Order**

The above discussion prove that the pre-temple society was involved in many subsistence forms and specialized occupations. The society was not based on caste system, instead it varied according to their inhabited landscape (*Tiṇai*) and occupation.<sup>197</sup> They were familiar with various skills and techniques and interacted with the people from outside *Tamiḷakam* and abroad as well.

### ***Settlement Areas***

As mentioned earlier, the megaliths are the crucial evidence to establish the Iron Age and early historic settlement formation in the region. Though the megaliths are the burial monuments, it was made by the existing population as their tribute to their ancestors. In most contexts, the megaliths are found as clusters. It shows that the megalithic society prepared a separate space for funeral practices including cremation or burial and preparation of monuments as well.

The abundant distribution of megaliths, especially in the midland and highland of the region, has signified to the population increase and the spread of the settlements in the nearby areas of the burial space. The megaliths and megalithic assemblages have represented the possible formation of settlement of the people who involved in various occupations in the nearby areas of the monuments.<sup>198</sup> However, the archaeological remains about the Iron Age

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<sup>195</sup> *Patir*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Tens 9:23 “tēmpīliyaṅtiram.”

<sup>196</sup> *A.N-* 71: 13. “Eḷḷara Iyarriya niḷalkāṅ maṅṭṛila.”

<sup>197</sup> Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai. “Kaḷavum Kaṛppum.” N. Sam (ed.). *Op. cit.* p. 63.

<sup>198</sup> So far, we are not able to get the evidence of burial cum habitation site of megalithic period from Kerala. But, if we go through the funeral practice of the modern times, it can



settlements have been reported from the excavation at Pattanam. Though it needs further probing, it is considered as the earliest archaeological proof on the Iron age settlement in the Kerala coast. This excavation furnished ample archaeological data, especially local pottery, about the early historic settlements in connection with various manufacturing process and urban context.

There are many references on the lamp like *naḷicuṭar*<sup>199</sup> in the literature, which has also shown the spread of permanent settlement rather than a temporary night camping. The *kānavar* hanged the lamp in the night at the guard house in the slash and burned cultivated millet tracts of *Kuṟiñji* zone.<sup>200</sup> A poem mentioned the lamp with garland placed at the house at the time of a marriage ceremony.<sup>201</sup> All these indicate that the lamp was used in the settled space and ritual contexts. The unearthed iron lamp from various megalithic sites also underlined the use of lamp in the early historic society.<sup>202</sup>

### ***Nāṭu, Ūr, Kuṭi, Cēri / Tuṟai, Āvaṇam, and Paṭṭinam***

*Nāṭu* was the larger agrarian settlements that comprises the grouping of *Kuṭi, Cēri* and *Ūr*.<sup>203</sup> The occurrence of *nāṭu* in the *Kuṟiñji* songs indicate that the cultivated areas were developed in the forest tract of hilly areas. It is argued that the *nāṭu* appears widely in the *Kuṟiñji* songs.<sup>204</sup> The prosperous cultivated regions were termed as *nalnāṭu* or *nannāṭu*<sup>205</sup> Though the *Nāṭu* was the

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be observed that the people do not place the burial space not far away from their dwelling plot. So, it can be considered as the continuity of the early practices.

<sup>199</sup> A.N- 65:11.

<sup>200</sup> A.N-88:1-6. "...neṭumcuṭar viḷakkam..."

<sup>201</sup> A.N-86:4. "mania viḷakkuṟuttu mālai toṭari..."

<sup>202</sup> J. Babington. *Op. cit.* B. K. Thapar. *Op. cit.*

<sup>203</sup> A.N-331:7-8. "kunṟaka ccirukuti maṟuku thoṟum maṟukumañcīṟūr nāṭu palapiṟa kkoḷiya..."

<sup>204</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p. 174.

<sup>205</sup> *Patir*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten:16, 34. A.N-83:10.

settlement agrarian unit, the *Kāṭu* was the unoccupied forest tract. Both are mentioned as separate entities, but the early *nāṭus* were developed within the *kāṭu*. *Kāṭu* is mentioned along with *kāvū* and *Nāṭu* with *tēyam*, waste land.<sup>206</sup> All these indicated that the *Nāṭu* was the grouping of agrarian settlement and had a separate special entity. It was comprised of *Ūr*, *Kuṭi*, *Cēri*, etc.

*Ūr* was the grouping of *Kuṭi*.<sup>207</sup> The size of the settlement was varied. The small settlements were known as *Cīrūr*.<sup>208</sup> The mention of *Mūtūr*<sup>209</sup> indicate the existence of traditional and archaic settlement. The prosperous agrarian settlement areas were known as *nallūr* and the chief or settlers of the *ūr* known as *ūran*, *nallūran*.<sup>210</sup> *Ūr* appears as the settlement area of the Brahmins as well. *Cellūr*,<sup>211</sup> the archaic Brahmin settlement of Kerala, is identified with the present Talipparamba of Kannur district.<sup>212</sup>

*Kuṭi* was the settlement site of the inhabitants of different eco-zones or *Tinai*. The small settlement area known as *Cīṛukuṭi*.<sup>213</sup> There are mentions of *Cīṛukuṭi* in the forest,<sup>214</sup> *Cīṛukuṭi* in the slopes of the hills,<sup>215</sup> *Cīṛukuṭi* surrounded

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<sup>206</sup> A.N-383: 3-4 “ kātum kāvum...nāṭum tēyavum...”

<sup>207</sup> A.N- 9: 10 mattanaṇṇiya vaṅkuṭi cēṛūr...”

<sup>208</sup> A.N-9-10; A.N-152:2. “ kunṛulai naṇṇiya cīrūr.” A.N-331:8. P.N-297:4.

<sup>209</sup> A.N-15-7. *Patir*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten:18.

<sup>210</sup> A.N- 14-21.

<sup>211</sup> A.N-220:3.

<sup>212</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Brahmin Settlement in Kerala- The Historical Studies*. Thrissur: Cosmo Books, (1978) 2013. pp. 35-41.

<sup>213</sup> A.N-7: 22. “...Cīṛukuṭi kānavan makaḷe...”; A.N-75:7; A.N-103:7; A.N-110:13; A.N-118:4; A.N-140:1. “Cīṛukuṭi paratavar...”; A.N-192:12; A.N-297:16. “Cīṛukuṭi Maṛavar...”; A.N-300:14; A.N-312: 5; A.N-318:12.

<sup>214</sup> A.N-315: 18. “kāṅkeḷu vāḷnaṛ cīṛukuṭi yāne”

<sup>215</sup> A.N-192:12. “Peruvarai cīṛukuṭi...”

by mountains like a fence,<sup>216</sup> *Ciṟukuṭi* of the barren mountain tract,<sup>217</sup> *Ciṟukuṭi* of fishermen in the sea shore or *tuṟai*,<sup>218</sup> The term *Ciṟukuṭiyān* stands for the member of the *Kuṭi*.<sup>219</sup> The term *Kuti* also occurred in the poems to denote the dwellings (*palkuṭi*) of the inhabitants.<sup>220</sup> The the chief of the *Kuṭi* known as *Kuṭipati*.<sup>221</sup> There are reference of the *Kuṭis* of Pāṇan (bards), Tuṭiyan ( who play Tuṭi drum), *Paṟayan* (drummer at funeral) and *Kaṭampan* (worshipper of Murukan).<sup>222</sup>

The *Cēri* was the street occupied by the people involved in different occupation and it appeared in the songs related to all eco-zones of ancient Tamiḷakam.<sup>223</sup> The *Cēri* was the crowded streets developed in the *Ūr*.<sup>224</sup> The *Cēri* and *Ūr* were the separate special entities,<sup>225</sup> but the first one seems to have developed within the second. It appears as the streets in the traditional settlements or *Ūr*.<sup>226</sup> The itinerary merchants who announced the exchange value of salt for paddy was moved through the *Cēri*.<sup>227</sup> The presence of prostitutes in the streets

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<sup>216</sup> A.N-232: 6. “kunṟa vēli ciṟukuṭi...”

<sup>217</sup> A.N-284:7. “punpulaṅṅalī iya poṟaimutaṟ ciṟukuṭi”

<sup>218</sup> A.N-70:2; A.N-250:11. “avvalai pparatavar kānalañciṟukuṭi”; A.N-320:5. “kānlañciṟukuṭi pperunīr ccēṟṟpa.”

<sup>219</sup> A.N-228-13.

<sup>220</sup> A.N-44:16.

<sup>221</sup> A.N-77: 6.

<sup>222</sup> P.N- 335:7-8.

<sup>223</sup> A.N-15:7; A.N-65:4; A.N-115:4; A.N-347:6; A.N-383:3. (*Pālai*- trans *tiṅai* probably *Kuṟiṅṅi* or *Mullai*); A.N-76:2; A.N-146:6; A.N-216:16; A.N-276:7 (*Marutam*); A.N-110:2; A.N-140-8; A.N-220:1; A.N-390:9 (*Neital*).

<sup>224</sup> A.N-65: 4; A.N-76. This space appears as the center of gossips; A.N-110:2; A.N-115:4; A.N-347:6-7.

<sup>225</sup> A.N-220: 1. “Ūrum cēriyum... ;” A.N-383:2. “Ūrum cēriyum orāṅku alaṟ ēḷa..”

<sup>226</sup> A.N- 15-7. “ceṟiṅṅa cēri ccemman mūtūr;” A.N-347:6-7 “...cēri ampalu mūtūr...”

<sup>227</sup> A.N-140:7-8. “nellinu nēre neṅkaluppena cēri viali māṟukūṟalin...;” A.N-390: 8-9 “nellum uppum nēre ūṟīṟ koḷḷīrōvena ccēritōrum nuvalum.”

of *Marutam* zone is also mentioned.<sup>228</sup> Like *Cēri*, *Āvaṇam* also stands for the active space of local exchange where the people exchanged their goods for goods.<sup>229</sup>

*Tuṛai* was the larger settlement of the sea shore mainly inhabited by fishermen and salt makers.<sup>230</sup> It mainly appeared in the *Neital* and *Marutam* zones. It was the grouping of *Ūr* and *Kutis* of the coastal zone.<sup>231</sup> The chief of the *Ūr* appears with the right over *Tuṛai*, which shows that the *Tuṛai* was part of the *Ūr*.<sup>232</sup> The coastal settlements in the river shores were also known as *Tuṛaiyūr*.<sup>233</sup> The water ponds were also termed as *Nīṛtuṛai*, where the animals and people took water.<sup>234</sup> The biggest settlement units of the coastal area was known as *Peruñtuṛai*.<sup>235</sup> The head of the *Tuṛai* was known as *Tuṛaivan*.<sup>236</sup> *Paṭṭinam* also appears as the coastal exchange or trading centre.<sup>237</sup>

Besides the information about the above said spaces, where the people involved in different activities, there are many indications like *Iṛai*,<sup>238</sup> *Manai*,<sup>239</sup> etc. on the early historic dwellings. The term like *Cirumanai* and *Nanmanai*<sup>240</sup> must have shown the difference in size and status of the houses

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<sup>228</sup> A.N-146:6. “Oḷḷilai makalir cēri...”

<sup>229</sup> A.N-227:21-22.

<sup>230</sup> P.N- 84: 6 “umaṇar verū uñtuṛaiyannane...”

<sup>231</sup> P.N- 400:22 “tuṛaitōṛum piṇikku nallūr.”

<sup>232</sup> A.N-276:5 “cā ay otuñkuñtuṛai kēḷ Ūranoṭu”

<sup>233</sup> P.N- 136:25.

<sup>234</sup> P.N- 94:2. P.N- 96:7.

<sup>235</sup> A.N- 70: 10; A.N-320:10; P.N- 42:15; P.N- 67:6.

<sup>236</sup> A.N-30:11; A.N-40: 16; A.N-70: 4; A.N-170: 7; A.N-190:3; A.N-210:6; A.N-380:3.

<sup>237</sup> A.N-227:20,

<sup>238</sup> A.N- 9:18

<sup>239</sup> A.N- 21:1; A.N-46:9; A.N-50:11.

<sup>240</sup> P.N- 29:20. “...cirumanai.. ;” A.N- 22:16. “nanmanai.”

### **Social Groups**

The pre-temple society was organized on the basis of occupations and they were involved in different occupations and settled in the different eco-zones.

*Kuṛavar*, the inhabitants of *Kuṛiñji*, were mentioned as the gatherers of honey and toddy.<sup>241</sup> They were depicted as the hunters with trident.<sup>242</sup> The unearthed remains of iron trident from many megaliths have corroborated this literary allusion.<sup>243</sup> They were involved in the shifting cultivation and such lands were known as *nāṭu*,<sup>244</sup> which has already discussed above. They depended on rainy season for the shifting cultivation in the hillocks. *Kuṛavar* gave offerings to *Kaṭavuḷ* or god for timely onset of rainy season in the hillocks and enable them to cultivate the land in proper time, which was also needed for the development of agrarian villages, the *nāṭu*.<sup>245</sup> *Kuṛavar* lived in the small hut known as *Kurampai*.<sup>246</sup> The house of the *Kuṛiñji* people in the garden land was also mentioned as *Mania*.<sup>247</sup> The chief of their settlements seems to have known as *Kiḷavan*.<sup>248</sup> *Kānavan* appears as the settler of the *Kuṛiñji* tracts who involved in the slash and burn cultivation.<sup>249</sup>

*Vēṭṭakkaḷvaṛ*, the *vēṭar* or hunters performed as *kaḷvaṛ* or robbers, occurs in a *pālai*, the trans-*tinai* that might have formed due to the decline of either *Kuṛiñji* or *Mullai*, indicated that the people were identified on the basis of their

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<sup>241</sup> A.N- 78: 7. “tēm pīḷi naṛavin kuṛavar.”

<sup>242</sup> P.N- 236:2.

<sup>243</sup> Tridents were found at the first megalithic excavation at Chettapparamba. J. Babington. *Op. cit.*; Rajan Gurukkal. *Op. cit.* 2008.

<sup>244</sup> P.N- 168:4-7.

<sup>245</sup> P.N- 143:1-7.

<sup>246</sup> P.N- 129:1. “kuṛiyiṛaikkurampaikkuravaṛ.”

<sup>247</sup> A.N- 272:10-11.

<sup>248</sup> P.N- 129:4-5. “āy āntīran mentioned as the māmalaiikkiḷavan.”

<sup>249</sup> A.N- 88:1-5.

survival form or occupation. If a hunter transformed into a robber, he came to recognize as robber or hunter cum robber. *Maṛavar* were the plunderers who often robbed the cattle herds<sup>250</sup> and the itinerary merchants. The cowherds and shepherd were mentioned separately in the poem. The cowherds of the *Mullai* tract was mentioned as *kōvalar*<sup>251</sup> who were using a stick to graze livestock.<sup>252</sup> The shepherd was referred to as *Ītaiyan* of *туру* or goat/sheep.<sup>253</sup> They were also mentioned as *Kuṭavar*.

The cultivators in the hillocks, garden lands and wetlands were mentioned in different terms. In the hillocks *Kuṛavar* were involved in the mixed crop cultivation. *Uḷavar*,<sup>254</sup> as the tilling occupational groups, occurred in the *Vanpulam*<sup>255</sup> (*Kuṛiñji* and *Mullai* tracts) and *Menpulam* (*Marutam*).<sup>256</sup> The cultivators in the *vayal* or *kaḷani*, means wet land, were termed as *Uḷavar*.<sup>257</sup> They were ploughing the land by using best bulls.<sup>258</sup> *Uḷavar* were depicted as the cultivators who were eating rice and consuming spicy fish curry and excessive toddy.<sup>259</sup> *Uḷavar* prepared a platform known as *kaḷam* for storing and thrashing

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<sup>250</sup> A.N- 63: 12 “kaṛavai tanta katunkāl maṛavar.”

<sup>251</sup> A.N- 14:7; A.N- 54:10; A.N- 74: 16; A.N- 124:14; A.N- 155:8; A.N- 219:15; A.N- 253:12; A.N- 264:4; A.N- 293:11; A.N- 311: 9; A.N- 321:7; A.N- 354:5; A.N- 399:11; P.P.T.I: 342.

<sup>252</sup> A.N- 74:15-16. “....koṭuñkōl kallākōvalar...”

<sup>253</sup> A.N- 94:4. “maṛattūru uttokutta paṛippuṛa ĩtaiyan..;” A.N- 274: 4, 8. “āṭṭalai tturuvin...;” “ĩtaiyan...;” A.N- 394:2. “... ciṛṭalai turuvin...”

<sup>254</sup> P.N- 65:4.

<sup>255</sup> P.N- 42: 13,18.

<sup>256</sup> Both *menpulam* and *vanpulam* are mentioned in the poem. P.N- 395: 1-2. “menpulattu vayaluḷavar Vanpulattuppaṭuvittuk.”

<sup>257</sup> P.N- 13:11. “kaḷaniyuḷavar.” *Paṭiṛ*. 9<sup>th</sup> Tens - 10:41. “kaḷaniyuḷavar.”

<sup>258</sup> P.N- 289: 2-3.

<sup>259</sup> P.N- 384:8, A.N- 37:2-3.

the harvested paddy sheaf.<sup>260</sup> Such paddy sheaf storing plots were prepared in the garden land very close to the harvested field.<sup>261</sup> They were involved in the winnowing process of the thrashed paddy. *Uḷavar* must have kept some portion of paddy, after harvesting, as seed for the coming seasons.<sup>262</sup> They were settled in the nearby zone of cultivated tracts. The skilled labour forces like *Kollan*<sup>263</sup> or Iron smith, *Taccan* or carpenters,<sup>264</sup> *Kammiyan* or gold smith,<sup>265</sup> potters etc. were also the part of early *Tamiḷakam*.

### ***Brahmins***

The Brahmins were mentioned by many terms like *Pārppān*,<sup>266</sup> *Antaṇar*, *Amantaṇar*, *Munivar*, *Mutalvar*, *Neṭiyōn*, *Āriyar* etc. The *Pārppān* were the brahmins who did not learn Vedic texts and did not perform ritual sacrifices.<sup>267</sup> Therefore, they are naturally unfit for the Vedic rituals and sacrifices and forced to do other jobs for their livelihood.<sup>268</sup> They appeared as the messengers of *Umaṇar* in the exchange routes and killed by the *Maṇavar*, the robbers, as well.<sup>269</sup> There is a reference that give warning to the *Maṇava* like “none of your ancestors did anything that Brahmins did not like”.<sup>270</sup> Such allusions have shown that *Pārppān* got an auspicious status from the society and considered hurting

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<sup>260</sup> This is a simile used for depicting the plenty availability of fish in the *Neital turai*. Always the very well-known matters are using as similes by a society. *A.N-* 30: 8.

<sup>261</sup> *A.N-* 41:4-5. “neṭunelataicciya kaḷaniyēr pukuttukkuṭumi kkaṭṭiya paṭaippayoṭu miḷira.”

<sup>262</sup> There is a simile that refers to the ignorance of a farmer who converts the seed paddy to rice and eat it up. *P.N-* 230:12-14.

<sup>263</sup> *P.N-* 21-7. 170-15. 180-12.

<sup>264</sup> *P.N-* 87:3.

<sup>265</sup> *P.N-* 353-1.

<sup>266</sup> *P.N-* 9:1; *P.N-* 34:3.

<sup>267</sup> *A.N-* 24:1-2.

<sup>268</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>269</sup> *A.N-* 337:5-20.

<sup>270</sup> *A.N-* 43: 11-14.

Brahmins as a sin. *Puṛaṇānūru* states that “gladden impoverished Brahmins who come begging for wealth by filling their moist cupped hands with gold flowers and gold coins along with the oblations of water.”<sup>271</sup> The *Pārppān* or *Piṛappālar* were desirous of liberation only and in order to attain salvation they restrained their senses.<sup>272</sup> They were respected by the Cēra rulers.<sup>273</sup> All these have shown the expression of courtesy of the society towards Brahmins. *Aṅtaṇar*, *Amaṅtaṇar* were the Brahmins who learned the Veda and performed Vedic rituals<sup>274</sup> and also teaches the Vedas.<sup>275</sup> The term *Antaṇar* stands for the highest birth in the contemporary society.<sup>276</sup> The poet Kapilar eulogize the precious grant of the Cēra ruler Celva kaṭuṅko to the *Aṅtaṇar*.<sup>277</sup> *Munivaṛ* appeared as the Brahmins who claimed to know four Vedas and practiced rituals in the temple of three-eyed god or Siva.<sup>278</sup> *Mutalvaṛ* was another term to indicate the well-versed Brahmins who restrained their senses and learned four Vedas.<sup>279</sup> *Mutalvaṛ* gives blessings to the wounded king to get heaven by cutting the body with sword and buried,<sup>280</sup> which probably shows the involvement of Brahmins in the death ritual as well.

Apart from the above-mentioned Brahmins, the poetic allusions have explored the combatant nature of *Āriyans* in ancient Tamiḷakam, who disturbed the existing socio-political systems. The *Āriyar* were the people, probably the

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<sup>271</sup> *P.N-* 367:3-5 Translation is taken from T. Madhava Menon. *Op. cit.* pp. 543-544.

<sup>272</sup> *P.N-* 367:11-13.

<sup>273</sup> *Patir.* 7<sup>th</sup> Tens-2:1.

<sup>274</sup> *P.N-* 1:6; *P.N-* 2: 22; *P.N-*122: 3; *P.N-* 361:4-5; *P.N-* 397:20.

<sup>275</sup> *Patir.* 3<sup>rd</sup> Ten-4:8. “aṛam puriyaṅtaṇar vaḷimolintoḷuki.”

<sup>276</sup> *P.P.T.I-* 34.

<sup>277</sup> *Patir.* 7<sup>th</sup> Ten-3:5-6.

<sup>278</sup> *P.N-* 6: 17-20.

<sup>279</sup> *P.N-* 26:12-13.

<sup>280</sup> *P.N-* 93:7-15.



*Vedic* Brahmins, from northern parts of India.<sup>281</sup> They are depicted as the martial group who did military operations against Cōḷa and defeated by Cōḷa.<sup>282</sup> The same thing happened in the case of Cēra as well.<sup>283</sup> *Āriyar* appears as the martial group who involved and defeated in the war.<sup>284</sup>

From the above discussion on Brahmins of Tamiḷakam, it can be seen some differences; some of them had not learned the Vedas and most of the others were well versed in it and performed Vedic rituals. It seems to have shown the possibility of the different time series of the Brahmin migration to Tamilnadu. Some Brahmins like *Aṅtaṅaṅ* were in fact of indigenous origin and going back to a class of priests.<sup>285</sup> The *Āriyar* were the northern Brahmins who must have had martial power as well.

### ***Influences of Buddhism and Jainism***

As the *Kēraḷaputra* mentioned in the Asoka's inscription along with the Cōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Satiyaputo, the Buddhist ideas must have percolated to Tamiḷakam even before the Common Era. The presence of *Vaṭukar*,<sup>286</sup> the powerful warriors in the forefront of the Mōriyar in their expedition to the southern countries,<sup>287</sup> was also underlined the interaction between North and South. According to George Hart, there are many poems on the ephemeral nature

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<sup>281</sup> *Patir*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten-1: 23-24; A.N- 276: 9; A.N- 398:18.

<sup>282</sup> A.N- 336:22. “Āriyar pataiyin ...”

<sup>283</sup> *Patir*. 5<sup>th</sup> Tens- *patikam* 5:6.

<sup>284</sup> A.N- 396:16.

<sup>285</sup> George Hart. *The Poems of Ancient Tamil- their milieu and their Sanskrit counterparts*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999. pp.54-55.

<sup>286</sup> P.N- 378-2 “vaṭukar vālōṭṭiya.,” A.N- 107-11. “kalla nīṇmolikkatanay vaṭukar.,” A.N- 213-8. “vāl niṇa ppukavin vaṭukar te ettu.,” A.N- 253-18. “neravanroḷu vaṭukar perumakan.”

<sup>287</sup> A.N- 281:7-8.

of life that seem certainly to have been influenced by Buddhism and Jainism.<sup>288</sup>

It is argued that the *Puranānūru* poem 27 “seems to reflect the Four Fold Noble Truth of Suffering of Buddhism, though not in terms of exactly equivalent to those in the Buddhist scripture.”<sup>289</sup>

The Jain practice of fast unto death, which is termed *Vaṭakkirikkal* (literally sitting towards north) mentioned in the literature,<sup>290</sup> has shown the Jain influence on the ruling elite and probably in the society as well. The fragmented inscription on a rim portion of a storage jar with five Tamil Brahmi letters deciphered as “ama ṇa,”<sup>291</sup> which is identified with *Śramaṇa* or Jain from Pattanam excavation alluded to the presence of Jain tradition in the west coast of Kerala.

### ***Women and Marriage relations in the society***

Women appears in different situations in the poem as spinster, cohabited, prostitute, maid, mother etc.<sup>292</sup> Women were involved in all subsistence forms in the contemporary society including hunting, resource gathering, slash and burn cultivation etc. The division of labour was practiced in the initial stage and gradually the working space of the women were limited to the house. They were appeared in the song as the itinerary toddy merchants as well.<sup>293</sup> They wore ornaments of semi-precious stones and gold coins. They were morally

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<sup>288</sup> George Hart, *Op. cit.* p.69.

<sup>289</sup> T. Madhava Menon. *Op. cit.* pp. 138-40; *P.N-27*: 11-14.

<sup>290</sup> *P.N-65*:10-11; *P.N-66*:8.

<sup>291</sup> P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Op. cit.* 2015e. p. 35.

<sup>292</sup> *A.N- 6*: 10-14.

<sup>293</sup> *A.N- 157*:1-2.

categorized in many sessions as young girl approaching puberty,<sup>294</sup> noble women who hold their chastity, women without chastity, prostitute,<sup>295</sup> maid,<sup>296</sup>etc.

Women were not entering into the sacred place during their menstrual times. A poem refers that they were scared to touch the vessels of the sacred space of Muruka at the menstrual time.<sup>297</sup> As this reference appeared as an example or simile to mention the victory of a minor king with the inferior cavalry over a big king with a powerful cavalry and who was forced to stand shy away from the battle field, it is clear that the women's code of conduct during their menses time was very much familiar to the early historic society. Women in menstrual phase is represented as inferior and polluted figure in the society, which also indicates the development of male dominant dwelling locale and also the expansion of pollution concepts, probably in the wake of the emergence of temple culture, in the society. A poem has indicated the social setting that state the confined freedom of a young girl who has reached at puberty in the early historic society.<sup>298</sup> She has to be beware about her body and keep away from the sacred spaces and the crowded zones.

The people of Tamilakam had a relatively simple conception of marriage like natural coming together of man and woman.<sup>299</sup> The poetic references indicated that the marriage system was gradually transformed and the Brahminic rituals and morality becomes dominant in the society. *Tolkāppiyam* states that

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<sup>294</sup> A.N- 7:1-7.

<sup>295</sup> A.N- 16:7. “ kūreyirrarivai kuṟukinaḷ.”

<sup>296</sup> A.N- 48:5, 25. “Tōḷi.”

<sup>297</sup> P.N-299:6-7. “aṇaṅkuṭai murukan kōṭṭattukkalaṅtoṭā makaḷiri nikaḷntu ninravvē.” This reference appears as an example.

<sup>298</sup> A.N- 7:1-7

<sup>299</sup> K. A. Nilakanta Sastri. *A History of South India- from pre-historic time to the fall of Vijayanagar*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, (1955) 2006. p. 117.

marriage as a sacrament attended with ritual was established by the Aryans.<sup>300</sup> Two terms; *Kaḷavu* and *Karpu* are mentioned in the *Sangam* literature in connection with the marriage and familial life of women in the society. *Tolkāppiyam* states *Kaḷavu* as pre-marital clandestine affairs and *Karpu* as married stage of women and it also warned the chance for generating gossips in both stages.<sup>301</sup> The *Kaḷavu* stands for the unfair pre-marital love affairs and cohabitation of the women with her lover. *Karpu* stands for the chastity of the women.<sup>302</sup> It was the loftier virtue of a girl or woman.<sup>303</sup> The coyness of the woman considers as a quality and the chastity as her asset.<sup>304</sup> *Karpu* also appears as the supreme quality and strength of the *Manaivi* or house wife.<sup>305</sup> The women, who firmly hold *Karpu*, was forced to stay at their household without interfering in the society.<sup>306</sup> *Karpu* represented as sacred strength of a women as well.<sup>307</sup> The *Karpu* or chastity of a girl is praised as her higher value at the time of her marriage<sup>308</sup> and also considered it as her fitness to wearing jasmine flower on the head,<sup>309</sup> probably at the marriage occasion. The young girls are very conscious to keep her chastity and they feel free from that irritating mindfulness when they are getting married.<sup>310</sup> The husband with wife who hold her chastity is glorified<sup>311</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>301</sup> *Tol. Porl. Karpiyal- 160.* “kaḷavum karppum alarvaraivu inṛē.”

<sup>302</sup> *A.N- 6:13; A.N- 9: 24; A.N- 33:2; A.N- 198:12; P.N- 163:2; P.N- 249:10; P.N- 383:14.*

<sup>303</sup> *A.N- 323:7* “karpumēmpaṭuvi...”

<sup>304</sup> *A.N- 9:24.*

<sup>305</sup> *A.N- 33: 2.* “maniamāṇ karppin vāṇu...”

<sup>306</sup> *A.N- 114: 13.* “...tirunakaṛ aṭaṅkiya mācilu karpin.”

<sup>307</sup> *A.N- 73:5.* “aṅankuṛu karpoṭu.” *A.N- 184: 1* “kaṭavud karpoṭu kuṭikku vaḷakkākiya.” *A.N- 314:15* “kaṭavud karpin...;” *P.N- 138:3* “kaṭavul cāṅra karpir cēyiṛai.”

<sup>308</sup> *A.N- 86:13-14.* *Akanānūru* 86 gives a beautiful description of marriage functions.

<sup>309</sup> *A.N- 274:12-14.*

<sup>310</sup> *A.N- 136:19.* “uvaṛ nīnku karpin...”

<sup>311</sup> *P.N- 3:6.* “...karpir cēyiḷai kaṇava...”

and sometime it is considered as the only remained wealth of the hero.<sup>312</sup> The gracious wives with impeccable chastity of the Brahmin are also mentioned in the poem.<sup>313</sup> All these show that the contemporary society was very much concerned about the morality of the women and such indications point towards the formation of a male dominated patrilineal society.

The term *Kaḷavu* and *Karpu* also shows the changes occurred in the marriage relations of *Sangam* society. The living together or the union of lovers were considered as immoral and the women who were holding their chastity without fault was glorified. Both these were subjected to the women only. The male members were outside the moral codes. The term *Manai* and *Maṇaivi* stands for the house and wife respectively. The development of *Manai*, wealthy houses, seems to have represented the changes in the gender relations and the emerging restriction over the movements of women.<sup>314</sup> It shows that the *Sangam* period witnessed the formation of a male dominant society and the women were forced to involve in the household activities only.

### ***Early Historic Diet***

The above discussed part of the pottery has proved that the pre-temple society was a settled one and widely used pottery for cooking and serving purposes. The archaeological evidences of the diet of early historic society are absent in Kerala. The only exception is the evidence of rice husk reported from

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<sup>312</sup> P.N- 122:8-9. The chastity of wife is considered as the only remained wealth even at the time of severe starvation or famine of the hero. P.N- 196:13.

<sup>313</sup> P.N- 166.

<sup>314</sup> K.S. Madhavan. "Gender Relations in Early Historic South India." V.V. Haridas and Haskerali E.C. (ed.). *Multi- cultures of South India- new perceptions on History and Society*. Mysore: Karnataka State Open University, 2015. p.269.

the megaliths at Parampantali and Vadakkanchery in Trissur district.<sup>315</sup> The Poruntal site of Tamilnadu unearthed two kilogram paddy from a four legged jar in Megalithic burial.<sup>316</sup> However, the archaeological layers of Pattanam site, the only extensively excavated early historic settlement site of Kerala, are almost silent about the food remains. It provides some indication on the flora of the contemporary period such as, pepper, cardamom, paddy, coconut shell, teak tree and frankincense.<sup>317</sup> Apart from the archaeological data, the literature furnishes ample record on the diet of the Tamilakam.

The cooked food was consumed by the early historic population in all eco-zones. There are many references about hearths in the settlement areas. Milk was consumed after boiling in a pot on the hearth.<sup>318</sup> The *puḷukku*, the mixture of rice and meet, was cooked above the oven and consumed with toddy.<sup>319</sup> The *Maṇavars* used the abandoned hearth of *Umaṇar* or salt merchants for the cooking of meet with rice (*Puḷukku*) in the *Pālai* tract.<sup>320</sup> Salt was very much consumed in the diet. It was exchanged with paddy. Salt was one of the major items of exchange, which shows its demand due to its wide consumption.

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<sup>315</sup> Rajan Chedampath. *Op. cit.* p .271.

<sup>316</sup> Report on K. Rajan's excavation in *The Hindu*, October 15, 2011 <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/porunthal-excavations-prove-existence-of-indian-scripts-in-5th-century-bc-expert/article2538550.ece> accessed on 26/3/2019; T. S. Subrahmanyam. "A Great Past in bright colours" in *Frontline*, Vol. 27, Issue 20, Sep 25-Oct.8, 2010, The Hindu. Accessed from <https://frontline.thehindu.com/static/html/fl2720/stories/20101008272006400.htm> on 26/3/2019.

<sup>317</sup> P.J. Cherian. *Op. cit.* 2015d. p. 12.

<sup>318</sup> A.N- 141: 15. "...aṭuppiṟu pālulai..."

<sup>319</sup> *Patir*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten-8:1-2 "Uṇmin kaḷḷēyaṭumin cōṟē Eṟika tirriyērrumin puḷukkē..."

<sup>320</sup> A.N- 119: 8-9. "Umaṇ cāttiṟaṅta oḷikal aṭuppin Nōncilai maḷavaṟ ūnpuḷukkayarum."

*Cōru* or rice was one of the special meals<sup>321</sup> and different variety of food was served in certain special occasion.<sup>322</sup> Rice mixed with meat was a special dish.<sup>323</sup> Rice mixed with black gram was another special meal.<sup>324</sup> The cooked white rice with fish curry was another item.<sup>325</sup> The dried fish was also consumed.<sup>326</sup> The cooked fish was part of the diet especially in the *marutam* and *neital* tracts.<sup>327</sup> Rice and millet was the main item of food. There is clear indication on the agriculture and harvesting process in the literature like slash and burning, harvesting, processing of the thrashing for removing husk, use of mortar and wooden pestle for pounding grains etc.<sup>328</sup> The mentions of the *Peruncōru*, *Uṅṅāṅṅu* etc. have shown the feast functions to the larger public as well.<sup>329</sup>

### **Evidence on a Literate Society**

The growth of writing system and literary compositions of the early historic period have signified the advanced phase of literary traditions of pre-temple society. There is clear indication on the practice of engraving the script on the memorial stones by using sharpened chisel in the literature.<sup>330</sup> The epigraphical evidences show that the early Tamil Brahmi and *Grantha* scripts, which developed during second century AD onwards, were known to the society. The language of the Tamil *Brahmi* inscriptions from South India in general and Kerala in particular was Tamil and the language of *Grantha* script was Sanskrit.

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<sup>321</sup> A.N- 87:1-2.

<sup>322</sup> A.N- 136-1. “peruncōru neykani veṅcōru, puḷukku.”

<sup>323</sup> A.N- 107:7-8.

<sup>324</sup> A.N- 86:1-2. “uṅṅūtutalaipeyya koḷuṅkaḷi mitavai Peruṅcōramalai...”

<sup>325</sup> A.N- 196: 5-6.

<sup>326</sup> A.N- 20:2. “koḷumīnuṅṅaṅkar..;” A.N- 80:6 “panmīn uṅṅaṅkar...”

<sup>327</sup> P.N- 212: 3-4.

<sup>328</sup> A.N- 393.

<sup>329</sup> A.N- 275:9.

<sup>330</sup> A.N- 343:5-7.

The earliest evidences on the writing system of Kerala is reported from Edakkal cave. F. Fawcett reported the discovery of the archaic rock in *Indian Antiquary* in 1901<sup>331</sup> and found four short inscriptions inscribed on the wall of the cave in Sanskrit and old Malayalam language.<sup>332</sup> The inscriptions were deciphered with the help of Hultzsch and the first one in Sanskrit deciphered as “Sri-Vishnu Varmma-kuṭumbiya kulavardhanasya likhitam.”<sup>333</sup> The second inscription was in Tamil and deciphered as “pla-puli- tan aṅtakari.”<sup>334</sup>

But it is difficult to argue that the entire society was literate. However, the poetic compositions of ancient Tamilakam, especially the *Eṭṭutokai* collection, have represented the developed form of Tamil literature. *Tolkāppiyam*, the earliest extant grammar in Tamil, itself have validated the progressive development of the Tamil literature. It has three parts which deals with the phonological (*Eluttu*), morphological (*Col*) aspects of language and the formulation and study of the principles of literary production.<sup>335</sup> All these have shown that the early historic society was familiar with the writing system.

### **Burials, Beliefs and Rituals**

The religious beliefs and rituals of the pre-temple society was connected with three elements; burial or ancestral, gods of Tamilakam and the north Indian gods.

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<sup>331</sup> F. Fawcett. “Notes on the Rock Engravings in the Edakkal Cave, Wynad.” Richard Carnac Temple (ed.). *Op. cit.* pp. 409-21.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.* 411-12

<sup>333</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.* 412

<sup>335</sup> L. Gloria Sundramathy and Indra Manuel (ed.). *Op. cit.*



### **Ancestral Worship**

The *Sangam* works mention different types of burial practices. *Puṛaṇānūru* refers to *Iṭukavaṅto*, *Suṭukavaṅto*,<sup>336</sup> means the body exposed or cremated, the post *Sangam* works like *Maṇimēkhalai* refers to *iṭuvōṛ* and *suṭuvōṛ*<sup>337</sup> means the people who exposed the dead body to degenerate and burned respectively. The same poem also refers to different types of burial structures as *toṭukulipaṭuppōṛ*, those who laid the body or mortal remains in pits dug into the ground for the purpose, *tāliyil kavippōṛ*, those who placed the body or the remains thereof inside a burial urn and inverted a lid over it, and *tālvayinataippōṛ*, those who interred in sub-terrain cist.<sup>338</sup> *Maṇimēkhalai* mentioned this song part of its description of the necropolis at Puhar or Kaverippattinam. As these types of megalithic burials are widely found in Kerala, this reference can be taken as the sign of the burial practice of Kerala as well. The wide distribution of megaliths has shown the ceremonial homage of the early historic society towards their ancestors. The megalithic builders were believed in the ancestral worship and the burials were treated as the pagoda of the spirit.

There are references on the offerings of the living people towards the dead ancestors.<sup>339</sup> The offerings of a widow to her dead husband on the platform that was prepared by rubbing cow dung is mentioned in the poem.<sup>340</sup> There is reference to the offering toddy as *Pali (Bali)* to the *naṭukaḷ* or menhir at dawn

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<sup>336</sup> P.N- 239:20.

<sup>337</sup> *Manimekhalai* -VI 65-73 cited in K. Rajan. *South Indian Memorial Stones*. Tanjavur: Manoo Pathippakam, 2000. pp. 11-12.

<sup>338</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>339</sup> P.N- 234.

<sup>340</sup> P.N- 249:10-14. “aṭankiya kaṛppinay nutan maṭaṅtai Uyar nilaiyulakamavan pukavāra Nīraṭu cuḷakir cīriṭa nīkki aḷutalānākkannaḷ Meḷuku māppikaṅ kaluṅnīrāṇe...”

every morning and lamps filled with ghee.<sup>341</sup> The *Patukkai* and *naṭukal*, cairn circle entombing cist and the Menhir or hero stone that erected to commemorate the murdered warrior *Maṛavaṛ*, was worshipped as *Kaṭavuḷ* or spirit as god and paid obeisance and offerings.<sup>342</sup> *Naṭukal* was worshipped as ancestral god.<sup>343</sup> It is believed that the spirit of the dead person reside in the stone.<sup>344</sup> The poet Māmūlanār refers to Utiyan Cēral's solemn offerings to his dead ancestors and the great feast at that occasion.<sup>345</sup> The contemporary society worshipped such memorial stone only as their god.<sup>346</sup>

### ***God and Goddesses***

There are many terms like *Kaṭavuḷ*, *Aṇaṅku*, *Teyvam*, *Aṛa*, *Iṛai*, etc. to mention the god in the literature. All these terms are appeared in all eco-zones or *Tinai*. Kuṛavaṛ's *Kaṭavuḷ* was the mountain god, probably *Murukan*, of *Kuṛiṅji*.<sup>347</sup> They were offering toddy to *Kaṭavuḷ*<sup>348</sup> and worshipped as the supreme deity.<sup>349</sup> *Kaṭavuḷ* is admired with devotional music,<sup>350</sup> which probably indicated the emergence of Bhakti tradition. *Kaṭavuḷ* was worshipped in the form

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<sup>341</sup> P.N- 329.1-4. “illaṭukallin cilkaṭiccirūppuṭai naṭukallināṭ paliyūṭṭi nannīrāṭi neynnaraikkolī iya...”

<sup>342</sup> A.N- 35:5-8. “...marumpin vīḷta Villēr vāḷkai viḷutodai maṛavaṛ Vallāṇ patukkaikaṭavuṭ pēṇmāṛ Nadukar pīli cūṭṭittuṭippaṭuttu.” K. Rajan Identified patukkai with cairn circle entombing cist. K. Rajan. *Op. cit.* Table 1-pp 26-27.

<sup>343</sup> P.N- 335.

<sup>344</sup> George Hart. *Op. cit.* p.25.

<sup>345</sup> A.N- 233:8-9.

<sup>346</sup> P.N- 335: 10-11.

<sup>347</sup> A.N- 13:2-4. K.K. Pillai. *Historical Heritage of Tamils*. Chennai: MJP Publishers, (1979) 2008. p. 123.

<sup>348</sup> A.N- 348: 7-9.

<sup>349</sup> A.N- 372: 1. “aruṇṭeraṇ marapiṛ kaṭavuḷ kappa.”

<sup>350</sup> A.N- 14:15-16.

of idol.<sup>351</sup> The Cellūr, the archaic Brahmin settlement of Kerala, is depicted as the space of the powerful gods (*Kaṭavuḷ*).<sup>352</sup> The same term is used to denote the worship of the god in the littoral zone.<sup>353</sup> It also used to express the divinity of certain matters like chastity,<sup>354</sup> Vedic education,<sup>355</sup> etc. by the contemporary society. *Kaṭavuḷ* of the *Marutam* tracts were more powerful.<sup>356</sup> There was a tradition of paying obeisance and offerings to *Kaṭavuḷ* at the beginning of auspicious functions like marriage.<sup>357</sup> The tree worship was prevailing in the contemporary society.<sup>358</sup> All these have shown that the *Kaṭavuḷ* was the common term to refer god in all geo-eco zones of hilly, plain and coastal regions.

*Teyvam* is another term to refer the god. The sacred space, probably temple, of *Teyvam* or god occurred in the bank of littoral zone.<sup>359</sup> The *Teyvam* appears as the superior goddess who received higher offering.<sup>360</sup> The animal sacrifice in front of the neem tree<sup>361</sup> to appease the *Teyvam* has also occurred. The two superior *Teyvams* (*perumteyvam*),<sup>362</sup> probably Śiva and Viṣṇu, is mentioned. The term *Perumteyvam* has shown that there were inferior and superior gods, probably the Brahminic gods were considered as the superior in the contemporary society.

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<sup>351</sup> A.N- 62:15. “kaṭavuḷ eḷutiya pāveyin.,” A.N- 209: 16-17. “nilaipēru kaṭavuḷākkiya Palar pukaḷ pāvaiyanna ninnalane.”

<sup>352</sup> A.N- 90:9. “aruntīrar kaṭavuḷ cellūrkkūṇa.”

<sup>353</sup> A.N- 156:15. “...nilaittuṛai kaṭavuḷ....”

<sup>354</sup> A.N- 184:1-4.

<sup>355</sup> A.N- 125:14-15. “kaiṭoḷu marapiṛ kaṭavuḷ cāṅṛa Ceyvinai maruṅkiṛ ceṅṛōṛ valvarin.”

<sup>356</sup> A.N- 396: 7.

<sup>357</sup> A.N- 136: 6. “katinakar punaiṅtu kaṭavuḷ pēṅi.”

<sup>358</sup> A.N- 270:12. “kaṭavuḷ maratta...”

<sup>359</sup> A.N- 110:3-5.

<sup>360</sup> A.N- 166: 7. “uyarṇali perū umurukeḷu teyvam.”

<sup>361</sup> A.N- 309: 4-6.

<sup>362</sup> A.N- 360: 6 “īru perumteyvattu...”

The *Tolkāppiyam* refers to the guardian deity of different *Tinai* as *Māyōn* of *Mullai* (hill slopes), *Cēyōn* of *Kuṟiñji* (forest), *Vēntan* of *Marutam* (riverine wetland) and *Varuṇan* of *Neital* (sandy sea shore).<sup>363</sup> The *Māyōn* was the deity of pastoral region.<sup>364</sup> Among these gods, *Cēyōn* appears in different occasions, mainly in the *Kuṟiñji* zones and occasionally mentioned in the *Neital*<sup>365</sup> and *Marutam*<sup>366</sup> *tinai* as well. The *Cēyōn* was worshipped in different names like *Vēl*, *Netuvēl*, *Celvan* and *Murukan*.<sup>367</sup> *Murukan* lives on a hill named *Tanparakunṟattu*.<sup>368</sup> The iconographic details of *Cēyōn* were also mentioned in the literature and worshipped in pacific, terrific and syncretic forms. The *Vēl* or lance appears as the attribute and peacock as the vehicle of *Cēyōn*.<sup>369</sup> *Murukan* worshipped as war god<sup>370</sup> and the contemporary people performed ritual like

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<sup>363</sup> *Tol. Porl. Akattiṇaiyiyal. 5. “Māyōn mēya kāturai ulakamum  
Cēyōn mēya maivarai ulakamum  
Vēntan mēya tīmpuṇal ulakamum  
Varuṇan mēya perumaṇal ulakamum  
Mullai Kuṟiñji marutam neitalāc  
Colliya muṟaiyār kollavum patumē.”*

*Māyōn* appears in *P.N- 57: 2. P.N- 229:27.*

<sup>364</sup> Günther- Dietz Sontheimer. *Pastoral Dieties in Western India.* Translated by Anne Feldhaus. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993. p.17.

<sup>365</sup> *A.N- 120.*

<sup>366</sup> *A.N- 226.*

<sup>367</sup> *A.N- 1:3 “murukanarṇpōr neṭuvēl...;” A.N- 22:6. “...netuvēṭpēṇa...;” A.N- 25: 20. “potiyir celvan...;” A.N- 98:10, 27. “murukan...;” “veṟikamaḷ neṭuvēl.;” A.N- 98: 18 “...celvan...;” A.N-118:5. “iyan murukoppinai...;” A.N- 120: 1. “neṭuvēl māṟpin...;” A.N- 272: 13,15. “murukane uṇarntu...;” “neṭuvēṭ paravum...;” A.N- 382:5. “kāṭukeḷu neṭuvēt...”*

<sup>368</sup> *A.N- 59:10-11.*

<sup>369</sup> *P.N- 56: 7-8. “maṇimayiluyariya māṟā venṟip Piṇimukavūṟṭiyōṇ Cēyyōnumēna.,” A.N- 59: 10-11. “Cutarilai neṭuvēl Cinamiku murukan ...”*

<sup>370</sup> *A.N- 181:3-7; A.N- 266:21*

*Veriyāttam* by *Vēlan*, the priest, in the *Kalam*, probably a decorated floor with flower and colours, to eulogize the great splendor of *Murukan*.<sup>371</sup>

The term *Ara makaḷiṟ* stands for the goddess.<sup>372</sup> The *Celvi* is another term refers to goddesses both in the forest and seashore tracts.<sup>373</sup> The *Celvi* is identified with *Koṟṟavai*.<sup>374</sup> She is called the victory goddess and considered as the indigenous goddess.<sup>375</sup> She is also identified as the goddess of *Pālai* area.<sup>376</sup>

### ***Worshipping centre or Temple***

There is a depiction about the abandoned and decayed public shrine, where the people regularly paid offerings (*pali*) to the image of the deity (*eḷutu aṇi kaṭavuḷ*), of the village which had emaciated mud floor and dilapidated chamber that was occupied by dogs and ruined wooden roof that covered by termite heap.<sup>377</sup> Similar reference appears in another song that depicts the decayed state of the wall covered by the termite heap and grass.<sup>378</sup> The godly vigour was absent in that space.<sup>379</sup> The house hold deity was also worshipped and presented offerings by the contemporary society.<sup>380</sup> These references shows the development of temple as the common worshipping space and the idol worshipping form as well even during or before the early historic period in *Tamiḷakam*. Temple was built for *Murukan* where the ritual forms like

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<sup>371</sup> A.N- 98:18-19 “celvan perumpeyaṟ ētti vēlan Veriyayaṟ viyankaḷam...;” Similar reference occurred in A.N- 138: 4-13; A.N- 232:10-15.

<sup>372</sup> A.N- 162: 25 “Cūrara makaḷir...;” A.N- 342:12. “...ara makaḷirin...”

<sup>373</sup> A.N- 345:4. “...kānamaṟ celvi...;” A.N- 370:12 “kaṭal keḷu celvi karai ninṟāka.”

<sup>374</sup> George Hart. *Op. cit.* p.23.

<sup>375</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>376</sup> Günther- Dietz Sontheimer. *Op. cit.* p.18.

<sup>377</sup> A.N- 167: 15-20.

<sup>378</sup> A.N- 307:11. “puṟṟuṭai ccuvara putalivaṟ potiyiṟ.”

<sup>379</sup> A.N- 307: 12. “kaṭavuḷ pōkiya karuṇṭātu kaṇṭattu.”

<sup>380</sup> A.N- 282:18 “illuṟai kaṭavuḷ kōkutum paliye.”

*Veriyāṭṭam* performed and sound of musical instruments spread.<sup>381</sup> It is mentioned in Tamil as *Murukan kōṭṭattu*.<sup>382</sup> Women were also involved in the *Veriyāṭṭam* ritual,<sup>383</sup> but they were prohibited to enter the temple and afraid to touch the dishes of the temple during their menstrual time.<sup>384</sup> The temple of the three eyed god or Siva, where the Brahmins performed ritual also mentioned.<sup>385</sup> *Neṭiyōn*, (*Parasurāma* of the Brahminic tradition) who hold axe in the hand, appears as the slaughter of *Kshatriya* lineage with iconographical depiction.<sup>386</sup> All these have emphasized on the development of a permanent space for the worship, probably with the influence of Brahmins.

### **Political Entities**

The available archaeological evidences including megaliths and Pattanam artifacts signified to the possible existence of some sort of political hierarchy in the Iron Age and early historic society. It is observed that differences in the size of megaliths and burial goods suggesting differentiation in status and ranking point to the nature of political power.<sup>387</sup> The huge burial monuments and valuable burial goods like semi-precious stone beads and iron weapons etc. must have represented the possible existence of powerful political system, which had sway over the resource mobilization and its redistribution. The discovery of copper and lead coins with Cēra emblem (bow and arrow and elephant) from the early historic archaeological layer at Pattanam also underlined the existence of

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<sup>381</sup> A.N- 138:4-13.

<sup>382</sup> P.N- 299:6.

<sup>383</sup> A.N- 138: 4-5.

<sup>384</sup> P.N- 299: 6-7. “aṇaṅkuṭai murukan kōṭṭattuk Kalāntotā makaḷiri nikaḷntu ninṛavvē.”

<sup>385</sup> P.N- 6: 17-20.

<sup>386</sup> A.N- 220: 5 “manmaruṅku aṛutta maḷuvāḷ neṭiyōn.”

<sup>387</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p. 145.

the political system which might have issued coins as well. As the archaeological remains are almost silent about the nature of political system, one has to look into the contemporary literatures and epigraphs.

According to the literature and Tamil Brahmi epigraphs, Tamiḷakam was ruled by three major political powers known as *Mūvar* or *Mūvēntar* who had royal drum termed *muracu* as the symbol of their commanding power.<sup>388</sup> The Cēra, Cōḷa and Pāndya were the *Mūvar* or *Mūvēntar*, who were mentioned in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC inscription of Maurya emperor Asoka<sup>389</sup> as the kings of South India. The early Tamil literature also mentions the Mōriyar or Maurya as the Emperor,<sup>390</sup> which proved the reciprocal familiarity between the North Indian Mauryan Empire and Tamiḷakam and also the contemporaneity of Maurya and the *Mūvēntar*. They had their own political emblems as tiger for Cōḷa, bow and arrow for Cēra and carp fish for Pāndya. Besides these three major powers, literature refers to many minor chieftains as well who belonged to *Vēḷir* and *Kiḷār* line.<sup>391</sup>

*Patirrupattu* eulogize Perum Cēral Irumporai as the Cēra ruler who had power to control the *Vēntar*, *Vēḷir* and other minor chieftains.<sup>392</sup> *Patirrupattu*, the

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<sup>388</sup> *P.N.*- 35:4. “...muracu muḷaṅku tāne mūvaruḷḷum.” *P.N.*- 110:1. “...kaṭaṅtaṭu tānai mūvirumkūṭi...;” *P.N.*- 338: 8 “...Koravēntar;” *P.N.*- 350:4-5 “Muraciṅ kaṭumān vēntar;” *P.N.*- 357: 2 “..Mūvarulakavum...;” see also, George Hart. *Op. cit.* pp. 14-15.

<sup>389</sup> D.C. Sircar. *Inscriptions of Asoka*. New Delhi: Publication Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1975 (1957). pp.41-42; Romila Thapar. *Asoka and the Decline of Mauryas*, revised edition. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997. p. 251.

<sup>390</sup> *P.N.*- 175:6 “Viṅporu neṭuṅkuṭaikkotittēr mōriyar.”

<sup>391</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op.cit.*1999. p.199; Y Subbarayalu “Early Tamil Polity” Noboru Karashima (ed.). *A Concise History of South India-Issues and Interpretations*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014. p. 53.

<sup>392</sup> *Patir.* 8<sup>th</sup> Ten 5:4. “vēntarum vēḷirum piṅarum kiḷpaṅiṅtu...;” *Patir.* 9<sup>th</sup> Ten 8:13; *A.N.*- 246:12 “Vēliroṭu vēntar.”

only collection of eulogizing song in the *Sangam* works, has shown the political prominence of the Cēras in the ancient Tamiḷakam.<sup>393</sup> The Cēra ruler Imayavarampan Neṭumcēral depicted as the lord of the prosperous *nāṭu* with sea, mountains, rivers and wetlands.<sup>394</sup> This is the typical reference on the topographical feature of the Cēra land and also the indication on the resource base of the Cēra power. They seem to have acquired the political prominence in the ancient Tamiḷakam through the resource mobilization from sea and land. They must have accumulated wealth from mountains and other resourceful tracts and sea and redistributed to their subjects.<sup>395</sup> They are depicted as the political power who defeated the entire political territories of Aryans in the North and extended upto Kanyakumari in the South.<sup>396</sup> Though such illustrations can be considered as only eulogy of the Cēra powers, it seems to show that the contemporary society was aware about the political scenario of the north and south of the Indian subcontinent. The reference of Maurya, which mentioned earlier, have also shown the reciprocal political contacts of the Iron Age and early historic political powers of the North and South.

The territorial boundary of *Mūvar* is referred to as *Tamiḷtalai*, or Tamiḷakam, the region surrounded by sea.<sup>397</sup> *Periplus of Eritrean Sea* of early Christian Era refers to the region of Tamil people as *Damirica*, probably the

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<sup>393</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. p. 205.

<sup>394</sup> *Patir.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Tens 5:16-17. “Kaṭalum kallavum yārravum piṟavum vaḷam pala nikaḷtarunana-ṅtalai nannāṭṭu.”

<sup>395</sup> *Patir.* 6<sup>th</sup> Ten 9:15-16. “malaiyavum kaṭalavum paṇṇiyam pakukkum...”

<sup>396</sup> *Patir.* 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten 1:23-24. “Āriyar tuvanṛiya pēriceyimayam tennaṅkumariyoṭāyīṭai.”

<sup>397</sup> *P.N-19:1-2* “...Imiḷ kaṭalvaḷai iya viṇṭakankiṭakkait tamiḷtalaimayaṅkiya...;” *P.N-35:1-4* “naḷiyīṟu munnirēṇiyāka Vaḷiyīṭai vaḷaṅkāvēnaṅcūṭiya Maṇṭiṇikiṭakkaittaṅtamiḷkkaḷavan Muracumuḷaṅku tānai mūvaruḷḷum...”



erroneous accent of Tamiḷakam.<sup>398</sup> As mentioned in the previous chapter, Tamiḷakam was a cultural and linguistic zone in an undulated topography bounded by the Cape Comorin on the South and Veṅkaṭa hills on the North (some time Himalaya also refers as the northern boundary) and the ocean on the east and west.<sup>399</sup> According to the literature, the region is divided into five geo-eco zones called *Tinai* and each *Tinai* represent different features of hilly forest, pastoral slopes, unoccupied dry lands, wetland areas and coastal areas.<sup>400</sup> All these three rulers were praised separately in different poems<sup>401</sup> and depicted as three major powers of south India. Among these, the region under political sway of Cēras is referred to as *Kētalaputa* in the Asokan inscription and *Cērobotra*, translated as *Kēraḷaputra*, in the *Periplus of Eritrean Sea*<sup>402</sup> was a separate political entity, which is part of the present central Kerala, and was extended up to Kongu region of the present Coimbatore area of Tamilnadu. *Patirrupattu*, the only Tamil text eulogizing ten Cēra rulers, also underlined the political prominence of their political power. In a poem of *Puṛaṇānūru*, sung by Poikayār about Cēramān Kō Kōtai Mārpen, refers to the political power of Cēra ruler over the undulated region by depicting him as the *Nāṭan* (the lord of cultivated and occupied zone in the hilly area or *Kuṛiṇṇi*), *Ūran* (lord of wet land agrarian settlements or *Marutam*) and *Cōṛpan* (lord of the coastal area).<sup>403</sup> This can be

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<sup>398</sup> Wilfred H Scoff. *Op. cit.* p. 205.

<sup>399</sup> *P.N-* 17: 1-4 “Tenkumari vaṭa perumkal kuṇakuṭa kaṭalāvellai kuṇrumalai kātu nāṭonrupattu..;” George Hart. *Op. cit.* p.14.

<sup>400</sup> *Aintinai* are *Kuṛiṇṇi*, *Mullai*, *Pālai*, *Marutam* and *Neital*. For details, Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. pp. 161-173.

<sup>401</sup> Many poems are there for example *P.N-2*, 5, 8, 11, etc. (Cēra), *P.N-3*, 6, 9, etc. (Pāntiya), *P.N- 4*, 7, 10 etc. (Cōḷa),

<sup>402</sup> Wilfred H Scoff. *Op. cit.* p.208.

<sup>403</sup> *P.N-49*.

considered as the clear depiction of the undulated landscape west of the Western Ghats of Tamiḷakam, i.e. the present Kerala, in the early centuries of Christian era.<sup>404</sup> Perumcōṟru Utiyan Cēral is represented as the king who extended his political boundary of the *nāṭu* by defeating the enemies of Cēra.<sup>405</sup>

Karur and Muziris were the two important political hubs of the early Cēra.<sup>406</sup> As the Cēras are depicted as the lord of the resource areas in the hilly forest, wetland plains and coastal zone, they must have possessed economic control over the contemporary resources of these terrain. The Roman trade was one reason for the political prominence of the Cēra power in Tamiḷakam. Muziris is depicted as the flourishing port town due to the arrival of *Yavanās* with gold and as the centre of spices especially pepper.<sup>407</sup> Pliny and Periplus also refer to Muziris as the port of pepper trade.<sup>408</sup> Besides spices, the iron deposit and the semi-precious stone, especially beryl, deposit of the Cēra region<sup>409</sup> was also the reason behind the opulence of Cēra economy. Karur was located in the nearby areas of such deposit zone. Koṭumaṇam and Paṅtar are mentioned in the *Patirrupattu* as the centres of semiprecious beads and pearls respectively.<sup>410</sup> Koṭumaṇam is identified with the present Kotumaṇal in Erode district, where archaeological excavation have brought to light the evidence of a flourishing gemstone craft centre.<sup>411</sup> Paṅtar seems to be the medieval port Fandarina and the

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<sup>404</sup> T. Madhava Menon. *Op. cit.* p. 172.

<sup>405</sup> A.N- 65-5 “nāṭukan akariya Utiyañcēral”

<sup>406</sup> Y Subbarayalu. *Op. cit.* 2014. p. 50.

<sup>407</sup> A.N- 149:10-11. “ponnoṭuvaṅṅu kariyōṭu peyarum valam keḷu muciri..”

<sup>408</sup> Wilfred H Scoff. *Op. cit.* p. 205

<sup>409</sup> K. Rajan. “Iron and Gem stone industries as revealed from Kodumanal Excavations”, *Purātatva*, 20, 1991. pp. 111-12; Y. Subbarayalu, *Op. cit.* p.50.

<sup>410</sup> *Patir.* 7<sup>th</sup> Ten 7:1-2 “Koṭumaṇam paṭṭa neṭumolyokkaloṭu Paṅtarpperiya pēriceya mūtūr...”

<sup>411</sup> K. Rajan. *Lo. cit.* 1991; Y. Subbarayalu. *Op. cit.* 2014. p. 50.

present day Panthalayani Kollam in Kerala.<sup>412</sup> Pliny refers that the Cēras sent best iron to Rome.<sup>413</sup> All these have indicated the importance of Muziris and Karur in the history Cēra polity.

### ***Genealogy of Cēras***

The *Sangam* literature and the early historic Tamil Brahmi inscriptions from Pugalur in Tamilnadu have mentioned the political genealogy of the Cēras. Accordingly, there were two lineages of Cēra like Utiyan and Irumporai lines. *Patirrupattu* refers to seven rulers of the Utiyan lineage and three rulers of Irumporai lineage.<sup>414</sup> *Puṛaṇānūṟu* poems also mention the eight Cēra rulers of the Irumporai line. The genealogy of three generations of Irumporai line of the Cēra recorded in the Pugalur inscription as well.<sup>415</sup>

**Table 3. List of the rulers of Utiyan Lineage**

<b>Utiyan Lineage<sup>416</sup></b>	<b><i>Sangam</i> Texts</b>
Utiyan Cēral or Perumcōrrudiyan	<i>Patir.</i> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ten ( <i>Patikam-2</i> ), A.N- 65:5, 233:8-9. P.N- 2, 65.
Imayavarampan Neṭumcēralātan Kuṭakkō Neṭuncēralātan	<i>Patir.</i> - 2 <sup>nd</sup> Ten. P.N- 368.
Palyānai Cēlkeḷu Kuṭṭuvan	<i>Patir.</i> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ten.
Kaḷaṅkāykaṅṅi Nārmuṭi Cēral	<i>Patir.</i> – 4 <sup>th</sup> Ten.
Kaḷalpiṛakōṭṭiya Ceṅkuṭṭuvan Kaḷalōṭṭiya Vēlkeḷkuṭṭuvan	<i>Patir.</i> – 5 <sup>th</sup> Ten. P.N- 368

<sup>412</sup> Y. Subbarayalu. *Loc. cit.*

<sup>413</sup> Wilfred H. Scoff. *Op. cit.* p. 209.

<sup>414</sup> G. Vaidyanatha Ayyar. *Op. cit.* p. 20; Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. pp. 205-09.

<sup>415</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Loc. cit.* Iravatham Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* pp.117-18, 405-21.

<sup>416</sup> G. Vaidyanatha Ayyar. *Op. cit.* Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. pp. 207-08.

Āṭukōṭupāṭṭu Cēralātan	<i>Patir.</i> – 6 <sup>th</sup> Ten.
Añtuvan Cēral	<i>Patir.</i> – 7 <sup>th</sup> Ten.

The details of the Irumpoṛai line occurs in the literature as well as in the inscription. *Patirrupattu* mentions three rulers, *Puṛanānūru* refers to 8 rulers and *Pugalur* inscription of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD alludes three rulers of *Irumpoṛai* line.

**Table 4. List of the rulers of Irumpoṛai Lineage**

<b>Irumpoṛai Lineage</b> <sup>417</sup>	<b>Sangam texts</b>
Karuvūrēriya oḷvāḷ Kōperumcēral Irumpoṛai	<i>P.N-</i> 5
Kaṭunko Aḷiyātan	<i>P.N-</i> 8
Celvakaṭunkō Aḷiyātan	<i>Patir.</i> 7 <sup>th</sup> Ten
Yānaikkaṭ Cēymāntarancēral Irumpoṛai	<i>P.N-</i> 17, 20,22, 50, 229
Takaṭūr eṛiṅta Perumcēral Irumpoṛai	<i>P.N-</i> 50; <i>Patir.</i> 8 <sup>th</sup> Ten
Māntaran Cēral Irumpoṛai.	<i>P.N-</i> 53
Kaṇaikkāl Irumpoṛai	<i>P.N-</i> 74
Kuṭakkō Cēral Irumpoṛai	<i>P.N-</i> 210
Kuṭakkō ḷancēral Irumpoṛai	<i>Patir.</i> 9 <sup>th</sup> Ten

The 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD Pugalur inscription clearly recorded the genealogy of three generation of Irumpoṛai line of the Cēras.<sup>418</sup> It recorded the construction and grants of a rock shelter to a senior Jain monk, Caṅkāyapan, by the Irumpoṛai line of the Cērās ruling from Karūr.<sup>419</sup> R. Paneerselvam and Irvatham Mahadevan

<sup>417</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* 1999. pp. 207-08.

<sup>418</sup> Irvatham Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* pp. 117-18, 405-21.

<sup>419</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 117, 405.

identified the three rulers mentioned in the inscription with the rulers mentioned in the *Patirrupattu* as follows;<sup>420</sup>

**Table 5. List of the rulers appeared in the Pugalur Inscription and corresponding references in the *Patirrupattu***

Pugalur Inscription	<i>Patirrupattu</i>
Kō Ātan Cel Irumporai	Celva-k-kaṭuṅkō Vāli-y Ātan – <i>Patir.</i> 7 <sup>th</sup> Ten
Peruṅkaṭuṅkōn	Perum-cēral Irumpurai- <i>Patir.</i> 8 <sup>th</sup> Ten
Kaṭuṅkōṅ ᱱaṅkaṭuṅkō	ᱱan- cēral Irumpurai – <i>Patir.</i> 9 <sup>th</sup> Ten

It is stated that there were about thirty Cēra rulers mentioned in the literature.<sup>421</sup> However, the major rulers eulogized in the *Patirrupattu* are considered as the important rulers and they belonged to above mentioned two genealogies. The term Kō Ātan occurred in the literature and the Tamil Brahmi inscription at Edakkal, Waynad district of Kerala<sup>422</sup> represented the Cēra ruler. Katumiputta Cēra of the Edakkal inscription have also corroborated the literary indications about the Cēra power in Kerala during the early historic period.<sup>423</sup> There is another Cēra ruler Kōkōtai Mārpan, not mentioned in the *Patirrupattu*, appears in the *Puṛanānūru* poems as the lord of the land and sea of the west coast of Tamiḷakam.<sup>424</sup> It is argued that Cēramān Kō Kōtai Mārpen is one of the last

<sup>420</sup> R. Paneerselvam, “An Important Brahmi Tamil Inscription: A Reconstruction of the Genealogy of the Chera Kings” *Proceedings of the First International Conference- Seminar of Tamil Studies I-*, Kualalampur, Malasya, 1968. pp.421-425; Iravatham Mahadevan, “Tamil Brahmi Inscription of the Sangam Age” *Proceedings of the Second International Conference- Seminar of Tamil Studies I*. Madras. pp. 73-106. cited in Iravatham Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* 2003. p. 117.

<sup>421</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. “Ādi Cēranmār” N. Sam (ed.). *Op. cit.* p.135.

<sup>422</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p. 193.

<sup>423</sup> Iravatham Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* 2003. p. 118, 431-35.

<sup>424</sup> P.N- 48:1-4, 49:1-6.

rulers in the Cēra genealogy and ruled between 150 AD and 175 AD.<sup>425</sup> The ceremonial functions before the predatory marches under Maravas with the auspicious blessing of the ruling power is clearly depicted in a *Purānānūru* song.<sup>426</sup>

### ***Features of Cēra Polity***

The above discussion reveals that Cēras were an independent political entity in ancient Tamiḷakam. *Patirrupattu*, the eulogizing genealogical account of Cēra, shows the political involvement of Cēras in the west coast of Kerala that extended upto the ancient Kongunāṭu (the present Coimbatore region). They must have passed through Palaghat gap of the Western Ghats. According to the literature there were two lineages of Cēra; Utiyan and Irumporai. They had a rich resource base both from land and sea. The inland and overseas exchange networks were important to the economic stability of the Cēras. Muziris had a significant role in the overseas exchanges of the Cēras. It is suggested that Cēra kings taking steps to control piracy in the western sea would also vouch for their keen interest in sea trade.<sup>427</sup>

The Cērās were influenced with the Jain, Buddhist and Brahmanic traditions. Utiyan Cēral observed the Jain practice of fast unto death called *Vaṭakkirikkal*. Pugalur inscription mentions that Kaṭumkōn Iḷamkaṭuṅko of Irumporai line constructed a rock shelter for Jain monks.<sup>428</sup> The land grants and gifts giving practices were prevailed during the Cēra period. Celvakaṭuṅko

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<sup>425</sup> K.N. Sivaraja Pillai. *The Chronology of the Early Tamils*. New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, (1932) 1984. Table III, p. xix.

<sup>426</sup> P.N- 289.

<sup>427</sup> Y. Subbarayalu, *Op. cit.* 2014. p 54.

<sup>428</sup> Iravatham Mahadevan. *Op. cit.* p.117.

Alīyātan is mentioned as the ruler who give respect to Brahmins.<sup>429</sup> He gave gifts and grants to the *Āntaṇar*, the learned Vedic Brahmins who performed *Vēlvi* (Vedic Sacrifices) in favour of the ruler.<sup>430</sup> Imayavarampan Neṭumcēralātan granted land to the Brahmana.<sup>431</sup>

They tried to upsurge their political power by defeating minor *Vēlir* chiefs and the major powers like Cōḷas. Nārmuṭi Cēralātan cut down the totem tree of the *Vēlir* chief Nannan of Eḷimalai and defeated and established his power over the region.<sup>432</sup> The Cēras also defeated Cōḷas.

### ***Nature of Pre- Temple Kerala Polity***

As the temple and Brahminic rituals had significant space in the early medieval period, it is necessary to check the nature of polity of the pre-temple phase. The above discussion prove that Kerala was ruled by Cēra, one of the Mūvēntars of Tamiḷakam, and minor Vēlir chiefs like Nannan and Āys. The petty chiefs must have enjoyed power over different clannish occupational groups (*Kuṭis*). Most of the studies considered *Mūvēntar* as Kings and the Cēra power as kingdom or dynasty or empire.<sup>433</sup> Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai considered Utiyan Cēralātan as the first king of Kerala.<sup>434</sup> Rajan Gurukkal put forwarded a chiefdom theory to the Cēra polity. Accordingly, there were three level of chiefly power based on kinship relations, *Kiḷār* (lower chiefs), *Vēlir* (hill chiefs) and *Vēntar*

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<sup>429</sup> *Paṭiṛ*. 7<sup>th</sup> Ten 3:1.

<sup>430</sup> *Paṭiṛ*. 7<sup>th</sup> Ten 4:3-6, *Paṭiṛ*. 7<sup>th</sup> Ten 10:18 “Vēlviyir Kaṭavuḷaruttinai kēlvi”

<sup>431</sup> *Paṭiṛ*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten *Paṭikam* 2.

<sup>432</sup> *Paṭiṛ*. 4<sup>th</sup> Ten 10:14-16.

<sup>433</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. “Ādi Cēranamar.” N. Sam (ed.). *Op. cit.* 135-59; A Sreedhara Menon. *A Survey of Kerala History*. Chennai: S, Viswanathana pvt. Ltd, (1967) 2003. pp.73-80; K.K. Pillai. *Op. cit.* pp. 26-27; George Hart. *Op. cit.* 13-20; Iravatham Mahadevan, *Op. cit.* pp. 117-18.

<sup>434</sup> Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai. “Kēraḷathile Ādyathe Rājāvu.” N. Sam (ed.) pp.174-79.

(major chief)<sup>435</sup> and dismissed the possibility of kingship and monarchy in early Kerala. The scholars like Y. Subarayalu stated that there was a sort of state society in the early Tamiḷakam, though the evidence is too slender to make concrete statement.<sup>436</sup> According to him, “the Tamil state can be compared to some extent with the Satavahana set up.”<sup>437</sup>

The present discussion also emphasizes on the possible existence of a stratified society with different level political hierarchies. The Mūvēntar must have enjoyed considerable control over the resources. As mentioned earlier, the Cēra rulers were depicted as the lord of the land, mountains and sea. The bards of the contemporary society elevated the Cēra ruler to the rank of an emperor who had sway over the entire region between Himalaya in the north and Cape Camorin in the south. Such references have shown that they were politically aware about the status of emperors.

Like Pāndyas and Cōḷas, the Cērās also issued coins. The coins must have been issued by the rulers to stamp their political power and not for the circulation in connection with money economy. However, the discovery of copper and lead coins from Pattanam excavation seems to have shown the material wise difference in the value of coins. If so, one has to argue that the early historic society was not fully ignorant about the money exchange. As the Cēra political emblem is found in the coins, it can be assumed that the Cēra rulers were issued coins as part of the coastal and it also represented their political control over the trade especially the maritime trade.

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<sup>435</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. 1999. *Op. cit.* pp. 199-213.

<sup>436</sup> Y. Subarayalu. “Early Tamil Polity.” Noboru Karashima (ed.). *Op. cit.* p.55.

<sup>437</sup> *Loc. cit.*



They were also depicted as the rulers who conducted predatory marches against *Vēḷir* and minor chiefs and bigger *Vēṅtars* like *Cōḷa* and *Pāndya*. They have collected the *Tiṟai* or tribute from the defeated powers.

The *Cēra* rulers performed various Vedic rituals and started land grants and other gifts to the Brahmins as the reward of their ritual performances. It shows that the land grants to the Brahmin was started even before the development of temple.

The literature and Pugalur inscriptions and coins with legends and emblems have evidently prove the patriarchic lineage of the *Cēra* ruling families. However, the above discussion emphasizes on the possible prevalence of some sort of state system in the early historic period, which probably influenced by the newly emerged Vedic principles of Brahmins as well.

### **The Beginning of Syncretic Culture**

Ancient *Tamiḷakam* consisted of many social groups and their settlements. As part of *Tamiḷakam*, Kerala had contact with many cultural zones in India and abroad mainly through the trade routes. *Sangam* literature refers to the presence of the people who spoke other language, probably reached at *Tamiḷakam* as part of trade. The term *Vaṭukar* and *Āriyar* also indicates the arrival of the people from northern parts to *Tamiḷakam*. The archaeological remains, especially the non-local semi-precious stones beads and manufacturing waste of carnelian, amethyst, chalcedony etc. from megaliths and Pattanam excavations respectively have shown the possible contact of the traders or craftsmen of the region with the northern parts. The Buddhist and Jain influence were prominent in the society. Both these sects were prominent in *Tamiḷakam* even before the arrival of Brahmins. The Brahmins tried to overcome the Buddhist influence in the society and emphasized the importance of four Vedas and six sections of Veda, probably

*Vēdaṅgās* and the Vedic sacrifices.<sup>438</sup> Thus the Brahmins gradually brain washed the common people into believing the Vedic scriptures and sacrifices and consciously generated a feeling that the Veda alone is true. This poem actually stands for the Brahminisation of early Tamilakam. Along with the propagation of the prominence of Vedic texts and sacrifices, the Brahmins or *Āriyar* must have used martial power as well.

The *Konkar*, probably the people from Kongunadu was mentioned in the poem.<sup>439</sup> The *Kōcar* from northern part also arrived.<sup>440</sup> The term *Yavanar* appears in the context of maritime exchange have underlined the presence of the traders from Ionian Sea of Mediterranean. The discovery of the West Asian ceramic from the early historic archaeological layers at Pattanam have proved their presence at the west coast of Kerala. All these have shown the formation of a syncretic culture in Kerala during the early historic period.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, the pre-temple society was an organized, stratified and economically very sound one. The multi crop production was practiced in the hillock, plains and wet lands. The prosperous agrarian settlements like *Nāṭu*, *Ūr* and the populous craft manufacturing zone like *Cēri* and exchange centres like *Aṅgādi*, *Caṅta*, *Paṭṭinam* etc. have shown the development of a complex society. It was a hierarchical and organized society comprised of various occupational groups with various skills and knowledge. It was some sort of a literate society and they are familiar with writing. The settlements were also developed according to the nature of occupation or subsistence. The hilly people who

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<sup>438</sup> P.N- 166.

<sup>439</sup> P.N- 130:5

<sup>440</sup> P.N- 169:9, 283:6, 396:7

involved in the hunting gathering subsistence must have followed a nomadic life according to the availability of the resources and the agricultural population must have had a settled life in the plains. The fishing and salt making developed as regular practices in the coastal areas. The settled form of familial life of the society is clearly mentioned in the literature. The resources from the mountains, plains and coasts were widely exchanged and the goods from long distance and abroad reached at the west coast of Kerala. The coastal trading port like Muziris had a remarkable space in the economic development of Cēra country.

There must have an effective hierarchical ruling system Like *Vēntar*, *Vēḷir* and *Kīlār* behind the existence of stratified and organized society in the pre-temple period. The Cēras must have patronized or influenced by the religious sects like Jain, Buddhist and Brahmin. They had practiced many Vedic rituals as part of their ruling system that also have shown the emerging influence of Brahmanic ritual over the Cēra polity. They had started land grants to the Brahmins as the reward of their service as well.

The above discussion proves that, the Brahmins, as the Vedic ritual performers and the custodian of the temples, came to an already flourished agrarian society of Kerala. Such material setting had facilitated the development of new kind of permanent structural institution for worship. Before the emergence of structural temples, the specialized occupation groups for the ritual functions were not prevailed. The traditional occupation groups practiced clannish ritual performances at household and various other occasions of the pre-temple society. This period also witnessed the formation of Brahminic culture and the beginning of temple worship. The early medieval epigraphs mentioned the substantial amount of land granted to the temple and the Brahmins. All that lands were fertile production units, not the barren land and most of them were

granted along with the tilling communities and other existing settlements of the various occupational groups. Thus, the temple and Brahmins got the ownership right over the land and it further resulted into the expansion of wetland agriculture. However, the present discussion tries to argue that there was an organized society with clear political backup in the pre-temple society and the temple and Brahminic traditions were developed in the backdrop of such a flourished multi-crop agrarian socio-cultural setting. Thus, the next three chapters will discuss the process of the development of temple as an institutionalized worshipping structure, the formation of early medieval society in the wake of the newly emerged Brahminic culture and the role of temple in the making of early medieval political structure.

## Chapter III

### **EVOLUTION OF EARLY MEDIEVAL TEMPLES**

The temples, as a structural edifice, provide a symbolic power to the Brahmins, which enabled them to make a ritual control over the ruling authorities and the society. The ruling powers enjoyed a hegemonic power over the society as the patron of Temples and the Brahmins and uphold their political status. The present chapter deals with the development of temple as an institutionalized worshipping edifice with various Vedic ritual ceremonies. The emergence of the Brahmin settlements with the Sanskrit, Tantric and Bhakti traditions in South India were the milestones of the formation of temples in the early medieval period. Similarly, the presence of Jain and Buddhist tradition, which later incorporated into the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions, is noteworthy, in Kerala. The temple had crucial role in the making of more complex form of stratified society after circa 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, the early medieval period (7<sup>th</sup> century to 13<sup>th</sup> century AD) witnessed the formation of the structural form of temples and many occupational groups in connection with the temple. So, the temple, as a permanent worshipping institution, mainly Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava, had both ritual and political status and resulted into formation of a more complex society based on Varna consciousness in the early medieval period, which will be discussed in the following chapters.

#### **Emergence of Brahmin settlements**

The emergence of the Brahmin settlements was the fundamental force behind the evolution of institutionalized devotion or *bhakti* through the structural

temple in Kerala. As part of early Tamiḷakam, Kerala had witnessed the advent of Brahmin tradition from the early historic period. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the presence of Brahmins in different terms like *antaṇar*, *pārppōn*, *neṭiyōn* etc. in South India in general and Kerala in particular is evident from the early historic period. *Akanānūru* literature of the early historic times refers to the archaic Brahmin settlements of Perumcellūr.<sup>1</sup> This is considered as the archaic Brahmin settlement of Kerala<sup>2</sup> and probably the only settlement that survive a long period in the history of erstwhile Kōlattunāṭu.<sup>3</sup> The reference about this settlement occurs in the later source materials like *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* of the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD, Perumcellūr inscription of 12<sup>th</sup> century AD, Kōlattunāṭu version of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* of circa 14<sup>th</sup> century AD and *Cellūr Nādōdayam Campu* of the medieval times. The continuity of Cellūr in the references have shown its survival as an important Brahmin settlement of Kerala from early historic to medieval period. The medieval documents revealed that Cellūr developed as a *Sankētam* and the *Yōgam* and *Sabha* of the Perum Cellūr Sankētam had dominant ritual power over the *Kōlaswarūpam*.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Kesavan Veluthat identified Perumcellūr settlement with present Talipparamba of Kannur district. Kesavan Veluthat. *Brahman Settlements in Kerala: Historical Studies*. Thrissur: Cosmo Books, (1978) 2013. pp. 35-59.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 35-42.

<sup>3</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Historical Geography of Kolattunadu: A Study of the Regional Formation in Medieval North Kerala*. Calicut University: Department of History, 2011. Chapter 5. unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

<sup>4</sup> *Loc. cit.*

It is argued that there were 32 Brahmin settlements in Kerala<sup>5</sup> and Cellūr was the archaic settlement.<sup>6</sup> The distribution of these settlements in the river valleys were listed and a distribution map was prepared systematically to establish the history of Brahmin settlements in Kerala.<sup>7</sup> The list was prepared on the basis of the information gathered from the *Kēraḷōlpatti* tradition and corroborated with early medieval inscriptions, medieval *Maṇipravāḷam* literature and the structural features of the temples.<sup>8</sup> The following part will examine these matters in detail.

The 32 settlements mentioned in the *Kēraḷōlpatti*<sup>9</sup> were distributed in the river valleys as mentioned below.

1. About ten settlements were distributed between river Perumpuḷa and Karumānpuḷa like Payyanūr, Perumcellūr, Karikkāṭu, Īśānamangalam, Ālattūr, Kārantala, Triśśivapērūr, Perumanam, Panniyūr and Cōkiram.<sup>10</sup>
2. About twelve settlements including Paṛavūr, Airāṇikkuḷam, Mūḷikkaḷam, Iringālakkuṭa, Avaṭūr, Ceṅganāṭu, Uḷiyannūr, Kaḷutanāṭu, Kuḷayūr, Iḷibhyam, Cāmuṇṭa and Āvattiputtūr were distributed between the river Karumānpuḷa and Cūrṇi.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Perumāḷs of Kerala Brahmin Oligarchy and Ritual Monarchy Political and Social conditions of Kerala under the Chera Perumals of Makotai (c AD 800 – AD 1124)*, Thrissur: Cosmo books, (1996), 2013. pp. 262-71.

<sup>6</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* pp. 35-59.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 48-50, 146-51.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* pp.43-59.

<sup>9</sup> Herman Gundert. “*Keralōlpatti*”. *Keralapazhama, Keralolpathi, Ayirattirunnuru Pazhancho- llukal*. Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Cooperative Society, 2014. pp. 111-12.

<sup>10</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* p. 262.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 262-63; Herman Gundert. *Op. cit.* pp. 111-12.

3. Last ten settlements were spread between the river Cūrṇi and Kanyākumāri which include Kidangūr, Kāṭurmaṛuka, Kumāranallūr, Kaviyūr, Ēttumānūr, Nīrmaṇṇa, Veṇmaṇi, Āraṇmuḷa, Cengannūr, and Tiruvalla.<sup>12</sup>

It is argued that 16 out of 32 settlements appeared in the inscriptions of the Cēra period.<sup>13</sup> Based on the early medieval epigraphs, M.G.S. Narayanan argued that there were about 59 Brahmin settlements mentioned in the inscriptions, which are not included in the 32 original settlements.<sup>14</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan considered these settlements as the ‘new settlements’ out of 32 original settlements. As these settlements were mentioned in the inscriptions of early medieval period, they must have developed in the early period. There are some indications on the existence of Brahmin settlements and their bodies like *Sabha* and also some Brahmin households with the prefix *Mangalam* in the epigraphs.

Based on the survey of the early medieval inscriptions, the present researcher assumes that some of the settlements included in the *Kēraḷōlpatti* literature did not belong to the early medieval period and the list of 32 settlements seems to have been compiled during the later period with the emergence of *Swarūpam* kind of polity, probably after the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. For instance, the Payyannūr settlement is not mentioned in the early medieval epigraphs and the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* of 11<sup>th</sup> century AD. At the same time Perumcellūr or Cellūr is mentioned as the prominent settlement in the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*<sup>15</sup> and in a

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<sup>12</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* p. 263.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 264, 286.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 264, 287.

<sup>15</sup> T. A. Gopinatha Rao. *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Volumes II and III. Canto XI-26. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publications Government of Kerala, (1908) 1992. pp. 87-113 (Hereafter *T.A.S.* Vol. II and III: 87-113); K. Raghavan Pillai.



12<sup>th</sup> century AD inscription.<sup>16</sup> Both the Mūṣaka rulers of early medieval period and their successors Kōlattirīs of medieval period paid their homage to this settlement. However, such details are not available in the case of Payyannur and the architectural features of Payyannur temple is not corresponding to the early medieval period and it is argued that the apsidal temple of Payyannur belonged to the later phase of temple architecture i.e. after 17<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>17</sup>

The number of settlements, mentioned in *Kēraḷōlpatti*, is very less in the case of northern part of Kerala. Regarding the distribution of Brahmin settlements, there is big gap between Perumcellūr and Payyannūr, located in the present Kannur district, and the Karikkāṭu settlement in the present Malappuram district. *Kēraḷōlpatti* does not give information about the Brahmin settlements of the region between these three settlements. At the same time the distribution of inscriptions points out that there must have been about 30 prominent temple sites in this region. The survival of temples with early medieval architectural features, with or without inscriptional evidence, in this region also underlined the possible spread of the Brahmin settlements.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, we cannot confine the number of Brahmin settlements in northern Kerala, especially in the present Malappuram,

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*Mushikavamsam* (Sanskrit–English translation). Department of Publications Kerala University, 1977; K. Raghavan Pillai. *Mūshakavamsam- Mūlavum Paribhāshayam*. (Sanskrit-Malayalam translation). Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Publications Kerala University, 1983. Hereafter *M.V.K.* XI :26, XIII:51.

<sup>16</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. “Perumchellur Chepped, Kollam 321, Kanni 21 (1145 September 22)”, *AdhAram: A journal for Kerala Archaeology and History* Vol 1. Kottayam: Kerala Puratatva Samiti, 2006. pp 75-82; Kesavan Veluthat. “A copper plate inscription from Perumchellur, North Kerala, India: AD 1145.” *Indian History Congress 69<sup>th</sup> session Souvenir*. Kannur: Kannur University, 2008. pp. 13-18.

<sup>17</sup> H. Sarkar. *An Architectural Survey of the Temples of Kerala*. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India. 1978. pp. 264-65.

<sup>18</sup> Many temples survive and some of them are abandoned. The details will provide in the section of the distribution of the temple.

Kozhikode and Kannur district, with the above mentioned three Brahmin settlements. As the *Kēraḷōlpatti* represented the medieval or late medieval political setting, it need not be mentioned about the early medieval temples that developed during the period of the Second Cēras and *Nāṭṭutaiyavar*. The emergence of Brahmin settlements and the temples were part of the contemporary political requirements of the pre-colonial Kerala. The Brahminic rituals were part of the ruling power to symbolize their power and equated their political status with the Kshatriya Varna, which must have been started from the time of early Cēras and flourished through the Second Cēra and established at the time of *Swarūpam* polity in the post-Cēra period.

Therefore, *Kēraḷōlpatti* does not mention the settlements related to Narayan Kaṅṅūr, Eramam Cālappuṟam, Triccambaram and Māṇiyūr temples in Kannur district of Kerala.<sup>19</sup> Both Narayan Kaṅṅūr and Māṇiyūr temple inscriptions refer *Mūlīkkaḷam Kaccam*, which obviously proved its connection with dominant Brahmin settlements of the Cēra territory. According to Narayan Kaṅṅūr inscription the Mūṣaka ruler Vikkirarāman granted cultivated wetlands to the temple and entrusted the Brahmin household Valampurimangalam to oversee the temple affairs.<sup>20</sup> The Triccambaram inscription of 11<sup>th</sup> century records the endowment of Mānavēpāla Mānaviyatan of Ēṟanāṭu for meeting the expense of the sacred lamp at Tirucemmaram temple.<sup>21</sup> *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*

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<sup>19</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan has already noticed this absence. But as he believed that all the 32 settlements were prevailed in the early medieval period, he considered these as new settlements. *Op. cit.* p. 264.

<sup>20</sup> Narayankannur Inscription line 1-27. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Kerala Charithrathinte Aṭisthāna Śilakal*. Calicut: Nava Kerala Cooperative Publication, 1971 pp. 93-101; “Index to Cēra Inscriptions.” No. B 3. *Op. cit.* (2013). pp. 475-76 (Hereafter *Index* No. B 3: 475-476).

<sup>21</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Index* No. C1: 486.

refers to this temple as Śambara<sup>22</sup> which is identified as Triccambara.<sup>23</sup> According to the *Kāvya*, Śambara was a glorious Viṣṇu temple. There are two sets of inscriptions at Māṇiyūr temple. The first one refers to the share of produce from the *Kārāṇmai* land of *Akappotuvāḷ* to meet the temple affairs according to the *Mūlikkaḷattu Sankētam*.<sup>24</sup> The second set mentions the *Puṛappotuvāḷ* and *Uvaccan* as the tenants of the temple land and they were responsible to submit share of produce from the wetland and garden land like paddy and pepper respectively. This agreement was fixed on the basis of *Mūlikkaḷattu Kaccam*.<sup>25</sup> The architectural features of this temple corresponds to the early medieval period. All these indicate that Māṇiyūr was an important temple and, as the decision was taken unanimously by the *Māṇiyūr Ūr*, *Potuvāḷ* and *Kōyil*, it must have developed in the surrounding of a dominant Brahmin settlement and it had support from the ruling power (*Kōyil*), probably the Mūṣakas. The temple committee resolution of the Vēḷam temple also hinted at the development of a Brahmin settlement in that region.<sup>26</sup> Kayalkkāṭu inscription, shows that it was a dominant temple that must have been possessed by a flourished Brahmin settlement.<sup>27</sup> It quotes a severe sin as the fine for violation of the temple contract like “*tanne uvaniccōtuvicca Āyāriyanaiyum Tannuṭaiya ta(antai)yaiyum konṛu koṇṭu Ākāramāyttinṛu*

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<sup>22</sup> “SaŚambarapata prathitābhitānam” *M.V.K.* XIII- 62.

<sup>23</sup> *M.V.K.* XIII:62 K. Raghavan Pillai. *Op. cit.* pp 276-277

<sup>24</sup> Māṇiyūr inscription-1. line 1-16. *Index* No. C 2: 486; Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Kerala Charithrathile Atisthanana Rekhakal*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Bhasha Institute, (2007) 2011. pp.396-97 (Hereafter *K.C.A.R.*: 396-97).

<sup>25</sup> Māṇiyūr inscription-2. line 1-36 *Index* No. C 2:486; *K.C.A.R.*:398.

<sup>26</sup> Vēḷam inscription. *Index* No. C 4:487.

<sup>27</sup> Kayalkkāṭu inscription. *K.C.A.R.*:393.

*Evolution of Early Medieval Temple*

*Tāyaikkalattiraventamākki Ūrkumpurattiṭṭu.*”<sup>28</sup> This references hint at the practice of *Upanayanam* (initiation of the learning process of the Brahmins) in the contemporary society in the surrounding of the Kayalkkāṭu temple and also the possible existence of the Brahmin settlement. The Cembra inscription refers to the formation of *Dēvasvam* and also mentioned *Ēṭanūr Sabha* and *Ūr*, the Brahmin bodies of the settlement.<sup>29</sup>

Kaliyāmpalli inscription refers to the provision made by the *Sabha* and Kaṇṭan Raṇamaṇi alias Polaivar for the lamp of the temple.<sup>30</sup> This temple is also noteworthy as it possesses the iconic representations of *Saptamātrika* cult, which must have belonged to the early phase of the temple architecture; i.e. 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>31</sup> Kāvuntara inscription of Kōta kō dated 943 AD refers to the temple committee resolution regarding the arrangements of the expenses of the lamp and offerings like *Nivēdyam* and *Śrībali* by *Kāvil Mūttār* and *Iṭaiyār*.<sup>32</sup> The survival of the early medieval architectural features is also noteworthy in this temple.<sup>33</sup> The endowment of the *Āṭṭaikkōḷ* of *Vēṇāṭaṭikaḷ*, Vēṇāṭu ruler in

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<sup>28</sup> Those who violate the temple contract will be considered as the person who killed his teacher and father and eat them as food and then married his mother and also evicted from the Ūr. *Ibid.* line 7-10. *K.C.A.R.*:393.

<sup>29</sup> Cembra inscription-1 line 7, Cembra inscription-2. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Keraleeyatha Charithramanangal*. Sukapuram: Vallathol Vidyapeetham, (1990) 2009. pp. 96-99, 109-10.

<sup>30</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan identified the Polaivar with the governor of Pōḷanāṭu. *Index* No. C 5:487.

<sup>31</sup> The present researcher found the icons kept at the outer space of the temple. It is not worshipped.

<sup>32</sup> Kāvuntara inscription. *Index* No. A 18:443.

<sup>33</sup> The present researcher documented the relics of the archaic structures from the temple like broken parts of the door, roof tiles, *Balikkal*, basement stone of the installation of *Śiva linga* etc. which will discuss in the following session of this chapter.

southern Kerala, to maintain the expenses of the Kuḷattūr temple is significant as it located in the region of Kuṟumbranāṭu in northern Kerala.<sup>34</sup>

The Cōkkūr inscription mentions two *Sabhaiyār* (member or chief of the Brahmin body) related to the Kumāranārāyaṇapurattu temple like *Vāliccēri Sabhaiyār* and *Puḷikkarpurai Sabhaiyār*.<sup>35</sup> Mānipuram inscription of Indu Kōta Varman refers to the temple committee resolution made by *Potuvāl* and *Paraṭaiyār*, which shows the presence of dominant Brahmin settlement in connection with the temple.<sup>36</sup>

Tirunelli in Wayanad district was another important Brahmin settlement. There are two sets of inscriptions of 1005 AD. The first set evidently prove the existence of the Brahmin settlement of Vaiṣṇava tradition who got the *Cērikkal* land of Kuṟumpuṟaināṭu ruler Kuñcikkutṭa Varman alias *Aṭikaḷ* as *Kīlīṭu*.<sup>37</sup> A special admire is bestowed to the Brahmins and cattle wealth of the temple.<sup>38</sup> The second set of inscription forbidden the attempt of the sole management of the temple affairs and stated that it will condense the majesty of the temple.<sup>39</sup> Instead it stood for the corporate management of the temple body including Brahmins at the temple. This inscription mentions *Karaiñcanūr Sabha* which granted the land for 157.5 gram gold and arranged to meet the expenses of three lamps at the

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<sup>34</sup> M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* (1990) 2009. pp. 119-20.

<sup>35</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 4-3, 55-56. *Index*. No. A 8:438; *K.C.A.R*:24-27.

<sup>36</sup> Mānipuram inscription. *Index* No. A 20: 444.

<sup>37</sup> Tirunelli inscription-1 line 1-19. *Index* No. A 46: 458; *K.C.A.R*:75-77.

<sup>38</sup> “*Gōbrāhmaṇānā(m)svastika(m) svasti*”, Tirunelli inscription-1 line 25. *K.C.A.R*: 77.

<sup>39</sup> “*Tirunelli Perumālītaiya Cirikāriyam Kuṭakkaṭaviyavakal kūṭiyallātu Oruttan Ēkaiyкамору Cuvāmiyōṭukūṭi Tēvakāriyam keṭukkum*” Tirunelli inscription-2 line 9-11. *K.C.A.R*:78.

temple.<sup>40</sup> As this inscription refers to *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam*,<sup>41</sup> Tirunelli must have had a significant space in the Brahmin settlements of early medieval Kerala.

The *Tēvatvam* or *Dēvaswam*, temple land and *Pirammattuvam* or *Brahmasvam*, the land of the Brahmins of Rāmavaḷanāṭu were mentioned in the Tiruvaṅṅūr inscription.<sup>42</sup> This was originally a Jain settlement and later incorporated into the Brahmanic tradition, which will be discussed later.

Many early medieval temples have been surveyed in the present Malappuram district and found the possibility of the wide distribution of Brahmin settlements in the region besides the Karikkāṭu settlement mentioned in *Kēraḷōlpatti*. It includes Pullānūr, Pulpetta, Trippanacci, Ponmala, Kunnath, Kārakkunnu, Naṭakkāvungal, Indyanūr, Triprangōṭu, Eravimangalam, Trikkalayūr, Kuṟumāttūr, etc.<sup>43</sup> Some of these temples like Pulpetta, Pūkkōṭṭūr, Triprangōṭu, Eravimangalam, Trikkalayūr, Kuṟumāttūr, Ponmala, Indyanūr, Pūkkōṭṭūr etc. have inscriptions and some others like Pullānūr, Trippanacci, Kārakkunnu, Naṭakkāvungal etc. have been survived with early medieval architectural features. The Karikkāṭu was the foremost Brahmin settlement of the region, which has five set of inscriptions belonged to 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>44</sup> The records hinted the existence of Cālai, the education institution for the Brahmin students and the land assigned for its maintenance (Cālaippuṟam).<sup>45</sup> The land and gold were received for meeting the expenses of the Brahmin feast at the

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<sup>40</sup> Tirunelli inscription-2 line 27-28. *Index* No. A 36: 452-453; *K.C.A.R*:78.

<sup>41</sup> Tirunelli inscription-2 line 33-36. *Index* No. A 36: 452-453; *K.C.A.R*:78.

<sup>42</sup> Tiruvaṅṅūr inscription line 6. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society,1972. pp. 70-71.

<sup>43</sup> Details are given in the Table.1 in the following part.

<sup>44</sup> Karikkāṭu Inscription. *Index* No. C 7,8,9,10,11: 488-89.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*. *Index* No. C. 7: 488.

temple (*Uttamākkiram, Tiruvakkiram*).<sup>46</sup> The *Pulāpaṛra Ūru, Kōyil, Ēranāṭṭu Arunnūrruvar* and *Eṭattiraināṭṭu Munnūrruvar* jointly take decision to meet the expenses of the feast of the temple from the granted land.<sup>47</sup> As this inscription mentions, *Ūr*, the temple body, in the name of the settlement or temple and *Ēranāṭṭu*, it can be assumed that the settlement must have received the patronage of the ruling powers of *Ēranāṭṭu* and *Eṭattiraināṭṭu*, probably the subdivision of *Ēranāṭṭu*.<sup>48</sup> *Pūkkōṭṭūr Śiva* temple, near *Valānchēry*, inscription refers to the presence of *Pūkkōṭṭūr Parataiyār, Ūrpaṭṭār, Kōyil, Potuvāḷ* and *Vaḷḷuvar*<sup>49</sup> which implied the possible survival of Brahmin settlement in the name of the temple. The appearance of *Tirupparaṅkōṭṭu Parataimār, Ūrpattārar* along with the *Āḷkōyil* and *Potuvāḷ* in the *Triprangōṭṭu* inscription shows the presence of Brahmin settlement related to the temple.<sup>50</sup> *Alanallūr*, in *Palakkad* district, inscription refers to the *Mūḷikkaḷa Kaccam* and hinted that it was a Brahmin settlement.<sup>51</sup> In short, these evidences indicate that there were many settlements besides *Perumcellūr* and *Karikkāṭṭu*, mentioned in the *Kēraḷōlpatti*, in the northern part and *Payyannur* settlement was not prevailed in the early medieval period. Similar distribution of Brahmin settlements in connection with the early medieval temples can be seen in the case of southern part as well. However, the above discussion regarding the distribution of Brahmin settlements in the northern part of Kerala aimed to reveal the need of the cross examination and revisit to the

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* Index No. C 8-11:488-89.

<sup>47</sup> *Pulparra* Inscription. Index No. C.12: 489.

<sup>48</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan remarked that *Eṭattiraināṭṭu* was the subdivision of *Ēranāṭṭu*. *Op. cit.* (2013). pp. 185, 490.

<sup>49</sup> *Pūkkōṭṭūr* inscription line 1-3. Index No. C.23:493., *K.C.A.R.*: 386.

<sup>50</sup> *Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu* inscription line 1-11. Index No. A 13: 440-441; *K.C.A.R.*:32.

<sup>51</sup> *Alanallūr* inscription. Index No. C. 24,25: 494.

narratives of *Kēraḷōlpatti* and the distribution of Brahmin settlements in the early medieval period.

There is no evidence on the charter of the Brahmin settlements in the inscriptions except the Tiruvaṭṭūr inscription which provided information about Brahmin households probably belonged to the important settlements of the central and southern Kerala like Vaikkam, Paravūr, Āvaṭṭiputtūr, Iringāṭikkūṭal and Peruvanam.<sup>52</sup> But the Tiruvaṭṭūr was not included in the list of traditional 32 settlements and there is no indication on the relation between Perumcellūr and Tiruvaṭṭūr. Apart from this inscription, very few mentioned about the land grants to the Brahmin as *Brahmaswam* and the land grants to the temple as *Dēvaswam*.<sup>53</sup> The personal name and household name of the Brahmins rarely occur in the inscription. At the same time the inscription contains many names and household name of the landholders, witnesses of the land grants or temple deeds, person in charge of carving and installation of the inscription who may not be Brahmins. Brahmins are always mentioned in the inscription as *Cāntis*, *Cānti Aṭikal*, *Tiruvārātanai naṭattumavar*, *Pirāmaṇar*, *Perumākkaḷ* etc., which will be discussed in the next chapters in detail. The occurrence of the term *Akkiram*, the feast to the Brahmins, in the temple inscriptions indicate that the Brahmins were attached to the temple and in other words the survival of the Brahmins in the early medieval period was largely connected with the temple. They may not be developed as big landlords, but remained as part of the corporate ownership of the temple property during the early medieval period.

As the Brahmins appear as the custodian of the ritual performers of the temple in the early medieval inscriptions and majority of the inscriptions

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<sup>52</sup> Tiruvaṭṭūr inscription line-1 & 2. *K.C.A.R*: 309-311.

<sup>53</sup> Porangāṭṭiri inscription. line 13-14. *Index* No. A 14: 441; *K.C.A.R*:34-35.



mentioned about the land grants and other offerings to the temple for the maintenance of its daily routines, it is clear that the major source of the wealth of the Brahmin settlement was temple. The land granted or arranged to the temple was cultivated by the intermediaries and the temple committee, which occurs in the inscription variously, was entrusted to oversee the temple expenses. The Brahmins, who involved in the temple duties as the chief or junior priest or such other temple duties, and various temple functionaries were granted a share of produce, mainly paddy or rice, from the land and in certain occasions an amount of gold that collected as fines for the violation of temple decree. Since these things will be discussed in detail in the next chapters, the present discussion sum up with the argument that the early medieval period do not witness the formation of 32 Brahmin settlements as the *Brhamakṣēṭras* mentioned in the *Kēraḷōlpatti*, instead they were existed along with the temple only, which were ruled by a corporate body probably consisted of the ruling and temple authorities. Brahmins had their bodies like *Sabha* or *Paraṭai* and also part of the temple body like *Ūr*. Probably the *Porangāṭṭiri* inscription directly mentions only the matters of the *Porangāṭṭiri Sabha (Tavakāriyamāvatu)*, which refers to the land grants to the *Dēvaswam* and *Brahmaswam*.<sup>54</sup>

The size and wealth of the Brahmin settlement was depended on the wealth of temple associated with the settlement. The distribution of the Brahmin settlements of the early medieval period has to be studied through the study of the distribution of early medieval temples. The list of 32 original settlements seems to have compiled in the medieval period after the emergence of *Nāṭuvāḷi Swarūpams* and, as the *Swarūpam* kind of polity requires the inevitable

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<sup>54</sup> *Porangāṭṭiri* inscription line 1-16. *Loc. cit.*

Brahminic ritual support, it had a political motive as well. Thus, after 12<sup>th</sup> century AD, the temple related Brahmin settlements developed as *Brahmakṣētras* or *Sankētam*, that existed as autonomous entities parallel with the *Nāṭuvāli Swarūpams*.<sup>55</sup> In short, the number of the early medieval Brahmin settlements cannot be confined to 32, as mentioned in *Kēraḷōlpatti* and many among these 32 settlements were not developed before 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.

### **Śaiva- Vaiṣṇava Bhakti traditions**

The Śaiva–Vaiṣṇava bhakti traditions were the vital force behind the expansion of structural temples in Kerala. The temples have provided an institutional base for the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava Bhakti cults and the popularity of these cults resulted in the formation of new temples as well.<sup>56</sup> The establishment of Brahmin settlements and the importance given to their ritual performance by the contemporary political entities corresponded to the development of temple as ritualistic cultural institution and an influential symbol of the political entities. Thus, the popularization of the Śaiva Vaiṣṇava Bhakti tradition became a political act during the time of Second Cēra power. The *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*, local chiefs or the households etc. became part of the popularization of the Bhakti traditions in Kerala through their involvement in the establishment or maintenance of the temples. The establishment of the temples, or the land grants or offerings of the gold etc. for meeting the daily expenses of the temple had been measured as the responsibilities of the ruling power during the early medieval

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<sup>55</sup> K.N. Ganesh argues that both *Swarūpam* and *Sankētam* were autonomous in nature. K.N. Ganesh. “Structure of political authority in medieval Kerala.” P.J. Cherian (ed.). *Perspectives on Kerala History*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala State Gazetteer Department, 1999. pp. 222-24.

<sup>56</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (2013). pp. 346- 47.

period and it became an essential qualification of the ruling power in the medieval period.

The Second Cēra rulers were the staunch supporters of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava Bhakti traditions. Rājasēkhara's, the first Cēra ruler, Vāḷappalli Śiva temple inscription starts with 'Namasśivāya' (834 AD)<sup>57</sup> and Kuṟumāttūr Viṣṇu temple inscription (AD 871),<sup>58</sup> contain the eulogy (*praśasti*) of the king Rājasēkhara as the upholder of *Varṇāśramadharmā*, shows that the Second Cēra rulers became the patron of the Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti tradition from 9<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards. The South Indian Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti factions were known as *Nāyanārs* and *Āḷvārs* respectively<sup>59</sup> and their presence was obvious in the case of Kerala as well. Rājasēkhara or Rāma Rājasēkhara, the contemporary of the bhakti poet Sundaramūrti Nāyanār, who came to be known as Cēramān Perumāḷ Nāyanār, has authored the bhakti literature like *Ponvaṇṇattandādi*, *Tiruvārūr Mummaṇikkōvai* and *Ādiyula* or *Tirukkailāyajñāna Ula*.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, the Vaiṣṇava bhakti was promoted by Kulaśēkhara Āḷvār, identified with Stāṇu Ravi Kulaśēkhara (844-870 AD), who authored the Tamil work *Perumāḷ Tirumoli* and the Sanskrit work *Mukundamāla*.<sup>61</sup> Kulaśēkhara Āḷvār is also identified with another Cēra ruler Kulaśēkhara who authored three Sanskrit works like a *Campūkāvya* called *Āścaryamañjari* and two plays called *Tapatisamvaraṇam*

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<sup>57</sup> Vāḷappalli inscription line. *T.A.S.* Vol. II& III: 8-14; Index No A 1: 435; *K.C.A.R.*: 4.

<sup>58</sup> Kuṟumāttūr inscription. M.R. Raghava Varier. "Kuṟumāttūr Praśasti of Rājasēkhara" paper presented in Epigraphical Society Conference, Karnataka Kulapurohita Alur Venkata Rao trust, Dharward, 6- January 2016.

<sup>59</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan and Kesavan Veluthat. "Bhakti movement in South India." D.N. Jha (ed.). *Feudal Order*. Delhi: Manohar, (2000) 2002. pp. 385-410.

<sup>60</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (2013). p. 382.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

and *Subhadrādhanañjayam*.<sup>62</sup> These Cēra rulers as well as the erudite poets were portrayed as the icon of the popularization of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava tradition in the post-Cēra period as well. The Kēraḷapuram inscription of Kollam era 782 (1607 AD) mentions the installation of the sculpture of Cēramān Perumāḷ and Sundara Perumāḷ (Sundara Mūrti Nāyanār) and also Kulaśēkhara Perumāḷ (Kulaśēkhara Ālvār) in the pillars of Śrī Vīrakēraḷēśvara temple.<sup>63</sup> A bronze image of Sundara Mūrti Nāyanār is also found at Tiruvañcikkulam temple.

Along with the Cēra rulers, the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* or the chief of the *Nāṭus* also promoted and popularized the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti through the patronization of the temples. Vēṇāṭṭaṭikaḷ Ayyanaṭikaḷ Tiruvaṭi, the Vēṇāṭu chief, was mentioned as a Nāyanār or devotee of Śiva and had a poem called *Vēṇāṭṭaṭikaḷ Tiruvicaippa*.<sup>64</sup> Vēṇāṭṭaṭikaḷ also appears as the benefactor of the Vaiṣṇava tradition through the offerings of his *Āṭṭaikkōḷ*, annual share, five *Kalañcu* gold to the Kuḷattūr temple of Kuṟumbranāṭu.<sup>65</sup> Vēṇāṭṭaṭikaḷ also appears in the Tirukkaṭittānam inscription as the overlord of the Nanṟulanāṭu as well as the benefactor of the Tirukkaṭittānam Viṣṇu temple.<sup>66</sup>

Besides Vēṇāṭṭaṭikaḷ, there are clear evidences on the patronage of local chieftains of Kuṟumpuraināṭu, who was entrusted to engrave the offerings of Vēṇāṭṭaṭikaḷ at Kuḷattūr, Puṟaikīlānāṭu and Mūṣakās of Kōlattunāṭu. It is interesting to note that all these rulers appeared as the patrons of Śaiva and

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> Kēraḷapuram inscription. *K.C.A.R.*: 345.

<sup>64</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* p. 383.

<sup>65</sup> Kuḷattūr inscription. M.R. Raghava Varier. “Kuḷattūr Likhithavum Kuṟumbranāṭu Rāja Swarūpavum”, *Kēraḷeeyatha Charitramānangal*. Edappal: Vallathol Vidyapeetham, (1990) 2009. pp.118-33; *K.C.A.R.*: 74.

<sup>66</sup> Tirukkaṭittānam inscription- 2-3. *T.A.S.* Vol. II & III: 33-34; *Index* No A 31: 449-450; *K.C.A.R.* :65.

Vaiṣṇava temple at the time of the Second Cēra ruler Bhāskara Ravi, whose rule witnessed the expansion of Cēra power throughout Kerala, especially towards north, probably through his patronage of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti, which will be discussed in the sixth chapter. The epigraphical evidences from the Tirunelli or Tirunelliyūr temple show that it was one of the chief Vaiṣṇava temples in the northern part of Kerala. About four inscriptions of early medieval period were found at the temple in which two of them had been issued during the period of the Cēra ruler Bhāskara Ravi Varman and the other two did not mention about the reign of the Cēra kings but refer to the *Mūlīkkaḷam Kaccam*, which shows that the inscription belonged to period before 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. The first one refers to the grant of the *Cērikkal* land of Kuṟumpuṟaināṭu ruler Kuñjikkutṭa Varman alias Aṭikal *Vīrakkurumpuṟaiyār* as *Kīlīṭu* to the *Taṅjāti* (Sanyāsi or saint) *Yōgikaḷ* and *Śrī Vaiṣṇavar* of the Tirunelli temple.<sup>67</sup> The second set mentions the land grant of Puṟaikīlānāṭu ruler Cangarankōta Varman alias Aṭikal Puṟaikīzhār and it also refers to the presence of *Taṅjāti* (Sanyāsi or saint) *Yōgikaḷ* in the temple. Another set of inscriptions, which refer to the *Mūlīkkaḷam Kaccam*, from the same temple refers to the presence of *Ālvār*,<sup>68</sup> who received land grants for meeting the expenses of the temple.

*Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*, the only available court chronicle of early medieval Kerala, signified to the political act of the Mūṣaka rulers to establish the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava temples in Kōlattunāṭu. Accordingly, it claimed that Mūṣaka ruler Śatasōma, established the Perumcellūr shrine.<sup>69</sup> Vaṭukavarman founded a Śiva

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<sup>67</sup> Tirunelli inscription - 1 line 17-19. Index No. A 46: 458; *K.C.A.R.*:75-77.

<sup>68</sup> Tirunelli inscription - 3 line 19 *K.C.A.R.*: 389-391.

<sup>69</sup> *M.V.K.* XI: 25-26.

temple named Vaṭukēśvaram<sup>70</sup> and Ahirana established a Śiva temple on the western bank of Pṛtanā river named Ahiranēśvaram.<sup>71</sup> According to the *Kāvya*, Kundavarman built a city named Nārāyaṇapuram with the majesty of lord Viṣṇu.<sup>72</sup> Vallabha visited the *Cellūr Agrahāra* and witnessed the splendors of the Agrahāra as the centre of Vedic rites and its teachings<sup>73</sup> and then he reached the glorious holy city of Viṣṇu called Śambara or Tṛiccambara.<sup>74</sup> According to the *Kāvya*, Vallabhan, who ruled just before the last mentioned ruler Śrīkaṇṭan of the Mūṣaka lineage, is portrayed as the patron of both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava tradition. Vallabha claimed his descent from the *Vriṣṇikula*<sup>75</sup> and through this claim and his association with the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions he must have elevated his position to the Kshatriya Varna.<sup>76</sup> As Vallabha was a ruler mostly adhered to the Brahmins of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions he came to be known as Rājadharmān.<sup>77</sup> The influence of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava traditions in the Mūṣaka territory, i.e. the northern part of early medieval Kerala, is further substantiated through the depiction of Mahābhārata stories with Vallabha's military action, for assisting the force of Kerala (Second Cēra) rulers in their fight against Cōḷa, as the army of Kauravās was shattered by the army of Pāṇḍavas.<sup>78</sup> Similarly, the *Kāvya* also mentions the *Rāmāyaṇa* stories through Vallabha's claim as the ruler of many islands when compared to Rāma who ruled only one island Lanka.<sup>79</sup> All

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<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.* XI: 61.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* XI: 69.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* XIII: 16.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* XIII: 51-61, 62-64.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* XIII: 62-64.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* XIII: 45.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.* XIII: 47.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.* XIII: 50.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* XIV:51.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.* XIV:69.

these references in the *Kāvya* evidently prove the influence of epic-purāṇic tradition in the region of Mūṣaka rulers.

The epigraphical evidences corroborated the involvement of the Mūṣaka rulers like Validharan alias Vikramarama, who granted land to Naracinkaviṇṇa Tēvar or the deity of Narayan Kaṇṇūr temple<sup>80</sup> and this ruler is identified with Vikramarāma, the nephew of Validhara mentioned in the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*.<sup>81</sup> Narayan Kaṇṇūr temple is a Śankaranārāyaṇa temple, which probably indicate the equal importance given by the Mūṣaka rulers to the Śiva and Viṣṇu worship. Similarly, Jayamaṇi and his nephew Śrīkaṇḍan of the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*<sup>82</sup> appears as Vijayam Śrīkaṇḍan and Kaṇṭan Kāri Varman in the Tiruvaṭṭūr and Eramam Cālappuṛam inscription respectively as the benefactors of the Śiva temples.<sup>83</sup> The last ruler Śrīkaṇḍan, brother of Vallabha, is represented in the *Kāvya* as staunch devotee of Śiva and also paid obeisance to Viṣṇu.<sup>84</sup> He renovated the temples like Vaṭukēśvara, Ahiranēśvara and Kharakānana.<sup>85</sup> However, all these references of the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* show the development of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti in the northern parts during the early medieval period.

The recitation of *Mahābhārata* was one of the methods of the propagation of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions in the society. As per the Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription (975 AD), the temple committee arranged land for meeting the

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<sup>80</sup> Narayan Kannur inscription line 11-12, 22-25. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* 1971. *K.C.A.R.*: 399.

<sup>81</sup> *M.V.K.*: XII: 90,95. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Reinterpretation of South Indian history*. Trivandrum: College Book House, 1977. pp 58-66.

<sup>82</sup> *M.V.K.*: XII: 39, XV: 1, 48.

<sup>83</sup> Eramam Cālappuṛam inscription line 5-7, M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* 1971. pp 84-85; *Index No.* A 40: 455. Tiruvaṭṭūr inscription line 4-6. *K.C.A.R.*: 309.

<sup>84</sup> *M.V.K.*: XV:1. The cantos from the beginning to the end (1-54) refers to the close connections of the Śrīkaṇṭan with the Śiva Bhakti.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.* XV: 48.

expenses of the recitation of *Māpārata* or *Mahābhārata* along with the expenses of the essential rituals like *Tiruvamritu* (offering to the deity), *Nantāvilakku* (perpetual lamp) and *Truvakkiram* (feast to the brahmins).<sup>86</sup> The temple committee resolution also prohibits to receive *Kaikkūli* (bribery) for the appointment of the *Cānti* (temple priest) and *Māpārata*,<sup>87</sup> which further indicates that the *Tirukkaṭṭānam* temple appointed a person for reciting the *Mahābhārata* stories. Similarly, Perunna inscription refer the share of temple income spent for meeting the expense of *Māpārata* reading.<sup>88</sup>

All these have shown that the second Cēra rulers and some of the local chieftains were the promoters of the Śaiva bhakti traditions in Kerala during the early medieval period. The popularization of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti through the establishment of temples and the propagation of Mahābhārata and Rāmāyaṇa stories through composing hymns and plays and also through the sculptures and murals became a political act during the medieval period. This was one of the supreme political moves of the second Cēra rulers for the consolidation of power and it also represented the early phase of feudal socio-political formation, which will be discussed in the fifth chapter of this work.

Almost all inscriptions of the early medieval period record the fiscal support of the ruling authorities to the temples either through the land grants, or offering the share of produce and in certain occasions donation of gold etc. for meeting the daily requirement of the temple, which will be discussed in the next chapter in detail. So the development of temple as an institutionalized

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<sup>86</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription-1 part I – II. *T.A.S.* Vol. II & III: 33-37; *K.C.A.R.*:63.

<sup>87</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>88</sup> Perunna inscription – 3 line 25 *K.C.A.R.*: 103.



worshipping centre was closely linked with the contemporary political requirements.

### **Temple Structure**

The structural temples were the artefact of the Brahmin settlements and the evolution of Bhakti tradition with the support of the ruling powers. The Second Cēra rulers and the local *Nāṭuvālis* or the landed households had provided backing for the development of temples. The magnitude of the structural temple was depended on the support received by the temple from the ruling personals and consequently the wealth possessed by the temple. The wealthy temples like Tiruvalla, Trikkākkara, Airāṇikkulam, Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi etc. got more support from ruling powers and received much amount of land grants.

The early medieval temple architecture and the available epigraphical evidences from the temples have signified to the continuity and modification in the pre-temple knowledge systems and skills and social setting in the early medieval period. The early medieval period witnessed the survival of pre-temple knowledge systems and skills with substantial growth with profuse use of sophisticated iron tools<sup>89</sup> and also embraced different styles of architecture and image like, Pallava, Pāṇḍya, Cālūkyā, and Cōḷa.

The previous chapter shows that the pre-temple society had their own worshipping system and they were influenced by the Brahmin, Buddhist and Jain traditions. The beginning of the temple in structural form was also noticed in that phase. But there is no reliable date regarding the origin of the temple structures in Kerala. The Vāḷappaḷi inscription of 832 AD is the earliest epigraph

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<sup>89</sup> There is no solid proof of iron tools in the early medieval period. But the material evidences related to the early medieval structures have shown the possible use of sophisticated iron tools for the shaping of granite and laterite stones.

discovered from the temple and, therefore, it requires a special mention. As the emergence of Brahmin settlement and the institutionalized form of new worshipping pattern are evident from the pre-temple period, it is rationale to assume that the temple seems to have developed even before the period of Vāḷappalli inscription (9th century AD). This inscription is executed during the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Rājasēkhara's reign (dated 832 AD), the first ruler in the Perumāḷ dynasty, who eulogized as *Rāja Rājādhirāja Paramēśvara Bhaṭṭāraka Rājasēkhara Dēvar*. This title indicates that he had the status of an emperor or a feudal lord. This may be the only inscription discovered so far from Kerala with the auspicious praise to *Namaśivāya* (Lord Śiva) which clearly shows that Rājasēkhara was an admirer of Śiva or supporter of Śaivite tradition. According to the theme of the inscription it has two parts, one deals with the regulations to the subject population attached to the temple for fulfilling the daily requirements of the temple and the second part refers to the details of the land grants to the temple. It is executed by the temple body consisted of the *Tiruvārruvāy Patinēṭṭu Nāṭṭār* and *Vāḷappalli Ūrār (Ūralar)* jointly in the presence of Rājasēkhara. It refers to the practice of various temple rituals like *Pali* or *Muṭṭāppali* (offering or perpetual offerings), *Uccappili* (midday offering), *Taipūyam* etc. and the temple functionaries like *Cānti* and *Paṇimakkaḷ*. The second part mentions about the land grants to the *Kailāsanāthan* (Śiva) including wet lands and homesteads in the garden land and also three gold coins called *Tīnār (Dinār)* for the maintenance of the temple.<sup>90</sup> This inscription also refer to the punishments for

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<sup>90</sup> “*Kīramkaṭampanār kari orāṅṭilirupatu orāṅṭilirupataiṅkalam* (20 and 25 *kalam*, a measure of paddy, for one year from the field named as *Kīramkaṭampanār kari*), *Aṅṭilakkaḷatoṭuḷavēli patinkalam* (ten *kalam*), *Kaḷḷāṭṭuvāyvēli aynūrrunāli* (500 *nāli*), *Kāñcikkāvinulainu nūrrunāli* (100 *Nāli* near *Kāñcikkavu*), *Ūrakattu pīlīkkōṭṭu purayīṭam*, *Kāvati kaṅṅan caṅkaran purayīṭattin mēl* (homesteads) *nūrraimpatu tūṇi nel* (150 *tūṇi*)

the violation of the temple contract like curse words like *māṭṛuparigrahavum ceytārāvatu* through which the offender of the contract is considered as a person who married his mother and a fine of 100 *Dinār*. Accordingly, this inscription gives the established nature of the temple institution during the first phase of 9<sup>th</sup> century AD and also imply that institutionalization of the temple occurred long before the date of inscription. The political involvement of the Second Cēra in the Śaiva Vaiṣṇava structural temples must have started from the reign of Rājaśekhara.

### ***Survival of the Pre-temple skills***

Before discussing the architectural features of the early medieval temple, it is important to make a discussion on the survival of pre-temple skills and knowledge in the early medieval period. The architectural features of the megalithic monuments especially the rock cut sepulchers can be considered as the proto-type of the architectural styles of the temples of Kerala.<sup>91</sup> The architectural features of the Kerala style temples have considerable similarity with several features of the rock-cut chambers, especially the long passage and the decorated doorjambs (Fig.1).<sup>92</sup> The circular and rectangular inner space of the rock cut chamber, the sacred abode of the spirit, seems to have influenced in the shaping of the temples of the later time. The circular lower part and domical roofs of the umbrella stone must have influenced in the making of circular temple with domical roof. Similarly, the occurrence of the stone circles, with urns and chambers in the inside part of the circle, must have represented the encircled

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paddy). *Mūnu tīnāravum* (3 dinar), *Ayyankāṭṭu maṛṛattil raṇṭu vēliyum...*” (incomplete) Vāḷappaḷli inscription line 6-10, *T.A.S. Volume II & III*: 8-14. *KCAR*:4.

<sup>91</sup> Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Cultural History of Kerala*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publications Government of Kerala, 1999. p.141.

<sup>92</sup> Figures are given at the end of the thesis as appendix II.

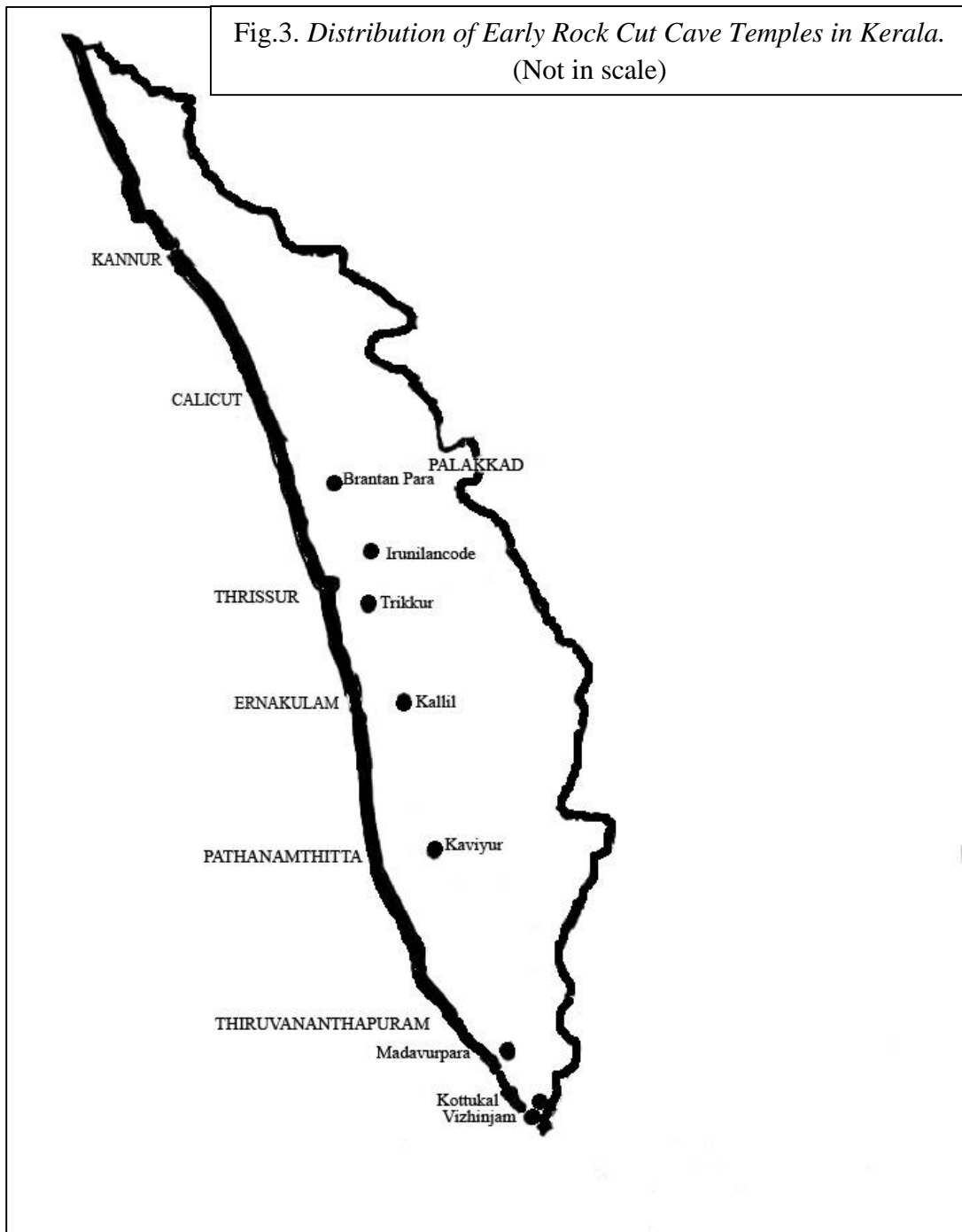
space of the spirit where the offerings were given by the successors of the dead. The megalithic builders treated these burials as the centre of ancestral worship and gave offerings as well. The similarity in the shape of these monuments and the early medieval temples must have shown the survival and transmission of the early historic architectural traditions and knowledge in the early medieval period. The knowledge for the plan of action must have transmitted from the early societies. The circular, elliptical, square and rectangular structures and the occurrence of door jambs and circumambulatory passage etc. of the temple must have been borrowed from the pre-temple knowledge and skills. The architectural knowledge may not be completely brought from outside by the immigrant Brahmin community, instead they must have depended on the existing skilled labour and their architectural traditions. The temple architecture has been mostly influenced by Pāṇḍya, Pallava and Cōḷa traditions. The indigenous tradition of Kerala has also a great influence.

The use of granite stone slabs and beams for the basements, the rectangular laterite stone blocks, especially in the central and northern part of Kerala, for the construction wall and the wooden architectures for the roof evidently prove the survival of the mastery in iron working, masonry and carpentry (Fig.2). The climatic condition of Kerala, the region regularly getting two monsoon seasons, also influenced in the structural features especially the conical shape superstructure, which protect the base from the heavy rain. The same thing must have been the reason behind the existence of unique shaping of rock-cut sepulcher, capstone and umbrella stone in the pre-temple period. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the megalithic monuments were considered as the abode of spirit, which were worshipped as *Kaṭavu!* in the pre-temple society. The local availability of the laterite and granite was also the influencing

factor behind the survival of Kerala style architecture in the early medieval and medieval period.

***Early Cave temples***

The course of the evolution of temples in Kerala can be traced back to the development of monolithic cave temple traditions. The rock cut temples of



Vizhinjam and Maṭavūrpāra in Thiruvananthapuram, Kōṭṭukal in Kollam district, Kaviyūr in Alappuzha, Kallil in Ernakulam, Trikkūr and Irunilancode in Trissur, Bhrānthanpāra in Palakkad etc (Fig.3). are the important rock-cut temples of Kerala. These rock-cut caves are distributed in the political terrain of Cēras and Āys. But none of these caves hinted at the authorship of the caves.<sup>93</sup> Most of such cave temples must have either Jain or Buddhist cultural links. Later all these were transformed as either Śiva or Viṣṇu temples and most of them are still functioning as temples with Brahminic rituals. It is argued that the architectural feature of these cave temples were influenced by the Pallava and Pāṇḍya traditions and the cave technique was not the result of indigenous development and was evidently import from outside.<sup>94</sup>

As mentioned earlier, the rock cut sepulchers carved in the laterite plateaus with port hole or with pillar or with multi chambers in circular dome and rectangular shapes must have indicated the indigenous development of cave carving techniques, especially in the northern part, in Kerala from the early historic period. Therefore, a reciprocal sharing of techniques between the traditional indigenous techniques and dominant architectural traditions of the Pāṇḍya and Pallava must have happened. The relation between the Cōḷa and Cēra rulers is evident in the Tillaisthānam inscription which refers to the offerings of the Kadamba queen, wife of the Tamil Vēḷ Vikki Aṇṇan, who was honoured jointly by the Thoṇṭaināṭu king Cōḷan Palyānai Kō Koṇṭan alias Rāja Kēsari

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<sup>93</sup> In the case of Pugalūr rock-shelter, which was established by the Cēra rulers for the Jain monks, we have direct mentions of the authorship. Iravatham Mahadevan. *Early Tamil Epigraphy- from the earliest times to the sixth century AD*, Cambridge: Harward University, 2003. pp. 405-21. H. Sarkar. *Op. cit.* pp. 42-43.

<sup>94</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* 2013. p. 367.

Varman and Cēramān Kōttāṇu Iravi to the temple.<sup>95</sup> The queen offered lamp and 100 goats to the temple. This offering seems to have indicated the cultural contact between the Cōḷa, Cēra and Kadamba rulers. The architectural features of the early medieval temples of Kerala temple have shown the influence of the Cōḷa, Cēra and Kadamba regions. Such political relations must have influenced to borrow the architectural styles and worshipping pattern as well.

### ***Early Medieval Architecture***

Early medieval period (600-1200 AD) witnessed the growth of structural temples in Kerala. However, it is too complex to confirm the date of the origin of the early medieval temple structure as it continuously renovated after the origin. In most cases the *Adhiṣṭhāna* or basement and, in certain extend, the main walls above the *Adhiṣṭhāna*, of the focal shrine seems to have remained in its original form from the early time. The superstructures are continuously renovated. For instance, the Cōkkūr inscription hinted at the existence of thatched roof of the temple and a share of temple wealth was fixed for the renovation of the *Pura* or thatched roof.<sup>96</sup> But later it must have been renovated with the roof tile. Almost all temples of Kerala have been renovated frequently and therefore it is not easy to find the chronology of the temple with the architectural features alone. The changes occurred in the patronage during various political powers was a determinant factor of the development of temple architecture. *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* refers to the renovation and endowments during the reign of Śrīkaṇḍan, who must have ruled during the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD, to the temple

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<sup>95</sup> Tillaistānam inscription line 1-8. *T.A.S.* Vol. II and III: 76-77; *Index*. No. A 5: 436-37; *K.C.A.R.*:11.

<sup>96</sup> “*Māṛāyinuḷḷirukalappāṭu Valankāmiḷipātintūṇippāṭu ivai aimpatintūṇippāṭum purai putukku-vān*”. Cōkkūr inscription line 33-35. *Index*. No. A 8: 438; *K.C.A.R.*: 24-27.

like Vaṭukēśvara, Ahiranēśvara and Kharakānana temples.<sup>97</sup> According to the *Kāvya*, all these temples were developed in the early period with the support of the predecessors of Śrīkaṇḍan. The rich temple that got higher patronage from its origin to the later times developed as large edifices and still remain as supreme worshiping centre. The Rājarājēśvara and Triccambara temple,<sup>98</sup> Tiruvaṅṅūr temple,<sup>99</sup> Neṭumpuram Taḷi, Trikkākkara,<sup>100</sup> Tiruvalla temple,<sup>101</sup> Padmanābha Swāmi temple,<sup>102</sup> etc. are the good examples. Thus, the major dependable source to determine the date of the origin of the temple structure is inscriptions, which engraved largely on granite stone slab or the *Adhiṣṭhāna*, wall of the *Namaskāra Maṇḍapa* or *Balikkal* of the temple and few are on the copperplates (Fig.4).

The structural temples, mainly dedicated to Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava deities are developed from the early medieval period. Based on stylistic features, the temple architecture can be classified into two; Dravidian and Kerala style. Dravidian temples are the earliest and are fully made of dressed stones. Viḷinjam shore temple, Varkkala Janārdana Swāmi temple, Tiruvallam Paraśurāma temple, Thiruvananthapuram Padmanābha Swāmi temple etc. are the good examples for the Dravidian style (Fig.5). It was mainly influenced by the Pallava architecture.

In Kerala, many of the temples are small shrines with a single *Maṇḍapa* in front of it and have a square base with a domical roof. Most of the structural

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<sup>97</sup> *M.V.K. XV:48.*

<sup>98</sup> Patronized by the Mūṣaka rulers in the early medieval and Kōlattirī in the medieval period.

<sup>99</sup> Patronized by Rāmavaḷanāṭu rulers in the early medieval and Zamorins in the medieval period.

<sup>100</sup> The Cēra rulers like Indu Kōta and Bhaskara Ravi, the Nanṇūlai Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar and Vēṇāṭu ruler etc.

<sup>101</sup> Epigraphs proved the continuous patronage from various ruling powers including Cēra rulers and Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars from the early medieval period.

<sup>102</sup> Vēṇāṭu rulers and later the Travancore state.



temples of Kerala are in typical Kerala style. It has many differences from the Dravidian type. They were constructed with the available natural materials including laterite and granite stones, timber, clay and palm leaves. The iconic or aniconic representations of idols and the artistic features like murals etc. are also found in the temples during the period under discussion. Some of such temples have inscriptional evidence that have hinted at the process of its evolution and historic setting.

Based on the architectural features and epigraphs, H. Sarkar, who conducted an architectural survey of the temples of Kerala, argued that there were three phases of the evolution of temple architecture in Kerala as follows.<sup>103</sup>

1. Early phase 800-1000 AD
2. Middle phase 1001-1300 AD
3. Late phase 1301 -1800 AD

Accordingly, the temples of the early phase are seen on square (Fig.6), circular (Fig.7), apsidal ground plans. Both *sandhara* and *nirandhara* types of temples are seen in this phase. Hypaethral temples were also seen in this phase. In the second phase of the temple architecture, many of the structural temples have epigraphs of Second Cēra period (9<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> AD). The Kerala style temples were prominently constructed during this phase. Temples in square, circular, apsidal, rectangular (Fig.8) and elliptical (Fig.9) were seen in this phase. Typical Dravida tradition and indigenous Dravida Kerala styles were developed. Temples of *Sarvatōbhadrā* types continued to be built, temples with two or three *Ghanadwārās* respectively built in this phase. The practice of enshrining the consort of a god at the back of the *Garbhagriha* must have received great fillip in this period.

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<sup>103</sup> H. Sarkar. *Op. cit.* pp. 95-101.

Other characteristics of this phase are the practice of placing a *Bhūta* figure near *Praṇāla* (Fig.10) and carvings on *Hasti-hasta* banisters (Fig.11) depicting dancing scenes (*Kūttu*), inspired by the Cōḷa plastic tradition. All the later temples are included in the third phase from 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century AD. The first two phases belonged to the early medieval period and the later phase is beyond the scope of the present study.

The circular and the elliptical temples are mentioned in the inscriptions as *Mukkālvaṭṭam*.<sup>104</sup> *Māṭakkōyikkal*,<sup>105</sup> *Taḷi*,<sup>106</sup> *Tirukkaikkīlu*,<sup>107</sup> or temple entrance, *Kōyil* or *Tirukkōyil*,<sup>108</sup> *Ampalam*<sup>109</sup> etc. are the other terms used in the inscription to mention the temple. All the inscriptions signified temple as the established institution that had both political and ritual supremacy over the region and they mention these terms as the space where the temple committee resolution finalized. The reference like *Avirōtattāl Mukkālvaṭṭattiruntu ceyta kaccamāvatu*, indicates that the temple committee resolution settled unanimously by the representative of the ritualistic and political authorities at the temple. Thus, the

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<sup>104</sup> Tirupparaṅgōṭu inscription line 11-12 *K.C.A.R.*: 32; Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription – 2 line 5 *K.C.A.R.*: 52; Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription – 3 line 3-4. *K.C.A.R.*:62; Tirukkaṭittānam inscription-1 part I line 3. *K.C.A.R.*:63; Māmpaḷḷi inscription-1 line 11-12. *K.C.A.R.*:173; Tirunelli inscription- 1 line 3. *K.C.A.R.*: 75; Iringālakuṭa inscription line 5. *K.C.A.R.*: 81; Mūḷikkalaṃ inscription-2 line 3. *K.C.A.R.*:83; Tirukkaṭittānam inscription-7. *K.C.A.R.*:98; Tiruvālūr inscription line 6-7. *K.C.A.R.*: 102; Perunna inscription–3 line 57-58. *K.C.A.R.*:103; Airāṇikkalaṃ inscription-3 line 5-6. *K.C.A.R.*: 110-111. This inscription mentioned about three *Mukkālvaṭṭam* temples like *Tiruvalla Mukkālvaṭṭam*, *Airāṇikkulaṭṭu Mukkālvaṭṭam* and *Cērākīsvaram*.

<sup>105</sup> Tirunanthikkara inscription line 1 *K.C.A.R.*: 2.

<sup>106</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-1 line 2-3 *K.C.A.R.*: 28.

<sup>107</sup> Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription line 2 *K.C.A.R.*: 4; Iringālakuṭa inscription line 3 *K.C.A.R.*:10; Avittattūr inscription line 3 *K.C.A.R.*:30; Putukkōṭu inscription line 3 *K.C.A.R.*: 43.

<sup>108</sup> This term has been used to denote both the temple and the political chief of the region.

<sup>109</sup> Tiruvalla Copper Plate No.13 line 161. *KCAR*: 257.

temple developed as a supreme institution of the execution of law and order in the temple land, which will be discussed in the following chapters in detail. The terms like *Tirukkai* or *Trikkai* and *Śrīkāryam*<sup>110</sup> etc. demonstrate the sacred entity or sacred nature of the temple before the contemporary society. The temple was also acknowledged with the name of the temple deity like *Tirunantikkarai Bhaṭṭārar*,<sup>111</sup> *Kumāranārāyaṇapurattu Tēvar*,<sup>112</sup> *Trippūṇitturai Paṭṭārar*,<sup>113</sup> *Cempaṟai Paṭārar*,<sup>114</sup> *Tirukālkkarai Paṭārar*<sup>115</sup> or *Tirukārkkarai Paṭārar*,<sup>116</sup> or *Tirukālkkarai Tēvar*,<sup>117</sup> *Kuḷattūr Paḷārar*,<sup>118</sup> *Tiruvirunkāṭikkūṭal Tiruvaṭi*,<sup>119</sup> *Tirukkaṭittānattu Paṭārar*,<sup>120</sup> *Tirukālkkarai Perumāḷ*,<sup>121</sup> *Tirumaṇṇūr Pāṭṭārar*,<sup>122</sup> etc. As the deity of the temple is referred as the guardian of the region, the temple got ritual as well as the political power over the region. In certain occasion, both the temple and the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* appears as the ritual and political lords of the *Nāṭu*. For instance, the Trikkākkara inscription refers to “...*Pūmiyum (Pulaiyarē)yum kūṭa Tirukālkkarai Paṭṭāarakar Tiruvaṭikku Aṭṭikkoṭuttān Kālkkaraināṭṭuṭaiya Kaṇṇam(puraiyan)*...”, means *Kaṇṇam Puraiyan*, the local chief of the *Kālkkaraināṭu* granted land along with the tilling communities to the

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<sup>110</sup> Mūḷikkaḷam inscription line 2 *K.C.A.R.*: 44; Tirunelli inscription-2 line 3 *K.C.A.R.*: 78.

<sup>111</sup> Tirunantikkara inscription line 2 *K.C.A.R.*:21.

<sup>112</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 4-5 *K.C.A.R.*:24.

<sup>113</sup> Trippūṇittura inscription line 3-4 *K.C.A.R.*:36.

<sup>114</sup> Cembra inscription line 5 M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* (2009). p 96.

<sup>115</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-3 part I line 7. *K.C.A.R.*:49.

<sup>116</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-5 part I line 3-4. *K.C.A.R.*:58; Trikkākkara Inscription-8 line 6. *K.C.A.R.*:70.

<sup>117</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-6 part II line 1. *K.C.A.R.*:61.

<sup>118</sup> Kuḷattūr inscription line 10 M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* (2009). p 119.

<sup>119</sup> Iringālakuṭa inscription line 1. *K.C.A.R.*: 81.

<sup>120</sup> Tirukkaṭittānam inscription -6 line 3. *K.C.A.R.*: 83.

<sup>121</sup> Trikkākkara inscription- 11 line 1. *K.C.A.R.*: 86.

<sup>122</sup> Tiruvaṇṇūr inscription line 3-4. *K.C.A.R.*:96.

Kālkkarai temple. Here the temple and the local chief were acknowledged in the name of *Nāṭu* and represented the ritual power and ruling authority over the *Nāṭu* respectively. There was a reciprocal tie between the temple and the ruling authority, which will discuss in the fifth chapter of this study.

Besides the reference of the *Mukkālvaṭṭam*, generally other parts of the temple complex are not mentioned. The Trikkākkara inscription refers to the storage space of the paddy as *Koṭṭakāram*,<sup>123</sup> probably located inside the temple premise. The *Balikkal* or altars were part of the temple. Both laterite and granite *Balikkals* were found in early medieval temples of Kerala (Fig.12).

When we cross examine the inscription, there is no noteworthy traces to substantiate the significant changes occurred in the structure of the temple in the first two phases mentioned by Sarkar. They are mainly furnishing evidences on the changes occurred in the patronage and also hinted at the ascendancy of the Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti tradition over the temple and subsequently the changes occurred in the worshipping pattern especially with the replacement of the mother goddess like *Saptamātrika* in iconic form to the aniconic form (Fig.13) and its incorporation into the Śaiva Vaiṣṇava pantheon in the later time as the consorts of the male gods.<sup>124</sup> The development of temple with the magnificent architecture was based on the patronage received by the temple. Consequently, the temple that received more grants from the ruling authorities had the splendid structures. For instance, the Trikkākkara, Tiruvalla, Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi, etc. of the early medieval time.

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<sup>123</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-1 part III line 1. *KCAR*:39.

<sup>124</sup> Arya Nair V.S. “Saptamatrikas in Kerala: Iconography and Distribution Pattern.” *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, 4 (2016). pp.376-400.

None of the early medieval inscriptions (9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century AD) mention the construction of the temple or the renovation work of the temple except the Cōkkūr and Kayalkkāṭu inscriptions. As mentioned earlier Cōkkūr inscription refers to the land assigned to thatch the roof of the temple and the Kayalkkāṭu inscription mentions the expenses for the renovation of the *Tatch*, the carpentry or architectural work.<sup>125</sup> The Tiruvañcikkaḷam inscription refers to the grant of *Purayitam* or homestead to the Irāyīnga Perumtaccan, the traditional stone mason or carpenter, and he had to remit thirty five *Nāli* paddy for this homestead at the temple.<sup>126</sup> It means that the ruling powers or the landed personals were granted land or such offerings to the already existing temples. Probably, the earliest inscription about the construction of a temple is from Cāttannūr temple (1273 AD) that belonged to the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century AD, which mentions that the construction work of the temple started in Kollam Era 446 and completed and performed the ritual ceremony called *Kalaśamāṭal* in 448.<sup>127</sup>

Thus the early phase cannot be confined to the period of the early available inscription from Vāḷappalli temple and cannot be fixed as 800 AD. As mentioned earlier, the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* hinted at the possibility of the earlier origin to the temples in north Kerala. It is argued that the temple worship based on Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti and Brahmanic and Puranic traditions has been started in South India from the sixth century AD and most of the early historic deities were incorporated into the Purāṇic pantheon during the period from AD sixth to ninth

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<sup>125</sup> Cōkkūr Inscription line 33-35. *KCAR*: 24-27; Kayalkkāṭu inscription line 5-6; *KCAR*: 393.

<sup>126</sup> Tiruvañcikkaḷam inscription line 1-2. *KCAR*: 93.

<sup>127</sup> Cāttannūr Inscription line 1-3. *KCAR*: 231. *Kalaśam* means Water pot, ceremony for the purification of an idol with water, milk, etc.

centuries.<sup>128</sup> As the Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription represented an established form of temple culture and Brahminic rituals, the present study, assumed that there was a beginning phase of the temple architecture before 800 AD and it must have started from the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century AD. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the early Tamil literature indicates on the structural form of the worshiping centre of Murukan, who was later incorporated into the Purāṇic pantheon as Subrahmaṇya, the son of Śiva.

### **Distribution of early medieval Temples**

The structural edifices for regular worship have been developed from the early medieval period. Based on the existing survey reports,<sup>129</sup> epigraphs,<sup>130</sup> and

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<sup>128</sup> R. Champakalakshmi. *Religion, Tradition, and Ideology Pre-colonial South India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011. pp. 13-16.

<sup>129</sup> K.V. Soundara Rajan. *Temple Architecture in Kerala*. Trivandrum: Government of Kerala, 1974; H. Sarkar. *Op. cit.*; S. Jayashanker. *Temples of Kannoor District*. Thiruvananthapuram: Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2001; *Temples of Kasaragod District*. Thiruvananthapuram: Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2001; *Temples of Wayanad District*. Thiruvananthapuram: Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2002; *Temples of Malappuram District*. Thiruvananthapuram: Directorate of Census Operations, Kerala, 2004.

<sup>130</sup> Epigraphs dated from 9<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. Rao Bahadur H. Krishna Sastri. *South Indian Inscriptions (Texts)*. Vol. V. Madras: Government Press, (1925) 1986. pp. 333-41; T.A. Gopinatha Rao (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. I. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1908) 1988; T.A. Gopinatha Rao (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vols. II and III. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1908) 1992; K.V. Subrahmanya Aiyar (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. IV. part I and II. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1923) 1999; A.S. Ramanatha Ayyar (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. V. part I, II and II. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1923) 1999; A.S. Ramanatha Ayyar (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. V. part I, II and II. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1930) 2004; M.G.S. Narayanan. "Index to Cēra inscription". (1996) 2013, *Op. cit.* pp. 435-501; M.G.S. Narayanan. *Kerala Charithrathinte Adisthana Śilakal*. Calicut: Nava Kerala Cooperative Publication, 1971. pp. 69-136; M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op.cit.* 1972. pp. 65-

the field survey conducted by the present researcher,<sup>131</sup> the following part will give a distribution list and map of the early medieval temples and try to give a picture of the distribution of the temples and the Brahmin settlements associated with the temple (Table.1).

**Table.1 Early Medieval temples of Kerala 9<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> century AD**

SL No	Temple	District	Structure	Remarks
1.	Vilīnjam Śiva Temple	Thiruvananthapuram	Square temple of Śiva and Rectangular of Bhagavati	Sarkar: 139 Field Survey
2.	Vilīnjam Bhagavati Temple	-do-	Rectangular	Sarkar: 141 Field Survey
3.	Perumpaḷudūr Viṣṇu temple	-do-	-do-	-do-
4.	Tiruvallam Mahādēva Temple	-do-	-do-	-do- Field Survey

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97; K. Paramesvaran Nair. *Epigraphia Malabarica*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1972; M.R. Raghava Varier. *Kēraḷeeyatha Carithṛamanangal*. Edappal: Vallathol Vidyapeetham (1990) 2009. pp 96-133; K. Retnamma. *Pracheena Sasanangalum Malayala Paribhashayum*. Thiruvananthapuram: Cultural Publication Department Government of Kerala, 2005; Kesavan Veluthat. “Perumchellur Chepped, Kollam 321, Kanni 21 (1145 September 22)”, *AdhAram: A journal for Kerala Archaeology and History* Vol 1, Kottayam: Kerala Puratatva Samiti MG University, 2006. pp 75-82; Kesavan Veluthat. “A copper plate inscription from Perumchellur, North Kerala, India: AD 1145,” *Indian History Congress 69<sup>th</sup> session souvenir*. Kannur University: Organizing committee IHC, 2008, pp 13-18; Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Op. cit.*; M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Tarisāppaḷḷippattayam*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Samgham, (2013), 2015.

<sup>131</sup> A sampling survey has been carried out in the central and southern part and a detailed survey in the northern part of Kerala.

*Evolution of Early Medieval Temple*

5.	Tiruvallam Paraśurāma Temple	-do-	-do-	-do- Field Survey
6.	Valiyaśālai Mahādēva temple	-do-	-do-	-do- Field Survey
7.	Śrī Padmanābha Swāmi Temple	-do-	-do-	Field Survey
8.	Nēmam Nīramankara Śiva temple	-do-	-do-	Sarkar:215- 217 Field Survey
9.	Veḷḷanād Subrahmaṇya temple	-do-	-do-	-do- Field Survey
10.	Pirappankōd Viṣṇu temple	-do-	-do-	-do-
11.	Maṇampūr Subrahmaṇya temple	-do-	Circular	Sarkar:183
12.	Varkkala Janārdana temple	-do-	-do-	-do-
13.	Nāvāykkūḷam Śankara Nārāyaṇamūrti temple	-do-	-do-	<i>T.A.S-VI: 83;</i> <i>Index C 44:</i> <i>501;</i> Sarkar:184. Field Survey
14.	Punalūr Trikōṭēśvara Mahādēva temple	Kollam	Circular	Sarkar: 183
15.	Parumala (Śiva ?)	Pathanamtitta	Ruined temple	<i>Index B 4: 476</i> 10 <sup>th</sup> century inscription. Field Survey
16.	Śrī Vallabha Temple Tiruvalla	-do-	Square	<i>K.C.A.R:244-</i> <i>300</i>
17.	Kaviyūr Mahādēva temple	-do-	Circular	Sarkar: 165. Field Survey



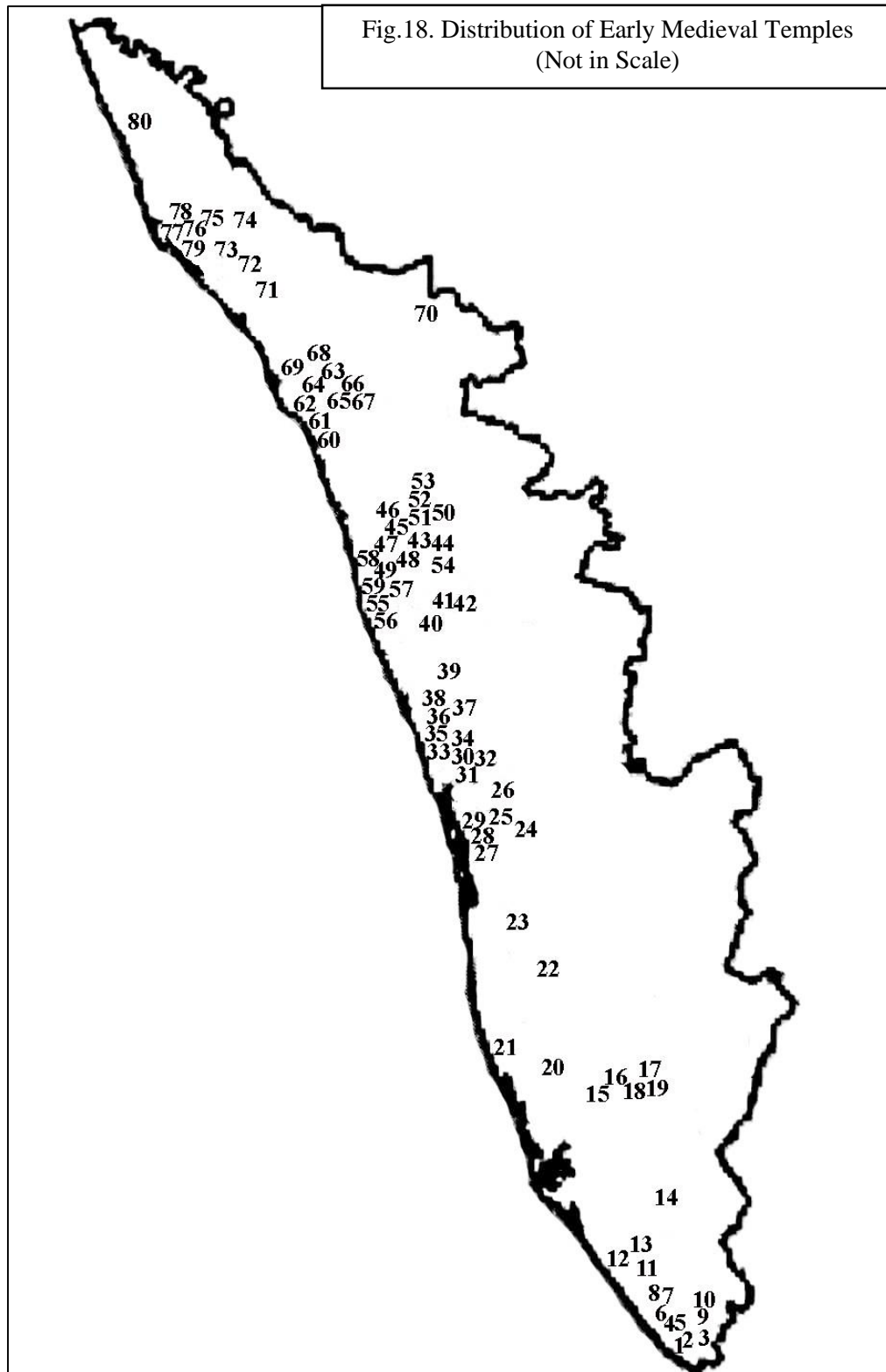
18.	Āraṇmuḷa Pārthasārathi temple	-do-	Circular	Field Survey
19.	Tiruchittattu Mahā Viṣṇu Temple	-do-	Circular	Field Survey
20.	Thiruvaṇḍūr or Tiruveṇmaṇḍūr Viṣṇu temple	Alappuzha	Circular	<i>T.A.S</i> –V: 31- 34 <i>Index C</i> 41: 499-500. Field Survey
21.	Kaṇḍiyur Śiva Temple	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 153
22.	Vāḷappalli Śiva Temple	Kottayam	Circular	<i>K.C.A.R</i> :4 Field Survey
23.	Kīḷveḷḷūr Vāmana Temple	-do-	Apsidal	Sarkar:220- 222
24.	Pāḷūr Peruntirukkōyil	Ernakulam	Circular	Sarkar: 183
25.	Trikkākkara Vāmana Mahā Viṣṇu temple	-do-	-do-	-do- Field Survey
26.	Mūḷikkaḷam Lakshmana Temple	-do-	Circular	<i>Index: A</i> 23: 445
27.	Udayampērūr Peruntirukkōyil	-do-	-do-	-do- Field Survey
28.	Uḷiyannūr Mahādēva temple	-do-	-do-	-do-
29.	Chēnnamangalam Kunnataḷi Śiva Temple	-do-	Apsidal	Sarkar: 185
30.	Aviṭṭattūr Śiva Temple	Thrissur	Circular	Sarkar: 184 Field Survey
31.	Tiruvañcikkūḷam Kīḷ Taḷi	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 158- 160 Field Survey

32.	Trikkulaśēkharapura m Śrī Kriṣṇa temple	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 155
33.	Ayirāṇikkūlam Śrī Mahādēva temple	-do-	circular	Field Survey
34.	Peruvanam Irattayappan Śiva Temple	-do-	-do-	Field Survey
35.	Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi Śiva Temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
36.	Nityavichārēśvara Taḷi Śiva Temple	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 160- 161 Field Survey
37.	Vadakkunnātha temple	-do-	-do-	Sarkar: 184 Field Survey
38.	Triprayār Rāma Temple	-do-	-do-	Sarkar: 184 Field Survey
39.	Venganellūr Tiruvempilappan temple	-do-	-do-	Sarkar: 184
40.	Panniyūr Śrī Varāhamūrti temple	Palakkad	Square	Sarkar: 161- 163
41.	Tirumiṛrakkōde Añcumūrti Temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
42.	Netirimangalam Śiva temple	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 149 Field Survey
43.	Karikkād Śāsta Temple	Malappuram	Apsidal	Sarkar: 167- 168 Field Survey
44.	Karikkād Subrahmaṇya temple	-do-	Circular and Square	<i>Index No. C</i> 8-11: 488- 489. Field Survey

45.	Pulpatta Śiva Temple	-do-	Circular	Sarkar: 202-203 Index No. C-12: 489. Field Survey
46.	Trippanachi Mahā Viṣṇu temple	-do-	Circular and Square	Field Survey
47.	Pullānūr Bhagavati Temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
48.	Ponmaḷa Śiva Temple	-do-	Rectangular	Field Survey
49.	Indianūr Mahāgaṇapati	-do-	Circular	Index A 63:465 Field Survey
50.	Kuṛumāttūr Mahā Viṣṇu Temple	-do-	Square	M.R. Raghava Varier:2016 Field Survey
51.	Naṭakkāvungal Śiva Temple	-do-	Circular	Field Survey- Ruined temple (Fig.14)
52.	Kārakkunnu Śiva Temple	-do-	Circular	Field Survey- Ruined temple (Fig.15)
53.	Tṛikkaḷayūr Mahādēva Temple	-do-	Circular	Field Survey Brocken inscription (Fig.16)
54.	Iravimaṅgalam Mahā Viṣṇu Temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey Inscription (Fig.17)
55.	Trikkaṇṭiyūr Śiva Temple	-do-	Apsidal	Sarkar: 170, 172

56.	Śukapuram Dakṣiṇāmūrti	-do-	Square	Sarkar:193 Field Survey
57.	Āthavanād- Ālvāncēri Śiva temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
58.	Thirunāvāya Nāvāmukunda Temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
59.	Triprangōṭṭu Kālasamhāramūrti	-do-	Apsidal	Sarkar: 169 Field Survey
60.	Tiruvaṇṇūr Śiva Temple	Kozhikode	Apsidal	Sarkar: 172 Field Survey
61.	Panniyankara Bhagavati temple	-do-	Circular	Field survey
62.	Talakkāḷathūr Śiva Temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
63.	Kāvuntaṛa Śiva Temple	-do-	Circular	Field Survey
64.	Kuḷattūrappan Temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
65.	Cōkkūr Śrī Rāma temple	-do-	-	K.C.A.R:24- 27
66.	Kinālūr temple	-do-	-	Index No B 23: 484
67.	Mānipuram	-do-	-	Index A 20: 444 Private temple of the brahmin family Makkāṭṭu Mana
68.	Tiruvangūr	-do-		Field Survey

69.	Kaliyāmvelli Bhagavati temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
70.	Tirunelli Mahā Viṣṇu temple	Wayanad	Square	Field Survey
71.	Cembra Śrī Subrahmaṇya Swāmi temple	Kannur	-	Raghava Varier. 1990 (2009): 96
72.	Vēlam Mahāgaṇapati temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
73.	Māṇiyūr Subrahmaṇya temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
74.	Tiruvaṭṭūr temple	-do-	Square	Field Survey
75.	Rājarājēswaram Śiva temple	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 176-77 Field Survey
76.	Triccambaram Kriṣṇa Temple	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 177- 178 Field Survey
77.	Narayan Kaṇṇūr Śankara Nārāyaṇa temple Ramantaḷi	-do-	Circular	Sarkar: 181- 182 Field Survey
78.	Eramam Cālappuram	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 173- 174
79.	Kuṛuvakkāvu Kaṇṇapuram Bhagavati temple	-do-	Square	Sarkar: 175- 176 Index B. 24:485 Field Survey
80.	Pullūr Kodavalam	Kasaragod	Square	Field Survey



The distribution pattern of the temples (Fig. 18) shows that majority of them were located in the multi-crop agrarian tracts that consisted of wet-land,

garden and homesteads in the catchment areas of the rivers, rivulets or such other water bodies in the midland. But it doesn't mean that they were absent in the hilly and coastal area. In the hilly areas the early medieval temples were located in the present day Wayanad and Palakkad districts probably in connection with the movement multi-crop produce and cultures through the passes of the western Ghats and the distribution of the temples in coastal zones seems to have influenced the coast based exchange of goods as well. Major distribution of settlements was found in the catchment areas of rivers like Vaḷapaṭṭanam, Cāliyār, Pērār, Periyār, Maṇimala and Pamba. The distribution pattern shows that the early medieval temples were distributed mainly in the multi-crop agrarian production and its internal and external exchanges in the midland and coastal zones of Kerala.

### ***Temple Deities***

The chief deities of the early medieval temples were Śiva and Viṣṇu and the gods and goddesses of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava-Purāṇic pantheon. The mother goddess cults especially the *Saptamātrikaḷ* were incorporated into the Purāṇic pantheon and placed as the consorts of the Brahminic male gods.<sup>132</sup> Thus this period witnessed the formation of institutionalized worshipping centres with Brahminic deities and Vedic rituals.

The deity of the temple was represented as the lord or guardian of the region where temple existed. For example, the *Kumāranārāyaṇapurattu Tēvar*<sup>133</sup> was considered as the lord of Kumāranārāyaṇapuram, *Tiru Mūlikkaḷattappan* was

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<sup>132</sup> Brāhmi is the consort of Brahmā, Mahēsvari of Śiva, Vaiṣṇavi of Viṣṇu, Indrāṇi of Indra, Kumāri of Kārthikēya, Varāhi of Varāha and Cāmuṇṭa of Yaman. Arya Nair V.S. *Op. cit.*

<sup>133</sup> Cokkur inscription, line 4-5. *KCAR:24-27.*

the guardian deity of Mūlikkaḷam.<sup>134</sup> As mentioned earlier, the deities of temples were acknowledged with the political territory where the temple exist. The deity of the Vāḷappaḷḷi temple is referred to as *Kailātamūṭaiynār* (the lord of Kailāsa i.e., Śiva).<sup>135</sup> *Tēvar* is the common term that appears to denote the temple deity.<sup>136</sup> Perumāḷ was usually used to mention Viṣṇu.<sup>137</sup> The main deity of the Neṭumpuṟam Tali temple is Śiva and *Kaṇapati* (Gaṇapati) appears as subsidiary deity.<sup>138</sup> The Bhūtagaṇas of Śiva was also worshipped through offerings called Pūtabali.<sup>139</sup> The Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription refers to *Kaṇapati*, *Mātrikkal* (*Saptamātrikkal*) and *Ayyan* (*Śāsta*) as the subsidiary deities.<sup>140</sup>

Some of the early deities lost their importance or ousted from the temple premises. The mother goddesses like *Saptamātrikkal* was the important example of the incorporation and eviction of the earlier deities from the newly emerged temples.<sup>141</sup> They are incorporated as the consort of the male gods of Purāṇic traditions and worshipped mainly in aniconic form in the Śaiva- Vaiṣṇava temples. The epigraphical references from the Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu temple mentioned about the offerings to the *Mātrikkal*.<sup>142</sup> In short, the epigraphical evidences indicate that the major deities belonged to the Śaiva- Vaiṣṇava traditions and the already existing deities especially the non-Brahminic mother goddesses were incorporated into the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava-Purāṇic pantheon as subsidiary deities.

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<sup>134</sup> Mūlikkaḷam inscription line 1-2. *KCAR*:44.

<sup>135</sup> Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription line 6 *KCAR*: 4.

<sup>136</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 4-5. *KCAR*: 24.

<sup>137</sup> Tirunelli inscription-1 line 4. *KCAR*:75-77.

<sup>138</sup> Neṭumpuṟam Tali inscription-1 line 24. *KCAR*: 29.

<sup>139</sup> Neṭumpuṟam Tali inscription-1 line 22. *KCAR*: 29.

<sup>140</sup> Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription line 23, 26,39. *KCAR*: 32-34.

<sup>141</sup> Arya Nair V.S. *Op. cit.*

<sup>142</sup> Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu Inscription line 23-24. *KCAR*: 32-34.



### ***Artistic features and Iconic representations***

Artistic features have a significant role in the dissemination of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava Bhakti tradition. It includes the bas-reliefs, *Dvārapālaka* figure, murals etc. Śiva is depicted in the *Linga* (aniconic) form and Viṣṇu is depicted in different forms like standing (*Stānaka*), reclining (*Śayana*) and seated. The Mother goddess, mainly *Saptamātrika*, are depicted in iconic and aniconic forms. They are accompanied by the Ganēśa and Vīrabhadra. These icons were found either in granite or wood.

The early form of Viṣṇu icon is found in *Sama-bhaṅga* (standing) posture with four arms carrying typical attributes like *Śankha*, *Chakra*, *Kaṭyavalambita hasta* and *Varada* postures.<sup>143</sup> Viṣṇu figures often wore *Kēyūra*, *Hāras*, *Upagrīva*, *Kuṅṭa Pavitra* rings, *Upavīta*, *Urabhandhana*, *Kaṭakavaḷaya*, *Kaṭisūtra* and commonly cylindrical crown. These features are highly influenced by the Pallava and Cōḷa artistic tradition. The *Saptamātrika* figures of the Tiruvañcikkulam Kīṭṭaḷi Śiva temples also represented the Pallava artistic tradition.<sup>144</sup>

The mural, which mainly depicts the story of epic and purāṇic traditions appeared in the temples probably after 14<sup>th</sup> century AD. The murals of the early medieval temples like Pullūr-Kodavalam Śiva temple, Triccambaram, Āranmuḷa Pārthasārathi temple etc. seem to have belonged to the later phase.<sup>145</sup>

### ***Temple rituals***

Almost all inscriptions of the early medieval period from the temple of Kerala are dealing with the details of the land grants or such other arrangements

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<sup>143</sup> H. Sarkar. *Op. cit.* 107.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.* p. 105.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.* pp 121-31.

for meeting the expenses of the temple rituals. The chief purpose of the grants was to maintain the temple rituals without any break and thus the temple became an institution functioned regularly with the various Brahminic ritual performances. The following table furnishes the details of grant arranged for meeting the expenses of various temple rituals mentioned in the available inscriptions.

**Table.2. Temple rituals mentioned in the epigraphs**

<b>Inscription- Reference</b>	<b>Rituals</b>
Vāḷappaḷḷi- <i>K.C.A.R:4</i>	Pali, Uccappali
Tillaisthānam- <i>K.C.A.R:11</i>	Nantāviḷakku
Tiruvārruvāy- <i>K.C.A.R:11</i>	Ūṭṭu, Pantīraṭi, Nivēdyam, Pūtapali
Tirunantikkara- <i>K.C.A.R:21</i>	Nantāviḷakku
Airāṇikkālam- <i>K.C.A.R:21-23</i>	Nivēdyam, Nantāviḷakku, Tiruvamritu
Cōkkūr- <i>K.C.A.R:24-26</i>	Nivēdyam, Viḷakku, Akkiram, Pali
Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi- <i>K.C.A.R:28-30</i>	Tiruvamritu, Teevika, Viḷakku, Muṭṭāviḷakku, Pūtapali
Aviṭṭattūr-- <i>K.C.A.R:30-32</i>	Nirmmālyam
Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu-- <i>K.C.A.R:32-33</i>	Tirucantanam, Kuntirippukai, Tiruviḷakku, Nivēdyam, Ozhukavik (daily rituals), Tiruvakkiram, Nivēdyam to the Mātrikkal, Nivēdyam to the Kaṇapti, Śrīkaraṇai, Kārilattu Tirukkōyil Nivēdyam, Tāra (Dhāra), offering to Ayyan
Porāṅgāṭṭiri-- <i>K.C.A.R:34-35</i>	Tiruvārātinai
Trippūṇittuṛa- <i>K.C.A.R:36</i>	Tiruvārātinai
Trikkākkara-1- <i>K.C.A.R:39-40</i>	Tiruvamritu, Pūtapali, Ozhukkavik, Paḷlittāmam, Tiruvakkiram, Akkiram, Tiruvamritu, Tiruviḷakku, Tiruppukai

Trikkākkara-2- <i>K.C.A.R:45</i>	Veḷḷi Nantāviḷakku, Karppūram tiri, Tiruvakkiram, Nantāviḷakku
Trikkākkara-3- <i>K.C.A.R:49-51</i>	Tiruvakkiram, Nantāviḷakku,
Trikkākkara-8-- <i>K.C.A.R:70</i>	Veḷḷittālam, Vaṭṭakai
Trikkākkara-9-- <i>K.C.A.R:80</i>	Nantāviḷakku Tiruvamritu, Pirāmaṇareyum Cirivaiṇṇavareyum (Brahmins and Sri Vaiṣṇava) Amritu Ceyyiccu, Paḷittāmam
Mūḷikkaḷam-1- <i>K.C.A.R:44</i>	Tiruvamritu, Nivēttiyam, Uttamākkiram, Antittiruvamirtu, Attāḷatiruvamirtu
Mūḷikkaḷam-2- <i>K.C.A.R:83</i>	Tiruvakkiram
Cembra- <i>K.C.A.R:46-48</i>	Viḷakku, Daily rituals
Tirukkaṭittānam-1- <i>K.C.A.R:63-64</i>	Tiruvamritu, Nantāviḷakku,
Tirukkaṭittānam-2- <i>K.C.A.R:65</i>	Tiruvakkiram, Māpāratam
Tirukkaṭittānam-3- <i>K.C.A.R:56</i>	Akkiram/ Tiruvakkiram
Tirukkaṭittānam-6- <i>K.C.A.R:83</i>	Pirāmaṇa Ūttu, Uttiraviḷa, Pūta Pali
Tirukkaṭittānam-7-- <i>K.C.A.R:98</i>	Nantāviḷakku, Amāvāti Nāl (Amāvāsi day) Tiruvamritu Pancamāśabdam, Nīrāṭṭu Paḷli, Tiruppali
Tirunelli- 1- <i>K.C.A.R:75-77</i>	Pantīraṭi, Nantāviḷakku, Tiruvamirtu
Tirunelli- 2- <i>K.C.A.R:78-79</i>	Nantāviḷakku
Iringālakkuṭa- <i>K.C.A.R:81</i>	Tiruvamritu, Nantāviḷakku, Uccai Tiruvamritu
Tiruvangūr-1- <i>K.C.A.R:82</i>	Akkiram
Tiruvangūr -2- <i>K.C.A.R:82</i>	Palikkal
Kinālūr-3- <i>K.C.A.R:71</i>	Palikkal
Tiruvaṇṇūr- <i>K.C.A.R:96</i>	Nantāviḷakku
Nallūr- <i>K.C.A.R:97</i>	Māpāratam, Nrittam
Perunna-3- <i>K.C.A.R:103-104</i>	Namakkāram, Māpāratam
Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi-5- <i>K.C.A.R:105</i>	Akattu Pantīraṭi
Kollam Rāmēsvaram- <i>K.C.A.R:106-108</i>	Akkiram

Airāṇikkaḷam-2- K.C.A.R:110	Tiruvakkiram
Tiruvīṭaikkōṭu- K.C.A.R:114	Nantāviḷakku
Māmpaḷli-1- K.C.A.R:173-174	Tiruvamṛitu
Māmpaḷli-2- K.C.A.R:177-178	Tiruviḷakku

The lamp was essential part of the temple rituals. It includes the usual lamp (*Viḷakku*), perpetual lamp (*Nantāviḷakku*) and the rows of lamps around the temple (*Curruviḷakku*). The first two lamps are integral part of all temple, but the last one is optional, not frequently appears in the inscriptions. The feast offerings to the deity like *Nivēdyam*, *Tiruvamṛitu*, *Ūṭṭu* etc. occurs in the morning, midday, evening and night. The time was fixed according to the movements of sun. The time of the temple offerings is detailed in Mūḷikkaḷam inscription.<sup>146</sup>

The details of the rituals related to the temple signified to the formation of a society with the Brahminic routine. The routines of the brahmins were attributed to the deity of the temple. The deity is equated with the human entity and the routines was fixed according to the routine of the Brahmins.

- The *Nivēdyam* to the deity in the morning, midday, evening, and night implied to the interim diet followed by the Brahmins.
- The *Dhāra*, *Kalaśam*, *Paḷli Nīrāṭṭu* etc. stand for the bathing of the deity represented the Brahmins as the most purified form of human entity.
- *Māla* or garlands, *Niṛmālyam* etc. stand for the ornamentation of the deity and also the majestic manifestation of both the deity and the Brahmin.
- The perpetual lamp signified to the eternal grandeur of both deity and the Brahmin.

<sup>146</sup> Mūḷikkaḷam inscription-1. K.C.A.R: 44.

Thus, both the deity and the Brahmins were developed as the supreme ritual icons of the contemporary society and the temple became their abode. As the temples owned the large amount of production areas including wet lands, garden lands and homesteads, it developed as powerful economic institution which was managed through an unanimously agreed contract named *Kaccam* by a corporate body consisted of Brahmins and ruling authorities of the region. Since the land was assigned to meet the expenses of various rituals of the temples, all routines of the temple were recognized by the contemporary society as the act of contemporary polity as well. If the ritual was hindered, the concerned person had to remit fine to the deity, Brahmins and the ruling authority. Through the temple rituals, the Brahmins and the ruling chiefs were equated with the temple deity and placed at the higher position in the society. Thus, the rituals of the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava or the Vedic- Purāṇic pantheon enabled the Brahmin to convert the temple as a dominant sacred institution that provide a ritual sanctity to the ruling authorities. This was the unique feature of the early medieval society, which was not prevailed in the pre-temple period.

### ***Temple arts***

Besides the ritual ceremonies, the temple arts also smoothed the popularization of the bhakti traditions of the Vedic-Purāṇic pantheon and established the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions in the early medieval society. The voice of *Śaṅkhu* (conch shell) and drum provide an atmosphere of Bhakti. The recitation of *Māpāratam* or Mahābhārata was one of the important methods of the popularization of Vedic-Purāṇic bhakti. The temples were arranged land for meeting the expense of Mahābhārata performance and also appointed specialized

personals to recite the Mahābhārata.<sup>147</sup> The presence of the *Kāntarvikaḷ* or singers in the temple also facilitated to popularize bhakti.<sup>148</sup> The presence of dancers like *Naṭṭuvan*, *Naṅgacci* etc. hinted at the popularization of bhakti through performing arts. Cōkkūr inscription refers to the grant of a *Naṅgaiyār* to the temple must have shown the possible existence of the performance of the dance to popularize the glory of the temple traditions.<sup>149</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription gives a clear picture about the prevalence of the dancers who were graded as excellent, medium and lowest and also paid their wage accordingly. The *Uttama* or excellent, *Madhyama* or medium and *Adhama* or lowest *Naṅkaimār* or dancers paid their wage in paddy as *Irunāḷiyuri*, *Irunāḷi* and *Nāvūri* measures respectively.<sup>150</sup> This inscription also mentions the presence of *Naṭṭuvan* or the male dancer who received *Iṅgali* paddy as his wage.<sup>151</sup> The share of paddy was arranged for the *Ōṛviyan* or the drummers as well.<sup>152</sup>

The Nallūr inscription refers to the land grant during the time of the Vēṅaṭu chief Gōvardhana Mārthāṇḍan, who ruled Nanṛuḷaināṭu as well, to the temple for meeting the expense of *Māpāratam* and *Niruttam* or dance.<sup>153</sup> The presence of dance performances in the sacred environment with the lamp to popularize the bhakti is evident in the Māṅiyūr inscription that refers to *Nirutta Viḷāviḷakku* (the lamp for performing the dance).<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription-1 part II line 1 part II-4, IV- 3. *KCAR*: 63-64.

<sup>148</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription line 10. *KCAR*:28.

<sup>149</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 74-80. *Index* No A 8: 438; *KCAR*: 27.

<sup>150</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-1 line 13-14. *KCAR*: 28.

<sup>151</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-1 line 12. *KCAR*: 29.

<sup>152</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-1 line 13-14. *KCAR*: 28.

<sup>153</sup> Nallūr inscription Side- 1 line 5-6 Side II line 2-3. *KCAR*: 97.

<sup>154</sup> Māṅiyūr inscription line 19-20. *KCAR*:396.

The Perunna inscription refers to the *Kulaśēkhara Kōyiladhikārikal* (identified with Rāma Kulaśēkharan, the last Cēra ruler) arranged the annual share called *Āṭṭaikkō!* for *Māpāratam*.<sup>155</sup> The Tiruvaṅṅūr inscription mentions the arrangements made for the *Pañcamaśabdham* of *Pañcavādyam*, an orchestra of five types of musical instruments, by the Nanṟūlai Nāṭu chief Maṅalmanṟattu Iyakkan Śrīkaṇḍan.<sup>156</sup> The Tiruvalla copper plates also mentions the offerings of the Kīlmalaināṭu ruler Kaṇṭan Kumaran alias Māḷuvakkōn for the *Pañcamaśabdham* of the Tiruvalla temple and the land grants as *Jīvitam* to the performers.<sup>157</sup>

However, the temple arts, especially, performing arts with musical instruments were fundamental part of the propagation of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti. The temples maintained a group of professionals for these purposes including the dancers, musicians etc. who were later included in the *Ampalavāsi* category. All these references have shown that the ruling authorities were the benefactors of the popularization of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava traditions, which must have been used by them to elevate their political position to the Kshatriya Varna, which will be discussed in the sixth chapter.

### ***Temple Committees***

The temples were managed according to the resolution made unanimously by a corporate body consisted of the ritual authorities of the temple and the ruling authorities of the temple region. The corporate nature of the temple committee itself shows the institutionalization process of the temple as dominant ritual as well as political edifice that had control over the production and production

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<sup>155</sup> Perunna inscription – 3 line 24-25. *KCAR*: 103.

<sup>156</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription- 7. *KCAR*: 98.

<sup>157</sup> Tiruvalla Copper Plate No. 25 line 351-55. *KCAR*: 272-73.

relations and surplus accumulation system. The following table gives a picture about the nature of temple committee of the early medieval temples.

**Table.3 Temple committee members mentioned in the epigraphs**

Members of the Committee	Inscription - lines	Remarks/ Reference
Tiruvārruvāy Patinettu Nāṭṭār, Vālaippaḷli Ūrār	Vālaippaḷli -2	The agreement made at the presence of Rājasēkhara Tēvar. Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:4</i>
Iringāṭikkūṭal Paraṭaiyār, ḷaiyār	Iringāḷakkuṭa-2-4	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:10</i>
Tiruvārruvāy Sabha and Aṭikaḷ	Tiruvārruvāy -1-2	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:11</i>
Tirunantikkarai Perumākkaḷ, Taḷiyāḷvān and Kaṇakkar	Tirunantikkara-1	Temple authorities and official accountant. <i>K.C.A.R:21</i>
Cērākēśvaram Taḷi Atikārar, Uḷpāṭan, Cēnāpati, Kuṭakkai, Iravi Pirāṭṭi, Irupattoruvar, Tava (sabha), Kōyil, Ulku	Airāṇikkaḷam-1-2	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:21-23</i>
Karkkōṭṭupurattu Kaṭampankumaran	Cōkkūr	A single political figure. <i>K.C.A.R:24</i>
Nityaviyārēśvarattu Taḷi, Taḷi Atikārar, Veṇpolināṭṭuṭaiya Kōtai Iravi	Neṭumpuram Tali-1	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:28</i>
Āvaṭṭipputtūr Āyiravar, Irupattēzhuvar, Iraṇṭukuṭi Potuvāḷ	Āvittauttūr	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:30</i>
Tirupparankōṭṭu Paraṭaimār, Ūrpattārar, Ālkōyil, Potuvāḷ	Tirupparankōṭṭu	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:32</i>



Porankāttiri Tavaiyār, Ilayyār, Kōyil, Ālkōyil, Iraṇṭukuṭi Potuvāḷ	Porankāṭṭiri	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:34</i>
Iravi Āticcan, Piccaipparaṭaiyār, Potuvāḷ	Trippūṇittuṛa	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:36</i>
Kēraḷakēcaripperumāḷ	Trikkākkara-1	Cēra rulers. <i>K.C.A.R:39</i>
Putukkāṭu Patinēṭṭu Nāṭṭār	Putukkāṭ	Probably, the chief of the eighteen major residences. <i>K.C.A.R:43</i>
Nanṛuzhanāṭu Munnūṛruvar, Kaṇayantēvan, Mankalattu Kumarankunṛappōḷan	Tiruvaṇmaṇṭūr-3	The ruling powers of the Nanṛuzhanāṭu. <i>K.C.A.R:43</i>
Cempaṛai Paṭārakar, Toṇṭati Mūrkanāyina Avirāman, Ēṭanūrūr, Tava, Potuvāḷ	Cembra	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:46</i>
Nityaviyārēśvarattu Patinēṭṭu Nāṭṭār, Atikārikal, Neṭumpuṛaiyur Nāṭuṭaiya Maṇalmanṛattu Iyakkan	Neṭumpuram Taḷi-2	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:52</i>
Irāman Cētinkan Tiruvaṭi	Vēṇṇāyūr	A single political figure. <i>K.C.A.R:57</i>
Nityaviyārēśvarattu Patinēṭṭunāṭṭār, Atikārikal	Neṭumpuram Taḷi-3	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:62</i>
Ūr, Paraṭaiyār, Potuvāḷ	Tirukkaṭittānam-1	Temple and political authorities. Vēṇāṭu ruler appears as the lord of Nanṛuzhanāṭu. <i>K.C.A.R:63</i>
Peruneytal Ūr, Potuvāḷ, Kīḷkuḷankara Tavai, Pantāvūr Nārāyanciritaran, Nanṛuḷanāṭuvāḷunṛa Vēṇāṭaiya	Perunna-1	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:67</i>
Tirukkaṭittānattu Pariṭai, Kaṇattār, Potuvāḷ, Nanṛuḷanāṭu Munnūṛruvar,	Tirukkaṭittānam-5	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:68</i>

Paṇi ceykinra Neṭumpuṛattu Kunta(n kōvin)tan and (Ira)virāman		
Cerumarrappuḷaikkaṇṇamankala-ttinmel Nakkaniravi, Āticcaniravi	Trikkākkara- 7	Household chiefs. <i>K.C.A.R:69</i>
Peruneytal Ūr, Paraṭaiyār, Potuvāḷ	Perunna-2	Temple and political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:71</i>
Mūttakūrriḷ Eḷunnūruvar, Paṇiyuṭaiya Nāyan, Ūr, Ūriṭ (nāliṭa)vakai Vellālar, Niḷal, Paṇi and Nāṭu of Kuṛumpuṛaināṭṭu Mūttakūru	Tirunelli-1	Mainly political authorities and cultivating tenants. <i>K.C.A.R:75</i>
Puṛaikīḷār, Niḷal and Paṇi	Tirunelli-2	Mainly political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:78</i>
Tirukkaṭittānattu Paṭārar, Ūr and Potuvāḷ	Mūḷikkaḷam-2	Brahmins and Temple authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:83</i>
Kuṭavalattu Ūrālar	Pullūr Koṭavalam	Temple authority as per the instruction of King Bhāskara Ravi. <i>K.C.A.R:84</i>
Cālappuṛattu Taḷi, Vaḷaṅciyar, Nānātēyi and Paṇimakkaḷ	Eramam Cālappuṛam	Temple authorities and merchant guilds with the presence of King Bhāskara Ravi and Mūṣaka ruler Kaṇṭan Kāri Varman alias Rāmaghaṭa Mūvar. <i>K.C.A.R:84</i>
Paṇiyankara Atikārar and Āḷkōyil	Panniyankara	Political authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:89</i>
Irāmavaḷanāṭuvāṇa Pāliyattu Kaṇṇan Kaṇṭan, Paṇiyuṭaivakaḷ, Aṛannūruvar and Niḷalōṛ	Tiruvaṇṇūr	Political and temple authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:96</i>

Tirukkaṭṭānattu Ūrārar, Paraṭaiyār, Capaiyār (Sabhaiyār) and the ruler of Nanṟuḷanāṭu	Tirukkaṭṭānam-7	Temple authorities, brahmin body and Political power. <i>K.C.A.R:98</i>
Kaṭaingōṭṭu Nārāyaṇaniravi, Ūr and Potuvāḷ	Tiruvālūr	Political and temple authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:102</i>
Nālutaḷi	Perunna-3	Body of the four important Brahmin settlements. <i>K.C.A.R:103</i>
Kumarankumarāticcan Paṭai Uḷppāṭṭil (the Nāṭvāḷkai Maṇakkāṭṭu Kumaraniravi's warrior) and Nityaviyārēcaravuttu Taḷi and Taḷi Atikāri	Neṭumpuṟam Taḷi-4, 5	Political and temple authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:105</i>
Irāmar Kōyiladhikāri	Kollam Rāmēśvaram	Political authority. <i>K.C.A.R:106</i>
Tiruvallavāḷ Ūr, Ayirāṇikkaḷttu Ūr and Iraṇṭu Kirāmattil Potuvāḷ	Airāṇikkaḷam-2	Body of the agrarian settlements and Temple authorities. <i>K.C.A.R:110</i>
Ayirāṇikkaḷattu Paraṭaiyār and Ūrār	Airāṇikkaḷam-4	Brahmin body and the chief of the agrarian settlement. <i>K.C.A.R:111</i>

The above table shows that there was no common format for the committee of the temple.<sup>158</sup> Many of them comprised of both political and temple authorities. Some others include either temple or political powers only. But when we analyze the inscriptions of the Cēra period, it is clear that all the temple

<sup>158</sup> The inscriptions of the second Cēra period are mainly used in the table. All of them are published in Malayalam language in Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Op. cit.*

committees refer the regnal years of the Cēra power as the period of the resolution, through which they acknowledged the political supremacy of the Cēra power. Both temple ritual and political authorities in the committee passed the temple resolution unanimously. The temple factions include the *Paraṭai*, *Sabha*, *Taḷiyār*, *Perumākkaḷ*, *Ūrālar*, *Ūrpaṭṭār*, *Potuvāḷ*, *Perumuṭṭiyan*, etc. The political authorities comprised of mainly three groups, the Cēra king himself, which occurs very rarely, the local chiefs of the *Nāṭu* as *Āḷkōyil*, *Kōyil*, *Aṭikaḷ* etc. and the officials or representatives of the ruling powers like *Kōyilatikāri*, *Atikāri*, *Āyiravar*, *Nūrruvar*, *Kaṇakkar*, etc. The presence of the political power in the execution of temple functions is conspicuous in the early medieval period. Some temples were overseen by more political authorities, for instance, the rulers of Veṅpolināṭu and Neṭumpuṛaiyurnāṭu appear as the benefactors of the Neṭumpuṛam Tali temple, the rulers of Kuṛumpuṛaināṭu and Puṛaikīlānāṭu occur as the patrons of the Tirunelli temple, the ruler of Vēṅnāṭu and Kāḷkkaraināṭu mentioned as the patrons of the Trikkākkara temple.

Some inscriptions display the absence of the temple committee as mentioned above and the grant was made by a single political authority of the region. But the punitive measures for the violation of the decision, which maintain the temple routine made by the donor, was based on the existing practices. For example, according to Cōkkūr inscription, the grant was made by certain Karkkōṭṭupurattu Kaṭampankumaran himself to the temple under his ownership during the reign of the Cēra king Kōta Ravi. The maintenance of the temple expenses was entrusted to Vivāha Taḷi Nampi and Senior *Sabhas* (*Mūtta Tavakaḷ*).<sup>159</sup> Those who make disruptions in the temple routines will be punished

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<sup>159</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line-47-48. *KCAR*: 26.

according to the *Mūlikkaḷam* agreement and had to remit fine in gold weight to the political authorities that include the Perumāḷ or Cēra king, local chief of the region and the ritual authorities like *Sabhas*.<sup>160</sup> All these references have shown that the political authority of the region had a significant role in the establishment of the temple as an established ritual and symbolic edifice according to the Varna principles in the early medieval society, which will be detailed in the following chapters of this work.

### **Jain and Buddhist tradition**

The influence of the Jain and Buddhist traditions is evident from the early historic Tamiḷakam and they are mentioned as *Śramaṇar* in the early Tamil literature and *Amaṇa* in the early Tamil Brahmi inscriptions. The early medieval period also witnessed the survival of these traditions. The epigraphs of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century AD and the structural remains have suggested the existence of the Jain temple in Kerala like, Tiruccāṇam, Ālattiyūr, Tiruvaṇṇūr, Kinālūr, Tiruvaṭṭūr etc. It is observed that, as the ritual practices of the Jain temples, which generally known as Kuṇavāy or Tirukkuṇavāy, and the Brahminic temples have no obvious distinctions, in later period almost all the Jain temples incorporated to the Brahmanical tradition and worshipped as Hindu temple.<sup>161</sup> The reference occurred in the Veḷḷāyaṇi inscription like “...*Tirukku(ṇa)karai (āyi)na yātava nārāyaṇa viṇṇakar ālvān*”<sup>162</sup> seems to have shown the conversion of a Jain temple to the Viṣṇu temple during the last four years of 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>163</sup> Such

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid*- 48-57. *KCAR*: 26-27.

<sup>161</sup> M.R. Raghava Varier. *Jainamatham Keralathil*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Cooperative Society Ltd, 2012. p. 40-41.

<sup>162</sup> Veḷḷāyaṇi inscription. line 2 *KCAR*: 210-211.

<sup>163</sup> Puthusseri Ramachandran remarked that it was a Jain temple and later developed as Viṣṇu temple. *K.C.A.R*:211.

a ruined temple is located at Panamaram in Wayanad where the figures of both Jaina and Vaṣṇava traditions are found (Fig.19).

Similarly, the mentions of Śrīmūla Vihāra in the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*, which was visited by the Mūṣaka ruler Vallabha<sup>164</sup> has shown the existence of Buddhist Vihāra at Trikkunnappuḷa.<sup>165</sup> The discovery of Buddhist images from Māvēlikkara and the Pāliyam copper plate inscription (898 AD) of the Vikramāditya Varaguṇan also point out the presence of the Buddhist traditions in Kerala during early medieval period.

As the Buddhist and Jain worshipping rituals were amalgamated with the Brahminic rituals, it is difficult to find out the presence of Buddhist and Jain influence in the development of early medieval temples in Kerala. Many of the shrines related to these traditions were later transformed or incorporated as Śiva or Vaiṣṇava or Bhagavati temples. The temples of Kallil Bhagavati, Kūṭalmānikyam, Trikkākkara, Kinālūr, Tiruvaṭṭūr, Tirumaṇṇūr, etc. are the good examples.

## **Conclusion**

The above discussion substantiated the historical setting of the evolution of temples in early medieval Kerala. Mainly three process were interrelated to the evolution of structural temples as the institutionalized worshipping centres with the Vedic-Purāṇic traditions such as the Brahmin settlements, Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti traditions and the fiscal supports to these actions getting from

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<sup>164</sup> *M.V.K.* XII: 96, XIV:25.

<sup>165</sup> T.A. Gopinatha Rao. *T.A.S.*, Vol. II, *Op. cit.* p. 116; Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. *Studies in Kerala History*. Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1970. p. 178; M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* 1972. pp. 9-10; B. Padmakumari Amma. *Jain - Buddhist Centers in the Early History of Kerala*. Calicut University: Department of History, 1995. p. 232. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis.

the ruling powers of the localities. The Vedic-Purāṇic traditions became the vital force behind the popularization of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti in Kerala. Many temples of Jain and Buddhist traditions were incorporated into Śaiva- Vaiṣṇava pantheon and idolized as Brahminic deities. The temples remained as the propagating institution of these bhakti traditions and also the supreme power of Brahminic rituals over the political and social life of the early medieval Kerala. The routines of the Brahmins were attributed to the routine of temple. Almost all the Brahmin settlements of the early medieval period was developed in connection with the temple. The epigraphical evidences show that almost all land grants and other offerings were given to the temple, not to the Brahmins directly, which was ruled by a corporate body of the temple. The formation of Brahmin settlement, as the big landholders, must have been happened only after the Cēra period when they were transformed into the *Sankētam* parallel to the formation of post-Cēra *Nāṭuvāli Swarūpams*.

The land grants established two dogmas in the society; (1) temple was the supreme sacred institution and, as the custodian of the Vedic-Purāṇic bhakti traditions, the Brahmins were the uppermost social strata in the society, and (2) as the benefactors of the Brahmins and the temples, the ruling power were elevated into the status of second most Kshatriya Varna and equated with the divine power. Hence the temple remained as an institution for infiltrating the Varna ideology in the early medieval society and it developed as the fundamental institution for the establishment of rigid caste based hierarchical society in the medieval feudal period. The nature of early medieval polities was also integrally connected with the temples of early medieval period. Thus, the following two chapters will examine the role of temple in the formation of early medieval social and political structure.

## Chapter IV

### **TEMPLE AND THE EARLY MEDIEVAL SOCIAL ORDER**

The early medieval period (c. 600 AD to 1300 AD) marked substantial changes in the socio-cultural and political scenario of Kerala. The emergence of temple as the permanent worshipping centre was linked with the formation of Brahmin settlements and emergence of the practice of Vedic rituals in favour of the contemporary polity, which was started in the pre-temple phase. The Vedic rituals were practiced in the pre-temple society as part of marriage and other such auspicious community functions. It was practiced by the Cēra rulers as well in order to elevate their political power to the divine status. It is already mentioned in the third chapter that the early Cēra rulers started land grants to the Brahmins during the early historic period.<sup>1</sup> By the beginning of the early medieval period, the Vedic or Brahminic rituals became part of the socio-political functions of the society, especially of the elite social groups. It was facilitated by the temple. The temple developed as an institution with excessive power over the ritual functions, economy, political power, cultural forms, worshipping pattern etc. The temples had multifaceted role in the early medieval social formation, especially in the midland agrarian belt, of Kerala. This chapter tries to explore the role of temples in the socio-economic and cultural setting of early medieval Kerala.

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<sup>1</sup> G. Vaidyanatha Ayyar (Tr.). *Patirrupattu*. Thissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, (1961) 1997. *Patikam* 2; Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier. *Cultural History of Kerala*. Thruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication Government of Kerala, 1999. p. 237.



## **Historical traces of the early medieval period**

The historical evidences related to the early medieval period include inscriptions, literatures and the temple architectures. Though the number of inscriptions is scarce, it furnishes significant traces and signifiers about the role of temple in the contemporary society. Major number of inscriptions belonged to the Second Cēra power who ruled from 9<sup>th</sup> century AD to 12<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>2</sup> Some other inscriptions of local rulers up to AD 1300 or little later are also used for the present study. Almost all inscriptions are related to the land grants and other privileges to the temple authorities. The literatures related to Bhakti traditions, genealogies like *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya*, court literatures etc. were also used. The architectural features, which have already mentioned in the previous chapter, will also be used for developing certain argument.

## **Grants to the Temples and Brahmins**

The epigraphical evidences have furnished the details of the endowments to the temple and Brahmins including mainly land, goat, gold etc. There are certain terms like *Kuṭukkapeṭṭa*, *Amaicca*, *Aṭṭippēṛ* or *Aṭṭikkoṭutta* etc. occurred in the inscriptions that represented various types of grants. The earliest Vāḷappallī inscription of the first known Perumāl ruler Rājaśēkhara Dēvar (800-844 AD) refers to the cultivated lands granted to the Vāḷappallī Śiva temple.<sup>3</sup>The term

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<sup>2</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. *Studies in Kerala History*. Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1970; M.G.S. Narayanan. *Perumāls of Kerala: Brahmin Oligarchy and Ritual Monarchy Political and Social conditions of Kerala under the Cēra Perumāls of Makōtai (c AD 800 – AD 1124)*. Thrissur: Cosmo books, (1996), 2013.

<sup>3</sup> “*Kayilātamutaiyanārku kuṭukkappaṭṭa pūmiyāvana*” Vāḷappallī inscription line 6-7. T.A. Gopinatha Rao. *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publications Government of Kerala, Volume II and III, (1908) 1992. pp.8-14, (Hereafter *T.A.S.II:8-4*); M.G.S. Narayanan. “Index to Cēra Inscriptions”. *Op. cit.* (1996)

*Kuṭukkappetta* stands for the complete transfer of the land right to the temple. Similarly, Tiruvārruvāy inscription mentioned the details of the land grant for meeting the expenses of the feast in connection with *Āvaṇi Ōṇam* festival by certain Puñcaippaṭakārattu Cēntan Cankaran.<sup>4</sup> Similar occasions can be seen in many inscriptions. Almost all lands were already cultivated and occupied by the agricultural population. It was granted along with the existing settlements of the occupational groups as well. The land was mainly granted to meet the expenses of daily ritual routine of the temple.

Another type of grant was *Aṭṭikkūṭukkuka*, means the title-deeds of freehold property. The Airāṇikkaḷam inscription refers to the grant of *Iṭayītu*, intermediary lease hold, land of the Queen Iravi Pirāṭṭi by the King Kōta Iravi to the temple as *Kīlītu*, some kind of subordinate lease hold.<sup>5</sup> The grant was given to the temple based on strict regulations and if the *Ūrālar*, the temple proprietors, failed to follow the regulations the land was repossessed by the King.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, Tṛikkākkara inscription refers to the allocation of the title deed of the Kālkkarai nāṭṭuṭaiya Kaṇṇampurāiyan to the Tirukālkkarai temple by receiving gold from the Tirukālkkarai Ulpātan and Perumuṭiyan, the temple committee members, and the share of produce of the Kaṇṇampurāiyan from this land was given to the temple to meet various temple expenses.<sup>7</sup>

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2013. No.A.1, p.435 (Hereafter *Index* No. A.1:435); Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Kerala Charithrattinte Aṭisthāna Rēkhakal*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Bhasha Institute, (2007) 2011. p.4. (Hereafter *K.C.A.R.*:4).

<sup>4</sup> “*Āvaṇiyōṇamaṭuvan koṭutta pūmi*” Tiruvārruvāy Inscription line 2. *K.C.A.R.*: 11.

<sup>5</sup> Airāṇikkūḷam inscription line 6-7. *K.C.A.R.*:22

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 21-26. *K.C.A.R.*: 23.

<sup>7</sup> “*Tirukālkkarai Ulpātanum Perumuṭiyanumkayyāl ponkontu kālkkaraināṭṭuṭaiya kaṇṇampurāiyan vāykkāl ciraikku mēl iṭaiciṛaikku kīlum veṭṭikkarikkāṭṭukoḷḷa pūmiyum*

The term *Amaittapūmi*<sup>8</sup> stands for the land arranged to meet the expenses of the temple. It also stands for the offerings to the temple. Trikkākkara inscription refers to the perpetual silver lamp offered to the temple<sup>9</sup> and also the land offered to the temple to meet the expenses of the lamp.<sup>10</sup> Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription refers to the land arranged to meet the daily rituals of the chief and subsidiary deities including *Gaṇpati*, *Saptamāṭṭrikkal* and *Ayyan* and to also meet the expenses of the temple priests and feast to the Brahmins.<sup>11</sup> It also mentions that the agreement executed by the temple body was applicable to the entire land of the temple assigned during early and later times for meeting various requirements. Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription refers to the land assigned for *Akkiram*, the Brahmin feast.<sup>12</sup> Trikkākkara inscription refers to the 120 *Kalañcu* (equal to 40 *Paḷankācu*) submitted by Ciṛumatappuḷaikkōtai Kēraḷan to the *Perumuṭiyan* (store keeper) and *Ulpāṭan* of the Trikkākkara temple to arrange the feast (*Akkiram*) for the Brahmins.<sup>13</sup>

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*(pulaiyare)yum kūṭa Tirukkālkkarai paṭṭārarakar tiruvaṭikk aṭṭikkuṭuttān Kālkkarain Nāttutaiya Kaṇṇampuṛaiyan...*” Trikkākkara inscription-3 Par I- 3-8, Part II 1-9 & Part III 1-9, Part IV 1-5. *K.C.A.R:*49-51.

<sup>8</sup> “*Amaitta (paṇṭa)ṛutuman*” Cōkkūr inscription line 5-6. *K.C.A.R:* 24.

<sup>9</sup> “*Amaicca vellī nantāviḷakkonnu*” Trikkākkara inscription-2. line 5. *K.C.A.R:* 45.

<sup>10</sup> “*Iccelavinnamaiṅja pūmiyāvatu*” Trikkākkara inscription, line 9-10. *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> “*Paṭāaruṭaiya nāl paṅkunikkum kaṇapatiyār nivēdyamum Sri karaṇaikkumkārillattu tirukkōyil nivēdyamum viḷakkum cāntiyum nārāyaṇanki tirukkōyirkkamaiṅja cennaṭaiyumkōtai keyavantirukkōyirkkamaiṅja cennaṭaiyum cāntikkuntārai(k)kum ayyanukkum ittanaikkumamaiṅja pūmi*” Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription. line 13-41. *K.C.A.R:*32-33; “*Ipparicayariyum Cātukkal Manṛatticuvaran Tuppan, Perumanaikkōṭṭu Caṅkaratāmōtiran, Mangāṭṭu Nārāyaṇankaṇṇan, Nakavarēri Puṛayan Cēnnaṅ, Kuḷikkāla Iravikkōtai, Ceṛumarrappuḷai Kōtai, Ayyanumkōtai Nārāyaṇan, Kōtai Kēraḷan.*” Trikkākkara inscription-7-part IV-2-8. *K.C.A.R:* 69.

<sup>12</sup> “*Akkirattinamaicca pūmi*” Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription line 6. *K.C.A.R:* 52.

<sup>13</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-5 part I, line 4-7. *K.C.A.R:* 58-59.

The granted, arranged or offered lands that appears in the inscriptions were mainly proposed to meet various temple requirements which include the daily rituals, temple maintenance, rewards to the service groups of the temple etc. The Cōkkūr inscription gives a clear picture about the submission of wet lands and homesteads to meet different purposes of the temple that include *Nivēdyam* (for sacred feast to the deity), *Viḷakku* (for lamp), *Cānti* (for temple priest), *Akkiram* (for feast to the Brahmins), *Purai Putukkuvān* (for the yearly roof-thatching of the temple or renovation) and *Pali* (for sacred offering to the deity). Similarly, the Trikkākkara inscription also gives details of the distribution of the produce from the temple land to celebrate *Āvaṇi Ōṇam*.<sup>14</sup>

The land grant was authorized through engraving the document on stone or copper plate by the temple committee, local rulers or *Kōyiladhikāri*, the representative of the King. For instance, *Kōyiladhikāri* was entrusted to make arrangements to engrave the unanimous decision of the Perunna temple.<sup>15</sup> The Vēṇāṭu ruler Iravi Kumaran declared that the document was written by himself.<sup>16</sup> The Kuṟumpuṟai Nāṭu ruler Kuṇjikkōṭa Varman was made arrangements to engrave the details of the grant of Vēṇāṭu ruler to the Kuḷattūr temple on stone.<sup>17</sup> In many occasions it was witnessed by a group of persons who were often

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<sup>14</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-1, Part IV, V, VI, VII, VIII. *K.C.A.R*: 39-40.

<sup>15</sup> “*Immaṭṭu Nāṭṭānumamaccuḷḷa tirukkōyiladhikārarukku*” Putukkoṭu inscription line 7-8. *K.C.A.R*:43 “*Kōyiladhikārikalāy Vanniruntu Kallil mēlkkotticcōr Veḷḷūriravikaṇṇiyunkūḷa mankalattu srī kumaran nārāyaṇan*” Perunna inscription- line IV & V. *K.C.A.R*: 71.

<sup>16</sup> “*Ikkarumam pa(ṇ)ṇittava kaiyyeḷutiaṟivēn Vēṇāṭtu Iravi (ku)ma (ra) nēn*” Trikkākkara - 7-part IV-7-8. *K.C.A.R*:69.

<sup>17</sup> Kuḷattūr inscription line 1-19. M. R. Raghava Varier. *Kēraḷeeyatha Carithramānangal*. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, (1990) 2009. p. 119; *K.C.A.R*:119-120.

mentioned along with their household name.<sup>18</sup> Trikkākkara inscriptions refer to many landed householders as the witnesses of the temple agreement.<sup>19</sup> Trikkākkara inscription refers to the land grant, exempting the share to *Nāṭu*, *Vāḷkai* or the king, and various occupational groups called *Paṇi*, of Kāḷkkarai Nāṭṭu Uṭaiya (ruler) Kaṇṇam Puṛaiyan to Trikkākkara temple. The grant was engraved and authorized by certain Kummarkōṭṭu Iravi Kunṛappōḷan, probably a local chief. The temple agreement with the presence of witnesses, the major landed chief, seems to have exemplified the local political sanctity to the temple decree made by the temple body unanimously.

### **The Ownership and other Rights over the Land**

The inscriptions collected from the temples are the major source material for the understanding of land ownership forms of early medieval Kerala. The epigraphical evidences since 800 AD refers to the land grants to the temple and the Brahmins by the Perumāḷ rulers, local rulers, the landed personals etc. This process resulted into the formation of new landholding rights in Kerala, probably from the post- *Sangam* period and flourished from 9<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards. It includes the *Cērikkal*, *Pirammavam* and *Dēvatānam*. Many landholding rights and tenure rights were also developed over the land like *Iṭayītu*, *Kīḷītu*, *Kārāṇmai*, *Orri*, *Virutti* etc. This period also witnessed the emergence of lease holding rights based on rent or share of produce to the land lords like *Pāṭṭam*, *Vāram* etc. The

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<sup>18</sup> “*Ipparicarivar Mailāyan Paḷḷi(ka)tampa Nārāyaṇan, Kārimukkil Kōtai, Vempaḷamanen malinkalattu Kaṇṭantāyanum, Kāyamaṛṛattu Kaṇṭan Nārāyaṇan, Kaṇṇan Vaikuṇṇi Nārāyaṇanum, Kānūr Caṅkara Nārāyaṇanum Aṟivār*” Avittattūr inscription line 23-26. K.C.A.R: 32.

<sup>19</sup> Trikkākkara inscription -3-part V & VI, Trikkākkara inscription -4-part V & VI, Trikkākkara inscription -6 part VII & VIII. K.C.A.R:50-51; K.C.A.R:54; K.C.A.R:61.

terms like *Kaṭam*, *Paṇayam* etc. have indicated the development of the money borrowing and lending economy. The terms like *Polivu*, *Paliśa* etc. have further indicated on the emergence of interest fixation system over the borrowing or lending money. The share of produce from the land submitted as the guarantee for the mortgage was collected as interest. The term *Kaikkūli* refer to the emergence of collecting unauthorized share of produce or money and a clear sign of bribery. All these have pointed towards the development of a complex form of agrarian economy which was mainly based on the paddy cultivation. The following part will detail the above-mentioned development of the agrarian economy.

### ***Cērikkal***

The eventual authority of the land was the ruling power, could be the Cēra rulers and *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*. The land of the ruling powers was generally mentioned as *Cērikkal*.<sup>20</sup> The ruling power granted their *Cērikkal* lands to the temple for meeting various daily expenses of the temple on conditional basis. The temple bodies were entrusted to meet the expenses from the land and they were under the surveillance of the ruler. Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription refers to *Cērikkal* land of Tribhuvana Mātēvi alias Ciritara Nangacci, probably Cēra queen, granted to the temple.<sup>21</sup> The inscription also stated that if the share of produce to the temple was not remitted on time, it should be submitted double time and then the

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<sup>20</sup> This term existed up to 19<sup>th</sup> century in Kerala to denote the land of the ruling power. Herman Gundert. *Malayalam English Dictionary*. Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society/National Book Stall, (1962) 2000. p. 24.

<sup>21</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-3 line 4-12. *K.C.A.R*:62.

*Cērikkal* land will be attached by the temple.<sup>22</sup> Tirunelli inscription refers to the *Cērikkal* land of the Kuṟumpuṟaināṭu ruler Kuṇṅikkūṭṭa Varmman that granted to the Tirunelli temple.<sup>23</sup> The *Cērikkal* land of Manukulāticca, i.e. Bhāskara Ravi Perumāl, is mentioned in the inscriptions.<sup>24</sup> The *Cērikkal* land of the Vēnāṭu ruler Kumāran Udaya Varman appears in the Kollam Rāmēśwaram inscription.<sup>25</sup>

In short, the *Cērikkal* must have been the earliest land ownership rights of Kerala. The king and the local rulers were granted their *Cērikkal* land to the temple for meeting its various requirements. This process resulted into the development of another two land ownership rights related to temple like *Dēvaswam* and *Brahmaswam*.

### ***Pirammavam or Brahmaswam and Tēvatānam or Dēvadānam***

The references occurred in the inscription shown that majority of the lands were granted to the temple in the name of deity<sup>26</sup> or arranged for meeting various temple functions. The direct mention of the *Dēvaswam*, the land of temple or *Brahmaswam* lands, the land of Brahmin households, are not many in the inscriptions.<sup>27</sup> The Poṟangāṭṭiri inscription of Kōta Iravi which refers to the

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<sup>22</sup> “*Muṭṭukil Muṭṭiraṭṭi Koṭuppatu ippūmiyum Cērikkalum mukkālvaṭṭattoṭukkum.*” line 11-12 *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> “*Kīlkkāṭṭippōla Ccērikkal aṭṭikkoṭuttānMūta Kūru Vāḷkinra Kuṇṅikkūṭṭa Vaṟmmanāyi(na) Aṭikaḷ VīraKuṟumpuṟaiyār.*” Tirunelli inscription-1 line 5-6. *K.C.A.R:*75.

<sup>24</sup> Mūḷikkaḷam inscription -2. *K.C.A.R:* 83; Airāṇikkaḷam inscription- 2. *K.C.A.R:* 110.

<sup>25</sup> Kollam Rāmēśwaram inscription line 61-67. *K.C.A.R:*106-108

<sup>26</sup> “*Kailāta nātamuṭaiynārku kuṭukkappaṭṭa pūmiyāvana.*” Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription. line 6. *K.C.A.R:* 4; “*Kumāranārāyaṇapurattu Tēvaṟkku cennataikkamaitta (paṇṭ)tu maṇ.*” Cōkkūr inscription line 3-6. *K.C.A.R:* 24.

<sup>27</sup> Poṟangāṭṭiri inscription line 13-14. *K.C.A.R:*34-35; Trippūṇittuṟa inscription line 6-7. *K.C.A.R:* 36; Tiruvaṇṇūr inscription line 6. *K.C.A.R:*96.

*Brahmaswam* and *Dēvaswam* land grants needs a special mention.<sup>28</sup> The traditional birth right and the *Kārāṇmai* right of the granted lands were also given to the temple or *Sabha*.<sup>29</sup> The absolute right over the land was given to the temple by *Porangāṭṭiri Sabhaiyār, Iḷaiyār, Kōyil (Nāṭuvāli), Āḷ Kōyil* (representative of the Perumāl), and *Iraṇṭu Kuṭi Potuvāl* unanimously.<sup>30</sup> The unanimous decision was recorded as the exclusive matter of the *Sabha* only.<sup>31</sup> It shows that the matters related to the *Brahmaswam* and *Dēvaswam* land was dealt by the Brahmin body with the blessings of the Perumāl king and local King. The *Ūrāḷar* were not included here as the member of the executive body of the *Sabha* matters. According to the *Porangāṭṭiri Sabha* agreement, the *Ūrāḷar* were not allowed to encroach or accumulate the resource of these lands and to breach the agreement of the *Sabha*. They were also not permitted to avert the tilling process in the *Virutti* land of the temple functionaries (*Paṇimakkaḷ*). If they attempted to violate the agreement of the *Sabha*, they had to remit a fixed amount as fine to *Perumānaṭi* (100 *Kalañcu*), *Āḷ Kōyil* (50 *Kalañcu*) and the *Tēvar*, the temple (50 *Kalañcu*). They will also have lost their proprietorship over the land and will be evicted from the *Ūr*. These references have shown that the *Ūrāḷar* were not Brahmins, they were only the proprietors of the land, most probably the non-Brahmin origin, and functioned as intermediary overseers of the temple lands. The Cembra inscription refers to the land granted by the *Ūr* unanimously to the temple as *Dēvaswam* that excluded the settlement plots of *Kuṭi* and garden plots and also made a decree that the *Ūrāḷar* do not enter into the temple land and the

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<sup>28</sup> *Porangāṭṭiri* inscription line 13-14. *K.C.A.R:34*.

<sup>29</sup> “*Parruvaliyum Kārāṇmayum kūṭa viṭṭār.*” *Ibid*.

<sup>30</sup> *Porangāṭṭiri* inscription line 1-11. *Ibid*.

<sup>31</sup> “*Avirōtattāl Cēyta Tavakāriyamāvatu.*” *Porangāṭṭiri* inscription line 9-11. *Ibid*.



land of *Paṇimakkal* after the endowment.<sup>32</sup> It shows that the *Ūr* had given the fertile wet land agrarian plot which had regular yield to the temple as *Dēvaswam*.<sup>33</sup> Another inscription from the same temple, probably issued in the later time, refers to the grant of wet, garden lands and homesteads to the temple.<sup>34</sup> This grant was settled by the temple body, which include certain *Toṇṭati Mūrkkānāyina Avirāman, Ēṭanūru, Tapai (Sabha)* and *Potuvāl*, unanimously. Accordingly, both food crops like paddy, jack fruit and cash crops including pepper, coconut, and areca nut regularly offered to the temple.<sup>35</sup> These inscriptions seem to have shown the change in the temple economy from the consumption based land holdings to the profit earning land lord. The Tiruvaṇṇūr inscription mentions about the *Dēvaswam* and *Brahmaswam* land of Tirumaṇṇūr temple.<sup>36</sup> These lands were given to *Aṟunnūrruvar*, the six hundred militia, of Rāmavaḷanāṭu as *Kīlīṭu*.<sup>37</sup> Such references indicate that the *Brahmaswam* was not an individual holding during the early medieval period. It was part of the temple and the right over the *Brahmaswam* must have held by the Brahmin families related to the temple. The *Sabha, Paraṭai* etc. were dealt with the matters of the Brahmins associated with the temple and the temple property.

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<sup>32</sup> Cembra inscription. M R. Raghava Varier. “Cembra Likhithangal”. *Op. cit.* (1990) 2009. pp. 96-117.

<sup>33</sup> M.R. Raghava Varier, based on the paleographical features of the two inscriptions from the temple, assumed that the second set will be earlier one. *Ibid.* pp. 109-111.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* pp.96-100.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* line12-16.

<sup>36</sup> “Tirumaṇṇūr Paṭāruṭaiya Tēvattuvamum Pīramattuvamum Aṟannūrruvarkku Kīlīṭu”, Tiruvaṇṇūr inscription line. 6-7. *K.C.A.R.*: 96-97.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

### ***Iṭayītu* and *Kīlīṭu***

The *Kīlīṭu* and *Iṭayītu* were the property submitted by the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* of local rulers or land lords to the temple executives for meeting various expenses and the land was managed by the temple proprietors namely *Ūrāḷars*. These lands were considered as the subordinate property of the temple. These lands were granted by the local ruler or *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* to the temple and the *Ūrāḷar*, the proprietors of the cultivation process in the granted land as well as the temple affairs, were entrusted to give a share of produce to the temple as *Ilakkāpōka* (*Rakṣābhōga*) or protection charge and from this share the temple made arrangements to meet various expenses. Thus the *Cērikkal* land of local rulers granted as *Kīlīṭu* yielded to the temple a good revenue as *Rakṣābhōga* in the early medieval period and it was one of the major source of the income for the maintenance of the daily affairs of the temple.<sup>38</sup> The description of the boundary of the *Iṭayītu* land of Iringālakkuṭa temple is clearly mentioned in the inscription. The land laid west to the *irinam nāṭu* (two *nāṭu*) north to *Kuṭṭankoḷaciṛa* (pond of Kuṭṭankoḷa) and east to the *Uṭarāṭṭu* (river).<sup>39</sup> The precise references about the boundary of the land indicate the process of the land grants by the existing land owners of the region to the temple on fixed condition basis.

Airāṇikkaḷam inscription refers to the grant of the Cēra queen Iravi Pirāṭṭi's *Iṭayītu* land to the temple as *Kīlīṭu* by the junior prince Iravi Iravi and fixed share of paddy produced in the land as *Rakṣābhōga* for meeting various temple expenses.<sup>40</sup> The Tirunelli inscription refers to the grant of *Cērikkal* land

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<sup>38</sup> For details Rajan Gurukkal. *The Kerala Temple and Early Medieval Agrarian System*. Sukapuram: Vallathol Vidyapeetham, 1992. pp. 32-36.

<sup>39</sup> Iringālakkuṭa inscription. line 4-6. *K.C.A.R*:10.

<sup>40</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 1-26. *K.C.A.R*:21-23.

of Kuṟumbranātu ruler to the Tirunelli temple, which was further given to the saints, yogis, and *Vaiṣṇavas* of the temple as *Kīlīṭu*.<sup>41</sup> Another set of inscription from the same temple refers to the land grants of Puṛaikīlānātu rulers Caṅkarakōta Varman Aṭikaḷ to the temple for meeting various expenses and it was given to the *Puṛaikīlānātu Aññūrruvar* and *Ayyāyiravar* as *Kīlīṭu*.<sup>42</sup> The intermediary tenant right (*Kārāṇmai*) over the wet and garden land was arranged by the *Atikārar* and *Ālkōyil* to the Panniyankara and in return the temple will get forty *Kalam* paddy as *Vāram*, the share of landlords, and it also made a clause that if the *Vāram* was not given on time, the *Iṭayīṭu* right will also be declined.<sup>43</sup> The *Iṭayīṭu* land was not subjected to transfer, sale, or mortgage.<sup>44</sup>

Regarding the *Iṭayīṭu* and *Kīlīṭu* land, the temple functionaries had only the proprietorship over the land and the actual ownership was apprehended by the donor, the ruling power. The senior most member of the *Kuṭi* was entrusted to look after the *Iṭayīṭu* land and the *Urālars* had no right to occupy the land or evict the existing *Kuṭikaḷ* from the land.<sup>45</sup> The grant was made on the basis of solid agreement in which the term and conditions and penalty for the breach of contract are clearly mentioned. They had no right to sell the *Iṭayīṭu* land or submit it as the guarantee for mortgage.<sup>46</sup> They were not allowed to make additional profit from the *Iṭayīṭu* land and forbidden to make further intermediaries in the land.<sup>47</sup> The *Ūrālārs* were not permitted to commit evils or to involve in the evil

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<sup>41</sup> Tirunelli inscription line 17-19. *K.C.A.R:*76.

<sup>42</sup> Tirunelli inscription-2 line 1-27. *K.C.A.R:*78-79.

<sup>43</sup> Panniyankara inscription lines 1-17. *K.C.A.R:*

<sup>44</sup> Iringālakkuṭa inscription line 7-10. *K.C.A.R:*89.

<sup>45</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription, line 18-20. *K.C.A.R:*22-23.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* lines 21-22.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* line 22-23.

talks against the *Ūr* of the *Iṭayīṭu* land.<sup>48</sup> If they violate the contract, they will be faced punishment like the excommunication or eviction from the *Ūr*, imposed fine, reclaimed their right over the land, treated as the persons who committed major sin including the killing of parent and marrying mother<sup>49</sup> etc. Anyone support the accused will also be considered as the culpable person.<sup>50</sup> In several occasions the inscription quote the major code like *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam*, *Kaṭāṅkāṭṭu Kaccam*, *Tavaranūr Kaccam* etc.<sup>51</sup> Airāṅikkaḷam inscription refers to that if the entire agreement are violated, the King, the donor of the land, revoke the grant and repossess the land.<sup>52</sup> All these references indicate that the actual ownership of the land submitted as *Iṭayīṭu* was held by the King or the state.

There are instances of the re-possession of the *Iṭayīṭu* lands due to the violation of the agreement that made by the temple executive unanimously and the reassignment of the same to another purpose. The Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription refers to the retrieval of the *Iṭayīṭu* land of certain Teñcēri Cēnnaṅ Tāyan who lost his position of the sacred treasury (Paṅṭāram keṭṭa) by the Nanṟulai Nāṭu ruler Maṅal Maṅṟattu Iyakkan and rearranged the same land for meeting various temple rituals.<sup>53</sup> The inscriptional evidences prove that majority of the land granted or arranged to the temple were *Iṭayīṭu*.

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* line 23.

<sup>49</sup> Iringālakkuṭa inscription line 7-11. *K.C.A.R.*:10; Airāṅikkaḷam inscription line 23-24. *K.C.A.R.*:23

<sup>50</sup> Iringālakkuṭa inscription line 7-12. *K.C.A.R.*:10

<sup>51</sup> Iringālakkuṭa inscription line 23-24. *K.C.A.R.*: 23; Avittattūr inscription line 18-19. *K.C.A.R.*:31-32.

<sup>52</sup> “*kōyil pūmi kōyilērumatu.*” Airāṅikkaḷam inscription line 25. *K.C.A.R.*:23.

<sup>53</sup> “Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription -7. *K.C.A.R.*: 98-99.

### ***Virutti***

*Virutti* was the land granted to the temple functionaries as the reward of their service. The *Virutti* land to the temple priest is mentioned in many epigraphical contexts. Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription refers to the arrangement of 700 *Nāḷi* paddy as *Cānti Virutti* by a Cēra princess Tribhuvana Mātēvi alias *Cirītara Naṅgacci*.<sup>54</sup> *Paṭṭa* (Bhaṭṭa) *Virutti*, probably the land assigned to the Vedic educational experts, also mentioned in this inscription.<sup>55</sup> The Nallūr inscription refers to the *Virutti* land of *Cānti* or temple priest.<sup>56</sup> The 12<sup>th</sup> century AD Kollūrmaṭham copper plate refers to the measure of paddy as *Virutti* to *Mēl Cānti* and *Kīl Cānti*.<sup>57</sup> It is clear that the *Virutti*, as the reward of service, was given either in the form of produce especially paddy or land.

### ***Kārāṇmai***

The formation of intermediary right over the land was the important development in the early medieval agrarian economy. The *Kārāṇmai* was the intermediary right to cultivate the land on condition basis and the holders of the *Kārāṇmai* right was known as *Kārāḷar*. They had to submit a stipulated share of produce to the actual land holder as *Pāṭṭam*. As the king, local rulers, the Brahmins related to the temple and the temple occupational groups were not cultivators by themselves, the cultivation process of the crown lands and the temple lands were managed by these intermediary *Kārāḷars*. As the intermediary right holders, the *Kārāḷar* were placed between the actual land lords and the

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<sup>54</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-3 line 9. *K.C.A.R*: 62.

<sup>55</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-3 line.6-7. *Ibid*.

<sup>56</sup> Nallūr inscription side 2- line 1, 5 *K.C.A.R*: 97.

<sup>57</sup> Kollūrmaṭham Copper plate. *K.C.A.R*: 149, 151.

actual tilling communities. The *Kārāḷār* were entrusted to submit the share of produce from the land.<sup>58</sup> If they declined to submit the same, they will lose their *Kārāṇmai* right. The Trikkākkara inscription refers to the land grant of the Kālkkaraināṭu ruler Kaṇṇampuraḷayan for meeting the expense of ghee to the temple and the reference give indication that the *Kārāḷar*, the intermediary tenant who must have held the *Kārāṇmai* right over the land submitted by the Kaṇṇampuraḷayan, had to submit the ghee.<sup>59</sup> This inscription refers to clause that if the *Kārāḷar* hindered the submission of ghee for daily or one month they had to submit double time and if it continued for one year they will lose their *Kārāṇmai*. Another set of inscription from the Trikkākkara temple mentions the share of produce offered by a *Kārāḷan* named Cālavēli Kēraḷam Pōḷan, who holds the *Kārāṇmai* right over the temple land (*Kārāṇmai koṇṭa*), for meeting the expense of the perpetual lamp.<sup>60</sup> It mentions the share of *Kārāḷan* as well.<sup>61</sup> The Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription indicates that the *Kārāṇmai* was hereditary right which can be transferred to the progenies of the *Kārāḷar* only.<sup>62</sup>

The *Kārāṇmai* holding right was prevailed not only in the temple land, but also in the *Cērikkal* land of the local rulers and the land granted to trade guilds. The Mūḷikkaḷam inscription mentions about the *Kārāṇmai* right holder of the *Cērikkal* land of Manukulāticcan (Bhāskara Iravi) that offered to the temple for

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<sup>58</sup> Tiruvalla Copper plate 3 line 34 *K.C.A.R*: 246.

<sup>59</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-4-part IV line 1-5. *K.C.A.R*: 54.

<sup>60</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-10 part I line 2-5. *K.C.A.R*: 85.

<sup>61</sup> “*onpatināl onpatin nūru (rā)l n (ā)lu...mitu Kārāḷanu patavāra...*” Trikkākkara inscription-10 line 6-7. *Ibid*.

<sup>62</sup> “*Kārāṇmai koṭutta Kolavāyanum Avan Cantatiyum anṇi maṇṇoruttarkku Kārāṇmai koṭukkavum pāṭṭamiṭavugkaikkūli koḷḷaveṇṭum ennavumpeṇār.*” Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription line 77-85. *K.C.A.R*: 34-35.

meeting the expense of Brahmin feast.<sup>63</sup> The *Kārāṇmai* of the *Cērikkal*, probably submitted by Manukulāticcan, to the Airāṇikkaḷam temple is mentioned in the inscription.<sup>64</sup> The *Veḷḷālar* were appeared in the Tarisāppaḷḷi copper plate as the *Kārāḷar*, the tenant groups, who managed the cultivation process of the land granted to the merchant corporations *Añcuvāṇṇam* and *Maṇigrāmam* for establishing a church at Kurakkēṇi Kollam.<sup>65</sup> Then it can be assumed that the production process in the wet and garden lands of temple, local rulers, landed households, merchant corporations etc. had been managed by the intermediary groups called *Kārāḷar*. As it was a new phenomenon developed in the early medieval time, it corresponded to the development of new economic and political hierarchy in the society.

### ***Orrī***

*Orrī* was the mortgage tenure prevailed during early medieval period and most common during the pre-colonial period. There are many references in the inscriptions that prohibit the pledging of land for mortgage.<sup>66</sup> As this tenure occurred in the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD epigraphs, one can think that the *Orrī* was a well-known tenure to the early medieval society, even before the period of epigraphs.

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<sup>63</sup> Mūlikkaḷam inscription-2 part I line 4-6. *K.C.A.R*: 83.

<sup>64</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription-2 part III. *K.C.A.R*: 110.

<sup>65</sup> “Pūmikkū Kārāḷar Nālukuṭi Veḷḷālarum” Tarisappaḷḷi copper plate 2 side 1 line 13-14 p. *T.A.S. Vol. II & III. pp. 60-86*; M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Tarisāppaḷḷippaṭṭayam*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Samgham, (2013), 2015. p.109.

<sup>66</sup> Iringālakuṭa inscription line 8. *K.C.A.R*:10; Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 22. *K.C.A.R*:23; Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription line 67-69. *K.C.A.R*:33.

### ***Pāṭṭam***

*Pāṭṭam* was rent on cultivated fields to be paid to the landlords. The tenants had to remit a stipulated proportion of produce in kind with grain equal to the net produce after the deduction of seed sown and an equal quantity as reward for the labour bestowed to the landlords.<sup>67</sup> Tirupparangōṭṭu inscription contain the clauses to forbid the further allocation of the granted *Kārāṇmai* right over the land to anybody for *Pāṭṭam*.<sup>68</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription mentions the *Pāṭṭam* of the Ukkiramangalam (Ugramangalam) and Iyānamangalam (Īśānamangalam) and according to the agreement a fixed amount of paddy (*Nelliṅgaliyāl Munnūrru Kalam or 300 Kalam*) had to be submitting as *Pāṭṭam* to the temple.<sup>69</sup> A Trikkākkara inscription refers to that if the temple affairs arranged by the Kālkkaraināṭu ruler Kaṅṅampuṛaiyan hindered, the *Pāṭṭamāḷan*, the collector of *Pāṭṭam* for the temple, had to submit it double time and it also stated that either *Nāṭuvāḷumavar* or his relatives were not allowed to receive *Pāṭṭam*.<sup>70</sup> The Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription refers to the unanimous decision taken by the *Nityaviyārēśwarattu Patineṭṭu Nāṭṭār, Atikārikaḷ, Neṭumpuṛaiyūr Nāṭṭutaiya Maṅal Manṛattu Iyakkan* and *Perumānar Pāṅṭan Cēnan (nāyakan)* to give Ukkiramangalam land, which was arranged for the Brahmin feast, for cultivation on *Pāṭṭam* basis.<sup>71</sup> The same inscription also mentions that if the *Pāṭṭam* was not remitted before the Viṣu, the temple proprietors had to borrow *Pāṭṭam* and spend the same for conducting the feast and then the *Pāṭṭam* should

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<sup>67</sup> Herman Gundert. *Op. cit.* pp. 598-99.

<sup>68</sup> Tirupparangōṭṭu inscription line 81-82 *K.C.A.R:*32-34.

<sup>69</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-1 line 4-7. *K.C.A.R:* 28-30.

<sup>70</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-3 part I-IV. *K.C.A.R:* 49-51.

<sup>71</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-2 line 1-8. *K.C.A.R:* 52.



be returned with interest.<sup>72</sup> The Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription clearly mentions the peasants (*Pūmiyuḷumavar*) of the temple land who had to submit *Pāṭṭam* in paddy grains and rice after removing paddy husk before *Tiruvōṇam* day at temple and also stated that the temple *Ūrāḷar* or *Parataiyār* were not permitted to receive the *Pāṭṭam*.<sup>73</sup> These references have indicated that the temple lands were cultivated on *Pāṭṭam* basis and it was collected by the spokesperson of the temple and the donor of the land had no right to collect the share of produce from the land.

### ***Vāram***

*Vāram* was the share of produce, mainly paddy, of landlords.<sup>74</sup> This term *Patavāram* occurs in the Vāḷappalli inscription and accordingly if the *Paṇimakkaḷ*, the temple servants, hindered to the offerings of the temple they had to submit a share of paddy as fine in which one by ten share had to give to the *Cānti* or the temple priest.<sup>75</sup> More specifically, the term *Vāram* mentions in the Panniyankara inscription and accordingly the *Kārāḷar* had to submit forty *Kalam* paddy as *Vāram* to the temple. It can be assumed that the temple leased out the land to the cultivators and, as the term occurs in the earliest Vāḷappalli inscription, it seems to have prevailed in Kerala even before the emergence of temple economy.

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* line 13-17.

<sup>73</sup> Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription II and III. *K.C.A.R.*: 63-64.

<sup>74</sup> Panniyankara inscription line 9, *K.C.A.R.*: 89.

<sup>75</sup> Vāḷappalli inscription line 5. *K.C.A.R.*: 4.

### ***Kaikkūli***

The term *Kaikkūli* mentioned in the Tirupparangōṭṭu inscription along with *Kārāṇmai* and *Pāṭṭam* lease holding rights.<sup>76</sup> The *Kaikkūli* can be interpreted in two ways. It was a fine upon a lease and its renewal in the pre-colonial and even in the colonial period.<sup>77</sup> Similarly, in the Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription *Kaikkūli* appears as the bribe and the temple committee stated that the temple *Ūrālar* and *Paraṭai* (temple Committee) were not allowed to receive *Kaikkūli* for the appointment of *Cānti* and the person in connection with the perusal of the *Māpārata* (Mahābhārata).<sup>78</sup> The agreement made at the temple did not allow to misuse the *Kārāṇmai* right for the collection of *Kaikkūli* as well.

### ***Kaṭam***

The system of borrowing share of produce on interest was also familiar to the early medieval society. The temple contract of the Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi temple gives instruction to the temple proprietors to borrow the share of produce if the *Taḷiyālvān* declined to carry out the feast for Brahmins.<sup>79</sup> It had to be given back with interest as early.

### ***Paṇayam***

The Trikkākkara inscriptions give many references about the practice of *Paṇayam*, mortgage, of the land for borrowing gold and a stipulated share of produce from the land was fixed as the interest for it. The temple committee was

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<sup>76</sup> Tirupparangōṭṭu inscription line 83-84. *K.C.A.R*:34.

<sup>77</sup> *Kaikkūli* existed even during the pre-colonial period. Herman Gundert. *Op. cit.* p. 299.

<sup>78</sup> Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription part II line 3-4. T.A. Gopinatha Rao identified it as bribe. *T.A.S.* Vol II. pp. 33-34.

<sup>79</sup> “*Kaṭamkoṇṭu Celuttakkaṭavar.*” Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-2 line 14-15. *K.C.A.R*: 52-53.

entrusted to collect the interest in paddy share from the mortgaged land and meet it for various temple purposes.<sup>80</sup> So the *Paṇayam* system was another source of income of the rich temples of early medieval period.

To sum up, all these land rights, tenures and leases are mentioned in the inscription in self-explanatory mode. None of them contained the description about the nature of land holdings, tenure, lease etc., which show that all these terms were very common to the contemporary society and already existed even before the emergence of the temple based economy. It further indicates the formation of intermediary land groups between the actual owner of the land and the actual tilling populations. The formation of intermediary land holding factions was one of the unique features of the early medieval agrarian economy and polity. This must have created certain hierarchy in the existing social order in which the non-producing land holding factions began to control and dominate the producing landless factions who were attached to the land. The relation between the producers and non-producers were developed based on the traditional social customs premeditated by the dominant factions and caste based on traditional occupations. In order to understand the nature of early medieval social order, there should be an idea about the nature of production process and settlement pattern.

### **Multi-Crop Agrarian settlements**

Almost all lands mentioned in the inscriptions as the grant to the temple were already cultivated and transferred along with the existing settlements. The cultivated tracts comprised of the wetlands, garden lands and homesteads.

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<sup>80</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-5 K.C.A.R:58-59.

Though the paddy cultivation was widely practiced in the wetlands, the garden lands and homesteads were the multi-crop cultivation areas that include both food crops and cash crops. The temples received multi-crop products as offerings to the temple. As the numbers of inscriptions are too insufficient, there will be a thorough look into the content of the available inscriptions. The area of wet land cultivation was fixed based on the quantity of the seed sown in the field like *Kalappāṭu Kalappāṭu (Kalam)*, *Tūṇippāṭu (Tūṇi)*, *Potippāṭu*, etc. The garden lands mentioned as *Paṛampū* and homesteads were referred to as *Purayitam*. The following table (Table. 1) will present the details of the wet, garden and homesteads mentioned in the inscriptions.

**Table.1 Lands granted to the Temples in the Perumāḷ inscriptions**

<b>Wet land / Paddy/Rice</b>	<b>Garden land/ Garden Products</b>	<b>Homesteads (residential plot in the garden land)</b>	<b>Inscription/ Reference</b>
1. Kīrankaṭampanār Kari, 2. Aṅṭilakaḷattōṭuḷavēlipatin kalam, 3. Kaḷḷāṭṭuvāyvēli Ainūrru Nāḷi	-----	1. Ūrakattu Pīlikkōṭṭu Purayīṭam 2. Kāvati Kaṅṅan Cankaran Purayīṭam	Vāḷappaḷḷi line 7-10 K.C.A.R:4
4. Cēnnancēnnanār Kari Pathinkalam (rice, paddy) 5. Kāṭēru Ainnūttu Nāḷiyum	1. Payaru (pea), Cakkarai (Jaggery), Enṇa (Oil), Vāḷaiippaḷam (banana)		Tiruvārruvāy inscription. K.C.A.R:11
6. Iṭayīṭu land –wet land		3. Puraikaḷ	Airāṅikkaḷam inscription K.C.A.R:21-23
7. (Paṅṭa)ḡumaṅ nārkalappāṭu 8. Iḷamkaṅṭu muppatu Tūṅippātin tūṅippāṭu 9. Palāvun kaḷamiḷi Patin tūṅiyāloti patin tūṅippāṭu		4. Kūrai Cīkaṅṭan Puraiyīṭam 5. Kuḷattinukku Vāṭakkin Puraiyīṭam	Cōkkūr inscription K.C.A.R: 24-26

<p>10. Kuṛuncaintūṇippāṭu  11. Kaḷukkal kaṭṭu kalappāṭu  12. Cuḷiyal Kalappāṭu  13. Kuḷamurutai Patinoru  Tūṇippāṭu  14. Kuḷiyara Kalappāṭu  15. Āyinattankalam Aintūṇippāṭu  16. Cikariyankalam Aintūṇippāṭu  17. Netumaṇ muppatin Tūṇippāṭu  18. Iṭākkōṭu Patinain Tūṇippāṭu  19. Mānkōṭu Pantiru Tūṇippāṭu  20. Pāṇkoṭu Patin Tūṇippāṭu  21. Paḷamuṇṭai Patin Tūṇippāṭu  22. Maṇaloṭi Patin Tūṇippāṭu  23. Cāttankaḷikkorri Aintūṇippāṭu  24. Marakkāṭṭir Pantiru Tūṇippāṭu  25. Palavayal Muppatin Tūṇippāṭu  26. Neṭumaṇalai Kalappāṭu  27. Tamai  Muppatinmuttūṇiyalaraiṇippāṭu</p>		<p>6. Cinukku Paṭiññāyarru  Puraiyīṭam  7. Kuṭiyirukkai Puraiyīṭam</p>	
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28. Aṅikkarai Patintūṅippāṭu			
29. Muṅṭaiyūrakattu Patinaintūṅippāṭu			
30. Cāttankanta Kalappāṭu			
31. Viyaimiḷi Patintūṅippāṭu			
32. Ciṟupilāvin            Kuḷamiḷi Patintūṅippāṭu			
33. Ciṟumarakkāṭaintūṅippāṭu			
34. Nākamputurṟilum Aintūṅippāṭu			
35. Maṟāyinuḷḷirukalappāṭu			
36. Valankāmiḷi Patintūṅippāṭu			
37. Thoḷukkuṟaiyir Patintūṅippāṭu			
38. Kaccikāṭṭir Patintūṅippāṭu			
39. Kākkaikkāṭṭir Eḷutūṅippāṭu			
40. Cevvaikkāṭu aṅcontu			
41. Kaṅpūḷir Patintūṅippāṭu			
42. Iraṅcikkunṭu Patintūṅippāṭu			
43. Toḷukkuṟayir Patintūṅippāṭu			

44. Ukkiramnkalamumiyānamnkal amucennaṭaikkittitu itinārṛālvārattu kōyil pāṭṭa maḷakkakaṭaviya nellu 45. Pālakkāṭṭu cēri 46. Neṭuṅkāṭuntāl patti pūmi 47. Kuṟuvayal			Neṭumpuṟam Tali-1 K.C.A.R: 28-30
48. Cēramān Mātēviyaṟaiya Karakkalam			K.C.A.R:30-32
49. Amaicca pūmi Munnamaicca Pūmi			Tirupparangōṭṭu. K.C.A.R: 32-34
50. Kalappāṭu, 51. Putuvayalil patin Tūṇippāṭu 52. Kuṭi nilpatin Tūṇippāṭu	2. Payaṟu		Porangāṭṭiri. K.C.A.R: 34-35
53. Pattu Nārkala Nellu			Trikkākkara-1. K.C.A.R:39-40
54. Peruvayal Pūmi	3. Pulaiyarunkaṇṇaikālāy uṭaiyār Pottai 4. Taccanār Pōṭṭai 5. Vattappōṭṭai		Trikkākkara-2. K.C.A.R: 45



	6. Kaṭanu Mēloṭi (Puḷi, Tēnka, Kaṛi)		
55. Karaippalattāl Nānūrru Nāḷi 56. Cūṇṭippāṭattāl Munnūrru Nāḷi	7. Palāvoru Cakkai 8. Oru Tenu oru Tengāy 9. Āyiramaṭakkai 10. Kottakāra vēliyakam 11. Korriyār vēliyakam 12. Karumāra vēliyakam	8. Mailkara Puraiṭam 9. Kunṛattu Puraiṭattāl 10. Tirumalēri Puraiṭam 11. Vengaiyāṭṭu Puraiṭam 12. Īḷikkāṭṭu Puraiṭam 13. Paḷḷippuṛam 14. Utiyanpuṛam	Cembra. M.R. Raghava Varier. <i>Op. cit.</i> pp. 96-99.
57. Veṭṭikarikkāṭṭukoḷḷa pūmi			Trikkākkara-3. K.C.A.R:49
58. Akkirattinamaicca pūmi Ukkiramankalam			Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi- 2. K.C.A.R: 52-53.
59. Aṭṭippēr koṭutta pūmi		15. Tēvar Koṇṭa Puraiṭam 16. Keyavan Cankaran Puraiṭam	Trikkākkara-4 K.C.A.R: 54
60. Pantirukalanel			Trikkākkara-5 K.C.A.R: 58-59

61. Karikkāṭṭu pāṭṭattin neṭunkari	13. Netumparaṃpu		Trikkākkara-6 K.C.A.R: 61
62. Tirupuvanamātēviyāyina Ciritara Nangacci Uṭaiya Pūmi Cōlūru 63. Cāttanūru 64. Perumpulam 65. Ciṟumāttūru 66. Perumaṇankāṭu Paṭṭavirutti		17. Maṇangāṭṭum Talikku kiḷakku kōyilukkuḷḷa Purayitamēḷu	Neṭumpuraṃ Taḷi-3. K.C.A.R: 62
67. Pantirukalanel			Tirukkaṭittānam-2. K.C.A.R: 65
68. Ari	14. Kaṟi, Verrila		Tirukkaṭittānam-3. K.C.A.R: 65
69. Peru neitalūru			Perunna-1. K.C.A.R: 67.
70. Kīḷkkāṭṭiyyppoḷaccerikkal			Tirunelli-1. K.C.A.R:75
71. Ārrōṭu tōṭṭoṭu vayal	15. Ārrōṭu tōṭṭoṭu Karai		Iringalakuṭa. K.C.A.R: 81
72. Nānūrukalam nilam			Tirukkaṭittānam-6. K.C.A.R: 83

73. Manukulāticca Tiruvakkirattinu koṭuttaruḷina Cērikkalāva		18. Paṭampu Perumpaṛampu	Mūlikkaḷam -2. <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 83
74. Vayal nālonu vārattālu nālpatin kalanel		19. Payyakkukarai	Panniyankara. M.G.S. Narayanan. <i>Op. cit.</i> p. 126; <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 89.
		20. Puraiṭattinu Iṛai muppatu	Tiruvañcakkāḷam. <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 93.
75. Njāral Vēlikkakarā 76. Vaṭṭakkari 77. Payittaṭṭiyākinta puraiṭam		21. Kuṭi irunta puraiṭam	Tirukkaṭṭānam-7. <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 98-99
78. Nālpatinkalanelu 79. Peruneytal Ūr			Perunna-3. <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 103

Most of the inscriptions mention the name, volume and boundary of the granted lands especially of wet and garden lands. Some inscriptions do not directly mention the name of the land either wet or garden, but mention the products. So, such details are also procured to find out a pattern.

The proportion of wetlands is higher than the garden and homesteads. The temples were mainly developed in the wetland areas. Paddy was primarily used for consumption and for giving wage to various occupational groups. Almost all occupational groups mentioned in the inscriptions were received paddy as the reward for their service at the temple. Paddy must have stored in the temple or households of the landlords for these purposes. The term *Pattāyam* signified the storage space of the paddy, probably in the temple and the households of the landlords.<sup>81</sup>

Hence it can be summarized that the temple was developed as an institution that managed the wetland paddy production especially for the maintenance of the temple. The major portion of the land granted or offered or arranged to the temple for meeting various temple functions were fertile wet, garden lands and homesteads that transferred along with the agrarian population.

### ***Pastoral wealth***

The pastoral wealth was the integral part of the agricultural process of the Kerala from the Iron age and early historic period. It was an essential component of the wet and garden land cultivation. Cattles were used as production force as well as the suppliers of milks and natural fertilizers. The ghee was part of temple

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<sup>81</sup> Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription. *K.C.A.R*: 99. The term *Pattāyam* means ‘the large chest to keep paddy or rice’. Herman Gundert. *Op. cit.* p. 571.

rituals and daily offerings. The temples received it as gift.<sup>82</sup> The temple received goat as gift. The Tillaisthānam inscription refers to the hundred goats granted to the Tillaisthānam Śiva temple to meet the expense of temple lamp by a Kadamba queen.<sup>83</sup> According to the Tirunelli inscription, the cows were treated as the sacred animal and gave adoration equal to the Brahmin.<sup>84</sup> The Tiruviṭaikkōṭu inscription refers to the submission of cow to the temple servants for meeting the ghee for perpetual temple lamp.<sup>85</sup> The Tiruvalla copperplates give a number of references about the milk product offerings to the temple. All these have epitomized the importance of the livestock in the agrarian population of the early medieval Kerala society.

### **Dwellings and Settlement areas**

*Mangalam*, *Purayītam*, *Kuṭiyirikka* etc. are the important terms appeared in the inscription to mention about different dwellings. They have represented hierarchical social order of the society as well. *Mangalam* was exclusively the residences of the Brahmins. The *Purai*<sup>86</sup> or *Purayītam* must have been the dwellings of the non-Brahmin landowning communities.<sup>87</sup> *Kuṭiyirikka* was the settlement plots of different occupational groups. The larger agrarian areas consisted of many *Kuṭis* came to known as *Ūr*. The larger political unit that consisted of many *Ūrs* came to be known as *Nāṭu*.

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<sup>82</sup>Tiruvārruvāy inscription line 5, 7. *K.C.A.R.*: 11.

<sup>83</sup>Tillaisthānam inscription line 6-8. *K.C.A.R.*: 11.

<sup>84</sup>“*Gōprāhmaṇanā(m) svastika(m) svasti*”, Tirunelli Inscription-1 line 25. *K.C.A.R.*: 77.

<sup>85</sup> Tiruviṭaikkōṭu inscription line 1-11. *K.C.A.R.*: 114.

<sup>86</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription, line 18-19. *K.C.A.R.*: 23.

<sup>87</sup>*Pura* means the thatched house and the *Purayītam* means the plot where the house is located or the site of a habitation. Herman Gundert. *Op. cit.* p. 629.

### ***Kuṭi / Kuṭiyirikka***

The *Kuṭi* was the kin group settlements of occupational groups. Aviṭṭattūr inscription refers to the *Kuṭis* of the *Potuvāl*, the temple administrators.<sup>88</sup> It was also referred to the dwellings of tenants and probably developed in the cultivated areas of garden land. The dwellings of the tenants were known as *Kuṭiyirikka*. The Cōkkūr Inscription refers to *Kuṭiyirikkai Puraiyitam*,<sup>89</sup> homestead of the *Kuṭi* settlers. Airāṇikkaḷam inscription clearly refers that the *Ūrālar*, the managers of the temple land, had no right to occupy the *Kuṭiyirikka* land and make to inhabit or to evict the existing *Kuṭi* of the tenants.<sup>90</sup> If the *Ūrālar* attempted to inhabit or evict *Kuṭi*, they will lose their proprietorship over the land. This inscription also indicates that the senior member of the *Kuṭi* had to maintain the matters related to the settlement. Interestingly, Airāṇikkaḷam inscription refers to that the *Kuṭis* had the right to sell the *Karaipūmi*, probably the less fruitful garden land close to the wet land, or submit it as the guarantee for mortgage within their *Ūr* only.<sup>91</sup> The *Kuṭis* seem to have enjoyed more flexible ownership right over the land than the *Ūrālar*.

The Cembra inscription refers to the *Kuṭittalai*, probably the settlement plots of various agrarian populations.<sup>92</sup> The early Cembra inscription mentions

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<sup>88</sup> “*Iraṇṭu Kuṭi Potuvāl*.” Aviṭṭattūr inscription line 3. *K.C.A.R*:30.

<sup>89</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 43. *K.C.A.R*:26.

<sup>90</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 18-20. *K.C.A.R*:23.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* line 24-25.

<sup>92</sup> Cembra inscription -2. line 7. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* (1990) 2009. pp 109-10.

about the land grant, excluding the *Kuṭittalai* and *Parāmpu* or garden land, by the *Ūr* to the Cembra temple as *Dēvaswam*.<sup>93</sup>

### ***Ūr and Nāṭu***

*Ūr* and *Nāṭu* are the two terms, which already flourished in the pre-temple period, appear in the inscription to show the grouping of settlement areas of the early medieval period.

The discussion made in the third chapter of the present study shows that *Ūrs* were the agrarian villages where the people involved in the multiple production process from the Iron Age and early historic period. The early medieval epigraphs also represented the *Ūr* as the mixed-crop cultivated agrarian zone. *Ūr* was the settlement area that developed in the backdrop of flourished wetland paddy cultivated agrarian tracts, garden areas and homesteads.<sup>94</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription indicates that the *Ūr* was the wetland cultivated areas that also contained *Kāṭu* (forest), *Kara* (river side or the wet field side land), *Kaḷi* (muddy tract), *Matil* (bounded garden tracts) and the garden land areas. There is a clause in the Airāṇikkaḷam inscription like “...*muppatin kalanellum cānti aṭikaḷ kayyil avvūrkaḷattil aḷantu kuṭukkakaṭavar Iravi Pirāṭṭi*,”<sup>95</sup> means Iravi Pirāṭṭi, probably the junior Cēra prince, had to measure and give thirty *Kalam* paddy to the priest of the temple at the threshing floor of the *Ūr* itself. This clause has shown that the main economic component of the *Ūr* was the paddy cultivated areas. The existence of *Kuṭis* of the *Ūrāḷar* in the *Ūr* is referred in the Painkaṇṇūr inscription and it mentions the offering of the *Ūr* (*Painkaṇṇūr*) to meet the

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<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> Cembra inscription gives a clear picture about the economic components of the *Ur*. *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription lines 16-17. *K.C.A.R.*:23.

perpetual lamp of the temple. If the temple *Ūrālar* violate the decision of the temple unanimously taken by *Painkaṇṇūr Paraṭaiyār*, *Ūr* and *Aṭikaḷ Rājasēkharan*, they will lose their right over *Kuṭi* and had to remit certain fines.<sup>96</sup>

The executive body of the *Ūr* also appears in the same term. *Ūr* was controlled by *Pati*,<sup>97</sup> probably *Ūrpati*, chief of the *Ūr*. The *Ūrālar* seems to be the proprietors of the land. They must have been the person in charge or the administrators of the *Ūrs* granted to the temple and had no right to make unwanted intervention over the day-to-day matters of the *Ūr* or the *Kuṭis* of the granted land. Airāṇikkaḷam inscription infers the differences among the *Ūrār* and *Ūrālar*. *Ūrār* appears as the chief or members of the *Ūr* who was entrusted to take over the *Iṭayītu* land of the Cēra queen granted by the junior Cēra prince to the temple as *Kīlītu* along with *Paraṭaiyār*, the Brahmin body. *Ūrālar* was entrusted to collect *Ilakkāpōkam (Rakṣābhōgam)* from the thrashing plot of the *Ūr (Ūrkaḷam)* of the *Kīlītu* land from the junior prince only in the absence of the *Cānti Aṭikaḷ* who failed to receive the same for one year or more owing to his clumsiness. In such contexts he had to redistribute the same to the temple functionaries as prescribed in the agreement without fail. If he failed to do so, he may be dispossessed from the *Ūrālar* post.<sup>98</sup> Such references indicate that the *Ūrālars* of temple lands functioned as the proprietors of the temple property and they were responsible to observe the unanimous agreement made by the temple body. These references have shown that the importance was given to *Ūr* and *Kuṭis*. The chief of the *Ūr* was *Ūrpati* and the senior most member of the *Kuṭi*

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<sup>96</sup> Painkaṇṇūr inscription. *K.C.A.R*:385.

<sup>97</sup> "...raṇṭu Ūrilum Uḷḷa patiyēyum..." Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 6. *K.C.A.R*: 22.

<sup>98</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription lines 17-19. *K.C.A.R*:23.



was the head of the agrarian settlement. The right of the *Ūrālar* of the temple land was restricted and they had to obey the rules and regulations set by the temple executive committee at the presence of king or the ruler of the region or Brahmin *Sabhas*. *Ūrālar* was entrusted to maintain the socio-economic status of the *Ūr* without decline.

*Ūrālar*s may not be the Brahmin and the *Ūr* was not exclusively the Brahmin village, but it was the agrarian settlement consisted of many *Kuṭis* of different occupational groups directly or indirectly associated with the agrarian economy and probably the Brahmin households were also in the *Ūr*. The term *Ūrmaṛaiyār*<sup>99</sup> occurs in the Tiruvārruvāy inscription proves the existence of the Brahmins in the *Ūr* and it doesn't mean that the *Ūr* was completely a Brahmin settlement. *Ētanūr Ūr* and *Tapai (Sabha)* appears in the Cembra inscription as the two executive bodies of the temple along with *Potuvāl*. Another set of inscriptions from the same temple mention the land grant excluding the settlement area of the occupational groups (*Kuṭitalai*) and inferior crop cultivated garden land (*Paṛampū*) land made by the *Ūr* to the temple as *Dēvaswam*. These references obviously prove the non-Brahminic entity of the *Ūr* as the multi-crop agrarian unit that consisted of wet, garden land and homesteads. Tirunelli inscription refers to *Ūr* and *Vellālar*, the peasant or tenant group, of the *Ūr*.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Tiruvārruvāy inscription line 3. *K.C.A.R.*: 11. T.A. Gopinatha Rao is doubtful about the term *Maṛaiyar* and he also identified it with *Paṛai*, *T.A.S.* Vol II. pp. 84-85. Herman Gundert refers to *Maṛayvar* as Brahmins. *Op. cit.* p. 726. It also refers as *Ūrmura* or the customary social contract of the *Ūr* (the *Ūr* village conventions) by Raghava Varier and Rajan Gurukkal, *Op. cit.* p.311.

<sup>100</sup> “*Ūrum Ūriṭavakai Vellālarum*” Tirunelli inscription-1 line 7-8. *K.C.A.R.*:75. Herman Gundert refers to *Vellālar*s as the Tamil Sudras and also the landed tenant groups. *Op. cit.* p. 886.

*Vellālar* were the Tamil *Śūdrās* and existed as landed tenants even during pre-modern period in Kerala.<sup>101</sup> *Vellālar* of four *Kuṭis* appeared as the *Kārālar*, the intermediary tenants between the Christian Church and peasants in Tarisāppalli inscription.<sup>102</sup> These evidences have shown that the *Vellālar*s were the intermediary peasant group in the land of temple, church, crown lands or the land of the landed households. However, the above discussion helps us to make the following premises.

- *Ūr* was not exclusively a Brahmin village.
- The *Ūrālar* had no right over the temple land, especially on the *Itayītu* land. Their proprietorship was subjected to stringent clauses. They were not allowed to intervene the economic affairs of the land and strictly prohibited to make unwanted hindrances.
- The more priority is given to the *Ūr*, than the rituals of the temple. If the *Ūr* faces disasters the *Ūrālar* and *Potuvāl* had to take initiative to solve the problem and coordinate the people for the disaster management. The *Cānti Aṭikal*, the temple priests were also owed to protect or save their *Ūr* from the calamity even stopping the daily rituals of the temple.
- The cultivated land with flourished agrarian settlements called *Ūr* that comprises many *Kuṭis* were granted to the temple. In another word, the prospered agrarian lands with settlements were granted to the temple. The *Ūrālārs* were the only office in charge of the temple to maintain the day to

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<sup>101</sup> Herman Gundert. *Loc. cit.*

<sup>102</sup> Tarisāppalli inscription line 13-14. M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* (2013) 2015. p.109.

day temple activities by ensuring the approved agreement at the time of grant to the temple.

- The *Kuṭis* had ownership right over their land and they were allowed to enjoy that right within their *Ūr*.
- The actual ownership right of the temple land that granted as *Iṭayītu* was apprehended by the king or state.

All these references show that the term *Ūr* was used to denote both the agrarian settlements and temple executive body. The *Sabha*, *Paraṭai*, *Gaṇam*, *Taḷi* etc. were the Brahmin bodies.

*Nāṭu* means a larger agrarian settlement comprised of many *Ūrs* and identified as a political area controlled by a landed political authority called *Uṭaiyavar*, *Kōyil*, *Nāṭṭuṭaya* etc. and in some cases also acted as the *Āḷkōyil*,<sup>103</sup> the representative of the Perumāl, which will be discussed in detail in the fifth chapter of the present work. However, the *Ūr* and *Nāṭu* comprised of many *Kuṭis* or the settlement areas of various occupational groups. The temple inscriptions have given direct and indirect indications on the existence of many occupational factions; some of them have already been developed in the pre-temple phase and some others, especially associated with the temple functions, were developed in the early medieval period with the emergence of Brahminic temples.

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<sup>103</sup> “*Annāṭṭu Āḷkōyil*.” Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription line 53-54. *K.C.A.R*:33.

## **Occupational groups**

The available inscriptions are not sufficient to make a clear picture about the occupational groups and their *Kutīs* in the *Ūr* and *Nāṭu*. Most of the inscriptions are mentioned about the occupational groups associated with the temple only. Based on the available inscriptional reference as well as the archaeological remains of architectures and icons the following part will survey the nature of early medieval occupational factions.

### ***Tilling communities***

The expansion of agriculture resulted in the formation of many occupational groups who facilitate the process of the agrarian economy. The tilling communities were integral part of the cultivated land and they were attached in person by birth with the land. Airāṇikkaḷam inscription refers to the authorized *Pulayar* of the agrarian settlement granted to the temple.<sup>104</sup> The *Pulayars* were mentioned in the Trikkākkara inscription who were transferred along with the land.<sup>105</sup> The Tirunantikkara inscription refers to the transfer of *Pulayar* along with land grants and the rights of *Kārāṇmai* (the right to cultivate) and *Mitātcī* (a superior possessive rights) to the Pārthivapuram temple by Āy king.<sup>106</sup> As the tilling communities, especially *Pulayars*, had no separate entity from the land, they were not always mentioned in the inscription along with other features of the granted land. The reference of *Pūmiyuḷumavar* (the people who are tilling the field) in the Tirukkoṭittānam inscription stands for the peasant

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<sup>104</sup> “*Adhikārappeṭṭa Pulayaraḷum.*” Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 3. *K.C.A.R.*:21.

<sup>105</sup> “*Peruvayal pūmiyum pulaiya*” Trikkākkara inscription-2 line 10. *K.C.A.R.*:45; “*Veṭṭikkarikkāṭṭukoḷḷa pūmiyum (pulaiya)(re)yum*” Trikkākkara inscription-3. Part I, line – 6. *K.C.A.R.*: 49.

<sup>106</sup> Tirunantikkara copper plate line 6. *K.C.A.R.*:128.

communities in the *Ūr*.<sup>107</sup> Though the inscriptions are silent about the tilling communities, there must have been a good number of tilling communities involved in the cultivation process in the wet and garden lands of the early medieval times.

### ***Skilled occupational groups***

The second chapter reveals the technical skills and knowledge of the pre-temple society with the profuse use of iron. The continuity of the technical skills can be seen in the architectural features of the early medieval architectural remain as well. They were built with granite stone slabs, which are used mainly for the basement and laterite for the wall of the structure. This type mainly found in the laterite rich part of Kerala, especially towards the north of the present Trissur district. Towards south the laterite, burned bricks, wood etc. were used for the construction of the temple. Such architectural features have shown the continuity and sophisticated development of the pre-temple technical skills related to masonry. An advanced iron technology must have supported the early medieval masonry. The roof of the temple seems to have made with roof tile or thatched with coconut or palm leaves. The stone structural base was supported by the wooden superstructure, which was thatched with tile or palm or coconut leaves. The Cōkkūr inscription assigned lands to meet the expenses for thatching or to renew the roof of the temple.<sup>108</sup> We have references about *Perumtaccan* in certain inscription that shows the existence of traditional occupational groups related to both masonry and carpentry. They mention the name of their *Kuṭi* like

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<sup>107</sup> Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription part III-1. *K.C.A.R*:63.

<sup>108</sup> “*Purai putukkuvān*” Cōkkūr inscription line 35. *K.C.A.R*:25.

“Tirukkuḷam *Perumtaccan*”,<sup>109</sup> “Vēḷakkōṭṭu *Perumtaccan*,”<sup>110</sup> etc. They are entrusted to engrave the inscription on the granite stone surfaces. The inscriptions must have initially written in the palm leaf and copied to the stone slab or copper plates.<sup>111</sup> Unlike these few indications the people who involved in the construction works are not mentioned in the inscriptions. The Kuḷattūr inscription mentions that Kuṟumpuṟaināṭṭu ruler Kuṅjikkōta Varman made arrangement to engrave the temple agreement on the stone.<sup>112</sup> According to the Perunna inscription as per the command of the Perumāl the *Kōyilatikāri*, the representative of the Perumāl, supervised the engraving of the temple verdict on the stone.<sup>113</sup> The Tiruvañcikkaḷam Śiva temple inscription refers to Tiruvañcikkaḷattu Irāyipperumtaccan who got *Purayiṭam* (homestead) as *Aṭṭippēru* and imposed a fine of fifty two *Kaḷañcu* gold as fine to the person who prevent the cultivation process and stolen the produce of the homestead.<sup>114</sup> This reference has shown that the homesteads of the traditional carpenters or masons were developed in the garden land granted by the local rulers or landlords. The land grant as *Aṭṭippēr* or the permanent transfer also signify the importance of *Taccan* in the contemporary cultural scenario. They functioned as traditional

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<sup>109</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 66-67. *K.C.A.R*:27.

<sup>110</sup> Cembra inscription line 79-81. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* (1990) 2009. p. 99.

<sup>111</sup> “*Ivvōlayiṟ paṭṭavaṅṅam kallil eḷutiviccū nāṭṭuvippān*” Aviṭṭattūr inscription line 19-20. *K.C.A.R*: 32.

<sup>112</sup> “*Kalleḷuti Vaippiccen Kuṅjikkōtai Varmanāyina Kuṟumpuṟai*” Kuḷattūr inscription line 16-19. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* (1990) 2009. pp.118-33.

<sup>113</sup> “*Kōyilatikārikaḷāy Vanniruntu Kallil mēlkkāṭṭiccōr*” Perunna inscription-2-part IV-V. *K.C.A.R*: 71.

<sup>114</sup> Tiruvañcikkaḷam inscription line 1-3. *K.C.A.R*: 93.

engineers of the early medieval architectures and probably a privileged occupational faction in the contemporary society.

Another traditional occupation group mainly associated with the gold and copper works was *Perumtaṭṭān*. The name of the *Perumtaṭṭān* of Kuṟumpuṟaināṭu, the traditional gold smith who incised the temple agreement on the copper plate is mentioned in the Tirunelli inscription of Bhāskara Ravi Perumāḷ.<sup>115</sup>

As the chief of the *Kuṭi* of the traditional *Taccan* or *Taṭṭān* occupational groups, *Perumtaccan* or *Perumtaṭṭān* seem to have had ritual right over the temple and it enabled them to make an eternal authorization to the temple decree through engraving it on the stone slabs or copper plates.

Like *Perumtaccan* and *Perumtaṭṭān*, the iron working communities are not mentioned in the inscription. The reference of the wet, garden lands and homesteads in the inscriptions have infer the wide use of iron implements in the early medieval period. The well finished stone blocks having inscriptions, the laterite and granite stone structures of the temple etc. signify the active presence of the iron working and the substantial use of iron tools in the contemporary society.

The pottery making, the major skill that acquired human being from the pre-historic times onwards, must have continued in the early medieval period. But we don't have sufficient archaeological and epigraphical data to prove the potters' presence in the early medieval time. The reference about *Akkiram*, the Brahmin feast, *Nivēdyam*, sacred offerings to the deity and the people who

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<sup>115</sup> “*Kaiyyeḷuti aṟivēn Vāliccērikkanaṭpati Nīlakaṇṭanāyina Kuṟumpuṟai Perumtaṭṭāneḷuttu*” Tirunelli inscription. line 24-25. *K.C.A.R*: 77.

washed the pottery after *Akkiram* etc. indirectly prove the substantial use of the pottery for cooking, storing and serving purposes by the contemporary society. The Tiruvalla copperplate refers to the share of paddy to the *Kala Vāṇiyan*,<sup>116</sup> the pottery merchant, who must have represented the pottery makers and sellers of the early medieval period.

### ***Occupational groups of Temple Services***

The Brahmins were the priestly class of the temples and involved in many duties related to the temple rituals. As the temple developed in the surrounding locale of the Brahmin settlements, the main population of the temple complex seems to be the Brahmins. Many inscriptions contain the clause to spent the temple wealth to feed the Brahmins (*Akkiram*)<sup>117</sup> regularly and also on special festive occasions. Various terms mentioned in the inscriptions related to the Brahmins (*Pirāmaṇar*) based on their functions in the temple like *Cānti*,<sup>118</sup> (*Mēl Cānti* and *Kīl Cānti*),<sup>119</sup> *Cāntiyaṭikaḷ*,<sup>120</sup> *Vivāhataḷi Nampī*,<sup>121</sup> *Paraṭaiyār*<sup>122</sup> and

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<sup>116</sup> Tiruvalla Copper Plate No.29 line 428. *K.C.A.R.*: 280.

<sup>117</sup> Cōkkūr inscription. line 23-28. *K.C.A.R.*: 24-25; Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription. line 22. *K.C.A.R.*: 34; Tṛikkākkara inscription-1 IV line 1. *K.C.A.R.*: 39; Tṛikkākkara inscription-3, part II line 3. *K.C.A.R.*:49; Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription -2 line 10. *K.C.A.R.*: 52.

<sup>118</sup> Vāḷappaḷi inscription line 5. *K.C.A.R.*: 4; Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription -1 line- 17-18. *K.C.A.R.*: 29; Tṛikkākkara inscription-part III line 4. *K.C.A.R.*: 39.

<sup>119</sup> Tirukkaṭittānam inscription. *K.C.A.R.*: 99.

<sup>120</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 14,16, 17. *K.C.A.R.*: 22-23; Avittattūr inscription line 6,10. *K.C.A.R.*: 30-31.

<sup>121</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 47. *K.C.A.R.*: 26.

<sup>122</sup> Iringālakkuṭa line 3 *K.C.A.R.*:10; Tṛippūnittuṛa inscription line 2 *K.C.A.R.*: 36; Tirukkaṭittānam inscription -1 part II line 3. *K.C.A.R.*: 63; Tirukkaṭittānam inscription 5-part II line 3. *K.C.A.R.*: 68; Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription line 6-7. *K.C.A.R.*: 34.



*Ḫaiyār*,<sup>123</sup> *Aṭikaḷ*,<sup>124</sup> *Perumakkaḷ* and *Taḷiyāḷvān*,<sup>125</sup> *Taḷi Atikārar*, *Candanam Paṭārar* and *Pirāmaṇar*,<sup>126</sup> *Arātikkumavan*,<sup>127</sup> *Arātikkum Perumān*,<sup>128</sup> *Āriyabrahmaṇar*,<sup>129</sup> etc. The Tiruvālūr inscription refers to the appointment of *Cānti* who has to function as *Kīḷ Cānti* and *Mēl Cānti* by the local ruler Kaṭaṅgōttu Nārāyaṇan Iravi, *Ūr* and *Potuvāḷ* unanimously and fixed one *Kāṇam* gold as the reward for his service.<sup>130</sup>

*Cānti Aṭikaḷ* was the head of the temple ritual and he was entrusted to receive the share of the produce granted to the temple. Airāṇikkaḷam inscription refers that the offerings to the temple had to receive directly by the *Cānti Aṭikaḷ* himself. If he declined to receive the share of produce because of his clumsiness for more than one year, the *Ūrāḷar* was responsible to receive the same.<sup>131</sup> This clause is important as it give more importance to *Cānti Aṭikaḷ* in the case of temple rituals. The *Ūrāḷar* had only the supervisory role and the ultimate authority of the temple ritual was the *Cānti Aṭikaḷ*, the Brahmin priest. It also seems to have pointed out that the *Urāḷars* were not Brahmins. They received

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<sup>123</sup> Tirupparaṅgōttu inscription line 6-7. *K.C.A.R*: 34. Iringālakkuṭa inscription line 3. *K.C.A.R*:10.

<sup>124</sup> Tiruvārruvāy inscription line 1. *K.C.A.R*:11.

<sup>125</sup> Tirunantikkara inscription line 1, 3. *K.C.A.R*: 21. Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription- 2 line 17. *K.C.A.R*: 53.

<sup>126</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-1-part VI line 1. *K.C.A.R*: 40.

<sup>127</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-VII line 2. *K.C.A.R*: 40; Cembra inscription line 55-56; M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p. 98.

<sup>128</sup> Mūḷikkaḷam inscription line 3. *K.C.A.R*: 44.

<sup>129</sup> Kollam Rāmēśwaram inscription line 33-35. *K.C.A.R*: 106.

<sup>130</sup> Tiruvālūr inscription line 1-14. *T.A.S.* IV No. pp. 145-66; *Index* No A. 67. pp. 467-68; *K.C.A.R*: 102.

<sup>131</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription lines 13-20. *K.C.A.R*:22-23.

rewards in kind or share of produce<sup>132</sup> from the land arranged for the temple for the daily consumption like paddy, rice, ghee etc. and also got land as *Virutti* (*Cānti Virutti*<sup>133</sup>) and also gold. *Cāntīs* were appointed for three years and the appointment was made by the temple committee. The temple committee did not accept bribe for the appointment of *Cānti* and the perusal of *Mahābhārata*.<sup>134</sup>

The term *Paraṭai* stands for the temple committee of the Brahmins. The *Perumuṭiyānmār* were the chief store keepers of the temple.<sup>135</sup> These terms had shown that the Brahmins were involved in various duties related to the temple.

Apart from the temple ritual functions, the Brahmins also had expertise in the martial activities and they were termed as *Cāttirar*. *Mūlikkaḷam* inscription refers to the guard duty of the *Cāttirar* at the evening temple rituals and *Akkiram*.<sup>136</sup> *Akkiramāṭuvān* could be the cook of the Brahmin feast, probably a Brahmin.<sup>137</sup> The Pārthivapuram copper plate mentions that the *Cāttirar* were the Brahmin students who learned martial arts along with the Vedic texts. A code of conduct was implemented for the *Cāttirar* and accordingly, the *Cāttirar*, who hurt his companion by weapon during the practical session, will be barred to enter into the kitchen space where food was serving.<sup>138</sup> They were not permitted to

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<sup>132</sup> “*Minnerpatavāram cāntippuṟam*”, Vāḷappalli inscription line 5. *K.C.A.R*: 4.

<sup>133</sup> Cembra inscription line 42. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p. 97-98; Neṭumpuṟam Tali inscription -3 line 9. *K.C.A.R*: 62.

<sup>134</sup> “*Cāntikkumāpārattinuṅkaik(kūli) Koḷḷapperār Cānti Ceyyumavaraḷai mūvāṅṅil mika vaikkapperār.*” Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription-1 part II line 3-5. *K.C.A.R*: 63.

<sup>135</sup> Trikkākkara inscription part VII- line 1-2. *K.C.A.R*: 40.

<sup>136</sup> “*Uttamākkirattinu Cāttiraraiyumērrikkonṅu Antitiruvamṟutu.*” *Mūlikkaḷam* inscription line 5. *K.C.A.R*: 44.

<sup>137</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-IV line 2. *K.C.A.R*: 39.

<sup>138</sup> “*Paṭaikkaḷattāl puṅceyṭāl aṟattukkappuṟattanāvatu.*” Pārthivapuram Copper Plate line 58-59. *K.C.A.R*:125.

appear in the public space with weapons.<sup>139</sup> The *Cōṇāṭṭu Kaḷakam*<sup>140</sup> appears in the inscription seems to have indicated the Brahminic committee to oversee various functions of temple service factions.

### ***Temple Service Factions***

The inscripational reference like the “*Cānti talaiyāy cikkōlkaṭaiyāy*,”<sup>141</sup> means from the temple priest to the sweepers,<sup>142</sup> hinted at the prevalence of occupational hierarchy probably based on the Varna hierarchy. The *Cānti* or *Śānti*, the Brahmin priest, was the uppermost temple functionary who was involved in the daily ritual duties of the temple. The lowermost was probably the sweepers like occupational groups who involved various functions. The term *Kōyil Manucar*<sup>143</sup> and *Pātamūlikaḷ*<sup>144</sup> have shown that there were various service groups associated with the temple.

The *Paṇimakkal*<sup>145</sup> or *Paṇiyuṭaivakaḷ*<sup>146</sup> etc. were the common term referred in the inscription to denote the service faction in the temple. They were

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<sup>139</sup> “*Caṭṭar paṭakkalam piṭṭukkuṭṭattukku cellapperār*.” Pārthivapuram Copper Plate line 59. *Ibid*.

<sup>140</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 61-62. *K.C.A.R*: 27.

<sup>141</sup> Trippūnituṭṭa inscription line 4-5. *K.C.A.R*: 36.

<sup>142</sup> Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Loc. cit*.

<sup>143</sup> Tirunelli inscription-2 line 17 *K.C.A.R*: 78. Iringālakkuṭa inscription line 17. *K.C.A.R*: 81.

<sup>144</sup> Thiruvārūvāy inscription line 7. *K.C.A.R*: 11.

<sup>145</sup> Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription line 4. *K.C.A.R*: 4; Neṭumpuṭam Taḷi inscription-3 line 8. *K.C.A.R*:62; Pārthivapuram Copper Plate line 19. *K.C.A.R*: 125.

<sup>146</sup> Tiruvaṇṇūr inscription line 6. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society,1972. p.70.

also received land, *Paṇivali virutti*,<sup>147</sup> and share of produce<sup>148</sup> as the reward of their service at temple.

The dancers and singers were part of the early medieval temple. They were the actual propagators of the bhakti traditions of the temple deity and also integrate the epic and Purāṇic traditions to the deity of the temple through music and dance. The male dancers of the temple were known as *Naṭṭuvan*<sup>149</sup> and the female dancers were termed as *Nankaiyār*<sup>150</sup> or *Nankaimār*<sup>151</sup> or *Nangacci*.<sup>152</sup> There are reference on hierarchy among the *Nankaimār* like *Uttama*, *Madhyama* and *Adhama*, higher, lower and inferior respectively.<sup>153</sup> As Tirubhuvana Mātēviyāyina Ciritara, the daughter of the Cēra king, mentioned as *Nangacci* in the inscription, the position of the *Nangacci* seems to have highly honoured by the contemporary society.<sup>154</sup>

The term *Vellāṭṭikaḷ* appears in the Pārthivapuram Copper plate refer the female servants.<sup>155</sup> The singers were known as *Kāntarvikaḷ*.<sup>156</sup> The drummers, refers in the inscription as *Ōrviyan* (drummer),<sup>157</sup> *Uvaccar* etc. were essential

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<sup>147</sup> Poṅgāṭṭiri inscription line 28-29. *K.C.A.R*:35; Pārthivapuram Copper Plate line 25-27, 36-37. *K.C.A.R*:125.

<sup>148</sup> “*Akampaṭi paṇimakkaṭkumorāṅṅaikkū vēṅṅunelnūrronpatukalamirupatu Nāḷi*” Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi -1 line 7-8. *K.C.A.R*: 28.

<sup>149</sup> Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription-1 line 15. *K.C.A.R*:29.

<sup>150</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 75-76. *K.C.A.R*: 27.

<sup>151</sup> Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription -1 line 10, 13. *K.C.A.R*: 28.

<sup>152</sup> Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription -3 line 8. *K.C.A.R*: 62.

<sup>153</sup> Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription -1 line 13. *K.C.A.R*: 28.

<sup>154</sup> Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription-3 lines 4-5, 8. *K.C.A.R*: 62.

<sup>155</sup> Pārthivapuram Copper plate line 60-61. *K.C.A.R*: 125-126.

<sup>156</sup> Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription-1 line 10. *K.C.A.R*: 28.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid* line 10-13.

part of the temple music. The readers of the *Mahābhārata*<sup>158</sup> were also part of the larger wealthy temples.

### ***Office and officials of the temple***

A number of spokespersons officiated the internal and external affairs of the temple. Many inscriptions refer the *Ūrālar*<sup>159</sup> as the leading officials of the temple and their executive body mentioned as *Ūr*. They seem to have been the proprietors of the *Ūr*, the cultivated agrarian village. As mentioned earlier, the Cembra inscription refers to the unanimous decision of the *Ūr* to donate fertile land excluding the settlement areas and garden land to the Cembra temple as *Dēvaswam*.<sup>160</sup> Here the *Ūr* and *Ūrālar* appears to be non-Brahmin landholding group. Another set of the inscription from the same temple refers the Sabha, the Brahmin body, along with *Ētanūr* the non-Brahmin gathering.

The *Sabha* was the Brahmin body of the temple and it came to be known in the name of the Brahmin settlements or the temple like *Ētanūr Tapai*<sup>161</sup> *Tiruvārruvāy Sabha*,<sup>162</sup> *Vāliccēri sabha*,<sup>163</sup> *Puḷikkarpurāi sabha*<sup>164</sup> etc. are the examples. The senior most male members of the Sabha were known as *Sabhaiyār*.<sup>165</sup> The reference to *Mūtta tavakaḷiruvarumkaṇṭu (Sabhakaḷ)*<sup>166</sup> seems to have indicate the existence of two old traditional *Sabha* of the Brahmin at

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<sup>158</sup> Tirukkoṭṭānam inscription part II line 1. *K.C.A.R*: 63.

<sup>159</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription 19, 22, 23. *K.C.A.R*: 23.

<sup>160</sup> Cembra inscription. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* pp.109-110.

<sup>161</sup> Cembra inscription line 7-8. *Ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> Tiruvārruvāy inscription line 1. *K.C.A.R*: 11.

<sup>163</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 55-56. *K.C.A.R*: 26.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> Pārthivapuram Copper Plate line 3. *K.C.A.R*:125.

<sup>166</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 47-48. *K.C.A.R*: 26.

Cökkūr and it was entrusted to oversee and meet the expenses related to the sacred offerings to the temple deity.

The *Patineṭṭu Nāṭṭār*<sup>167</sup> appears in some inscriptions as the decision making group of the temple executive body and it is argued that they were the eighteen chief residents of the region.<sup>168</sup> They seem to have represented the major agrarian households of the region. *Irupattoruvar*<sup>169</sup> seems to have been the important residents of the region. The term *Kīlvāyana* and *Mēlvāyana*<sup>170</sup> seem to have represented the inferior and superior officials of the region. The term *Atuttu kaṇṭu kaṭaviyōn*<sup>171</sup> probably indicates an official to oversee the temple agreements who seems to have been accountable to the Perumāḷ. The Karaṇan was the accountant of the temple. The terms *Ulpāṭan*,<sup>172</sup> *Potuvāḷ*,<sup>173</sup> *Akapotuvāḷ*,<sup>174</sup> *Atikāran*, *Perumutiyan* (chief store keeper)<sup>175</sup> etc. were the proprietors of the temple affairs.

Generally, the terms like *Ūrāḷar* stands for the members of the executive body of the temple and they were known in the name of the temple like *Vāḷappallī*

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<sup>167</sup> Vāḷappallī line 2. *K.C.A.R*: 4; Putukkōṭṭu inscription line 2. *K.C.A.R*: 43

<sup>168</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. pp. 209, 420.

<sup>169</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 2. *K.C.A.R*: 21.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* line 4.

<sup>171</sup> Cökkūr inscription line 59. *K.C.A.R*: 26.

<sup>172</sup> Ṭrikkākkara inscription -2 line 18 *K.C.A.R*: 45; Cembra inscription line 78 M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p.99. Ṭrikkākkara inscription-3 part I line 3-4. *K.C.A.R*: 49; Ṭrikkākkara inscription -5 part I line 4 *K.C.A.R*: 58; Ṭrikkākkara inscription-6 Part II line 1-2. *K.C.A.R*: 6

<sup>173</sup> Cembra inscription line 7-8. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p.96; Veṇṇāyūr inscription side II line 8-9 *K.C.A.R*: 57; Trikkālayūr inscription (broken stone slab discovered by the present scholar) refers to *Potuvāḷ*. (see Fig.17 of the chapter III).

<sup>174</sup> Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi inscription- 2 line 20. *K.C.A.R*: 53.

<sup>175</sup> Ṭrikkākkara inscription-3 part I line 4 *K.C.A.R*: 49; Ṭrikkākkara inscription -3 part VII line 1. *K.C.A.R*: 51.

*Ūrār*.<sup>176</sup> These names indicate that their administrative power was confined to the temple premises only and they had to follow the rules and regulations decided by the temple executive. The officials, mainly, *Ūrālar*, *Potuvāḷ*, *Uḷpāṭan* etc. mainly belonged to the non-brahmin group and had to strictly follow the temple statute mentioned in the inscription. If they violate the statute, they were punished through various measures including the eviction from the *Ūr*, fine etc.

### ***Other Occasional services in the temple***

The suppliers of the banana leaf for the Brahmin feast and the fire woods for the preparation of the Brahmin feast, by receiving two *Nāḷi* rice as the reward, were mentioned in the Trikkākkara inscription.<sup>177</sup> The person for grinding paddy,<sup>178</sup> waste management<sup>179</sup> and cleaning the vessels of the feast,<sup>180</sup> etc. were also mentioned in this inscription. They were not mentioned as separate occupational groups. Such duties must have done by the occupational groups associated with the temples.

### **Treasure Capital - Gold as gift**

The above discussion proves that the temple was an institution that developed in the fertile agrarian tracts and accumulated a huge amount of agrarian wealth and redistributed it to many temple functionaries. Like land grants, the temple received gold as fines from the persons who breached the

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<sup>176</sup> *Vāḷappalḷi* inscription line 2. *K.C.A.R*: 4.

<sup>177</sup> “*Ariyum Viṛakumiṭuvānnu Irunāḷi*.” Trikkākkara inscription-1 part IV line 2-3. *K.C.A.R*: 39-40.

<sup>178</sup> “*Arikuttuvānum*” Trikkākkara inscription-1 part VII line 3. *K.C.A.R*: 40.

<sup>179</sup> “*Eccilaṭippān*...” Trikkākkara inscription-1. part IV line 3 *K.C.A.R*: 39-40.

<sup>180</sup> “*Taḷikai Āyuvān*” Trikkākkara inscription-1 part VII line 3 and VIII line 1. *K.C.A.R*:39-40.

contract of the temple and offerings for meeting the expense of various temple ceremonies.<sup>181</sup> Generally *Kalañcu* and *Kāṇam* occur in the inscription to mention the gold weight. The Roman gold coins, which was considered as the gold treasure, was also mentioned. Vāḷappaḷi inscription refers to the 100 *Tīnāram* (Dinār, Roman gold coin) had to remit to the temple if the perpetual offerings (*bali*) hindered.<sup>182</sup> The Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription refers to twenty-five fine gold (*Cempon*).<sup>183</sup>

*Kīlānaṭikaḷ*, daughter of Kulaśēkhara Tēvaṛ and spouse of Vijayarāghava Tēvaṛ offered thirty *Kalañcu* gold to the Tirunantikkara temple.<sup>184</sup> The Cōkkūr inscription refers to the offer of thirty six *Kalañcu* gold to the temple for meeting the expense of feast of the Brahmanas (*Tiruvakkiram*) with two *Nāḷi* of rice per day by a trader Cēraṇāṭṭu Ceṭṭiyār.<sup>185</sup> The inscriptions of the Trikkākkara temple furnished many information about the gold and land transactions.<sup>186</sup> One set of Trikkākkara inscription, during the 6<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Bhāskaraniravi Varman, refers to the system of land mortgage (*Paṇayam*) for lending gold at five percent interest i.e., twelve *Kalam* of paddy.<sup>187</sup> The paddy had to submit to the temple for meeting temple needs.

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<sup>181</sup> For details Rajan Gurukkal. *Op. cit.* 1992. pp 41-49.

<sup>182</sup> “*Muṭṭāppali Vilakkuvār Perumānaṭikaṭku nūru tīnāraṇṭappaṭuvatu.*” Vāḷappaḷi inscription. line 3. *K.C.A.R:*4.

<sup>183</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-3 line 14-15. *K.C.A.R:*62.

<sup>184</sup> Tirunantikkara inscription line 2-3. *K.C.A.R:* 21.

<sup>185</sup> “*Cēraṇāṭṭu Ceṭṭiyār oru Tiruvakkirattinukku koṭutta pon muppattaru kaḷaiñcu.*” Cōkkūr inscription line 83-91. *K.C.A.R:*27.

<sup>186</sup> For details, Rajan Gurukkal. *Loc. cit.*

<sup>187</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-5. *K.C.A.R:* 58-59.



The gold was being used as medium of exchange by the temple.<sup>188</sup> It was exchanged with the land. Gold was obtained by submitting land as guarantee. However, all these references have shown that the temple possessed a good amount of gold that obtained as offerings and fines. The gold was lending out to the local landlords who mortgaged their land at a fixed interest as the share of produce from the mortgaged land. Thus, the temple developed as an institution that possessed both land and gold in the early medieval time.

### **Weights and measurements**

The weights and measures of the contemporary society was developed mainly in connection with the wetland based agrarian economy. The multi-crop produce from the garden lands and the livestock were also connected with the development of weights and measures (Table.2).

**Table.2 - Weights and Measurements mentioned in the Inscriptions**

<b>Weights and measurements</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Inscriptions</b>
Nāḷi	Paddy, Rice, Ghee, milk	Vāḷappaḷli- <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 4; Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi-1 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 28-30; Trikkākkara-39-40, Tirunelli-1,2. <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 75-79 Tiruvalla copper plate <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 244-299.
Itangali	Paddy, Salt, Tamarind	Airāṇikkaḷam- <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 21-23, Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi-1 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 28-30 Trikkākkara -9 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 80.

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<sup>188</sup>Rajan Gurukkal. *Op. cit.*

Uri, Nāvūri	Paddy	Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi -1 <i>K.C.A.R:28-30</i> , Tiruvalla copper plate <i>K.C.A.R:244-299</i> .
Para	Paddy	Tiruvalla copper plate <i>K.C.A.R:244</i>
Uḷakku	Paddy, Salt	Tiruvalla copper plate <i>K.C.A.R:244-245, 265</i> .
Kalam	Paddy	Vāḷappaḷli lines <i>K.C.A.R:4</i> , Airāṇikkaḷam- <i>K.C.A.R:28-30</i> Cōkkūr- <i>K.C.A.R:24-26</i>
Tūni	Paddy	Vāḷappaḷli line - <i>K.C.A.R:4</i>
Poti	Paddy	Cōkkūr- <i>K.C.A.R:24-26</i>
Tuṭavu	Ghee	Tiruvāṛruvāy lines <i>K.C.A.R:11</i>
Piṭi	Ghee	Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi- <i>K.C.A.R:28-30</i>
Kayyu, Kaḷaiṇḷu	Tamarind	Trikkākara, line 8- <i>K.C.A.R:39-40</i> ; Tiruvalla copper plate. <i>K.C.A.R:245</i> .
Palam	Tamarind	Trikkākara -1- <i>K.C.A.R:39-40</i>
Kaḷañcu	Gold, Tamarind	Tirunantikkara line 3- <i>K.C.A.R:21</i> , Pullur kodavalam- <i>K.C.A.R:84</i>
Kāṇam	Gold	Airāṇikkaḷam line <i>K.C.A.R:21-22</i> .
Kōl	Garland of Flowers	Tiruvalla copper plate <i>K.C.A.R:244-299</i> .

### **Exchange networks**

The exchange of produce was the chief form of surplus redistribution in the early medieval period. The temple was survived based on the surplus accumulation from the multi-crop agrarian lands. The accumulated wealth of the temple includes the food crops like paddy, jack fruit, banana and cash crops like

pepper, coconut, areca-nut etc. The presence of the merchant guilds like *Valañciyar*, *Mañigrāmam*, *Nānādēśi* etc. in the temple inscriptions infer the exchange relations of the temple with the inland and overseas traders. The temple seems to have exchanged the cash crops with the necessary items of the temples like sugarcane, Jaggery, oil etc. The *Vāñiyar*, the oil mongers cum oil exchange community, were attached with the temple and they have received *Virutti* land for their service.<sup>189</sup> The *Mañigrāmam* guild, probably a Christian merchant corporation that first referred in the *Tarisāppalli* copper plate,<sup>190</sup> is mentioned also in the *Iringālakkūta* inscription<sup>191</sup> and *Rāmantaḷi* inscription.<sup>192</sup>

The salt was used extensively. The salt and paddy exchange are well-known from the pre-temple period and the presence of salt in the temple inscriptions<sup>193</sup> signify the exchange between the coastal zone and the midland area during the early medieval period. The presence of *Eruviyar* in the *Tarisāppalli* copper plate has evidently proved the presence of salt makers in the west coast of Kerala.<sup>194</sup>

The temples seem to have connected with the exchange networks of the contemporary period. *Valañciyar*,<sup>195</sup> *Cēravanāṭṭu Ceṭṭiyār* gave 36 *Kalañcu* gold for the expense of *Tiruvakkiram* or the feast to the Brahmins of

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<sup>189</sup> Kollūrmatham copper plate. *K.C.A.R.*: 145, 147.

<sup>190</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. pp. 277-81.

<sup>191</sup> *Iringālakkūta* inscription line 14-17.

<sup>192</sup> *Rāmantaḷi* inscription line 38. *Op. cit.* 1971. p. 99, 106; *K.C.A.R.*: 400.

<sup>193</sup> *Ṭrikkākkara* inscription-1 part VI line 3. *K.C.A.R.*: 40; *Ṭrikkākkara* inscription-2 line 8. *K.C.A.R.*: 45; *Tiruvalla* copper plate line 16-17. *K.C.A.R.*: 245.

<sup>194</sup> *Tarisāppalli* Copper Plate line 13. M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* p. 104, 109

<sup>195</sup> *Cōkkūr* inscription line 60. *K.C.A.R.*: 27.

Kumāranārāyaṇapurattu temple<sup>196</sup> The *Vāṇiyars* were the skilled group who know the technique of oil making and act as oil merchants.<sup>197</sup>

The available inscriptions refer that these foreign merchant corporations were developed in the west coast of Kerala with the blessings of the existing political authorities and they were enjoying autonomy in the trade deeds. The *Maṇigrāmam* and *Añcuvaṇṇam* merchant guilds established their trade settlements at Kollam, Kodungallūr and Tālekkāṭu with the consent of the Perumāḷ power, which will be discussed in the next chapter. However, the temples had some sort of connection with the merchants and merchant corporations and it may have helped the temple to obtain various goods like oil, salt, molasses, sugarcane etc. and to sell the accumulated cash-crops like pepper, coconut, areca nut etc.

### **The early medieval Diet**

Paddy appears as the main item of the produce from the lands mentioned in the inscriptions, rice can be assumed as the staple food of early medieval population. The ghee, tamarind, coconut, pepper and salt must have included in the daily diet of the contemporary period.<sup>198</sup> The occurrence of salt in the inscription signify the exchange relation of the midland to the coastal zones. The

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<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.* line 83-91.

<sup>197</sup> Kollūrmaṭham copper plate 3.1. *K.C.A.R.*: 145. Tṛikkākkara inscription -1-part VI line 2-3. *K.C.A.R.*: 40.

<sup>198</sup> “*Neyyum kayyupuḷiyum oru tēnkāyum kaṛiyum uppum kūṭa.*” Tṛikkākkara Inscription-1 line 8. *K.C.A.R.*: 45.

jack fruit was also included in the diet.<sup>199</sup> The banana was also part of the contemporary diet.

The public feast offered by the ruling authorities originated in the pre-temple period. In the early medieval context, the epigraphical evidences are mentioned only about the feast to the Brahmins (*Akkiram*). It doesn't mean that the feasts of the non-Brahmin folks were absent. As the inscriptions are referring the matters connected with the temple affairs only, the practice of non-Brahminic society may not have appeared in the inscription. However, as the feast was originated in the pre-temple society, it cannot be seen that the feast culture was developed along with the establishment of temple.

In short, the early medieval society must have followed a multi-crop diet system and considered paddy or rice as the staple food and substantially consumed the dairy products as well. The salt, tamarind pepper, cumin and asafetida<sup>200</sup> seems to have included as the ingredients of the diet. Also used molasses as the sweet ingredient.

### **Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct related to the temple affairs are known as *Kaccam*, *Cavattai* etc. The main purpose of the *Kaccam* was maintaining the temple routine. It was the written covenant,<sup>201</sup> mostly made unanimously, by the Brahminic bodies like *Sabha*, *Paraṭai*, *Perumāḷ*, *Kōyilatikārikaḷ* or the representatives of the *Perumāḷ*, *Kōyil* or the local *Nāṭuvāḷi*, temple executives

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<sup>199</sup> “*Oru palāvoru Cakkai*.” Cembra inscription line 14. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* (1990) 2009. p. 97.

<sup>200</sup> Tiruvalla copper plate line 420-421. *K.C.A.R.*: 280.

<sup>201</sup> “*Ivveḷutina Kaccam*,” Poṟangāṭṭiri inscription line 19-20. *K.C.A.R.*: 34.

etc.<sup>202</sup> The unanimous decision was engraved on granite stone slab or copper plate and fixed or kept at the temple. Some of the inscriptions refer the person who was entrusted to copy the agreement and engraved on the stone or copper.<sup>203</sup> The list of the witnesses was also presented in some inscriptions.<sup>204</sup>

The clauses of the code were not similar. The punishment for the violation of the *Kaccam* included the fines, sins, isolation, eviction, excommunication etc. The fines were collected in share of produce and gold weight called *Kalañcu*. The Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription refers that the person who breach the temple contract had to pay 100 *Dinārs* as fine to the *Perumānaṭi* (King) and considered as the person who married his mother as well.<sup>205</sup> The Poṟangāṭṭiri inscription refers the details of the fines to be collected from the *Ūrāḷar* if they violated the *Kaccam* of the temple. It was fixed 100 *Kalañcu* to the Perumāḷ, 50 *Kalañcu* to the *Āḷkōyil* or the local chief and 50 *Kalañcu* to the temple.<sup>206</sup> According to Iringālakkuṭa inscription, if the *Ūrāḷars* violate the unanimously approved agreement of the temple *Iṭayīṭu* land they will be considered as killed his mother and those who

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<sup>202</sup> There was no common form in the temple authorities who made the unanimous decision. For instance, the *Kaccam* of Vāḷappaḷḷi temple was made by the Tiruvāṟṟuvāy Patinēṭṭu Nāṭṭār and Vāḷappaḷḷi Ūrār, the *Cavattai* of the Iringālakkuṭa temple was made by Irungāṭṭikkūṭa Parāṭaiyār and Iḷaiyār, the *Kaccam* of the Aviṭṭattūr temple was made by Āvattipputtūr Āyiravar, Irupattēḷuvar and Irantu Kuṭi Potuvāḷ. For details see Table 3 in the chapter 3 of the present thesis.

<sup>203</sup> “*Ivōlayir paṭṭavaṇṇam kallil mēḷ eḷutiviccu nāṭṭuvippān ūrāke(yi)tu Iḷamaṇa Ciritan.*” Aviṭṭattūr inscription line 19-20; *K.C.A.R.*: 32. “*Vāliccērikkāṇapati Nīlakaṇṭan āyina Kuṟumpuṟai Peruntaṭṭāṇēḷuttu*” Tirunelli inscription-I line 24-25. *K.C.A.R.*: 77.

<sup>204</sup> Tirunelli inscription -I line 21-24. *K.C.A.R.*: 77; Aviṭṭattūr inscription line 23-26. *K.C.A.R.*:32.

<sup>205</sup> “*Māṭṟh Parigraham ceytārāvatu.*” Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription line 3-4. *K.C.A.R.*: 4.

<sup>206</sup> Poṟangāṭṭiri inscription lines 18-27. *K.C.A.R.*: 34-35.

support such depravities also will be treated as committed the same sin.<sup>207</sup> The similar clauses are appeared in the Tirunelli inscription and accordingly one who stolen the property of the temple will be considered as the person who killed his father and married his mother.<sup>208</sup> The Kayalkkāṭu inscription has given more severe clauses. The person who hindered the production process of the temple and stolen the temple property will be treated as the person who killed his spiritual teacher and father and consumed the flesh as food and then married his mother.<sup>209</sup> They will be expelled from the *Ūr* as well.

### ***Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam***

*Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam*<sup>210</sup> appears in the inscriptions as the major settlements or code of conduct and it must have been connected with the Perumāḷ kings. It appears as *Mūlikkaḷa Cavattai*<sup>211</sup> or *Mūlikkaḷa Vyavastai*<sup>212</sup> or *Mūlikkaḷattoḷukkam*.<sup>213</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai states that the *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* was a grand agreement between the representatives of all Kerala temples arrived at in a meeting under the presidentship of the Perumāḷ or his representative.<sup>214</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan states that the *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* was the code of conduct designed by the major Brahmin settlement at Mūlikkaḷam and it

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<sup>207</sup> “*Tāyāraṅkonra pātakarāvatu appātakarōṭupōriyum.*” Iringālakkuṭa inscription line 11-12. *K.C.A.R.*: 10.

<sup>208</sup> Tirunelli inscription-3 line 13-14. *K.C.A.R.*: 390.

<sup>209</sup> Kayalkkāṭu inscription line 6-12. *K.C.A.R.*: 393.

<sup>210</sup> Airāṅnikkaḷam inscription line 23-24. *K.C.A.R.*:23; Cōkkūr inscription line 50-51 *K.C.A.R.*: 26; Tṛikkākkara inscription-8 line 8. *K.C.A.R.*: 70.

<sup>211</sup> Airāṅnikkaḷam inscription line 23-24. *K.C.A.R.*: 23; Pūkkōṭṭūi inscription. *K.C.A.R.*: 386.

<sup>212</sup> Cōkkūr inscription lines 50-51. *K.C.A.R.*: 26; Tirunelli inscription-3 line 23-24. *K.C.A.R.*: 389-390; Tirunelli inscription-4 line 14-15. *K.C.A.R.*: 392-393.

<sup>213</sup> Kumaranellūr inscription line 14. *K.C.A.R.*: 356-357.

<sup>214</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. *Op. cit.* 1970. pp.336-37.

followed as the model by Brahmin settlements all over Kerala.<sup>215</sup> However, the available references have shown that the *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* became prominent because of its connection with both Brahmin settlement of *Mūlikkaḷam* and the ruling power *Cēramān Perumāḷ*.

None of the inscription refers to the complete clauses of the *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam*. The available information from the inscription helps us to think that the following will be the clauses of the *Kaccam*.

- *Mūlikkaḷaccavattaiyum Piḷaiccūrkumiṭayītu keṭāvitu*,<sup>216</sup> means the violation of *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* leads to extinguish the right over *Ūr* and *Iṭayītu* land.
- The *Mūlikkaḷam Vyavastai* was pertinent to the people who interrupt the ploughing of the land (cultivation process), occupy or encroach the land and take side with the person who occupied or encroached the land. If one violates the *Mūlikkaḷam Vyavastai*, he had to pay 100 *Kaḷaṅcu* gold, in which 42 *Kaḷaṅcu* was *Perumāḷ*'s share, 20 to *Āḷkōyil*, 12 to *Sabhas*, 14 to the temple and the remaining 12 was the share of the person in charge of the execution of the settlement. Besides these conditions, inscription mentions that the next generation of the person who violate the code was also responsible to give the same amount as fine. Otherwise they will not be recognized as the temple functionary by the *Perumāḷ*.<sup>217</sup> The *Cōkkūr* inscription seems to have signified to the association of *Perumāḷ* rulers with the *Mūlikkaḷam Vyavastai*. It also shows that the violation of the code will affect the entire generation of

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<sup>215</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. pp 214-216.

<sup>216</sup> *Airāṅikkaḷam* inscription lines 23-24. *K.C.A.R.*: 23.

<sup>217</sup> *Cōkkūr* inscription line 48-59. *K.C.A.R.*: 26.



the persons which again substantiate the political and ritual eminence of the *Mūlikkaḷam Vyavastai*.

- If the temple proprietors violated the code of conduct of the temple, he will be considered as the person who violate the dominant *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* and subsequently expelled from the *Ūr*.<sup>218</sup> This clause probably indicates two things; (a) he will be terminated from the executive body named *Ūr* (b) or he will be expelled from the agrarian settlement called *Ūr*.
- The main clauses, seems to have based on *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam*, appeared in the Cembra inscription are on fines. If the *Ūrāḷan* hindered the expenses of the temple he had to give twelve *Kaḷaṅcu* gold to the deity, six *Kaḷaṅcu* to the *Ūr* and *Sabha*, and twenty-five *Kaḷaṅcu* to the Perumāḷ. If the temple priest or *Potuvāḷ* break the temple contract they had to pay fines double time.
- Kumaranellur inscription gives more details of the clauses of the temple *Kaccam* based on *Mūlikkaḷam Oḷukkam*. It prohibits the illegal gathering or dispute in the surroundings of the temple. The temple *Ūrāḷan* had to collect paddy directly from the temple tenants. The temple expenses would not be obstructed. The *Ūrār* and the title holders are not allowed to demolish the production fields. The emergency situations will have to face jointly. Those who made injustice after entering homesteads or those who involved in unfair land dealings and the people who support these offenders will lose their official positions in the temple. If the settled *Cūttirar* (Sudras) of the *Ūr* abuse or assault the Brahmins, they had to pay 12 or 24 *Kaḷaṅcu* as fine to the temple

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<sup>218</sup> Porangāṭṭiri inscription line 31-35. K.C.A.R: 34-35.

respectively. If one *Cūttira* (Sudra) made any lose to another Sudra, he had to pay 6 *Kalañcu* to the temple as fine. If one *Cūttira* (Sudra) killed another Sudra, he had to pay 12 *Kalañcu* to the temple as fine. It gives a mandate that the *Ūrāḷars* will not express different opinion when the penalty fixed for atrocities against *Veṅṅolinātuṭaiyavar*. Finally, it refers that those who violate this agreement or support the convicts had to pay 100 *Kalañcu* as fine to the *Perumāṇaṭikaḷ*.<sup>219</sup>

These clauses of the *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* emphasis the political importance of the *Perumāḷ* or *Perumāṇaṭi* and the local chiefs or *Kōyil* in designing the code of conduct of the temple. It ensured the corporate right of the temple committee over the managers of the temple, especially over the Brahmins, and established the political control over the temple affairs.

### ***Other dominant Kaccams***

Besides the *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* some inscriptions refer to certain regional *Kaccams* like *Muḷakutira Kaṭankāṭṭu Kaccam*,<sup>220</sup> *Tavaranūr Kaccam*,<sup>221</sup> *Kaitavārattu Kaccam*<sup>222</sup> and *Śankaramangalattu Kaccam*.<sup>223</sup> According to *Muḷakutira Kaṭankāṭṭu Kaccam* and *Śankaramangalattu Kaccam*, the *Ūrāḷan* and *Potuvāḷ* who violate the temple contract will be lost their position in the *Ūr* and *Paraṭai* and also lost their right over *Iṭaiyīṭu* land. According to *Tavaranūr Kaccam*, if the *Ūrāḷan* or *Potuvāḷ* breach the temple contract they will be expelled

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<sup>219</sup> Kumaranellur inscription line 1-18. *K.C.A.R.*: 356-357.

<sup>220</sup> Avitṭattūr inscription line 17-19. *K.C.A.R.*: 30-32.

<sup>221</sup> Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu inscription line 48-59. *K.C.A.R.*: 32-33; Cōkiram inscription. *K.C.A.R.*: 384.

<sup>222</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. pp. 218-219.

<sup>223</sup> Tiruvalla copper plate 25 line 343-345. *K.C.A.R.*: 272.

from the *Ūr* and had to remit fines as twenty-five *Kaḷaṅcu* to the Perumāḷ, twelve *Kaḷaṅcu* to the ruler of that *Nāṭu*.

However, as these *Kaccams* were not found in the post Perumāḷ source materials like *Granthavaris*, it can be assumed that the *Mūḷikkaḷam* and other regional *Kaccams* had some sort of political significance in the early medieval society in connection with the Second Cēra or Perumāḷ power. All the temple *Kaccams* and the above mentioned specific *Kaccams* contain the clauses for the maintenance of the temple affairs and also the executive norms of the temple committee in which the Perumāḷ or the representative of the Perumāḷ or *Nāṭuvāḷis* were included. In short, the *Kaccams* can be treated as the temple decree which aims to rule the affairs of the temple only. As the *Mūḷikkaḷam Kaccam* was not mentioned in the non-temple Perumāḷ inscriptions like *Tarisāppaḷḷi* and Jewish copper plate, it cannot be treated as the code of conduct of the Perumāḷ rulers. Instead it can be considered as code of conduct designed by the dominant Brahmin settlement and approved by the Perumāḷ and the *Naṭuṭaiyavars*. As it appears without the details of the clauses in some inscription, it can be assumed that the clauses of the *Mūḷikkaḷam Kaccam* was very much known to the society and there is no need for further elaboration. It implies the overlordship of the Perumāḷ over the temple as well.

The inscriptions are silent about the code of conduct outside the temple properties and Brahmin settlements. Since the *Kaccams* were applicable to the temple related affairs, the common society seems to have followed the traditional customs based on caste hierarchies termed as *Maryātai*. But the early medieval inscriptions do not mention such terms and it may not be expected from the temple inscription. But the medieval records like *Granthavaris* substantially mention these terms as the code of conduct of the society and are silent about the

*Kaccams*. Such traditional customs seem to have been provided the bond between the intermediary tenants (probably *Kārāḷar*) and the actual tilling communities. This bond seems to have smoothed the process of the production relations in the land under cultivation. The relation between the intermediaries or the proprietors of the temple land and the land owners (like Cēra King, *Nāṭuvāli*, temple, Brahmin, landed personals) was ruled by the *Kaccams*. Thus, the *Kaccams* and the traditional customs, probably *Maryātai*, based on the caste hierarchy must have corresponded to the development of feudal hierarchical relations in the temple land.

### **Survival of Cultural interaction**

As mentioned earlier, the region of Kerala had cultural contact with other parts of India and abroad, especially with the west Asian and Mediterranean world from the early historic pre-temple period. The cultural interaction through exchange and trade networks have survived during the early medieval period as well. The Tarisāppaḷḷi copper plate gives clear indications on the establishment of trade settlement of a Christian merchant organization at Kollam with the blessings and endowments of the Vēṇāṭu ruler during the reign of Second Cēra King Sthāṇu Ravi (849 AD). The signatures of the witnesses in Arabic (Kufic script), Persian (Pahlavi script) and Persian (Hebrew script) at the end of this inscription also establish the prevalence of the traders from Arab and Persian countries in the Kerala coast.<sup>224</sup>

The Jewish copper plate of Bhāskara Ravi (1000 AD) substantiated the presence of Jewish merchants at Kodungallūr. It is argued that the *Añcuvannam*

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<sup>224</sup> M.R.Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* 92, 112-113.

was a West Asian merchant guild in which the traders from West Asian world was active. The signature of the Persian traders in the Tarisāppalli copper plate have shown the involvement of Persian traders in the *Añcuvaṇṇam* and *Mañigrāmam* corporations. They were considered by the contemporary society as one of the occupational groups who involved in the trading activities rather than the people who belonged to a particular region or religious faction.<sup>225</sup>

The Tālakkāṭu inscription signifies the formation of settlements of the *Mañigrāmam* merchants and their church in the nearby area of the temple.<sup>226</sup> The *Ūrālars* of the Tālakkāṭu temple unanimously decided to arrange land to establish trading shops of the *Mañigrāmam* merchants who were arranged by the King Rājasimha Perumāṇaṭikaḷ or Ravi Kōta Rāja Simhan.<sup>227</sup>

It is interesting to note that the Mūṣaka ruler Validhara Vikraman entrusted the *Mañigrāmam* members to oversee the temple affairs and considered them as the most favourite to the junior prince.<sup>228</sup> This inscription refers to Valampuri Mangalattuppukkala Kōpan, probably a Brahmin, and Tāyattu Cāttan Kaṇṇan, seems to be the member of *Mañigramam*, as the chief supervisors of the granted land to the temple.<sup>229</sup> These references also hinted at the cooperation of

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<sup>225</sup> Even *Kēralōlpatti* literature, when it mentioned about the *Kulakrama* of the Srīśankara, of the late medieval period refers to the Guṇjarāṭṭi, Cōnakar, Nazrāṇi, Baudhar, etc. as the trading group belonged to a single *Kula*. Herman Gundert. *Kerala Paḷama, Kēralōlpatti, Āyirattirunūṟu Paḷaṅcol*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Cooperative Society, 2014. pp.140-41.

<sup>226</sup> The boundary of the land is mentioned as Ceṟupalli in the west, Pērāl in the north, Karappalli in the east and towards south of the Kīḷṭirukkōyil Tēva pūmi (temple land) Tālakkāṭu inscription line 3-6. *K.C.A.R.*: 92.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> Narayan Kaṇṇūr inscription. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Kerala Charitrattinte Aṭisthāna Śīlakal*. Calicut: Navakerala Cooperative Publication, 1971. pp. 98-99.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.* lines 18-22

the people belonged to different worshipping patterns and their acceptance in the contemporary society. According to M.G.S. Narayanan, the *Mūṣaka Vamśa Kāvya*, the genealogical account of the Mūṣika rulers, gives a clear picture about the syncretic cultural formation of Kerala during the early medieval period through a meaningful canto which signified to the unity of the divergent cultures in the region.<sup>230</sup>

However, it can be concluded that the temples were caused to the formation of an agrarian society, especially in the midland river valleys, that consisted of the hierarchy of occupational groups dominated by the Brahminic traditions, and the trade activities of the coastal and inland areas instigated for the development of a multicultural society. The production and distribution related to the temple land broadened the cultural setting of the early medieval Kerala.

## **Conclusion**

In short, the above discussion proves that the temples developed in the agrarian tracts and all lands granted or arranged to meet the expenses of the temple were already cultivated fertile agrarian tracts that include, wet lands, garden land and homesteads. The multi-crops from these lands was accumulated at temples and redistributed it among the temple functionaries and also spent to meet the daily ritual requirements of the temple. All these lands were transferred along with the existing *Kuṭis* and *Ūrs*. The land grants and its terms and

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<sup>230</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* 1971. pp. xi-xii; T.A. Gopinatha Rao. *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. II and III. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural publication Government of Kerala, 1920 (1992). pp. 87-113; K. Raghava Pilla. *Mushakavamsam*, (Sanskrit –English translation) Trivandrum: Department of Publications Kerala University, 1977. (Hereafter *M.V.K- Canto: Sloga*) *M.V.K-12* :112.

conditions were institutionalized by the temple body unanimously. There was no common pattern in the nature of body and the members of the body varies. In most cases it consisted of the Perumāḷ or the representative of Perumāḷ, *Nāṭṭutaiyavar* or the local ruler, temple priests, the proprietors of the lands like *Ūrāḷar* or *Potuvāl*. The proprietors had no actual property holding right over the land and they were under the strict surveillance of the temple body or the King or the donor. The actual ownership right over the land was enjoyed by the donor and there are references in the inscription on the clause for the repossession of the land by the donor if the agreement violated. All these indicate that the granted lands were cultivated and occupied *Ūrs* that consisted of many *Kuṭis*, the basic settlement areas of various occupational groups.

The *Ūrs* were under the sway of *Ūrār* or *Ūrpatis*. The *Ūrār* or *Ūrpatis* and the *Ūrāḷars* were not same entities. The *Ūrāḷars* were only the proprietors of the land submitted to the temple and they were under the regulations of the temple body. The unanimous decision of the temple body was considered as the established statute and in many cases, it was finalized and engraved on a stone or copper plate with the presence of the witnesses who must have been the prominent landed magnate of the region. The eyewitnesses mentioned in name with their household names again authorized the sanction of the economic and political sanctity of the deed as well as the terms and conditions on the granted land. All these agreements were executed in order to ensure the regular production process of the land without obstacles and strictly prevented the unnecessary involvement of the proprietors of the temple land over the regular occupations of the land. As almost all temples of early medieval Kerala received the cultivated settlement areas as grants, it can be assumed that the temples were not primary cause for the expansion of the agriculture, but they were functioned

as the managing institution of the agricultural land. The land grants resulted to the development of certain new land holding rights like *Brahmaswam*, *Tēvatānam* (*Dēvaswam*), *Kīlītu* and *Iṭayītu*. The new holdings resulted in the creation of new intermediaries like *Kārāḷar* between the temple, Brahmin households and the actual tilling communities.

The formation of temple as the landholding institution, where the surplus from the agrarian tracts were accumulated and redistributed, corresponded to the formation of new occupational groups in connection with the temples. Some of them received the land (*Virutti* or *Jīvitam*) as the reward of their services that further resulted in the development of intermediary tenant groups between the *Virutti* holders and already occupied agrarian population of the granted *Virutti* land. Thus, along with the temple holdings, the individual holding like *Virutti*, *Brahmaswam* etc. were also developed. The intermediary rights over the land was known as *Kārāṇmai*, the mortgage of land rights for a stipulated period for money, the lease holding rights, etc. were also developed in this period.

It does not mean that all these developments occurred due to the emergence of the temple. As all these holding rights were referred in the inscription in self-explanatory mode without the description of the nature of rights, it can be assumed that all abovementioned land holding rights were already existed in the early medieval agrarian society of Kerala even before the establishment of the temples.

Thus, the temples acted as the managing institution in the land submitted to the temple and the features of the submitted land, which mentioned in the inscriptions, must have represented the features of the existing contemporary agrarian economy, settlements, cultural and political geography of the early medieval Kerala. In that sense, the early medieval temple inscriptions are



important source materials for the reproduction of early medieval polity as well. The relation between the temple and the ruling authorities have to be cross examined to understand the role of temple in the political consolidation of early medieval period, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

## Chapter V

### **TEMPLES IN THE EARLY MEDIEVAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE**

The previous discussions realize that the temples, as the institutionalized worshipping centres, developed during the early medieval period owing to the formation of Brahmin settlements, the beginning of land grants to the temples and Brahmins and also the spread of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti tradition. The available early medieval epigraphs from the temples show that they were developing with the constant support from the existing political entities of the region which enable them to maintain the internal and external affairs of the temple. The existence of multiple power centres with socio-economic and political control in the multi-crop agrarian regions of Kerala is evident in the early medieval epigraphs. The present chapter tries to locate the early medieval political entities mentioned in the temple inscriptions and literatures and analyzes the nature of the relation between the temple and the ruling authorities. It tries to argue that there were multiple power centres in Kerala and majority of them accepted the political or ritual suzerainty of the Cēramān during the early medieval period. The temple acted as an integral institution that enabled the ruling powers of the region to get the blessings of the Brahmins who follow the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions and integrate their polity into the majesty of the Cēra power. The major source material for the study is inscriptions and a few contemporary literatures are also surveyed. As *Kēraḷōlpatti* traditions composed during the late medieval time, probably to protect and legitimize the political

interests of the pre-colonial *Nāṭuvālis* especially of Zamorin and Kōlattiri, the present study does not give much importance to it in the historical study of early medieval period.

### **Historiographic Trend**

The 'early medieval' has been considered as period of emergence of state under the second Cēra in the historical studies of Kerala and it has already been subjected to many ongoing debates as well. The pioneering studies on the early medieval polity of Kerala termed it as 'Second Chera Empire'<sup>1</sup> and 'Perumāḷ Kingdom.'<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the first political consolidation of Kerala occurred between 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. Based on the 'Byzantine model' and the *Arthaśāstra's* *Saptāṅga* concept of state, it is stated that the Cēra state was a centralized kingdom, which had a capital at Mahōdayapuram (present Kodungallūr) and a Brahmin council called *Nālutaḷi*. The kingdom was divided into fourteen districts and ruled by the governors called *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* and the district further divided in to *Ūr* or *Grāma* and *Nagara*.<sup>3</sup> The local bodies functioned according to the code of conduct like *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam*. Perumāḷs collected revenue from the trade centres, Brahman villages and ordinary villages separately.<sup>4</sup> Both the Perumāḷ and the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* had police forces called *Āyiram* and *Nūruvar*. Thus M.G.S. Narayanan attributed a centralized administrative structure to the Perumāḷs. Recently, he has revised his earlier

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<sup>1</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. *Studies in Kerala History*. Kottayam: National Book Stall, 1970. pp. 250-51.

<sup>2</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Perumāḷs of Kerala: Brahmin Oligarchy and Ritual Monarchy Political and Social conditions of Kerala under the Cēra Perumāḷs of Mākōtai (c AD 800 – AD 1124)*. Thrissur: Cosmo books, (1996), 2013.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 205-30.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 239-50.

position of centralized power of the Cēras and argued that the Perumāḷs had only ritual power over the *Nāṭu* and the actual political power was enjoyed by the Brahmin oligarchs. Therefore, M.G.S. Narayanan termed it as “Ritual Sovereign under the Brahmin Oligarchy”.<sup>5</sup>

Kesavan Veluthat has included the Cēra state as one among the feudal states of South India.<sup>6</sup> He also argued that the Cēra state originated in the beginning of 9<sup>th</sup> century AD and it had all the characteristics of an early state.<sup>7</sup> According to him, originally, the *Nāṭuvāḷis* were the lords who had evolved in their respective *nāṭu* and they were later incorporated to the Cēra state. The Perumāḷ was the supreme lord of the capital city Mahōdayapuram and at the same time he was the overlord of the Cēra Kingdom. Rajan Gurukkal has analysed the role of temple in the making of Cēra state and argued that “the political power of early medieval Kerala remained in agrarian localities, the temple deity embodied the sovereign power of the temple corporation and represented the king in his ideal forms adding to the ritual status of the royalty”.<sup>8</sup> According to him, temples were part of the divinization process of kingship. In response to the theory of centralized monarchical power, few attempts are there to realize the political relations within the monarchy and tried to locate multiple power centres within the kingdom like temple, Brahmin settlement, *Nāṭuvāḷis*, *Dēśavāḷis* etc., and

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<sup>5</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. “State in the Era of the Cēramān Perumāḷs of Kerala.” R. Champakalakshmi, Kesavan Veluthat, T.R. Venugopalan (eds.) *State and Society in Pre-modern South India*. Thrissur: Cosmo Books, 2002. pp. 111-19.

<sup>6</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *The Political Structure of Early Medieval South India*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993.

<sup>7</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Early Medieval in South India*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2010. pp.183-228.

<sup>8</sup> Rajan Gurukkal. *The Kerala Temple and Early Medieval Agrarian System*. Sukapuram: Vallathol Vidyapitam, 1992. pp. 81-82.

therefore attributed an incorporated political structure to the Perumāl state.<sup>9</sup> Most recently, the process of the evolution of Cēra state has been analysed and stated that there were four phases in the state formation process - First phase (800-900 AD), Second phase (900-960 AD), Third phase (960-1020 AD) and Fourth phase (1020-1122 AD).<sup>10</sup> The third phase witnessed the completion of political consolidation of Cēra power in Kerala.

However, these historical studies have been interpreted the dominant political figure of early medieval Kerala variously like ‘the Second Chera empire’ of Kulaśēkharas,<sup>11</sup> the Kingdom of Cēra Perumāls of Mākōtai,<sup>12</sup> the Second Cēra kingdom, etc. The existing historiography of the early medieval polity is focused on the centralized monarchical character of the Perumāl state. The present study uses the Second Cēra kingdom to refer the name of the ruling system and Cēra or Cēramān for the king, the rationale behind the usage will be discussed later. The role of temple and Brahmin settlements in the making of the kingdom is more or less accepted without much theoretical disparities. It was perceived as a Kingdom controlled by the Brahmins and the Perumāl as the supreme lord developed in the material milieu of the proliferation of the Brahmin settlements and temples.

However, if we cross examine the inscriptional evidences, it can be seen that they are mainly refer to the administrative mechanism for the maintenance

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<sup>9</sup> K N. Ganesh. “State Formation in Kerala: A Critical Overview”. *Reflections on Pre-Modern Kerala*. Thrissur: Cosmo Books, 2016. pp 13-45.

<sup>10</sup> E. Rekha. *Formation of State in Early Medieval Kerala*. University of Calicut: Department of History. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis. 2012.

<sup>11</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai. *Op. cit.* pp. 216-66. A. Sreedhara Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*. Chennai: S. Viswanathan pvt. Ltd., (1967) 2003. pp.131-67.

<sup>12</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.*

of temple affairs of the temples and the clauses for the violation of the temple decree. The administrative body of the temples are different and the clauses are also different. There is no uniformity in the temple administrative bodies of the temples during the reign of Cēra rulers (see below, Table.1). Thus, the multiplicity in the executive body of the temple itself hinted at the existence of multiple form of power execution. Similarly, the *Aṭṭaikkol*, the annual share of the Cēra, or *Rakṣābhōgam*, protection tax was not collected from all temples. As the *Rakṣābhōgam* appears in the Tirunantikkara inscription (892 AD) of Āy king Vikramāditya Varaguṇar, it cannot be confined to the Cēra polity alone.<sup>13</sup> *Kōyilatikāri* or *Atikāri* as the representative of the Cēra king not appears in all inscriptions. The *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* was not appeared in all context. For instance, the land grants to the Kumaranārāyaṇapurattu temple of Cōkkūr was made by a single person named Karkkōṭṭupurattu Kaṭampan Kumaran and the temple was under his proprietorship.<sup>14</sup> The land grant was made by various landed people. The inscriptions furnish the details on the possible existence of multiple powers in the agrarian locale of Kerala and most of them accepted the suzerainty of the Second Cēra, probably to integrate their political position with the splendour of a great power Cēra who had the fame as the benefactor of the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava bhakti in Kerala. There were many forms of political power like local chiefs of the agrarian localities, Brahmin settlements, temples, landed intermediaries like *Kāraḷars*, *Nāṭuvālis*, etc. and their power was maintained in a hierarchical social

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<sup>13</sup> Tirunantikkara inscription line 7. Puthusseri Ramachandran. *Kerala Charitratintte Aṭistāna Rēkhakaḷ*. Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Bhāsha Institute, (2007) 2011. p.128. (Hereafter *K.C.A.R*:128).

<sup>14</sup> “*Tannuṭaiya Kumaranārāyaṇapurattu Tēvaṟkku*” Cōkkūr inscription line 3-5. *K.C.A.R*: 24.

relation based on land. The following part will discuss the elements of political structure that mainly appeared in the inscriptions.

### **The temple and the political authorities**

The nature of polity that associated with the temple cannot be reduced into a centralized political system and at the same time the significance of the Cēramān as the supreme authority of the early medieval period of Kerala cannot be ignored. The dominant political power of the period was Cēramān who was placed above various authorities like *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* or *Ālkōyil*, landed households, temples and Brahmin *Sabhas*. Hence, the role of the temples in integrating various power units of the *Nāṭu* have to be cross examined on the basis of the available source materials and the above discussed historiographic trends.

### ***Cēramān***

The name of the Cēra ruler often appears in the beginning part of the inscription with their regnal years (see below, Table 1). Most of the inscriptions from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century AD refers the regnal year of the Cēra ruler, mostly to denote the period of the land grants or other arrangements in the temples.

The term *Ivvāṇṭu*, means in this year, always appears in the inscription to mention the year of the grant made by various ruling authorities of the region. If the grant was given by the King directly, the regnal year was not mentioned in certain cases.<sup>15</sup> Such references have shown that the regnal year was used to denote the political period of the land grants of different political entities and also used to endorse the political sanction of the Cēra king, who were the Śaiva Vaiṣṇava devotees, to the agreement made by the temple authority.

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<sup>15</sup> Tillaistānam inscription *K.C.A.R.*: 11; Tirunantikkara inscription. *K.C.A.R.*: 21.

The land grants or such other grants were not made by the Cēramān directly. Occasionally, the grant was made with the presence of the representatives of Cēra kings known as *Atikāri*<sup>16</sup> or *Kōyilatikāri*. But, as the regnal year mentioned in the beginning part, the granted authorities mentioned in the temple like *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*, *Ūr*, households, landed personals, merchants etc. must have accepted the suzerainty of the Cēramān.

Almost all inscriptions refer to the regnal year and some inscriptions mention the position of Jupiter in the Malayalam month. The lack of uniform pattern in the temple bodies shows the multiplicity in the historical context for the emergence of temples. The nature of the body differed according to the resource potential of the temple. The temples like Trikkākkara, Tiruvalla, Tirukkaṭṭānam, Neṭumpuṟam Taḷi etc. received more grants that recorded in a series of inscriptions. About eighteen inscriptions are found at Trikkākkara temple and about sixty-four copper plates are from Tiruvalla temple. As the administrative bodies are different and, apart from the mentions of the regnal years as the date of the inscription, not all temples having the presence of the Cēra kings. It seems to have shown that the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars*, temples and temple bodies of the brahmins and temple functionaries accepted the suzerainty of the Cēra power, who must have been depicted as the benefactors of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava traditions and the dominant icon of early medieval Kerala polity by the contemporary society, to elevate their socio-political position

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<sup>16</sup> Tarisāppalli copper plate line 4. T.A. Gopinatha Rao (ed.). *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vols. II and III. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, (1908) 1992. pp. 60-86 (Hereafter *T.A.S.* Vol. II and III: 60-86); M.G.S. Narayanan. "Index to Cēra inscription". *Op. cit.*, (1996) 2013. No. A 6. p. 437. (Hereafter *Index*: No A 6: 437); M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Tarisāppallippaṭṭayam*. Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Cooperative Society, (2013), 2015. pp.109-19.



**Table.1 - Regnal Year of the Cēra Kings (c. 800-1122 AD)**

Period (regnal year) of the land grant	Regnal year of the King	Temple body that made the temple settlement	Inscription
RĀMA RĀJAŚĒKHARA (c.800-844 AD)			
<i>Srī Rājādhirāja Paramēśvara bhaṭṭāraka Rājaśēkharadēvarkku cellāninṛayāṅṭu pan(ni)raṅṭu</i>	12 <sup>th</sup> year of the first mentioned ruler Rajaśekhara Dēvan (832 AD)	Tiruvārruvāy Patinēṭṭunāṭṭār and Vālappalli Ūrālar	Vālappalli line 1. K.C.A.R: 4
STHĀṆU RAVI KULAŚĒKHARA (c.844-883 AD)			
<i>Kōtāṅṭu Iravikkuttan palanūrāyirattāṅṭu maṛukutalai ciraṅṭaṭippaṭuttālāninṛa yāṅṭuḷcellāninṛa yāṅṭaintu</i>	5 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Thāṅṭu Iravi or Sthāṅṭuravi (849 AD)	Vēṅāṭu ruler Ayyanaṭi Tiruvaṭikaḷ	Tarisāppalli T.A.S. Vol. II & III: 60-86. M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. <i>Op. cit.</i>
<i>Kōttāṅṭu Iravikku cellāninṛayāṅṭu Patinonṛāvatu</i>	11 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of the King Tāṅṭu Iravi or Sthāṅṭu Ravi (855 AD)	Irungāṭikkūṭa Paraṭaiyār, ḷaiyārum	Iriṅgālakkūṭa K.C.A.R: 10

<i>Kōttāṇu Iravikku cellāninrayāṇṭu Patinēlu</i>	17 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of the King Tāṇu Iravi or Sthāṇu Ravi (861 AD)	Tiruvārruvāy Sabha and Aṭikaḷ – Land granted by Puñcai Paṭakārattu Cēntan Caṅkaran	Tiruvārruvāy <i>K.C.A.R:11</i>
KŌTA RAVI VIJAYARĀGA (C.883-913 AD)			
<i>Ko Kōtai Iravikku cellāninrayāṇṭu Patimūnru</i>	13 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (896 AD)	Taḷi Atikārikaḷ, Uḷpātan, Cēnāpati, Kuṭakkai, Iravi Pirāṭṭi (Junior Prince), Irupattoruvar, Sabha and Kōyil	Airāṇikkaḷam. <i>K.C.A.R: 21</i>
<i>Ko Kōtai Iravikku cellāninrayāṇṭu Patinaiṅcu</i>	15 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (898 AD)	Karkkōṭṭupurattu Kaṭampankumaran	Cōkkūr. <i>K.C.A.R: 24</i>
<i>Ko Kōtai Iravikku Patinēlāmāṇṭu Mitunattil Viyāḷan nirka</i>	17 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (900 AD) Jupiter in the <i>Mīnam</i>	Nityaviyārēśwarattu Taḷiyār, Taḷi Atikārar, Vempolināṭuṭaiya Kōtai Iravi	Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi-1 <i>K.C.A.R: 28</i>

<i>Ko Kōtai Iravikku cellāninṛayāṅṭu Iruvatu Ivvāṅṭu Kanniyil Viyālan Nirka Viriccika ṅāyaṛu</i>	20 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (903 AD) Jupiter in Kanni	ĀvaṭṭipputtūrāyiravaṛIrup attēzhuvaṛ, Iraṅṭu kuṭi Potuvāḷ	Aviṭṭattūr. <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 30
<i>Ko Kōtai Iravikku cellāninṛayāṅṭu Irupattumūnṛāmāṅṭaikkettir Nālāmāṅṭu</i>	27 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (910 AD)	Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu Paraṭaimāṛ, Uḷpāṭar, Āḷkōyil, Potuvāḷ	Tirupparaṅgōṭṭu <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 34
<i>Kō (taira)vikku cellāninṛa(yāṅṭ iru) pattēḷu (ivvāṅṭu)</i>	27 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (910 AD)	Tavaiyār, Iḷaiyār, Āḷkōyil, Iraṅṭukuṭi Potuvāḷ	Porāṅgāṭṭiri <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 34
<i>Kōtairavikku cellāninṛayāṅṭiru pattēḷu ivvāṅṭu</i>	27 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (910 AD)	Paraṭaiyār, Iḷamuṭaiyār, Potuvāḷ	Indianūr <i>Index No A 15: 442</i>
<i>Ko Kōtai Iravikku cellāninṛayāṅṭu Muppatu</i>	30 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Iravi or Kōta Ravi (913 AD)	Iravi Āticcan, Paraṭaiyār, Potuvāḷ	Trippūṅṭittuṛa <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 36
KŌTA KŌTA KĒRAḶA KĒSARI (c. 913-943 AD)			

<i>Kēraḷa Kēcari Perumāḷ</i>	Regnal year is not legible (c. 913 AD)	Kēraḷa Kēsari Perumāḷ	Trikkākara- 1 Index No 19:443 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 39
<i>Kō Kōta Kōta kku ccellāninṛa yāṅṅu nāḷu</i>	4 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Kōta Kōta (943 AD)	Kāvilmūttār, ḷaiyār	Kāvuntara <sup>17</sup> <i>Index</i> No A 18:443
INTU KŌTA / INTĒSWARAN KŌTA VARMA (C. 943-962 AD)			
<i>Kōvintukkōtai varmarukku...</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> regnal year of King Intu Kōtai Varmar or Intu Kōta (946 AD)	Potuvāḷ and Paraṭaiyār	Mānipuram <i>Index</i> No. A 20: 444.
<i>Kōvintēccurankōtaipanmārkku Cellāninṛayāṅṅu mūntā...</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> regnal year of King Intēswaran Kotai or Intu Kota (946 AD)	Putukkōṭu Patineṭṭu Nāṭṭārum.....	Putukkōṭu <i>Index</i> No A 21: 444 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 43.
<i>Kōvintukōtai Varmarkku Cellāninṛayāṅṅ (yya) māṅṅaikketirāmāṅṅu....</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> regnal year of King Intēswaran Kotai Varmar or Intu Kōta (948 AD)	Nanṛulanāṭu Munnūrruvar, Kaṅayēntan, Maṅkalattu	Tiruvanmaṅṅūr-3 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 43

<sup>17</sup> The present scholar is also documented and read the legible part of the Kāvuntara inscription with the help of *Index*.

		Kumaran Kunṛappōlan, Nanṛuḷaināṭṭu...yanum	
<i>Kōśrīvintukōtaikku Cellāninṛayāṅṭu aiyyāmāṅṭaikkētirāmāṅṭu</i>	6 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Intēśwaran Kōtai or Intu Kōta (949 AD)	Śrīkāriyam	Mūḷikkaḷam K.C.A.R: 44
<i>Kōvintēśwarankōtaikku ccellāninṛayāṅṭu A(y)yamāṅṭaikkētiraiyāmāṅṭu mīnattil viyāḷanninṛa Mēṭa ñāyirru</i>	10 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Intēśwaran Kōtai or Intu Kōta (953 AD) Jupiter in Mīnam in the month of Mēṭam	Catiracikāmaṅi alias Kīḷānaṭikaḷ (queen)	Trikkākara -2 K.C.A.R: 45
<i>Kō Kōvintēcuvuraṅkō taikku ccellāninṛāṅṭu ayyāmāṅṭaikkētirēḷāmāṅṭu mēṭattilu viyāḷanninṛa makara ñāyarṛilu</i>	12 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Intēśwaran Kōtai or Intu Kōta (956 AD) Jupiter in Mēṭam in the Makaram	Toṅṭati Mūrkkānāyina Avirāman, Ēṭanūr Ūr, Ēṭanūr Tapai, Potuvāḷ	Cembra <sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> M.R. Raghava Varier. *Keraleeyatha Charithramānangal*. Edappal: Vallathol Vidyapadam, (1990) 2009. p. 96

<i>(Kovi)ntukōtaiivanmar Tiruvaṭikkucellāninṛāṇṭu Patinōramāṇṭaikkettir Ayyāmāṇṭu cinkattul viyāḷannirka</i>	16 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Intu Kōtai Varman or Intu Kōta (959 AD) Jupiter in Ciṅgam month	Tirukālkkarai Ulpātan, Perumutiyan, Kālkkaraināṭuṭaiya Kaṇṇampuraian	Trikkākara -3 <i>K.C.A.R: 49</i>
<i>Kōvinteśwaraṅkōtaiikku ccellāninṛayāṇṭu patinōrāmāṇṭaikkettir Ārāmāṇṭu Kanniyil Viyāḷannirkka</i>	17 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Intēśwaran Kōtai or Intu Kōta (960 AD) Jupiter in Kanni month	Nityaviyārēśwarattu Patinetṭu Nāṭṭār, Atikārar, Neṭumpuraiyūrnāṭuṭaiya Maṇalmanṛattu Iyakkan	Neṭumpuraṃ Taḷi-2 <i>K.C.A.R: 52</i>
<i>Kōvintukōtaiivanmar Tiruvaṭikku c(cellāninṛayāṇṭu)... Kanniyil (vi)yāḷamnirratu ṅāyirru</i>	17 <sup>th</sup> ? regnal year of King Ko Intu Kōta Varman or Intu Kōta (960 AD) Jupiter in Kanni month	Kaṇṇanpuraia, (Cōḷa Cikāmaṇi)	Trikkākara -4 <i>K.C.A.R: 54</i>
BHĀSKARA RAVI VARMAN (c.962- 1021 AD)			
<i>Kō pākkaniravi Vanmar...yāṇṭu Iraṇṭu</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> regnal year of King of Bhāskara Ravi Varman (964 AD)	Rāman Cētingan Tiruvaṭi	Veṅṅāyūr <i>K.C.A.R: 57</i>

<p><i>Kō ppārkkaraniravi Vanmarkku ccellāninrayāṅṅu Iranṅāmāṅṅaikkettir nālāmāṅṅu Iṅapattil Viyālam Nirikka kkarkkaṅṅa nāyirru</i></p>	<p>6<sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi Varman (968 AD) Jupiter in Iṅavam in the Kaṅkkaṅakam</p>	<p>Uḷpāṅan, Perumuṅṅiyan, Ciṅumarrappuḷaikkōtai Kēraḷan</p>	<p>Trikkākara-5 K.C.A.R: 58</p>
<p><i>...ravikku (c)cellāninrayāṅṅ(tu) irāṅṅāmāṅṅaikkettirompa tāmāṅṅu</i></p>	<p>11<sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi Varman (973 AD)</p>	<p>Kōyilatikāri</p>	<p>Pantalāyani Kollam Index No A 29: 448-449</p>
<p><i>Kōpākkaraniravi Vanmma Tiruvaṅṅikku cellāninrayāṅṅu iranṅāmāṅṅaikketti(roru) pattōrāmāṅṅu Makarattil viyālaninra miriccika nāyiru Ēḷu cenra nāḷ</i></p>	<p>13<sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi Varman (975 AD) Jupiter in Makaram in 7<sup>th</sup> Vriścikam</p>	<p>Vallatu pōḷa Narāyaṅan</p>	<p>Trikkākara-6 K.C.A.R: 61</p>
<p><i>Kō Śṅī pākkaraniravikku cellāninrayāṅṅu patinōrāmāṅṅaikkettiru irāmāṅṅu tulāttil viyālanilkka</i></p>	<p>13<sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (975 AD) Jupiter in Tulām</p>	<p>Nityaviyārēsvarattu Patinēṅṅu Nāṅṅṅar, Atikārikaḷ</p>	<p>Neṅṅumpuram Taḷi-3 K.C.A.R: 62</p>

<i>Kōppākkaraniravi Varmmar Tiruvaṭṭikku cellāninra Ārāmāṇṭaikkētirēlāmāṇṭu Iṭapattuḷ viyālanninra Tulā ñāyirru</i>	13 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (975 AD) Jupiter in Iṭavam in the Tulām.	Ūr, Paruṭaiyār, Potuvāl	Tirukkaṭṭittānam-1 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 63
<i>Kōppākkaraniravi Varmmar Tiruvaṭṭikku cellāninrayāṇṭi raṇṭāmāṇṭaikkētir pantirāmāṇṭu</i>	14 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (976 AD)	Vēṇāṭuṭaiya kōvartanam mārttāṇṭa(nai)amaiccu Nanruḷaināṭuvālṇnu	Tirukkaṭṭittānam-2 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 65
<i>Kōccir pākkaraniravi varmmarkku ccellāninrayāṇṭi raṇṭi</i>	...? regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (976 AD ?)	Mārttāṇṭan Nanruḷanāṭu vāl	Tirukkaṭṭittānam-3 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 65
<i>Kōpārkarāniravivarmmar Tiruvaṭṭikku cellāninra (yāṇṭi) raṇṭinetir irupa(ttū) nālāmāṇṭu</i>	26 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (988 AD)	Vēṇāṭuṭaiya kōvartanam m(ārttāṇṭan), Tirukkaṭṭittānattu Pariṭaiyār, Kaṇattār, Potuvāl, Nanruḷanāṭu munnūruvar, Paṇiceykinra	Tirukkaṭṭittānam-5 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 68



		Neṭumpuṛattukunṛa(nkōv iñ(tan) Iravi Rāman	
<i>Kōccir pākkaraniravi varmmarkku ccellāninṛayāṅṭu Iraṅṭāmāṅṭaikkētir Irupattonpatāmāṅṭu Tanuvil Viyālam ninṛa viriccika ṅāyīru irupatu cenṛa nāl</i>	31 <sup>st</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (993 AD) Jupiter in Dhanu in the Vriścikam.	Cerumarrappuḷaiikkaṅṇa maṅkalattinmēl Nakkaniravi, Āticcaniravi, Puttillattu Nārāyaṅantēvan	Trikkākara-7 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 69
<i>Kōcciripakaraniravivanmar Tiruvaṭṭikku ccellāninṛayāṅṭu iraṅṭā(mā)ṅṭaikkētir (i)rupattonpatāmāṅṭu kumpattuḷ viyāḷanninṛa Makaraṅāyirru</i>	31 <sup>st</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (993 AD) Jupiter in Kumbham in the month of Makaram.	Cirumarrappuḷaikotai Nārāyaṅan	Trikkākara-8 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 70
<i>Kōṅērimaikōṅṭān Kōcciripakaraniravivarma Tiruvaṭṭikku ccellāninṛayāṅṭu iraṅṭāmāṅṭaikkētir Muppattōrāmāṅṭu.....</i>	33 <sup>rd</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (995 AD) Jupiter in <i>Iṭavam</i> in the <i>Iṭavam</i> .	Neital Ūr, Paraṭaiyār, Potuvāl	Perunna-2 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 71

..... <i>Itavattil viyālanninra Vāṇṭu</i> <i>Iṭapam</i>			
<i>Kōppākkara Iravi Varmmar</i> <i>Tiruvaṭṭikku Cellāninra Iyāṇṭu</i> <i>Muppattaiṅcu</i>	35 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (997AD)	Mā(ka)lūr karā(la)n Kēcavan	Kiṇālūr-3 <i>K.C.A.R: 71</i>
<i>Kōppākkara iravi varmar</i> <i>tiruvaṭṭikku ccellāninrayāṇṭu</i> <i>muppattaiṅcu</i>	35 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (997AD)	Mā(ka)lūr karā(la)n Kēcavan	Tiruvangūr-2 <i>K.C.A.R: 82</i>
<i>Kō Kōnērimaikoṇṭān kō Śrī</i> <i>Pārkkaran Iravi Vanmar</i> <i>Tiruvaṭṭi</i>	38 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1000 AD)	King Bhāskara Ravi	Jewish Copper plate <i>K.C.A.R: 72</i>
<i>(Kōppākkara)niravi</i> <i>Varmmanāyina Manukulāticca</i> <i>pperumālkkku ccellāninravāṇṭu</i> <i>Muppatteṭṭāmāṇṭaikkettir</i> <i>Makarattil Viyālannirka</i>	39 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1001 AD)	Vēṇāṭṭaṭikaḷ	Kuḷattūr M.R. Raghava Varier. <i>Op. cit. p. 119.</i>
<i>Kō Śrī Pārkkaran</i> <i>Iravivarmman Tiruvaṭṭikku</i> <i>ccellāninra Iraṇṭamāṇṭaikkettir</i>	43 <sup>rd</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1005 AD)	Mūtta Kūru Vāzhkinra Kuṇṇikkutta Varmanāyi(na) aṭikaḷ Vīrakkurumpuraiyār	Tirunelli -1 <i>K.C.A.R: 75</i>

<i>Ārāmāṅṭu Tulāttilu</i> <i>Viyāḷanninṛa Mīna ṅjāyīru eṭṭu</i>		Tiruvaṭi, Mūṭṭa Kūrriḷ Eḷunnūrruvar, Paṇiyuṭaiya Nāyan, Ūṛ, Ūriṭavakai Veḷḷāḷar, Niḷal, Paṇi, Nātu, Iṭavaka, Pirakiriti (prakriti)	
<i>Kōppākkaraniravi Varmmar</i> <i>Tiruvaṭikku ccellāninṛayāṅṭai</i> <i>kketir nālpattārāmāṅṭu</i> <i>avvāṅṭu cingattil viyāḷanninṛa</i> <i>makara ṅāyīruḷ</i>	47 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1009 AD) Jupiter in Cingam in the month of Makaram	Cangaraṅkōṭa Varmmanāyina Puṛaikīḷar, Niḷal, Paṇi	Tirunelli -2 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 78
<i>Kōppākkarani(ravi vanma</i> <i>tiruvaṭikku ccel)lāninṛayāṅṭu</i> <i>nālpṭat(taṅcāmaṅṭaikketir</i> <i>iraṅṭāmāṅṭu mīnattil</i> <i>vīyāḷannircceyta</i> <i>karumamāvatu</i>	47 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1009 AD) Jupiter in Mīnam	Kuvalāyini Kōvintan Kunrappōḷan	Trikkākara -9 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 80
<i>Kōppākkara iravi varmar</i> <i>tiru(va)ṭik(ku) c(cellāninṛa</i>	48 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1010 AD) Jupiter in Mīnam	Muḷakkāṭu Iyakkan Kōvintan	Tirukkaṭittānam-6 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 83

<i>yāṅṅai)kketirāmaṅṅu nālpāt(tetṅṅum cenra tulāttiviliyāḷanninra</i>			
<i>Kōppākkara iravi varmar tiruvaṅṅikku) ccellāninrayāṅṅu nālpattēṅṅāmāṅṅaikkētirāmāṅṅ ṅṅu</i>	49 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1011 AD)	Tirumūḷikkaḷattu Ūr, Potuvāḷ	Mūḷikkaḷam-2 K.C.A.R: 83
<i>Kōppākkaranira(vi) varmar tiruvaṅṅikku cellāninrayāṅṅu Aimpattēṅṅāmāṅṅu</i>	58 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1020 AD)	Cālavēli Kēraḷam Pōḷan Kārāḷan	Trikkākara -10 K.C.A.R: 85
<i>Pākkaraniravi varmman Āyina Manukulāticca Tēvar Kōnmai Celutti Ayampettēṅṅāmāṅṅu kaṅṅkaṅṅaka viyāḷattilu</i>	58 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1020 AD) Jupiter in Karkkaṅṅakam	King Bhāskara Ravi	Pullūr Koṅṅavalam <sup>19</sup>
<i>(Kōpā)kkaraniravi varṅṅ(manāyina kōyilatikārikku(ccellā)ninra</i>	59 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Bhāskara Ravi (1021 AD)	Kaṅṅṅankārivarman alias Rāmakaṅṅamūvar Tiruvaṅṅi, Cālappuṅṅattu Taḷi,	Eramam Cālappuṅṅam <sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Kerala Charitrattinte Adisthana Śilakaḷ*. Calicut: Navakerala Cooperative Publication, 1971. pp. 74-75.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 84-85.

<i>aympatteṭṭ(āmāṇṭai)kktirāmā ṇtu ivvāṇtu karkkaṭakaviyālanniṛa nāl</i>		Valañciyar, Nānātēyar, Paṇimakkaḷ	
RAVI KŌTA RĀJA SIMHAN (c. 1021-1036 AD)			
<i>Ravikōtaiyku cellāninṛayāṇ.....avvāṇtu</i>	Regnal year is not legible (c. 1028 AD) <sup>21</sup>	Panniyankara Atikārar, Āḷkōyil	Panniyankara <sup>22</sup>
<i>Kō Iravikkōtaiyku ccellāninṛa Āṇtu eṭṭu.</i>	8 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Ravi Kōta (1029 AD)	Cōḷan Parakēcarivarman	Tirumirrakkoṭu K.C.A.R: 90
RĀJARĀJA, RAVI RĀMA RĀJĀDITYA, ĀDITYAN KŌTA RAṆĀDITYA (C.1036-1089 AD)			
<i>Kōvāticca(nkōtaivarmar)iruzhi irāmar Tiruvaṭiyāna Iraṇāticca cak(ki)ravartikaḷ (tī)ṭṭeluti iṭṭ ayyāmāṇṭai makaravviyālam Iṭava ṇāyirru</i>	5 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Iruzhi Irāmar Tiruvaṭiyāna Raṇātitya (c. 1041 AD) Jupiter in Makaram in the Iṭavam month.	.....	Paṛampan Taḷi K.C.A.R: 97
<i>Kō Śrī Śrī Iraiyrāyarkkucellā ninṛayāṇtu nālāmāṇṭaikketir nālu</i>	8 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Rāja Rāja (c. 1044 AD)	Irāmavaḷanātu Pāliyattu Kaṇṇankaṇṭan,	Tiruvaṇṇūr K.C.A.R: 96

<sup>21</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan assumed that it belonged to c. 1028 AD. *Ibid.* pp. 122-36. *Index* No A 53 461-62.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* 1971. pp. 125-26. *Index* No A 53. *Ibid.*

		Paṇiyuṭaiyvakaḷ, Aṟunnūṟruvar, Nizhalōr	
<i>Ko Āticcaṅkōtai (iruva)ṭikku ti(ru)veḷutti(ṭu) cellāninṟayā ṇṭu (ira)ṇṭāmāṇṭaikke (tiṟ) pati (no)rāmāṇṭai tanu viyāḷa(tti)l</i>	13 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of King Āticcan Kōta (c. 1049 AD)	Vēṇāṭuṭaiya Kōva (rttanān Mārttāṇṭan)	Nallūr <i>K.C.A.R: 97</i>
<i>Kō Iravi Irāmanukku cellā ninṟayāṇṭiraṇṭu</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> regnal year of King Ravi Rāman	Tirukkaṭittānattu Ūrār, Paraṭaiyār, Capaiyār, Nanṟuḷanāṭu Vāḷiṅṟa Maṇalmanṟattu Iyakkan Cirikāṇṭan	Tirukkaṭittānam-7 <i>K.C.A.R: 98</i>
RĀMAKULASĒKHARAN (c. 1089-1122 AD)			
<i>Makarattil Viyāḷan ninṟa Kulacēkarapperumāḷirācciya (m) vāṇṇaraṇṭāmāṇṭēkkitirā māṇṭu</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> regnal year of Kulasēkhara Perumāḷ (1092 AD) Jupiter in Makaram	Kaṭaingōṭṭu Nārāyaṇan Iravi Kōyil, Ūr, Potuvāḷ	Tiruvālūr <i>K.C.A.R: 102</i>
<i>Iranṭāmāṇṭaikketiṟ eṭṭāmāṇṭu Kulacēkara Kōyilatikārikaḷ</i>	8 <sup>th</sup> regnal year of Kulasēkhara Perumāḷ (1097 AD)	Kulasēkara Kōyilatikārikaḷ	Perunna-3 <i>K.C.A.R: 103</i>

<p><i>Kō Irāmartiruvaṭi ccellāninra iraṇṭāmāṇṭaikketir eṭṭāmāṇṭu karkkaṭaka viyālam mīna ñāyirru</i></p>	<p>10<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Kulaśēkhara Perumāḷ (1099 AD)</p>	<p>Cētu Pullūr Kumarankumarāticcan</p>	<p>Neṭumpuram Taḷi-4 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 104</p>
<p><i>Kollam tonriyirunnūrrelupa tteṭṭāmāṇṭai kanniyil viyālam pukka cingaṇṭāyiru onpatu cenra nāḷ Iraṇṭāmāṇṭaikketir patinōrāmāṇṭai Irāmar Tiruvaṭi Kōyilatikārikaḷāyina Śrī Kulaśēkhara Ccakaravarttikaḷ</i></p>	<p>Kollam era 278, 13<sup>th</sup> regnal year of Rāmaṭ Tiruvaṭi Kōyilatikārikaḷ alias Śrī Kulaśēkhara Cakravarttikaḷ. (1102 AD)<sup>23</sup> Jupiter in Kanni in the Cingam month.</p>	<p>Śrī Kulaśēkhara Cakravarttikaḷ</p>	<p>Kollam Rāmēśwaram <i>T.A.S.</i> Vol. V No. 13:40-47 <i>Index</i> No A 71: 469 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 106</p>

<sup>23</sup> Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai quotes 1102 AD as the end of Second Cēra power. But M.G.S. Narayanan believes that it must have continued upto 1122 based on the reference of Cēramānār Rāma in the Tiruvalaṅcūḷi inscription of King Vikrama Cōḷa in Tamilnad. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. p. 73. *Index* No A 73: 470.

***Titles as the symbol of Power***

The titles of the kings communicate the nature of their ruling power. The temple inscriptions have attested the dominant political entity of the Cēramān, who were mentioned in different titles (see below, Table 2). These titles have exemplified the omnipotence of the Cēramān over the various political entities of the region who owned the property rights over the cultivated lands.

**Table. 2 - The titles of the Cēra Kings**

No	Titles	Name of the Ruling power	Inscription- lines
1	Tēvar, Perumāṇaṭi	Rājaśēkharan	Vāḷappaḷi-1,3 <i>K.C.A.R</i> :4
2	Kō, Cēramān	Tāṇu Iravi (Sthāṇuravi)	Iringālakkuṭa <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 10 Tillaistānam- <i>K.C.A.R</i> :11 Tiruvārruvāy <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 11
3	Kō, Kōyil, Perumāḷ, Tirukkōyil, Cēramān	Kōtai Iravi (Kōtaravi)	Airāṇikkaḷam <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 21- 23, Cōkkūr <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 24-26 Neṭumpuṇam Taḷi- 1 <i>K.C.A.R</i> :28-30, Aviṭṭattūr- <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 30-32, Trippūṇittuṇa <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 36
4	Kēraḷa Kēcari Perumāḷ	Kōta Kōta (913- 943AD)	Trikkākkara-1 <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 39 Kāvuntara <i>Index</i> No A 12:443
5	Kō, Perumāḷ, Varman	Indēśwaran Kōta or Indu Kōta	Putukkōṭu- 1 <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 43 Tiruvaṇmaṇṭūr <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 43 Mūlikkaḷam-1 <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 44 Trikkākkara 2, 3 4 <i>K.C.A.R</i> : 39,45,49,54, Cembra <sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* pp.96-99.



6	Kō, Varman, Kō Kōnmaikkoṇṭān, Manukulāticcan	Pākkaraniravi (Bhāskara Ravi)	Veṅṅāyūr- <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 57, Trikkākara 5 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 58, Pantalāyani <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 60, Trikkākkara <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 61, Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi 3 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 62, Tirukkaṭṭānam <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 65, Perunna 2 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 71, Jewish copper plate <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 72, Tiruvalla copper plate No 21 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 285
7	Kō, Perumāṇāṭikal	Ravi Kōtai, Ravi Kōta Rajsimhan	Panniyankara <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 89, Tirumirrakkoṭu <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 90, Tālakkāṭu <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 92,
8	Kō, Kō Śrī Śrī Perumāṇāṭikal	Rājaraja, Ravirāmarājādityan Ādityan Kōta Raṇādityan (1036-1089 AD)	Tiruvaṅṅūr – 1 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 96 Tirukkoṭṭānam 7 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 98-99.
9	Kulacēkara Perumāḷ, Kō, Tiruvaṭi, Kulacēkara Cakravarti, Kulacēkara Tēvar	Rāmakulasēkhara (1089-1122 AD)	Tiruvālūr <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 102 Perunna-3 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 103, Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi-4 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 104, Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi-5 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 105 Kollam Rāmēśwaram <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 106-107, Pantalāyani Kollam-2 <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 109, Talakkūḷattūr Matilakam <i>K.C.A.R:</i> 109

The term *Perumāḷ* or *Perumāṇaṭikaḷ*, literally means the great one,<sup>25</sup> was the biggest political authority associated with the temple, whose position was equal to the God. The term *Perumāḷ* seems to be provided a hegemonic power of the Cēramān over the temple and thus it may not be denoted the name of dynasty. The term Tēvar appears to mention about both the King and temple deity in the inscriptions. Tillaistānam inscription refers to Palyānai Kōkkaṇṭan alias Rāja Kēsari Varman and Sthāṇu Iravi as the Cōḷan and Cēramān rulers respectively.<sup>26</sup> The reference about the Cēramān Mātēyi, a Cēra queen is also evidently proved the presence of Cēra as the name of the dynasty. M.G.S. Narayanan has argued that Cēra was the dynastic name<sup>27</sup> whereas he titled his book on the later Cēras as *Perumāḷs of Kerala*.<sup>28</sup> But if we use the title *Perumāḷ* to label the early medieval polity of Kerala, the usage of ‘Perumāḷs of Kerala’ seems to be a misnomer.<sup>29</sup> The evidences are pointed towards the possibility of the prevalence of the term Cēra for the name of dynasty. But, as the lord of the temples of Kerala, the usage of the term *Perumāḷ* is not inappropriate. The Cēramān, the Cēra king, was generally termed as *Kō* in the inscriptions and the name of the ruling Cēramān is mentioned in the beginning part of the temple inscriptions mainly as the chronological indicator and also the patrons of the temple.

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<sup>25</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. p. 154.

<sup>26</sup> Tillaistānam inscription line 1-4. *K.C.A.R.*:11.

<sup>27</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. pp. 149-51.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> Rich Freeman has already pointed out the inappropriateness of the use of *Perumāḷ* to mention the Cēra state. Rich Freeman. “Genre and Society: The Literary Culture of Pre-Modern Kerala.” Sheldon Pollock (ed.). *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstructions from South Asia*. Berkely and Lose ngels: University of California Press. Cited in Manu V. Devadevan. “Changes in Land Relations During the Decline of the Cēra State.” Kesavan Veluthat, Donald R. Davis, Jr. (ed.). *Irreverent History: Essays for M.G.S. Narayanan*. Delhi: Primus Books, 2014. pp. 53-79.

The Cēramān were mentioned as *Kōyil* and *Tirukkōyil* and at the same time the temple or temple deity referred as *Perumtirukkōyil*. The Airāṇikkaḷam inscription refers the temple as *Perumtirukkōyil*<sup>30</sup> and at the end of the inscription where the clauses of the temple decree appeared it mentions that the *Kōyil* or the ruling power repossessed the land if the clauses are violated.<sup>31</sup> Here the temple appeared as an institution functioned according to the arrangements made by the patronizing power. The title *Perumtirukkōyil* has indirectly signified to the hegemony of the temple, as the seat of deity, over the political power. The title of the ruling power had conveyed the message of supreme power, which was almost equal to the Brahmanic god, to the contemporary society. By doing these grants to the temple the ruling power elevated their position equal to the Brahmanic deity. Consequently, the ruling power and the deity of the temple were some time appeared in common terms like *Tēvar*, *Tirukkōyil*, *Perumāṇāṭikal*, *Perumāḷ*<sup>32</sup> etc. The title *Perumāḷ* was represented both the King and deity of the temple.<sup>33</sup> Through these titles the kings seem to have obtained an equal status with the deity of the temple.

The Cēra kings and *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* claimed Kshatriya status through accepting Varman title, probably granted by the Brahmins. The *Varman*, a Kshatriya title, appeared with Indu Kōṭa (943-962 AD), was not frequently used. Probably Bhāskara Ravi (962-1021 AD) was the first ruler who perpetually used the *Varman* title. He also used the title *Kō Kōnmaikkōṇṭān* by which he might have claimed a status of the monarch who had support from many

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<sup>30</sup> Airāṇikkaḷam inscription- line 10-11. *K.C.A.R.*: 21-23.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* line 25.

<sup>32</sup> Tiruvalla Copper Plate 21. line 69. *K.C.A.R.*: 249.

<sup>33</sup> The *Perumāḷ* appears in the Tirunelli-2 inscription stands for the deity. line 9. *K.C.A.R.*: 78.

*Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars*.<sup>34</sup> The Jewish copper plate mentions the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* of Vēṇāṭu, Venṭolināṭu, Eṛālanāṭu, Vaḷḷuvanāṭu and Neṭumpuraiyūrṇāṭu as the witnesses of the grant made by Bhāskara Ravi to the *Añcuvanṇam* trade corporation.<sup>35</sup> None of these *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars*, except the Cirivallabhan Kōtai of Vēṇāṭu mentioned in the Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription,<sup>36</sup> used the title Varman. The *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* of the Kuṟumpuraiyūrṇāṭu, Kuñjikkōtai Varman<sup>37</sup> and Kuñjikkutṭa Varman,<sup>38</sup> and Puṛaikīlanāṭu Caṅkara Kōta Varman,<sup>39</sup> the feudatories of the Cēramān adorned *Varman* title. It is argued that, based on the occurrence of Kadamba ruler Viṣṇuvarma Kuṭumpiya in the Edakkal cave inscription of early historic period, the Kuṟumbranāṭu rulers had the Kadamba influence.<sup>40</sup> As the Varman title occurred with the Cēra rulers, and the rulers of Puṛaikīlanāṭu and Vēṇāṭu, the Varman title may not be emerged due to the Kadamba influence alone.

The Varman title seems to have been adopted by the rulers of Kerala during the period of Bhāskara Ravi, the only Cēra ruler who perpetually claimed the Kshatriya status throughout his rule. It is interesting to note that the appearance of Ārappan Kuñci in the Kinālūr inscription, a post Cēra record, as the Kuṟumbranāṭu ruler without Varman title.<sup>41</sup> As Kinālūr was originally a Jain settlement, the Kuṟumpuraināṭu ruler seems to have patronized the Jains as well. It further leads us to think that the Varman title seems to have granted or offered

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<sup>34</sup> Jewish Copper Plate line 1. *K.C.A.R.*: 72; Perunna-2. *K.C.A.R.*: 71.

<sup>35</sup> Jewish Copper Plate line 20-28. *K.C.A.R.*: 73.

<sup>36</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription. *K.C.A.R.*: 65.

<sup>37</sup> Kuḷattūr inscription- line18-19. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p. 119; *K.C.A.R.*: 74.

<sup>38</sup> Tirunelli inscription- 1 line 6. *K.C.A.R.*: 75.

<sup>39</sup> Tirunelli inscription-2 line 5-6. *K.C.A.R.*: 78.

<sup>40</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. p. 183.

<sup>41</sup> Kinālūr inscription line 14-15. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society,1972. pp. 76-77.

to the staunch benefactors of the Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava traditions of Brahmins. Bhāskara Ravi used another title *Manukulāticcan*, which seems to have shown the sovereignty of the king over the mankind of the region<sup>42</sup> or the ruler who belonged to the legendary *Manukula* and ruled according to the Dharmaśāstra principles. By accepting this title, the ruler claimed higher Kshatriya status. However, the post Cēra period witnessed the wide use of the Varman title by the *Nāṭtuvaḷis* who were elevated to the Kshatriya status through various Brahmanical rituals and ceremonies and most of them appeared as the patrons of the Śiva or Vaiṣṇava temples that treated as the public temple of the *Swarūpam*. Hence, the process of elevating the *Nāṭṭutaiyavar* to the Kshatriya status seems to have started from the period of the Cēra ruler Indu Kōta and established during the reign of Bhāskara Ravi Varman.

The absence of the Varman title in the name of the Cēra rulers after Bhāskara Ravi Varman seems to have shown the lack of the support from the traditional Brahmins. The reference about the animosity of the Āriya Brahmins against the last Cēra rulers and his atonement for solving the issue in the Kollam Rāmēśvaram inscription,<sup>43</sup> must have represented the emerging chaos between the Brahmins and the ruling Cēra and consequently the extraction of their ritual support to the ruling power. The conflict between the brahmins and the ruling powers was the part of the post Cēra, medieval, polity of Kerala.<sup>44</sup> As the

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<sup>42</sup> *Manukulam* is identified as mankind. Herman Gundert. *Malayalam English Dictionary*. Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society/National Book Stall, (1962) 2000. p. 718.

<sup>43</sup> Kollam Rāmēśvaram inscription line 19-35. *K.C.A.R:*106-08.

<sup>44</sup> Many examples are cited in Kōlathunāṭu and Travancore. K. P. Rajesh. *Historical Geography of Kolathunadu. A Study of the Regional Formation in Medieval North Kerala*. University of Calicut: Department of History, 2011. pp. 281-86. unpublished Ph.D. thesis;

Brahmins had a supreme ritual role in the making of the chief of the medieval *Swarūpam* through the coronation ceremonies like *Ariyittu Vālcā*, *Hiranya Garbham* etc. This process was closely associated with the Brahmin settlements and the Brahmanic temples, which developed as the crucial element of the medieval *Swarūpam* polity.

Some of the Cēra rulers have claimed emperor status. The Vāḷappalli inscription of Rājasēkhara (832 AD), the first ruler in the second Cēra kingdom, eulogized him as *Rāja Rājādhirāja Paramēśvara Bhaṭṭāraka Rājasēkhara Dēvar* which had given the status of emperor or a feudal lord. This may be the only inscription discovered so far from Kerala with the auspicious praise of *Namaśśivāya* (Hail Lord Śiva) which clearly shows that Rājasēkhara was an admirer of Śiva or a Śaivite. The Kuṟumāttūr inscription, discovered in the Kuṟumāttūr Viṣṇu temple near Areekode, Malappuram district, in Pallava Grantha script dated May 24, AD 871<sup>45</sup> eulogized Rāma Rājasēkhara, probably the first Perumāḷ king. In this context, the beginning portion (*Rāja Rājādhirāja Paramēśvara Bhaṭṭāraka Rājasēkhara Dēvar*) of the Vāḷappalli inscription can also be treated as a kind of acclamation that substantiated the political power of Rājasēkhara as an emperor or a feudal lord. According to these two inscriptions, Rāma Rājasēkhara was the only Cēra king had any sort of *Praśastis*. Thus, we can infer him as a devotee of both Śiva and Viṣṇu. However, Rāma Kulaśēkhara,

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K.N. Ganesh. "Polity and Society in Medieval Kerala Preliminary Considerations." *Op.cit.* pp.72-96.

<sup>45</sup> Kuṟumāttūr inscription. M.R. Raghava Varier. "Kuṟumāttūr Praśasti of Rājasēkhara" *Epigraphical Society Conference*. Dharward: Karnataka Kula Purohita Alur Venkata Roa Trust, 9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

the last Cēra King, used the title *Cakravartin*.<sup>46</sup> This term seems to have shown the existence of many feudatories in the first decade of the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD and therefore the King seems to have compelled to claim such a title. The term *Sāmantar* appears in the inscription of this ruler to denote the existence of feudatories like Vikkirāman, probably the Ērālanāṭu ruler.<sup>47</sup>

Some inscriptions directly mention the authority of the Cēramān who had sovereignty over the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*. According to the Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription, King Bhāskara Ravi entrusted Gōvardhana Mārttāṇṭan, the *Nāṭṭuṭaiya* of Vēṇāṭu to rule Nanṟuḷaināṭu also and he had to supervise the expenses of the temple from the already agreed annual share of produce of Nanṟuḷaināṭu.<sup>48</sup> Interestingly, this inscription refers to two terms; *Nāṭṭuṭaiya* (Vēṇāṭuṭaiya) and *Nāṭuvāḷumavar*, which probably indicate the two types of power execution of the Vēṇāṭu king. The term *Nāṭṭuṭaiya* refers to the actual sovereign of the king over Vēṇāṭu and *Nāṭuvāḷumavar* refers to the charge of Vēṇāṭu king to officiate the affairs related to Nanṟuḷaināṭu. Here the king Bhāskara Ravi Varman of the Cēra kingdom exercised the legal and executive power.

In short, the titles mentioned above, except Cēramān, are the title of the rulers, especially of the male members, of the second Cēra kingdom. The titles like *Kulaśēkhara* and *Perumāḷ* were the coronation titles of the Cēra kings. The reference like Cēramān Mātēvi, the queen of Cēramān, clearly revealed the

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<sup>46</sup> Kollam Rāmēśwaram inscription line 16-17. *T.A.S.* Vol III No 13. p. 44; *Index* No A 71: 469-470; *K.C.A.R.*: 106.

<sup>47</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan identified the Vikkiraman with the Pūntuṟakkōn or the Ērānāṭu ruler. Pūntuṟakkōn was a prominent title of the Zamorin of Calicut of later period. *Op.cit.* (1996) 2013. pp. 469-470.

<sup>48</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription-2 line 1-4. *K.C.A.R.*: 65.

prevalence of state in the name of political lineage, the Cēramān.<sup>49</sup> It could be the successors of the early Cērās.<sup>50</sup> But unfortunately, like the early Cēras who were eulogized in *Patirrupattu*, an early Tamil literary composition similar to a genealogical account and the Pugaḷūr inscription that refers to the Cēra genealogy, the later Cēras had no eulogy except a one line *Praśasti* of Rājaśekhara in the Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription<sup>51</sup> and a four line *Praśasti* in Kuṛumāttūr inscription.<sup>52</sup> As mentioned in the second chapter, the main source of the wealth and political power of the early Cēra, who were mentioned as one of the important political entity of the peninsular India along with Cōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Sathiyaputa in the Asokan inscriptions, was obtained through Indo- Roman exchanges or trade. The weakening of the Roman trade in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, after the decline of ancient Roman empire, must have resulted in the disintegration of the political power of the early Cērās. Similarly, as mentioned in the third chapter, this period also witnessed the emergence of Brahmin settlements in the agrarian belts of Kerala. The distribution of the temple inscriptions of the later Cēra period have shown that the temples were granted flourished multi-crop agrarian plots by various landholding political entities including Cēra rulers, *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars*, landed households, *Ūrs*, etc. The newly emerged Brahmanic temples were used as a tool for the expansion of the political control of the Cēra rulers over these flourished agrarian tracts that were under the control of various landholding political powers. Thus, the titles of the rulers occur

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<sup>49</sup> Aviṭṭattūr inscription line 4. *K.C.A.R*: 30.

<sup>50</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan remarks that the Perumāḷs were successors of the early Cērās. *Op.cit.* (1996). pp. 15-16.

<sup>51</sup> Vāḷappaḷḷi inscription line 1. *K.C.A.R*: 4.

<sup>52</sup> M.R. Raghava Varier discovered and deciphered the Kuṛumāttūr inscription. *Op. cit.* 2016.



in the temple inscriptions have given the idea that the ultimate political power of the early medieval Kerala was the Cēra rulers and they must have used temple as a hegemonic institution for consolidating their political power. Similarly, the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* and landholding intermediaries seem to have paid their homage to the Cērās to get a higher political position as well as the blessings of the Brahmins who followed the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions. The following part will present further indications in the inscriptions that substantiate the dominance of the Cēra rulers and the subordination of the multiple power entities.

### **Fines for the Violation of Temple Decree**

The proportion of fines collected from the offenders of the temple decree have exemplified the supreme authority of the Cēra rulers whose political rank was fixed above the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*, the temple or temple authorities and the *Sabha* of the Brahmins. The Cōkkūr inscription refers to the 100 *Kalañcu* gold as fine for the violation of the temple contract. In this amount of gold, 42 *Kalañcu* gold was fixed to the Perumāḷ, 20 *Kalañcu* to the *Āḷkōyil*, who could be the representative of the Perumāḷ, 12 *Kalañcu* to the *Sabha*, the Brahmin body, of Vālicēri and Puḷikkarpurāi, 14 *Kalañcu* to the temple deity and 12 *Kalañcu* to the person in charge (*Aṭuttu kaṇṭu kaṭaviyōn*) of the temple.<sup>53</sup> According to Poṙangāṭṭiri inscription, the Ūrāḷar who violated the temple verdict had to remit 100 *Kalañcu* as fine to the Perumāṇaṭi, 50 *Kalañcu* to the *Āḷkōyil* and 50 *Kalañcu* to the temple deity.<sup>54</sup> As per the decree of the Cembra temple, six *Kalañcu* gold was given to both *Ūr* and *Sabha* and 25 *Kalañcu* to the Perumāḷ.<sup>55</sup> The dominant political position of the Perumāṇaṭi over the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* is evident in the

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<sup>53</sup> Cōkkūr inscription line 53-59. *K.C.A.R.*: 26.

<sup>54</sup> Poṙangāṭṭiri inscription line 21-27. *K.C.A.R.*: 34-35.

<sup>55</sup> Cembra inscription line 43-54. *K.C.A.R.*: 47-48.

Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription that mentions the distribution of the fine amount as follows; 100 *Kaḷaṅcu* gold to Perumāḷ, 50 *Kaḷaṅcu* to the Nanṛuḷanāṭu *Vāḷvavar* or ruler, 25 *Kaḷaṅcu* to the *Vāḷkai Vāḷumavan*, the subordinate ruler under *Nāṭṭutaiyavar*.<sup>56</sup>

*Kōyilatikārikaḷ* as the representative of the Perumāḷ i.e., Cēra ruler, received larger share of fine compared to the *Kōyil* or the local ruler of the *Nāṭu*. Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription mentions that if the *Iṭayīṭu* holder hindered the *Tiruvakkiram*, the Brahmin feast, he had to pay 25 *Kaḷaṅcu* gold as fine, six *Kaḷaṅcu* and two and half *Kāṇam* to the *Nāṭuvāḷumavar*, the chief of the *Nāṭu*.<sup>57</sup>

But some inscriptions refer that the fines should be remitted only to the *Kōyil*, the local ruler. The Trippūṇittuṛa inscription refers to 12 *Kaḷaṅcu* gold to the *Kōyil*.<sup>58</sup> The Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription refers to the equal share of fine to the temple and *Kōyil* of the *Nāṭu*. Accordingly, 12 *Kaḷaṅcu* and five *Kāṇam* had to be remitted as fines to the temple and *Kōyil* of the *Nāṭu*.<sup>59</sup> Those who hindered to submit ghee for the *Vriścikaviḷakku*, the ritual lamp in the Malayalam month *Vriścika*, had to remit 10 *Kāṇam* as fine to the *Kōyil* of the *Nāṭu*.<sup>60</sup> Another set of inscription from this temple mentions about six *Kaḷaṅcu* gold as fine to the *Nāṭuvāḷumavar*.<sup>61</sup>

The above discussion on the distribution of fine reveals the political hierarchy of the ruling powers. It shows the superior power of the Perumāḷ over the *Nāṭu* and other power holding centers related to the temple like *Sabha* and

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<sup>56</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription-7. *K.C.A.R*: 98-99.

<sup>57</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription-2 line 2-3. *K.C.A.R*: 65.

<sup>58</sup> Trippūṇittuṛa inscription line 9-12. *K.C.A.R*: 36.

<sup>59</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription-1-part VI line 1-5. *K.C.A.R*: 64.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>61</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription-4 line 5. *K.C.A.R*: 67.

*Ūr*. Often Perumāl and *Kōyilatikāri* received the higher share of the fixed fines, probably the double time of the share of the local chiefs, which indirectly demonstrated the superior power of Perumāl over the local *Nāttuṭaiyavar*, *Sabha*, *Ūr* and the temple.

### ***Kōyilatikāri and Āḷ Kōyil***

Some inscriptions mention the presence of *Āḷ Kōyil* and *Kōyilatikāri* as the representative of the Cēra king. In the last phase of the Cēra rule, the king himself appears as the *Kōyilatikāri*. The identity of *Kōyilatikāri* as the representative or the office in charge of the Cēra King at the temple, is evident in the inscription.<sup>62</sup> As per the temple decree of Tirukkoṭittānam, if the *Iṭayītan*, the *Iṭayītu* holder, violated the temple contract he had to pay 25 *Kaḷaṅcu* gold to *Kōyilatikāri*, and 12.5 *Kaḷaṅcu* gold to the *Nāṭuvāḷumavar*.<sup>63</sup> *Kōyilatikāri* appears as the person in charge of engraving and erection of the temple decree. According to the Perunna inscription, the temple committee consisted of *Peruneytal Ūr*, *Paraṭaiyar* and *Potuvāl* decided to give 80 *Kalam* paddy as annual tax or *Aṭṭaikkōḷ* to Nanṟuḷanāṭu and the *Kōyilatikāris* were entrusted to collect it.<sup>64</sup> Certain *Vellūr* *Iravikaṇṇan* and *Kūḷamangalattu Śrīkumāran* *Nārāyaṇan* of Nanṟuḷanāṭu mentioned as the *Kōyilatikāris* who were entrusted to make arrangements for engraving and erecting this temple decree.<sup>65</sup> The Eramam *Cālappuṟam* inscription refers to king Bhāskara Ravi Varman (*Kō Pākkaraniravi Varman*) as the *Kōyilatikāri*.<sup>66</sup> This further indicates that the king himself acted

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<sup>62</sup> Putukkōṭu inscription line 8. *K.C.A.R*: 43; Trikkākkara inscription - 3-part IV line 7-8 *K.C.A.R*: 50; Panthalāyani Kollam inscription-1 side line 9. *K.C.A.R*: 60.

<sup>63</sup> Tirukkoṭittānam inscription-2 line 1-4. *K.C.A.R*: 65.

<sup>64</sup> Perunna inscription-2-part I-V. *K.C.A.R*: 71.

<sup>65</sup> Perunna inscription-2-part IV and V. *K.C.A.R*: 71.

<sup>66</sup> Eramam *Cālappuṟam* inscription line 1-2. *K.C.A.R*: 84.

as *Kōyilatikāri* or *Kōyilatikāri* got an equal status of the Perumāl. Kulaśēkhara *Kōyilatikāri* mentioned in the Perunna inscription received the annual share of the state called *Aṭṭaikkōḷ* and *Arantai*, war tax from the temple land.<sup>67</sup> The Kollam Rāmēśvaram inscription refers to *Irāmar Tiruvaṭi Kōyilatikāri* alias *Kulaśēkhara Cakravartti*.<sup>68</sup> The Pantalāyani Kollam inscription also refers to king Kulaśēkhara as the *Kōyilatikāri* who received *Aṭṭaikkōḷ*.<sup>69</sup> These references have shown that the last mentioned Cēra king Rāma Kulaśēkharan acted as the *Kōyilatikāri* and collected the taxes directly.

*Āḷ Kōyil*<sup>70</sup> was another term appears in the inscription to refer the *Kōyilatikāri* or the representative of the Cēramān or the *Nāṭuvāli*. The *Kōyil* and *Āḷ Kōyil* appears in the Poṅgāṭṭiri inscription as the decision makers along with *Sabhayār*, *Ilaiyār* and *Potuvāḷ*.<sup>71</sup>

The term *Atikāri*<sup>72</sup> shows the presence of state officials in the temple who collected the revenue from the land and redistributed it for the maintenance of the temple affairs. The Trikkākkara inscription refers to the *Atikāris* of the temple who was entrusted to oversee the expenses of the temple and he was responsible to arrange additional paddy if the collected produce was not enough to meet the temple expenses.<sup>73</sup> They had to obey the decree of the temple and had to pay fine for the violation of the same.<sup>74</sup> *Atikārar* appears along with the *Āḷkōyil* in the

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<sup>67</sup> Perunna inscription-3. *K.C.A.R*: 103.

<sup>68</sup> Kollam Rāmēśvaram inscription line 13-17. *K.C.A.R*: 106-107.

<sup>69</sup> Pantalāyani inscription line 1- 12. *K.C.A.R*: 109.

<sup>70</sup> Tiruppaṅgōṭu inscription line 8-9. *K.C.A.R*:32; Cōkkūr inscription line 54. *K.C.A.R*: 26.

<sup>71</sup> Poṅgāṭṭiri inscription line 6-7. *K.C.A.R*: 34-35.

<sup>72</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-2 line 14-15. *K.C.A.R*: 45; Neṭumpuṅam Taḷi inscription-3 line 3. *K.C.A.R*: 62.

<sup>73</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-2 line 14-15. *K.C.A.R*: 45.

<sup>74</sup> Neṭumpuṅam Taḷi inscription-3 line 13-14. *K.C.A.R*: 62.

Panniyankara inscription and the political position of the *Atikārar* seems to be higher than the *Ālkōyil* (*Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*) as they mentioned first in the inscription.<sup>75</sup>

The references about *Kōyilatikāri*, *Āl Kōyil*, *Atikāri* etc. exemplify the existence of the Cēra power over the temple and the annual share was collected by these officials and redistributed it for meeting the temple requirements and substantiate the political supremacy of the king over the temple and in return king seems to have received as hegemonic political status as the benefactor of the temple.

### ***Nāṭus and Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar***

*Nāṭu* was the grouping of agrarian settlements developed from the early historic period and it developed as major political units under the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* during the early medieval period.<sup>76</sup> It is argued that there were fourteen *Nāṭus* as the district or division under Cēramān Perumāl kingdom like Kōlattunāṭu, Puṛakīlānāṭu, Kuṛumpoṛaināṭu, Rāmavaḷanāṭu, Ērāḷanāṭu, Vaḷḷuvanāṭu, Neṭumpuṛayūrnāṭu, Neṭunkalanāṭu, Kāḷkkaraināṭu, Vempalanāṭu, Kīḷmalaināṭu, Muññināṭu, Nanṛūḷaināṭu and Vēṇāṭu.<sup>77</sup>

*Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* were loyal to Cēramān and they are mentioned in many inscriptions as the donors of the land to the temple, which included the wet, garden and homesteads. The political power of the *Nāṭus* varied according to the nature of resource capacity, the volume of multi-crop agrarian areas and in certain extends the control over the coastal exchange zones. Such *Nāṭus* were recognized

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<sup>75</sup> Panniyankara inscription line 3-4. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op.cit.* 1971.p. 126. *K.C.A.R*: 89.

<sup>76</sup> K.N. Ganesh. *Keralathinte Innalekal*. Thiruvananthapuram: The State Institutes of Languages, (1990) 2011. pp. 22-45.

<sup>77</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* (1996) 2013. pp. 177-204. See Fig. 4 of the chapter 1 of the present thesis.

as the important political powers and were placed as the chief witnesses of certain important contracts or grants of the Cēramān. For example, the, *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* of Vēṇāṭu, Veṅpolināṭu, Ērālanāṭu, Vaḷḷuvanāṭu and Neṭumpurāiyūrṇāṭu, have appeared as the witnesses, who were knowing the grants of the Cēra King Bhāskara Iravi to the *Añcuvanṇam* merchant corporations at Muyirikkōṭu or Koṭungallūr in 1000 AD.<sup>78</sup> The absence of the name of Kōlattunāṭu in the Cēra inscriptions, is conspicuous. The term Kōlattunāṭu was not in use during the time of Cēras and the area of this *Nāṭu* was under the sway of Mūṣakās, who must have accepted the Cēra suzerainty during the time of Bhaskara Ravi in 11<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>79</sup> The name Kōlattunāṭu, to mention a political territory, appears in the 12<sup>th</sup> century Peruñcellūr inscription.<sup>80</sup> Earlier it was part of the region of Mūṣakās.

Vēṇāṭu got a higher status in the Cēra period. The Vēṇāṭu ruler Ayyanaṭikaḷ appears in the Tarisāppalli copper plate as the donor of various grants including land and other important privileges to the merchant corporations like *Maṇigrāmam* and *Añcuvanṇam* and they were exempted from various taxes<sup>81</sup> that prevailed in Vēṇāṭu.<sup>82</sup> This grant must have enabled the Vāṇāṭu ruler to

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<sup>78</sup> Jewish Copper Plate line 23-25. *K.C.A.R.*: 72-73.

<sup>79</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* pp. 12-13.

<sup>80</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. “Perumchellur Chepped, Kollam 321, Kanni 21 (1145 September 22)”, *AdhAram: A journal for Kerala Archaeology and History* Vol 1, Kottayam: Kerala Puratatva Samiti MG University, 2006. pp 75-82; Kesavan Veluthat. “A copper plate inscription from Perumchellur, North Kerala, India: AD 1145,” *Indian History Congress 69<sup>th</sup> session souvenir*. Kannur University: Organizing committee IHC, 2008, pp 13-18; Kesavan Veluthat. *Brahman Settlementsin Kerala*. Thissur: Cosmobooks, 2013. pp165-80.

<sup>81</sup> Tarisappalli Copper plate. *T.A.S.*Vol. II & III. pp. 60-86. M.R. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Tarisāppallippattayam*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Samgham, (2013), 2015.

<sup>82</sup> The revenue term appeared in the Tarisāppalli copper plate must have prevailed in Vēṇāṭu and it may not be of the Cērās.

enrich their economic and political position probably through trade. The King Bhāskara Ravi had given additional charge to the Vēṇāṭu ruler Kōvardhana Mārttāṅṭan on Nanṛulanāṭu, the neighboring *Nāṭu* of Vēṇāṭu.<sup>83</sup> Vēṇāṭṭaikaḷ submitted five *Kaḷaṅcu* gold as annual share or *Aṭṭaikkōḷ* to the Kuḷattūr temple in the northern Kerala during the reign of Bhāskara Ravi and this temple decree was engraved by the Kuṛumbranāṭu ruler Kuñjikkōta Varman alias Kuṛumpuṛai, the *Nāṭuvāḷi* of the temple area.<sup>84</sup> All these have hinted at the eminence of the Vēṇāṭu in the early medieval polity.<sup>85</sup>

The Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription refers to the grant of Ugramangalam and Īsānamangalam, the two Brahmin households, at the presence of the Venṇolināṭu Uṭaiya Kōtai Iravi during the reign of the Cēra king Kōkōtai Iravi (883-913 AD).<sup>86</sup> Iravi Cirikaṅṭan also appears as the *Nāṭuvāḷi* of Venṇolināṭu.<sup>87</sup> The *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* was responsible to maintain the temple routine along with the *Taḷiyār* and *Atikāri*, probably the revenue official of the Cēramān had to pay 12 *Kāṇam* gold if the temple ritual hindered due to his actions and 25 *Kaḷaṅcu* gold had to pay by the *Taḷiyār* and *Atikāri* if they hindered the temple routine.<sup>88</sup> The amount of fine signified to the political rank of the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* which was above the temple officials, mainly the Brahmin and at the same time he was placed under the Cēramān's power and also loyal to the Cēramān. Irāman Kōta

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<sup>83</sup> Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription- 3 line1-4. *K.C.A.R:*65; Perunna inscription-1 *K.C.A.R:* 67; Tirukkaṭṭānam inscription- 5. *K.C.A.R:* 68.

<sup>84</sup> Kuḷattūr inscription line 1-19. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* p.119.

<sup>85</sup> It is argued that the powerful Travancore state of 18<sup>th</sup> century AD emerged from the early medieval Vēṇāṭu. K N Ganesh. *Reflection on Pre-Modern Kerala*. Thrissur: Cosmo Books, 2016. pp 46-71.

<sup>86</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-1 line 1-5. *K.C.A.R:*28-30.

<sup>87</sup> Tiruvalla Copper plate 7 side 2. *K.C.A.R:*247-48.

<sup>88</sup> Neṭumpuṛam Taḷi inscription-1 line 1-3, 31-40. *K.C.A.R:* 28-30.

Varman and Irāman Mātēvi appeared as the *Utaiyvar* of Muññināṭu.<sup>89</sup> Certain Kaṇṭan Kumaran alias Māḷuvakkōn appeared as the *Uṭaiya* or chief of the Kīḷumalai and Neṭumpalanāṭu who made offerings to the Tiruvalla temple.<sup>90</sup>

The *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* of Nanṛuḷanāṭu, along with the *Munnūrruvar* appears in the Tirumaṇṭūr inscription.<sup>91</sup> Pāliyattu Kaṇṇan Kaṇṭan appeared as the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* of Rāmavaḷanāṭu.<sup>92</sup> Kaṇṇampurāyan, the *Uṭaiya* (*Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*) of Kāḷkkaraināṭu occurs in the Trikkākkara inscription.<sup>93</sup> Maṇalmanṛattu Iyakkan mentioned as the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* of the Neṭumpurāiyūrṇāṭu.<sup>94</sup> Both Neṭumpurāiyūrṇāṭu and Kāḷkkaraināṭu refers to another set of Trikkākkara inscription during the reign of king Bhāskara Ravi and accordingly the rulers of these *nāṭus* were entrusted to receive ghee for the temple. This performance seems to have signified a ceremonial position of the *Nāṭuvālis* in the temple that hegemonise their power over the *nāṭu* as well. The Tirunelli temple received land grants from two dominant *nāṭus* namely Kuṛumpuraināṭu and Puṛaikīḷānāṭu. The Kuṛumpuraināṭu Aṭikal Vīrakuṛumpurāyār Tiruvaṭi,<sup>95</sup> who belonged to the senior matrilineal lineage (*Mūttakūru*) granted the Kīḷkāṭṭiypōḷa *Cērikkal* land to the Tirunelli temple with the presence of *Eḷunnūrruvar* (seven hundred-martial group) of *Mūttakūru*, *Paṇiyuṭaiya Nāyan* (royal official), *Ūr*, *Ūriṭavakai*

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<sup>89</sup> Tiruvalla Copper Plate 37 side 2. *K.C.A.R.*: 290-91.

<sup>90</sup> Tiruvalla copper plate 25 side 1&2 line 351-357. *K.C.A.R.*: 272-73

<sup>91</sup> Tirumaṇṭūr inscription -3 line 2. *K.C.A.R.*: 43.

<sup>92</sup> Tirumaṇṭūr inscription. *Index*. No A 62: 465.

<sup>93</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-3 part I, II, IV. *K.C.A.R.*: 49-51; Trikkākkara inscription-4. *K.C.A.R.*:54.

<sup>94</sup> Neṭumpuram Taḷi inscription-2 line 3. *K.C.A.R.*: 53-54.

<sup>95</sup> This part of the inscription eulogizes the king as a courageous ruler, a kind of *praśasti*. It is interesting to note that such salutation is absent in the case of Bhāskara Ravi who is mentioned as *Kō Śrī Pārkarān Iravivarman Tiruvaṭi*. Tirunelli Inscription-1line 1, 5-6. *K.C.A.R.*:75.



*Vellālarum* (the peasants or tenants of the *Ūr*) and the *Nilal* (body guard), *Paṇi* (workers), *Nāṭu* (ruling territory), *Iṭavaka* (lineage faction) and *Prakriti* (martial group) assigned to the *Mūttakūru*, the senior lineage. Another set of inscriptions from Tirunelli temple refers to the grant of the *Mūttakūru* of Puṛakīlānāṭu with the presence of *Nilal* and *Paṇi*.<sup>96</sup>

Though the inscriptions are silent about the succession pattern of Cēra kings, they give clear signs on the succession line of the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars*. The Tirunelli inscription gives clarity about the structure of Kuṛumbranāṭu and ruling family who followed the *Kūruvāḷca*, polity based on the matrilineal lineage succession where the senior most male member became the head of the *Nāṭu*. This practice can be seen in the case of Mūṣikas mentioned in the *Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* and it is argued that the Mūṣakas had *Kūruvāḷca* and followed the *Mūppumura*.<sup>97</sup> The presence of the Tekkinkūru of the Vempolināṭu or Venṭpalanāṭu in the Tiruvalla copper plate also indicate the practice of *Kūruvāḷca* in the southern part of Kerala.<sup>98</sup> Thus it can be assumed that the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* of the early medieval *Nāṭus* followed the matrilineal succession pattern from the early medieval period.

### ***Ūr, Ūruṭaiya, Ūrpati, Ūran***

*Ūr* was the agrarian settlement, from the Iron Age and early historic period onwards, consisted many *Kuṭis* of various occupational groups functioned under a chief. Like *Nāṭṭuṭaiya* of the *Nāṭu*, *Ūruṭaiya* also mentioned in the inscription.<sup>99</sup> They were the chiefs of the agrarian settlements within the *Nāṭu*. They appeared

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<sup>96</sup> Tirunelli inscription-2 line 5-7. *K.C.A.R*:78.

<sup>97</sup> K.P. Rajesh. *Vatakkal Malabar Samuhavum Charithravum*. Kottayam: Sahitya Pravarthaka Cooperative Society, 2014. pp. 62-65.

<sup>98</sup> Tiruvalla copper plate 25 side 1 line 351-354. *K.C.A.R*:272-73.

<sup>99</sup> “Kunṛiyūruṭaiya” Trikkākkara inscription-3-part V line 9. *K.C.A.R*: 51.

as the witnesses of the temple deeds. *Ūrpatīs* were another term for the chief of the *Ūr*.<sup>100</sup> *Ūran* was another term that denoted the chief of the agrarian settlement.<sup>101</sup> Many *Ūrans* of Kālkkaraināṭu are referred in Trikkākkara inscription as witnesses of the land grants of Kālkkaraināṭu *Uṭaiyvar* like Ūrankōtai kōtai, Ūran Uṇṇiccirikaṇṭan, Ūran Kumaran Cirikaṇṭan and Ūran Pōlanārāyaṇan.<sup>102</sup> The presence of these Ūrans as witnesses of the deeds related to grant of Kālkkaraināṭu *Uṭaiyvar* have revealed their authoritative power in the *Nāṭu* and also their political linkage with the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*. The *Ūrāḷars* were the proprietors of the temple lands only and it was different from the above mentioned terms, and cannot be considered as the powerful land owners during the early medieval period. The *Ūrāḷars* were under the strict control of the state and the temple body as well.<sup>103</sup>

### ***Household Titles***

The occurrence of the personal name with their household name as the witnesses in the inscription must have shown the development of intermediary landholding section and their considerable involvement in the contemporary political system.

Most of the personal name with households were occurred as the witnesses of the temple document and some others as the donors of the grant and person in charge of the execution of the document (Table 3.)

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<sup>100</sup> “Ivvi raṇṭu Ūrilumuḷḷa patiyēyum” Airāṇikkaḷam inscription line 6. *K.C.A.R.*: 22.

<sup>101</sup> *Ūran* seems to be the most archaic term occurs in the early *Sangam* literature to denote the chief of the *Ūr*. Nenmara P. Viswanathan Nair (Tr.). *Akanānūru*, Vol. I. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, 1981. *song* 14 line 21; V.R. Parameswaran Pillai (Tr.). *Puṇānānūru*. Thrissur: Kerala Sahitya Academy, (1969) 1997. *Song* 49

<sup>102</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-3-part IV line 10, VI line 1-7 *K.C.A.R.*: 50-51.

<sup>103</sup> They seem to have become powerful only after the decline of the Cēramān power, which will be discussed in the concluding part of the present work.

**Table. 3 - List of households appears in the inscriptions**

SL No	Name with household title	Inscription
1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mailāyanpaḷḷi(kka)ṭampa Nārāyaṇan</li> <li>2. Kārimukkil Kōtai</li> <li>3. Vempaḷa Manen</li> <li>4. Malimankalattu Kaṇṭantāyan</li> <li>5. Kāyamarrattu Kaṇṭa Nārāyaṇankaṇṇan</li> <li>6. Vaikaṇṇi Nārāyaṇan</li> <li>7. Kānūr Caṅkara Nārāyaṇan</li> </ol>	Aviṭṭattūr. <sup>104</sup>
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cālaiparampil Nārāyaṇan Kaṇṭan</li> <li>2. Mēnmanaiṇṇattu Kaṇṭan Cinganāyina (Cingan alias) Kaliyēri</li> <li>3. Kuṇṇantariyanāyina (alias) Atikāran</li> <li>4. Kalituṭṭam Vijayanāyina (alias) Paṭai Ulpāṭar</li> <li>5. Vēḷkkōṭṭu Perumtaccan</li> </ol>	Cembra. <sup>105</sup>
3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Aṭṭāṇikōṭṭattu Tēvancāttan</li> <li>2. Iḷanturutti Kēraḷa Nārāyaṇan</li> <li>3. Peruntōṭṭattu Kaṇṭa Nārāyaṇan</li> <li>4. Paṇṇamputai Kēraḷancirikumāran (Śrīkumāran)</li> <li>5. Kuppe Vāḷkai Kaṇṭa Nārāyaṇan</li> <li>6. Paṇṇamputaiya Kumāra Nārāyaṇan</li> <li>7. Ciriyan Koṭṭiravi Vātutēvan (Vāsudēvan)</li> <li>8. Paṇṇitturutti Kaṇṇampōḷan</li> <li>9. Veṇṭalamaṇa Kaṇṇankumaran</li> </ol>	Trikkākkara-3. <sup>106</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Aviṭṭattūr inscription line 23-26. *K.C.A.R.*:30-32.

<sup>105</sup> Cembra inscription line 63-81. M.R. Raghava Varier. *Op. cit.* pp. 98-99.

<sup>106</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-3-part V –VI. *K.C.A.R.*: 49-51.

	<p>10. Kīlakattu Korrapurāyan  11. Kunṛiyūruṭaiya Kaṇṭampurāyan  12. Ūran Kōttan Kōtai  13. ....Iravi Kōtai  14. Kulacēkarapaṭṭinattu Mārānkōvintan  15. Ūran Uṇṇi Cirikaṇṭan  16. Ūran Kumaran Cirikaṇṭan  17. Ūran Pōlan Nārāyaṇan  18. Veḷḷiyān Paḷli Pōla Cāttan  19. Pullippaḷli Caṅkaran Kumaran  20. Kammankōṭṭu Iravi Kunṛappōlan (writer)</p>	
4	<p>1. Malaippuṛattu Tēvantēvan  2. Perumanaikkōṭṭattu Kēcavan Caṅkaran  3. Kulacēkarapaṭṭinattu Pōla Nārāyaṇan  4. Ūran Pōla Cirikaṇṭan  5. Veḷḷiyān Paḷli Pōla Cāttan  6. Malaiyippaḷliyil Kumaran  7. Kumarankōṭṭu Iravi Kunṛappōlan (writer)</p>	Trikkākkara -4. <sup>107</sup>
5	<p>1. Paḷlippuṛattu Tanivi  2. Mēṅṛalai Nārāyaṇan Tuppiramaṇiyan  3. Koṛappaṛambil Caṅkarankaṇṭan  4. Mēṅṛalai ppāṇṭa Nārāyaṇan  5. Kulacēkarapaṭṭinattu Kumaran Cirikaṇṭan and  Kumaran Kuṭṭan  6. Perumanaikkoṭṭattu Kēcavan Caṅkaran</p>	Trikkākkara -5. <sup>108</sup>
6	<p>1. Vallattu Pōla Nārāyaṇan</p>	Trikkākkara -6. <sup>109</sup>

<sup>107</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-4-part V-VI. *K.C.A.R.*: 54.

<sup>108</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-5-part IV-V. *K.C.A.R.*: 58.

<sup>109</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-6 part VII-VIII. *K.C.A.R.*: 61

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Paḷli.....Kōkkōtai</li> <li>3. Paṭaiyoḷukkan cīla Nārāyaṇankaṇṇan</li> <li>4. Veḷḷiyān Paḷliccāttan Kumaran</li> <li>5. Neṭuṅkolliyiḷ Kāḷan Gōvintan</li> </ol>	
7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ceṟumarrappuḷai Kaṇṇamangalattinmēḷ Nakkaniravi and Āticcaniravi (donors of paddy)</li> <li>2. Puttilattu Nārāyaṇan Tēvan (donors of paddy)</li> <li>3. Maṇṇatti Cuvantuppan</li> <li>4. Perumanaikkoṭṭattu Cangarantāmōtaran</li> <li>5. Māṅgāṭṭu Nārāyaṇan Kaṇṇan</li> <li>6. Nakavarēri Puṟaiyan Cēnnan</li> <li>7. Kuḷikkāla Iravi Kōtai</li> <li>8. Ceṟumarrappuḷai Kōtai Ayyan, Kōtai Nārāyaṇan and Kōtai Kēraḷan</li> <li>9. Vēṇāṭṭu Iravi Kumaran (writer)</li> </ol>	Trikkākkara -7. <sup>110</sup>
8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mākkappaḷḷi Tuppan Patmanāpan</li> <li>2. Neytalmangalattu Keyavantēvan</li> <li>3. Perumutiyan Kōtai Nārāyaṇan</li> </ol>	Trikkākkara -8. <sup>111</sup>
9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Āṟūr Kuṇṇivikkiran alias Atikāran</li> <li>2. Amaiyamaṅgalattu Yakkan Cāttan alias Paṭaiyuḷtan</li> <li>3. Kiḷiyārru Tūlavilli Ayyan</li> <li>4. Kāyumaṇmāyinan Kaṇṇan</li> <li>5. Maṅgāṭṭu Kaṇṇan Kēriḷan</li> <li>6. Kaṇṇanūr Irāman Kuṇṇi</li> </ol>	Tirunelli-1. <sup>112</sup>
10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Malaiyampaḷḷi Āriyaṅkuṭṭan</li> </ol>	Tirunelli -2. <sup>113</sup>

<sup>110</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-7 part VII-VIII. *K.C.A.R.*: 69.

<sup>111</sup> Trikkākkara inscription-8 line 8-12. *K.C.A.R.*: 70.

<sup>112</sup> Tirunelli inscription-1 line 20-29. *K.C.A.R.*: 75-77.

<sup>113</sup> Tirunelli inscription-2 line 29-30. *K.C.A.R.*: 79.

11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Neytalmangalattu Kēcavañkōvintan</li> <li>2. Perumanaikkāṭṭu Kēyavan</li> <li>3. ...pāṭi Nārāyaṇan</li> <li>4. Kāṭṭakaṭava...Kōvinnan, Kaṇṇancēnan</li> </ol>	Trikkākkara-10 <sup>114</sup>
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As the *Atikāran* appears with the local household title in the Cembra inscription, it can be assumed that one of the prominent landed households associated with the temple was entrusted as representative of the Cēra king. The Trikkākkara inscription gives insight on the existence of the landed households belonged to both Brahmanic and Jain or Buddhist traditions. The personal names mentioned above must have indicated the influence of the Vaiṣṇava or Śaiva bhakti traditions. The names like Nārāyaṇan, Śrīkaṇṭan, Vāsudēvan, Kēśavan, Vāsudēvan, etc. apparently shows the influence of Vaiṣṇava tradition and the names like Ravi, Śankaran, Tēvan etc. shows the prominence of Śaiva tradition in the contemporary society. The embracing of these names was part of the early medieval polity through which the landed households and ruling powers elevate their political position to the ritual status equal to the Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava deities. The terms like *Cāttan*, *Yakkan* the term *Paḷli*, *Paṭṭinam* etc. in the household name must have shown their Jain or Buddhist traditions. This shows the gradual shift of the temple tradition of Trikkākkara from Jain to, mainly, the Vaiṣṇava tradition with the support of ruling Cēra power. Similar examples can be seen in the case of Tirunelli temple where the term like Amaiyamangalattu Yakkan Cāttan, probably indicate the influence Jain tradition. The appearance of Amaiyamangalattu, probably indicate the Brahmin household, Yakkan Cāttan as the martial head in the inscription again seems to have shown the appropriation

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<sup>114</sup> Trikkākkara inscription part II- III. *K.C.A.R.*: 85.

of a Jain into the Brahmanic tradition. The Kinālūr inscription has evidently proven the Jain connection of the Kuṟumbranāṭu ruler Arappan Kuñji who made offerings to the Jain temple (1083 AD)<sup>115</sup> which later incorporated to the Brahmanic tradition. The Tiruvaṅṅūr inscription clearly refers to the institutionalization of the Brahmanic tradition over the Jain through the cancellation of a new gold levy introduced by Kaṇaiyapallī Yakkan Cellan, probably a person with Jain connection and the placing of the *Brahmaswam* and *Dēvaswam* as *Kīlīṭu* to the temple.<sup>116</sup> However, the presence of the persons with the names with Śaiva Vaiṣṇava traditions in the temple inscription especially during the reign of Kōta Ravi, Indu Kōta and Bhāskara Ravi Varman indicate the expansion of the brahmanic power holding over the temple.

### **Polity and Trade centres**

The economic prosperity of the ruling powers of Kerala was closely associated with their direct or indirect involvement in the trade especially in the coastal based overseas exchanges. The second chapter of this work has shown that the role of the exchange relations of the early Cēra period to the Mediterranean and West Asian world. Apart from the early historic period, for which we have evidences like archaeological, indigenous and foreign literary accounts and coins, the early medieval period furnishes a few epigraphs that mention the grants to the merchants for the establishment of trade centres like

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<sup>115</sup> *Index* No B 23: 484

<sup>116</sup> *Index* No A 62: 465.

Tarisāppalli copper plate,<sup>117</sup> Jewish Copper plate,<sup>118</sup> and Tālakkāṭu inscription.<sup>119</sup> None of these inscriptions connected with the temple. The temples had no active involvement in the trade, but, as the early medieval merchant corporations like *Maṇigrāmam*, *Nānādēśikal*, *Vaḷaṅciyar* etc. are mentioned in some inscriptions, the temples must have linked with the internal exchange networks.

There are indications on the direct involvement of *Nāṭuvālis* on the establishment of trading centre and the political promotion of trade. The Tarisāppalli copper plate is one of the earliest early medieval documents that provide direct indication on the political involvement in the establishment of a trading centre with the grant of lands and other privileges to the leading trading guilds like *Añcuvāṇṇam* and *Maṇigrāmam*. The Vēnāṭu ruler Ayyanaṭikal Tiruvaṭikal granted land to Maruvān Sapīr Īso, the head of the merchant guild *Añcuvāṇṇam* and *Maṇigrāmam*, during the auspicious reign of the Second Cēa ruler Sthāṇu Ravi (849 AD) with the presence of *Atikārar* (royal representative or in charge of revenue matters) and *Pirakiriti* or *Ṙrakṛiti* (royal guard), the members of the merchant corporations like *Añcuvāṇṇam*, *Maṇigrāmam* and the *Punnaittala Pati* (local chief of the Punnaittala).<sup>120</sup> The land and other privileges were granted to the Tarisa church at Kurakkēṇi Kollam, the place that developed as the most important trading port town of early medieval and medieval Kerala. The nature of grants, through which the *Añcuvāṇṇam* and *Maṇigrāmam* got

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<sup>117</sup> Tarisāppalli Copper Plate. *T.A.S.* Vol. II-III: 60-86; *Index* No A 2, 6: 435-36, 437; Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.*

<sup>118</sup> Jewish Copper Plate. *Index* No A 34: 451-452; M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* 1972. pp.79-82. *K.C.A.R.*: 72-73.

<sup>119</sup> Tālakkāṭu inscription. *Index* No A 54: 462; *K.C.A.R.*: 92.

<sup>120</sup> Tarisāppalli Copper Plate. *T.A.S.* Vol. II-III: 60-86. *Index* No A 2, 6: 435-436, 437. Raghava Varier and Kesavan Veluthat. *Op. cit.* pp. 109-113.



autonomy over the trade and exempted from the various taxes, indicate the possibilities of the happening of negotiations between the ruling power and the merchant corporations. The association of Vēṇāṭu with these trade corporation was the one of the reasons for their political prominence during the early medieval period. *Añcuvāṇṇam* was a West Asian merchant guild actively involved in the Indian Ocean trade and *Maṇigrāmam* was active in the hinterland and oceanic trade.<sup>121</sup> It was a political decision to uphold the economic as well as the political power of Vēṇāṭu through the prosperous trade of Kurakkēṇi Kollam.

The same action can be seen in the case of Kodungallūr, the political hub of the second Cēra power. The King Bhāskara Ravi made grant to *Añcuvāṇṇam* guild to establish a trade settlement at Muyirikkōṭu, the present Kodungallūr, in 1000 AD, only 151 years after the Tarisāppalli grant. It is interesting to note that the *Nāṭuvālis* of Vēṇāṭu took initiative to promote the trade guilds at Kollam even one and half centuries before the initiative of a Cēra ruler at Muyirikkōṭu. Śrī Rāja Simhan, the immediate successor of Bhāskara Ravi Varman, also granted land and offerings to establish the trading shops at Tālakkāṭu, a place near Iringālakkūṭa.<sup>122</sup>

*Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* of the Mūṣaka ruling family of Kōlattunāṭu also took initiative to prop up the trade at Mādāyi and Vaḷapaṭṭaṇam. According to the *Kāvya*, Vallabha II, a 11<sup>th</sup> century AD Mūṣaka ruler, established these two cities and subsequently their ruling headquarters shifted to Vaḷapaṭṭaṇam. The

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<sup>121</sup> Y. Subbarayalu. “Trade guilds of South India upto the tenth century” in *Studies in People’s History, special issue on Trade and Merchants in Indian History*, Volume 2, Issue 1. New Delhi: Sage Publication, June 2015. pp 21-26.

<sup>122</sup> Tālakkāṭu inscription. *Index* No A 54: 462; *K.C.A.R*: 92.

*Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya* of 11<sup>th</sup> century AD refers to the establishment of the trading centers like Mārāhi (Mādāyi) and Vallabhapaṭṭanam (Vaḷapaṭṭanam) by the Mūṣaka ruler Vallabha II, the elder brother of Śrīkaṇṭan who was mentioned as the last Mūṣaka ruler in the *Kāvya* and also the patron of Atulan, the author of the *Kāvya*.<sup>123</sup> Śrīkaṇṭan is mentioned in Eramam Cālappuṛam inscription (1020 AD) as Kaṇṭan Kāri Varma who accepted the suzerain of the Cēra ruler Bhāskara Ravi Varman during 11<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>124</sup> An inscription dated 929 AD from the Narayan Kaṇṇūr temple in the Mūṣaka territory (later Kōlattunāṭu) mentioned the *Maṇigrāmam* as the guardian of the temple and also the most favourite group of the Junior Mūṣaka prince.<sup>125</sup> This inscription shows that, like Vēṇāṭu in the South, the Mūṣakas in the North must have given more privileges to the *Maṇigrāmam* merchant groups to establish their trade settlements. We don't know whether the king established these trading centres or incorporate the prosperous trading centres into the political arena of the Mūṣaka lineage. The recent archaeological investigations undertaken by a team of researchers at the laterite plateau of Mādāyi (Mādāyipāra) and the discovery of the ceramic pieces of the Turquoise Glazed Wares indicate the presence of West Asian merchants in the region. It is argued that these potteries belonged to 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> T.A. Gopinatha Rao. *Travancore Archaeological Series*. Vol. II. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Cultural Publication Government of Kerala, 1920 (1992). pp. 87-113; K. Raghava Pilla. *Mūṣakavamśam*, (Sanskrit –English translation) Trivandrum: Department of Publications Kerala University, 1977. (Hereafter *M.V.K- Canto: Sloga*) *M.V.K-14*: 66-67.

<sup>124</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan identified Kaṇṭan Kāri Varman with the Śrīkaṇṭan of the *Mūṣakavamśakāvya*. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op. cit.* 1971. pp 98-99. Eramam Cālappuṛam inscription. *Ibid.* pp 84-85.

<sup>125</sup> “*Ṇamkōyilanpu Maṇikkirāmattār.*” Narayan Kaṇṇūr inscription line 37-38. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op.cit.* 1971. pp. 98-99. Index B 3: 475-76.

<sup>126</sup> The expert view is cited in K.P. Rajesh. *Op. cit.* 2011. p 194.

The ancient artificial pond of Mādāyi named *Jūtakkulam* (Jewish pond) is also a signifier to the historical existence of West Asian settlement at Mādāyi. The continuity of the merchant guilds like *Añcuvaṇṇam* and *Maṇigrāmam* in the northern part of Kerala up to 14<sup>th</sup> century AD is evident in *Payyannūr Pāṭṭu*,<sup>127</sup> a fourteenth century AD folk songs related to trading communities.<sup>128</sup> These evidences have shown that the *Maṇigrāmam* merchants were active in the region with the consent and favour of the ruling power in the region of Mūṣakās from the beginning of 10<sup>th</sup> century AD and continued till 14<sup>th</sup> century AD. However, the *Maṇigrāmam* guild must have placed in northern part of Kerala by the end of 10<sup>th</sup> century and got prominence at the time of Bhāskara Ravi in the 11<sup>th</sup> century AD. Similarly, the Eramam Cālappuṛam inscription refers to *Nānādēśikaḷ* and *Vaḷaṅciyar* merchant guilds that facilitated the trade relation between Mūṣakas and the Cōḷa country.<sup>129</sup> Similarly, the Ēraṇāṭu rulers shifted their headquarters to Calicut from the remote area Neṭiyirippu, near present Kondōṭṭy of Malappuram district during medieval period.

However, all these evidences indicate the importance of the development of internal and external trade in the early medieval and medieval political consolidation in Kerala. Thus the origin of state is associated with the ruling power's ownership right over the cultivated multi-crop agrarian units centered around the temple and subsequently the economic prosperity of the state determined its association with the prosperous trading centres either through the

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<sup>127</sup> P. Antony (ed.). *Payyannūr Pāṭṭu: Pāṭhavum Paṭhanangaḷum*. Kottayam: D.C. Books.1994. song No.92

<sup>128</sup> K.P. Rajesh. "Payyannūr Pāṭṭum Uttarakēraḷattile Ulpadana Vitarāṇa Vyavastayam," *Vijñānakairali*. Vol.39 Issue 12 Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Bhasha Institute, 2008 December.pp. 61-69.

<sup>129</sup> Eramam Cālappuṛam inscription. M.G.S. Narayanan. *Op.cit.* 1971. pp. 84-85.

political control over it or through incorporating the trading centres to the political power of the kingdom.

### **Structure of early medieval polities**

It is not easy to make a conclusion regarding the structure of Cēra power owing to the absence of solid historical evidences. *Kēraḷōlpatti*, as it was created by the post Perumāḷ rulers especially the major powers like Zamorins, Kōlattiri and Kochi, cannot be considered as major source material for the reproduction of Cēra polity. The post Cēra rulers use the Cēramān myth of the *Kēraḷōlpatti* to substantiate their ancestry from the Cēra period and claimed a political status as their feudatory. This text must have helped them to find a political justification for their rule over the *Nāṭu*. The available epigraphs do not give hints at the extension of the Cēra rule. Based on the discovery of the inscriptions that refers to the regnal year of the Cēra king, it is argued that their power extended from Kōlattunāṭu to Vēṇāṭu, which covered the entire part of the present Kerala state from Kasaragod to Thiruvananthapuram.<sup>130</sup> But the available epigraphs are not enough to attribute the status of a pan Kerala ruler to the Cēra.

However, the above discussion reveals the supremacy of the Cēra rulers as Perumāḷ, the greatest political person, over the temple. But there are scanty details available regarding the structure of the Cēra power from the inscriptions. It has been stated that the Cēra had a capital at Mahōdayapuram, near the present Tiruvañcikkaḷam temple, and a council of ministers called *Nālu Taḷi*.<sup>131</sup> But no compact archaeological remnants of the capital so far discovered. The existence

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<sup>130</sup> M.G.S. Narayanan. (1996) 2013. *Op.cit.* pp. 177-204.

<sup>131</sup> Perunna inscription line 10-12. *Index* No A 68: 468; *K.C.A.R.*:103. Kollam Rāmēśvaram line 43-44. *Index* No A 71: 469-470; *K.C.A.R.*: 106-107. Trikkulaśēkharapuram *Index* No C 32:496.

of the council throughout the period of the Cēra power from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century AD is doubtful.<sup>132</sup> *Nālu Taḷi* could be a dominant Brahmin body and probably the higher authority than the early *Mūlikkaḷam* settlement or *Sabha*. It is interesting to note that in the post Perumāḷ period only *Nālu Taḷi*, *Sabha* and *Yōgam*, (*Yōgam* was absent in the Perumāḷ period), got prominence and the importance of *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* weakened. The *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam* was not mentioned in the inscriptions after the reign of Bhāskara Ravi in 1021 AD and the *Nālu Taḷi* did not appear before 12<sup>th</sup> century AD inscriptions. The Perunna inscription of the last Cēra ruler Rāma Kulaśēkhara refers to the meeting of the *Nālu Taḷi* and the king to cancel the claim of the King over the *Aṭṭaikkōḷ* and *Araṅtai* and same was informed to the Kuṭipatis. Similarly, the Kollam Rāmēśwaram inscription clearly refers to the presence of *Nālu Taḷi* with the *Sāmantās* or feudatories. These references seem to have indicated the growing importance of feudatories and the ritualistic control of the *Nālu Taḷi* over the feudatories during the first decade of 11<sup>th</sup> century AD. This could be an indication on the decline of the supremacy of the Cēra as the Perumāḷ over the temples and the growing power of the Brahmanic body like *Nālu Taḷi*. The Kollam Rāmēśwaram inscription mentions the atonement of King Rāma Kulaśēkhara for the offence against the *Āriya Brahmin* at the presence of *Nālu Taḷi* and feudatories. He donated paddy for daily feeding of the Brahmins and leasing out the *Cērikkal* land for this purpose to Kumaran Uṭaiya Varman of Vēṇāṭu.

The confrontation between the ruling powers and the consequent practice of atonement of the king for the offence against the Brahmins occurred in the

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<sup>132</sup> Manu V. Devdevan. *Op.cit.* p. 54

post Perumāḷ medieval polity. Thus, this could be considered as a sign of the change occurred in the early medieval political structure and the growth of the Brahmin settlements as *Sankētam* over the medieval political structures like *Swarūpam*. The decline of the support from the ritualistic authorities, the brahmins, to the political powers seems to be one major reason for the decline of the Cēra power.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, majority of the land grants were made by the *Nāṭṭutaiyavar*, landed households etc. The occurrence of the Perumāḷ's regnal year in the beginning part indicate that the *Nāṭuvālis* were accepting the suzerainty of the dominant Cera power who were the major followers of Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva bhakti and thus they themselves claimed as the followers of the Cēramān. The acceptance of the *Mūlikkaḷam Kaccam*, the agreement clauses of the dominant Brahmin settlement who must have enjoyed the patronage of the Cēra rulers, also indicate the incorporation of the hegemony of the Cēra power to the political status of the *Nāṭuvālis* or the landed households. According to the inscriptions, probably, the only kind of tax collected for Perumāḷ from the temple land was *Aṭṭaikkōḷ* or *Rakṣābhōgam*. It was consumed for maintaining the temple rituals and no information about the transfer of these taxes to the capital of the Cēra power. The *Kōyilatikāris* or *Atikāris* or temple committees had to oversee the collection and redistribution of the *Aṭṭaikkōḷ* or *Rakṣābhōgam* for the maintenance of the temple routines.

In short, the above-discussion shows two process in the political structure of early medieval period.

1. The expansion of the Cēramān's political power through the claim of the suzerainty over the temple through which they might have acted as the ultimate political power of early medieval Kerala. They had political control

over the Nāṭu where the temple was located. After establishing the power over the temple, it was further shared among his subordinating political authorities include *Kōyilatikāri*, *Kōyil* or *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*, *Sabha*, the temple bodies etc. As the decisions of the temple were made unanimously by a body consisted of various power hierarchies, the political power of the Perumāḷ may not be seen as monarchy. Instead, it tempted the historian to characterize a system which seems to have a more dependable and reciprocal sharing of power between various interconnected political and ideological powers. Here the temple had furnished a ritual sanctity to the ruling power and in return the ruling power protects the interests of the temple to maintain its various functions.

As the temple is an institution that mainly involved in the rituals in Brahmanic order, they must have required the political support to survive in the agrarian settlements. They need the support from the existing political power to maintain the cultivation process in the temple land and also to fulfil the routine requirements of the temple. Thus, the temple had a ritualistic role in incorporating various political powers especially under the majesty of Cēramān.

2. Second possibility is that the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar*, the landed households or landed personals accepted the Cēra suzerainty in order to elevate their political position and also to claim a Kshatriya status by accepting Varman title or an equal position through acting as the benefactors of the Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava tradition through their land grants to the temples and the brahmins. There is no clear evidence on the mode of expansion of the Cēra power either through invasions or through the dissemination of bhakti traditions. As their regnal year frequently appeared in the dominant Śaiva Vaiṣṇava temples, the Cēras must have the benefactors of the Śaiva bhakti traditions.

It can be seen that the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* must have incorporated the political majesty of the Cēra power into their political splendor and claimed as the feudatory of the Cēra power. This must have helped them to get into the brahmanic tradition and also got a status of the patrons of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti. They used the political splendor of the Cēras to substantiate their hegemonic political power over the *Nāṭu*. The incorporation of the majesty of the Cēramān Perumāḷ into the mythical past by the post Cera *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* is evident in the *Kēraḷōlpatti* traditions.

### **Conclusion**

The existing theories on the early medieval polity in Kerala are centred around the history of Second Cēra Kingdom termed as ‘Kulaśekhara Empire’ and ‘Perumāḷ Kingdom’ by Elankulam Kunjan Pillai and M.G.S. Narayanan respectively. None of the later studies have rejected the historical entity of the Cēra power during the early medieval period in Kerala. Later M.G.S. Narayanan attempted to revise the political power of the Perumāḷ over the *Nāṭus* as a ritualistic one and argued that the actual power was exercised by the Brahmanic oligarchies and doubted the centralized monarchical characteristics of the Perumāḷ kingdom. In response to the above mentioned studies the later discussions mainly focused on the nature of Perumāḷ state rather than its structure.<sup>133</sup> According to Rajan Gurukkal, ‘the nature of Cēra state was of localized and parceled power mediated by a nominal King.’<sup>134</sup> The models of

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<sup>133</sup> As M.G.S. Narayanan has used almost all inscriptions, discovered and deciphered so far, of the Perumāḷs for developing the theory of ‘Perumāḷ Kingdom’, it is not easy to make a discussion on the structure of the state. Majority of the later studies are depending on the *index* prepared by him.

<sup>134</sup> Rajan Gurukkal. *The Kerala Temple and Early Medieval Agrarian System*. Sukapuram: Vallathol Vidyapeetham. 1992. pp.69-82.



‘feudal,’<sup>135</sup> and ‘early state’ are also put forwarded.<sup>136</sup> The existence of incorporated polity with multiple power centres such as the temple, *nāṭu* and the household is also observed.<sup>137</sup> Recently some scholars have observed that the period of later Cēra kingdom cannot be considered as a single historic block of around 324 years<sup>138</sup> and the process of state formation was completed through four historical periods; formative, mature, disintegrating and decline.<sup>139</sup> Due to the absence of new source materials especially inscriptions, the present study do not attempt to cross examine the existing theories. Instead it mainly focused on the role of temple in the early medieval political formations.

The above discussion reveals that the early medieval polities were integrally associated with the temples. The temple inscriptions have signified to the existence of multiple power centers in the region around the temples. These powers approved the supreme authority of the Cēramān who were often referred as *Perumāḷ* or *Perumāṇaṭi*, the biggest political power. They have granted or arranged lands and other essential goods to maintain the daily routines of the temple. The temple was developed as a central institution for endorsing the hegemony of the ruling authorities and newly emerged landed intermediaries over the region and its subjects. It was acting as an integrating agent of the Cēra polity to expand and consolidate their political power in Kerala and also extract the wealth, especially in the form of gold through fines for the violation of temple decrees. The major share of the fines collected from the culprits were given to

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<sup>135</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. *Op.cit.* 1993. pp.257-267.

<sup>136</sup> Kesavan Veluthat. “The King as Lord and Overlord”. *The Early Medieval in South India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009. pp 183-228.

<sup>137</sup> K.N. Ganesh. *Op.cit.* 2016. pp. 13-38.

<sup>138</sup> Manu V. Devdevan. *Op. cit.* pp. 53-79.

<sup>139</sup> Rekha E. *Op.cit.*

the Cēra power and lower portion was given to the *Kōyilatikāri*, *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* or *Āḷkōyil*, and temple committees. Similarly, by accepting the suzerainty of the Cēra power, the regional political entities elevated their political position in to the status of the feudatory of the Cēras.

The early medieval period was the formative phase of the feudal kind of socio-economic and political system in Kerala. The details of the land grants to the temple obtains from 9<sup>th</sup> century AD. The land grants to the Brahmins were very few and most of the lands were granted or arranged for the temples. The yielding fertile lands were granted to the temple along with the labour forces and other existing parasites of the land. The functions of the temple lands were under severe clauses called *Kaccam* unanimously decided and engraved by the temple committee in which the person who granted the land had a significant power. In effect the land grants during this period was only meant the transfer of ownership right or managerial power over the land to the temple committee. It was a corporate right of the temple committee. The Brahmins seem to have had no excessive power over the temple or temple land. They were the members of *Sabha*, *Paraṭai* etc. and they had corporate right over the land during the medieval period. They had only limited right over the land and if they violated the temple decree, they will be ousted from the temple land and lost their position in the *Sabha* or, *Ūr* or *Paraṭai*.

The temple inscriptions do not furnish concrete evidences for the formation of Brahmin oligarchs during the early medieval period. Apart from a few indications on *Mangalam*, there is not much details about the Brahmin households. The growth of Brahmin settlements to the Brahmin *Sankētam* in the post Cēra period has to be seriously addressed. As the ritual performers of the coronation ceremonies of the feudal lords, the traditional Brahmins must have

got more priority during the medieval period. The list of the 32 traditional settlements seems to have prepared during this period, when the Brahmin settlements were developed as an essential component of the post Cēra or medieval polity.<sup>140</sup>

The land grants to the temples largely resulted into the developments of intermediaries known as *Kārāḷar* who owned the right to cultivate the land and a stipulated share of produce had to submit to the temple and they were under strict surveillance of the temple committee. They were allowed to handover their right to the next generation but not allowed to sell their right or to submit their land right as guarantee for mortgage. However, the growth of intermediaries corresponded to the development of a political hierarchy based on land right; as the temple at the utmost, intermediaries in the middle and the actual tilling communities in the lowest layer. The same case occurred in the case of lands granted to the merchant corporations like *Añcuvāṇṇam* and *Maṇigrāmam*, where the lands were cultivated by the intermediary *Kārāḷar*. The same case must have been practiced in the *Cērikkal* lands of the *Nāṭuvāḷis*. Thus, the growth of intermediary land right was a unique characteristic of the early medieval period and its substantial growth is attested by the temple inscriptions. The appearance of the name of the persons with the name of their households as witnesses of the temple decree seems to have shown the formation of intermediary cultivators or

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<sup>140</sup> The list of 32 settlements appears in *Kēraḷōlpatti* texts seems to have incorporated later. As the Brahmin settlements had supreme role in the making of power of the *Swarūpam* kind of medieval polity, the exclusion of some of the settlements mentioned in the early medieval inscriptions like Tiruvaṭūr, Eṭanūr, Vāliccēri, Puḷikkarpurāi etc. and inclusion of the later settlements mentioned in the later *Maṇipravāḷam* texts and *Kēraḷōlpatti* like Payyannūr, Ālattūr, etc. seems to have happened. Thus the 32 settlements seem to have the wealthy settlements who owned the status of *Sankētam* and had ritualistic involvement in the making of post Cēra political power of the region.

landed personals. But we do not have any indication about their community identity or titles except one or two indications about the Nairs. The growth of *Nairs* as the landholding groups as well as the group of militias during the post Cēra period have hinted at the possibilities of the formation of *Nair* community as the intermediaries in the early medieval times itself. The formation of intermediaries resulted into the development of hierarchical feudal relations in the society and also weakening the power of the Cēras. The intermediaries were more loyal to their managers or the temples only. The clauses of the fines are not appearing in all temples and not in all contexts the fine was given to the Perumāl, sometimes it was given only to temple or the local rulers. All these have shown the growth of intermediaries, who were maintaining their right to cultivate the land hereditarily, during the period under discussion. The growth of feudatories in connection with the temple based socio-economic system seems to have one of the reasons for the decline of the later Cēra power.

To sum up, the socio-economic, cultural and political formation of early medieval Kerala was centrally connected with the development of temples. The temples functioned as the ritual institution to consolidate multiple power forms of early medieval period under the Cēras. The distribution of the inscriptions that refer to the regnal year of the Cēra rulers indicate the acceptance of the sovereignty of the Cēras by the multiple polities especially, the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* and the intermediary land holding households. The expansion of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti traditions through the establishment of Brahmin settlements and temples created a ritualistic platform for the early medieval political formation. The formation of intermediary land holdings and the relation of production in the multi-crop agrarian lands offered or granted to the temples resulted into the formation of hierarchical polities. The hegemonic relation between the temples

and the ruling feudatories of these multi-crop lands further corresponded to the development of a feudal society. Thus, the early medieval period was the formative phase of the feudal social formation in Kerala and its further development, with the excessive control of the Brahmin *Sankētam*, occurred with the formation of matrilineal households, called *Swarūpams* in the medieval period (13<sup>th</sup> century AD onwards).

## CONCLUSION

The previous chapters of the present work, *Temples of Early Medieval Kerala: A Study based on Archaeological and Literary Evidences*, have analyzed the role of temples, especially Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava structural temples, of early medieval Kerala (600-1200 AD). The temples had multifarious function in the early medieval society. It was primarily a Brahmanical institution developed with the support of the existing ruling authorities of the region. It functioned as an ideological institution to protect and preserve the economic and political interest of early medieval landed magnates and the state through various Vedic ritual practices. The ruling authorities including Cēra King, *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* or *Nāṭuvālikaḷ*, chiefs of the *Ūr*, the prominent landed persons etc. granted lands and other offerings to the temple. In return, the temple offered ritual sanctity to their political sway over the region.

The terms and conditions occurred in the inscription shows the statutory power of the temple committee over the agrarian settlements in the temple land. In certain contexts, the militia (*Nūṛruvar*) of the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar* were also included in the executive committee. The *Cāttiras*, the armed Brahmins, were also present in some inscription. These things indicate that the temple functioned as an ideological as well as repressive apparatus of the early medieval agrarian economy and polity. It had a crucial role in the maintenance of the feudal hierarchies in the land and integrates various power structures of the agrarian regions.

These arguments are developed through five chapters excluding introduction and conclusion. The introductory chapter states the problem of the present research and the methods and methodology followed in the study. The temple of early medieval period cannot be seen as a worshipping centre of the caste groups, but it was developed as an economic, political and cultural institution which caused to the formation of feudal kind of socio-political relations in the early medieval and medieval period. This process is delineated through the following chapters of the present work. The details of the arguments of each chapter will be briefly explained in the following part.

The first chapter attempted to study the geo-historical setting of Kerala and argued that the term Kerala appeared to denote a political territory from the Iron Age and early historic period. The Second Major Rock Edict of Mauryan emperor Asoka is the earliest epigraphical reference of the political entity of Kerala, in the cultural and linguistic zone in the peninsular India called *Tamiḷakam*, as *Kēraḷaputra* along with other major political entities of South India like *Cōḷa* and *Pāndya*. The survival of the term Kerala to denote the political territory of the Second *Cēra* rulers can also be understood from the early medieval epigraphs. The term *Malabar* mainly indicates the geographical peculiarity of the region which has undulated topography dominating by the hills and hillocks. This chapter analyses both geographical and political aspects of Kerala and found that it is a hospitable space for the human settlements and a political entity in South India from the pre-historic period onwards.

The second chapter focuses on the evolution of organized and stratified society with sound economic base of the multi-crop agriculture and internal and external exchanges in the pre-temple phase. The remnants of the past of pre-temple society of Kerala can be traced from the pre-historic period when the

people started to make their tools in stone to support their contemporary subsistence mode. Its continuity can be seen in the Iron Age and early historic period when a settled agro-pastoral society with multi-faceted knowledge and skills developed based on metal technology, especially iron. The reference of the geo-eco zone called *Tiṇai* or *Aintiṇai* in the early Tamil literature hinted at the existence of five types of habitational space where people involved in various actions to meet their daily subsistence. The life of the inhabitants of the *Tiṇai* and the archaeological remains related to the Megalithic burials and the early historic urban site at Pattanam signified to the formation of a complex society with multiple knowledge and skills in agricultural production, metallurgy, masonry, pottery making, salt making, fishing, manufacturing of semi-precious stone articles etc. The occurrence of the people belonged to various sects like Jainism, Buddhism, and Vedic-Puranic ideology in the ancient Tamiḷakam also pointed towards the commencement of a stratified society with the Varna ideology where the Brahmins and their Vedic rituals got prominence. The practice of *Vēlvi* or Vedic rituals by the early Cēra rulers also underlined the development of Brahminic culture in the pre-temple society. The references of the *Patirrupattu* literature shows that the early Cēra rulers patronized the Brahmins and they started land grants as well. Brahmins must have conducted ritual performances to elevate the political and social status of the ruling power of the Varna hierarchy. The beginning of temple worship and the incorporation of the early Tamil Dravidian deities into the Vedic-Puranic pantheon and beginning of the construction of structural temples can be seen from this period onwards. In short, the pre-temple society had developed form of economic, social, cultural and political system. The Brahmin settlements and structural temples developed in such material settings. Thus this chapter emphasized that the temples developed



in an already flourished agrarian settlement of Kerala and the remnants of its past can be traced from the Iron Age and early historic period.

The third chapter analyses the evolution of the temples as a structural edifice and a Brahminic institution that became the centre of the dissemination of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti. The spreading out of Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava bhakti was the leading force behind the establishment of temple. It examined the nature of Brahmin settlements and, as many of the settlements have not mentioned in the inscriptions or literary accounts of the early medieval period, argued that the list of thirty-two Brahmin settlements mentioned in the *Kēralōlpatti* tradition seems to have compiled in the post Cēra period and most of them had significant role in the making of medieval *Nāṭuvāli Swarūpams*.

It also emphasized on the survival of the pre-temple knowledge and skills in the early medieval period through the analytical study of the architectural features of the temples of early medieval period. The climatic condition of Kerala, where getting two seasons of monsoon regularly, has very much influenced in the development of Kerala style architectures with conical roofing. The material used for the structures are varied according to the nature of topography. In the northern part, the temples are mainly made with granite and laterite for the basement and the wall respectively. In the southern part, where the laterite is not plenty, mainly used granite. The reference of *Taccan* or *Perumtaccan* in the inscriptions underlined the presence of the carpenters or stone masons in the early medieval period.

The early medieval temples mainly developed adjacent to the Brahmin settlements in the catchment areas of watercourses especially in the midland areas of Kerala where the flourished agrarian tracts were distributed. The temples functioned according to the directions of a corporate committee in which the

Brahmins, political entities, the temple functionaries, landed personals etc. were included. It became the centre of arts and performance that popularized the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava bhakti and Vedic-Puranic ideology. The daily routines of the Brahmins were attributed to the temple deity as well and it became part of the temple culture. Many of the early Jain and Buddhist shrines were incorporated into the Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava pantheon and worshiped as Brahminic temples during this period.

The fourth chapter examines the process of the formation of new social order due to the development of the temples of Śaiva-Vaiṣṇava traditions. The temples became an economic and cultural institution. It received large amount of land grants which resulted in the formation of various land holding rights. The earliest land holding rights seem to be *Cērikkal*, the land of the ruling power. Tirunelli inscription mentions the grant of *Cērikkal* land of the Kuṟumbranāṭu king to the Tirunelli temple. The land granted to the temple and the brahmins are mentioned in the inscriptions as *Brahmaswam* and *Dēvaswam*. The lands were also granted to the temple functionaries as reward of their service including *Jīvitam*, *Virutti* etc. The occurrence of *Kīlīṭu* and *Iṭayīṭu* lands also point out the emergence of subordinate ownership rights over the land related to the temples. The emergence of intermediary cultivation rights over the land called *Kārāṇmai* was the important feature of the early medieval period. As the temple committee, Brahmins and the temple service factions were not cultivators by themselves, the cultivation process was controlled by the intermediary group called *Kārāḷar*, the person who held the *Kārāṇmai* right. This was actually resulted into the formation of hierarchical structure in the means of agricultural production, in which the land lords, intermediary right holders and the actual tilling communities were placed in descending order. The relation of production was

based on the ties of dependences and thus the land grants to the temples gradually resulted in the formation of feudal social relations in Kerala during early medieval period. The temples provided conceptual base, by disseminating the Varna ideology, to develop and maintain new type hierarchical relations of productions among the landholding groups, the intermediaries and the actual tilling communities.

The formation of temple functionaries was the unique feature of the early medieval temple society. Most of the temples were maintained various service groups. The major share of the temple wealth was redistributed for the maintenance of the service groups attached to the temple. The service factions including Brahmin and non-Brahmin elite of the temples received rewards for their service, probably the share of produce mainly paddy or rice and land. Consequently, the land grants to the temples and the service groups created non-producing land owning class and the producing class who had no ownership over the land. The relations of production in the temple land was regulated through a code of conduct known as *Kaccam*, which usually approved unanimously by the temple committee. The proprietors of the temple lands had to face material and ideological punishments for the violation of these established code of conduct. The material punishments comprised of the eviction from the *Ūr*, isolation from the public, fines in kind and gold coins or gold weight. If they failed to submit fine, it will be doubled (*Muṭṭiraṭṭi*). The ideological penance includes the breaking of moral codes of the existing society and considered the dishonored person as one who committed the sin like the killing of father and married his mother (*Mātruparigraham Ceytārāvatu*). As none of the inscription refers to the wrath of god towards the person who violates the code of conduct, it can be assumed that the early medieval society had given more importance to the social

morality than the misfortune caused by divine influence, especially of Brahminic gods.

The epigraphs hinted at the corporate ownership of the brahmins as the members of the temple committee over the land. The ownership right over the land was processed by the temple itself. The multi-crop production patterns of the temple land are evident in the epigraphs and the references of merchant guilds also underlined the internal and external exchanges of the goods during the early medieval period. The exchange relations were also directed to the development of a syncretic culture in Kerala. However, the emergence of the temple resulted into the formation of various land holding rights and relations of production which corresponded to the growth of a hierarchical social order. The temples became an institution for propagating the Varna ideology and placed the Brahmin and the ruling class in the highest social rank and the temple functionaries and the landed intermediaries just below and the skilled labourers and the actual tillers at the bottom. To sum up, the emergence of institutionalized Brahminic temples was representing the formative phase of the feudal social relations in the early medieval Kerala.

The fifth chapter deals with the role of temple in integrating and consolidating the early medieval polities. The rulers of the second Cēra polity mentioned in the beginning part of the inscription without eulogy seems to have represented the propagators of Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava bhakti. The mentions of ruling reign of the Cēramān or Perumāḷ or the presence of their representative termed *Kōyilatikāri* in the temple inscription seems to have shown the stamping of their suzerainty over the region where the temple exists. This must have helped them to expand their political power and integrate various political entities of Kerala. Thus the early medieval temples became the integral part of the early medieval

polity. The structural temples remained as a dominant institution to symbolize the Brahminic as well as the political authority over the contemporary society and also it became an institution to propagate and establish the Varna as well as the *Varṇāśramadharmā* ideology in the society, which later created a rigid caste based socio-political hierarchy in the society. The land grants resulted into the formation of many landed households who had both economic and political control over the region. They must have used their right over the temple and the acceptance of the suzerain of the Cēramān as the ideological tool to establish their power. As the upholders of the Brahminic traditions and the feudatories of the Cēramān, who were the actual propagators of the Bhakti based on Brahminic rituals, the newly emerged landed magnates elevated their political power equal to the Kshatriya Varna. Thus both Cēramān or Perumāḷ and the donors of the land including *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* simultaneously claimed as the upholders of the Brahminic bhakti tradition and also a highest rank in the Varna hierarchy.

In that sense, the early medieval structural temples cannot be considered as the temples of the entire society. Instead it must have existed as a Brahminic institution which legitimated the political power of the region and thus claimed a ritual authority over the existing polity. This process can be seen from the period of the early Cēra rulers who practiced Vedic ritual to elevate their socio-political status and continued in the period of later Cēra rulers when the rulers were elevated into the Kshatriya status through Brahminic rituals and their presence as the benefactors of the temples. Thus, the temple existed as a ritualized Brahminic institution for integrating and consolidating various political entities of the early medieval period. As the benefactors of the temple, the Second Cēra rulers and the *Nāṭṭuṭaiyavars* established their power over the hierarchical feudal society that developed according to the emerging Varna ideology. The Brahminic rituals

became an established and essential part of the *Swarūpam* polity of the medieval times, the period of developed stage of feudal socio-political system in Kerala.

In short, the early medieval temples developed in an already flourished multi-crop agrarian settlements of Kerala, a geo-political terrain which must have survived from the early Iron Age and early historic period. The temples of early medieval period were a Brahminic institution established as a result of the evolution of Śaiva Vaiṣṇava bhakti tradition with the support of ruling political authorities. It was a symbolic edifice that propagate the dominance of the Vedic-Puranic dogmas and disseminate the Varna ideology. As the temples received a large amount of land as grants from various ruling powers and the landed personals, it corresponded to the emergence of various land holding rights and land relations. It further created hierarchical social relations in which the Brahmins, ruling powers, the intermediary tenant groups and temple functionaries were placed in the upper strata in descending order and the actual tilling communities and other occupational groups related to multi-crop production and manufacturing process placed at the lower strata. Temple was the most influential icon of the integration and consolidation of early medieval political powers. Both the Second Cēra rulers and the local chiefs were considered the temple of the Śaiva Vaiṣṇava pantheon as powerful symbol for legitimating their political power within the newly emerged hierarchical power structure of early medieval period. Thus it was economic, cultural, ritualistic and political institution which instigated the foundation of feudal socio-political relations in the early medieval Kerala.

## GLOSSARY

<i>Ācil kammiyan</i>	Immaculate jeweler, gold smith
<i>Adhama</i>	Lowermost
<i>Adhiṣṭhāna</i>	Base of a temple
<i>Agrahāra</i>	Brahmin households
<i>Aintiṇai</i>	Five eco-zones of Tamiḷakam
<i>Akam</i>	<i>Akanānūru</i> , collection of 400 early Tamil poems
<i>Akampāṭi</i>	Companion of a person of higher status
<i>Akappotuvāḷ</i>	Proprietor of the internal affairs of the temple
<i>Akkiram</i>	Brahmin feast
<i>Ālvār</i>	Vaiṣṇava followers
<i>Amaicca</i>	Arranged
<i>Amaṇa</i>	Śramaṇa - Jain
<i>Amantaṇar</i>	Brahmins
<i>Ampalam</i>	Temple
<i>Ampalavāsi</i>	Temple service group
<i>Angādi</i>	Market centre
<i>Antaṇar</i>	Brahmins
<i>Añcuvaṇṇam</i>	West Asian merchant corporation
<i>Aññūruvar</i>	Five hundred martial group of the Nāṭuvāḷi
<i>Arantai</i>	War tax
<i>Āriyar</i>	Brahmins
<i>Ariyittu Vāḷca</i>	Coronation ceremony of the ruling power in the medieval <i>Swarūpam</i> polity
<i>Arunnūruvar</i>	Six hundred martial groups of the Nāṭuvāḷi

<i>Aruvai vaṇikan</i>	Textile merchant
<i>Ātan</i>	The title of early Cēra ruler
<i>Aṭikaḷ</i>	Terms of respect, King or Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar or god
<i>Atikārar</i>	Officials (officials of the ruling power)
<i>Āṭṭaikkōḷ</i>	Annual share to the second Cēra rulers
<i>Aṭṭikkoṭutta</i>	Give complete right (over the land)
<i>Aṭṭippēr</i>	Complete transfer of a freehold
<i>Āvaṇam</i>	Local exchange centre
<i>Avirōtattāl</i>	Unanimously
<i>Āy</i>	The Vēḷiṟ chief of the ancient Vēṇāṭu
<i>Balikkal</i>	Ritual altars in the temple
<i>Bhakti</i>	Devotion
<i>Bhaṭṭa</i>	Learned Brahmins
<i>Bhūta</i>	Dwarf figures
<i>Brahmaswam</i>	Land granted to the Brahmins
<i>Chakra</i>	Wheel (attribute of Viṣṇu)
<i>Cakravartin</i>	Emperor
<i>Cālai</i>	Education institution of the Brahmin
<i>Cālaippuṟam</i>	The land assigned to the education institution of the Brahmin
<i>Canta</i>	Local exchange centre
<i>Cānti</i>	Temple priest Śānti
<i>Cāttirar</i>	Armed Brahmins
<i>Cellirupuṟai</i>	Brahmi inscription from Pugaḷūr in the Tiruchirappalli district of Tamilnadu mentions three Cēras of Irumpuṟai line <i>Cellirupuṟai</i> , <i>Perunkaṭuṅko</i> and <i>Kaṭuṅko</i>
<i>Cellūr</i>	Archaic Brahmin settlement of Kerala
<i>Cēramān</i>	Cēra ruler



<i>Cēraputro</i>	The early Cēras mentioned in the Greek-Roman literatures
<i>Cēri</i>	Street
<i>Cērikkal</i>	Crown land appears in the inscriptions
<i>Ceṭṭiyār</i>	Merchant from Kongunāṭu
<i>Cīrukarōṭan</i>	Leather worker
<i>Cīrukuṭiyān</i>	Member of the small settlement unit or <i>Kuṭi</i>
<i>Cīrūr</i>	Small agrarian settlement
<i>Cōru</i>	Rice
<i>Cūlai</i>	Kiln
<i>Curruvilakku</i>	The rows of lamps around the temple
<i>Dēśavālis</i>	Minor chieftains
<i>Dēvaswam</i>	Land granted to the temple
<i>Dvārapālaka</i>	Male door keeper sculpture of the temple
<i>Eccilaṭippān</i>	Sweeper of the dining hall
<i>Elunnūrruvar</i>	Seven hundred martial organization of Nāṭuvālis
<i>Eruviyar</i>	Salt makers
<i>Eṭavappāti</i>	North West monsoon of Kerala
<i>Gaṇam</i>	Trust of committee of the (Brahmins)
<i>Garbhagriha</i>	Sanctum sanctorum
<i>Ghana-dwārā</i>	False-door
<i>Grāmakṣētra</i>	Central temple of the Brahmin settlement
<i>Grantha</i>	Script used for writing Sanskrit in South India
<i>Granthavari</i>	Chronicle related to medieval ruling households
<i>Hāra</i>	Garland or necklace
<i>Hasti-hasta</i>	Banister in the shape of elephant trunk on either side of a flight of steps

<i>Hiraṇya Garbha</i>	Coronation ceremony of the ruling power in the medieval <i>Swarūpam</i> polity
<i>Ṭaiyār</i>	Junior
<i>Ṭakkāpōka</i>	Rakṣābhōga, Protection tax
<i>Ṭrumporai</i>	Early Cēra lineage
<i>Ṭtaiyan</i>	Shepherd
<i>Ṭtangāḷi</i>	A measure holding four Nāḷi
<i>Ṭtayītu</i>	Intermediary holding right
<i>Ṭtuka</i>	Expose (burial)
<i>Ṭtuvōr</i>	Those who exposed (the dead body)
<i>Ṭvvāṇtu</i>	In this year
<i>Jīvitam</i>	Reward for the service in the temple in the form of share of produce or land to the temple functionaries
<i>Jūtakkulam</i>	Literally Jewish pond, an artificial pond at laterite plateau of Mādāyi
<i>Kaccam</i>	Temple contract or agreement passed by temple committee unanimously
<i>Kaikkūli</i>	Bribery
<i>Kalam</i>	A measure of paddy grains
<i>Kaḷam</i>	Plot for storing and thrashing the harvested paddy sheaf
<i>Kaḷañcu</i>	Weight used as a standard (Weight of 12 gold <i>Paṇam</i> or 2 silver <i>faṇam</i> in the medieval period)
<i>Kaḷani</i>	Wetland
<i>Kalappātu</i>	Measure of paddy field
<i>Kalaśamāṭal</i>	Ritual related to the installation of the deity

<i>Kaḷavu</i>	Pre-marital clandestine affairs in early Tamiḷakam
<i>Kaḷvar</i>	Robbers
<i>Kaḷitōṇi</i>	Lighter boats
<i>Kalluppu</i>	Rock salt
<i>Kanam</i>	Weight – one tenth of <i>Kaḷaṅcu</i>
<i>Kānavar</i>	Forest dwellers, <i>Kuṛiṅji</i> people
<i>Kāntarvikaḷ</i>	Temple singers
<i>Karaipūmi</i>	Garden land close to the wet land
<i>Kārāḷar</i>	<i>Kārāṅmai</i> right holder
<i>Kārāṅmai</i>	Right to cultivate
<i>Karpu</i>	Married stage of women in early Tamiḷakam
<i>Kaṭakavaḷaya</i>	Bangles
<i>Kaṭam</i>	Debt
<i>Kaṭampan</i>	Devotee of <i>Murukan</i>
<i>Kaṭavuḷ</i>	God
<i>Kaṭisūtra</i>	Belt of cloth or metal tied on the hip
<i>Kāṭu</i>	Forest tracts
<i>Kāvu</i>	Forest area
<i>Kēraḷaputra</i>	Early Cēras mentioned in the edicts of Asoka
<i>Kēyūra</i>	Armlet of various shapes
<i>Kīlīṭu</i>	Subordinate land
<i>Kiḷār</i>	Lower chiefs
<i>Kodakkallu</i>	Umbrella stone
<i>Kō</i>	King or chief
<i>Kōlattiri</i>	The ruler of Kōlattunāṭu
<i>Kōlattunāṭu</i>	Northern most province of the second Cēra
<i>Kollan</i>	Iron smith
<i>Kōnmaikkoṅṭān</i>	Title of the king Bhāskara Ravi

<i>Koṭṭi</i>	Drummer
<i>Kōvalar</i>	Herdsmen
<i>Kōyil</i>	Temple or King or Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar
<i>Kōyiladhikāri</i>	the Second Cēra ruler or the representative of the Cēra ruler or Nāṭṭuṭaiyavar
<i>Kōyil manucar</i>	Occupational groups in the temple or the agents of the ruling power
<i>Kulaśēkhara</i>	The title of the Second Cēra ruler
<i>Koḷuvaṇikan</i>	Plough merchant
<i>Kunrunāṭu</i>	Cultivated areas in the hillocks
<i>Kurampai</i>	Small hut
<i>Kuṛavar</i>	Inhabitants of forest tracts or <i>Kuṛiñji</i>
<i>Kuṛiñji</i>	Hilly forest areas of early Tamiḷkam
<i>Kurumpuṛai</i>	Chief of Kurumpuṛaiyūrnāṭu
<i>Kūruvāḷca</i>	Succession according to the matrilineal lineage
<i>Kuṭavar</i>	Shepherds
<i>Kuṭi</i>	Basic settlement unit
<i>Kuṭipati</i>	The chief of the settlement unit
<i>Kuṭiyirikka</i>	The settlement plot of occupational groups
<i>Kuṭukkapeṭṭa</i>	Given (land given to the temple)
<i>Kuṭṭuvan</i>	Cēra ruler
<i>Linga</i>	Aniconic form of Śiva in the shape of phallus
<i>Mādēvi</i>	Mahādēvi, Senior queen
<i>Madhyama</i>	Medium
<i>Mākōtai</i>	The core political hub of the Second Cēra ruler
<i>Malaināṭu or</i>	The region of hilly region. i.e., Kerala
<i>Malaimaṇḍalam</i>	
<i>Manai</i>	House
<i>Manaivi</i>	House wife

<i>Maṇḍapa</i>	Pillared hall, either open or closed
<i>Mangalam</i>	Brahmin household
<i>Maṇigrāmam</i>	Early medieval merchant guild
<i>Manukulāticcan</i>	Title of the king Bhāskara Ravi
<i>Māpārata</i>	Mahābhārata
<i>Maravar</i>	Robbers, plunders, cattle lifters
<i>Marutam</i>	(wet land plains)
<i>Menpulam</i>	Wet land mentioned in the <i>Sangam</i> literature
<i>Mitāṭci</i>	A superior possessive right over land
<i>Moliṭpeyar tē</i>	The region where spoke non-Tamil
<i>Mōriyar</i>	Mauya mentioned in the <i>Sangam</i> literature
<i>Muciri</i>	Ancient port town in the west coast of Kerala mentioned in the <i>Sangam</i> literature. (Muziris)
<i>Mukkālvaṭṭam</i>	Circular temple
<i>Mullai</i>	The pastoral tracts
<i>Munivar</i>	Brahmins
<i>Munnūrruvar</i>	Three hundred organization
<i>Mūppumura</i>	Succession according to the seniority in the matrilineal lineage
<i>Mūṣakavamśa Kāvya</i>	Lineage chronicle of the Mūṣika rulers of Ēḷimalai authored by Atula
<i>Mutalvar</i>	Brahmins
<i>Muṭṭāppali</i>	Perpetual offering
<i>Mūttār</i>	Senior member
<i>Mūttakūru</i>	Senior lineage
<i>Muttu or maṇi</i>	Stone bead
<i>Mūtūr</i>	Traditional archaic agrarian settlement
<i>Muyirikkōṭu</i>	Kodungallūr

<i>Mūvendar</i>	<i>Mūvaraśar</i> , the early Cēra, Cōḷa and Pāṇḍya political powers of early Tamiḷakam
<i>Mūlikkaḷattu Kaccam</i>	The agreement of <i>Mūlikkaḷam</i> temple
<i>Naḷicutar</i>	Lamp
<i>Nalnāṭu</i>	Prosperous agrarian settlement
<i>Nālutaḷi</i>	Brahmanic council
<i>Nallūran</i>	Person of the prosperous agrarian settlement
<i>Namaskāra maṇḍapa</i>	A detached pillared hall, with pyramidal roof in front of the shrine
<i>Nānādēśi</i>	Trade guild
<i>Nangacci</i>	Female dancer of the temple
<i>Nangaiyār</i>	Female dancer of the temple
<i>Nāḷi</i>	Standard measurement of grain
<i>Nannan</i>	The Vēḷiṟ chief of Ēḷimalai
<i>Nannangāṭi</i>	Burial urn ( <i>Megalithic</i> period)
<i>Nannāṭu</i>	Prosperous agrarian settlement
<i>Nantāviḷakku</i>	Perpetual lamp
<i>Nāṭu</i>	Grouping of agrarian settlement
<i>Naṭukal</i>	Menhir
<i>Nāṭṭutaiyavar</i>	The ruler of the <i>Nāṭu</i>
<i>Naṭṭuvan</i>	Dancer
<i>Nāṭuvāḷi</i>	The ruler of the <i>Nāṭu</i>
<i>Nāṭuvāḷi Swarūpam</i>	Matrilineal household power units of medieval Kerala
<i>Nāṭuvāḷumavar</i>	The ruler of the <i>Nāṭu</i>
<i>Neital</i>	Coastal areas
<i>Neṭiyōn</i>	Brahmins
<i>Niḷal</i>	Body guard like shadow
<i>Nirandhara</i>	Temple without an inner ambulatory

<i>Nirmālyam</i>	Garlands
<i>Nivēdyam</i>	Offering
<i>Nūrruvar</i>	Hundred organization – martial group
<i>Ōrviyan</i>	Drummers
<i>Orri</i>	Mortgage tenure. A tenure in which the landlord yields to the tenant all the produce of the field in lieu of interest for his advance
<i>Paḍappai</i>	Garden land surrounding a residence
<i>Pālai</i>	Parched zone mentioned in <i>Sangam</i> literature
<i>Pali</i>	Offering
<i>Paliśa</i>	Interest on money
<i>Paḷli Nīrāṭṭu</i>	Ritual bathing of the deity
<i>Paḷittāmam</i>	Garland of the deity
<i>Pāṇan</i>	Bards
<i>Paṇayam</i>	Pledge
<i>Pañcamaśabda</i>	Sound of the five musical instruments used in the temple
<i>Paṇimakkaḷ</i>	Temple servants
<i>Panita vaṇikan</i>	Toddy merchant
<i>Paṇi</i>	Workers
<i>Paṇiyuṭaiya Nāyan</i>	The chief of the occupation group
<i>Paṇampu</i>	Garden land
<i>Paraṭaiyār</i>	Member of the Paraṭa or committee
<i>Paratavar</i>	Fishermen
<i>Paṇayan</i>	Drummer at funeral
<i>Pārppān</i>	Brahmin
<i>Perumuṭiyanmār</i>	Store keepers of the temple
<i>Pataṅāram</i>	Tithes. <i>Kōppataṅāram</i> - King's portion
<i>Patineṭṭu Nāṭṭār</i>	Eighteen chief residents of the place

<i>Pāṭṭam</i>	Rent of grounds, mainly wetlands
<i>Pattanam</i>	Coastal trading centres
<i>Pattāyam</i>	Storage space of paddy grains
<i>Patukkai</i>	Cairn circle
<i>Perumāḷ</i>	Literally the great person, King or God. Title of the second Cēra rulers
<i>Peruncōrru</i>	Biggest feast
<i>Perumtaccan</i>	Traditional carpenter
<i>Perumtaṭṭān</i>	Traditional goldsmith
<i>Perumtuṟai</i>	Biggest coastal settlement unit
<i>Pirammattuvam</i>	Brahmaswam, the land granted to the Brahmin
<i>Pirāmaṇar</i>	Brahmins
<i>Polivu</i>	Interest or Accumulation or collection
<i>Ponkācu or maṇikkācu</i>	Gold coin
<i>Pon kolavan</i>	Gold smith
<i>Potippātu</i>	A measure of paddy field
<i>Potuvāḷ</i>	Secretary of the temple or village assembly called Ūr
<i>Praṇāḷa</i>	Water chute
<i>Praśastis</i>	Eulogies
<i>Pulayar</i>	Tilling community of Kerala
<i>Pūmiyuḷumavar</i>	Those who ploughing the land
<i>Punpulam</i>	Dry cultivation areas
<i>Pura</i>	Thatched roof or house
<i>Purayiṭam</i>	Homestead
<i>Puṟam</i>	<i>Puṟanānūru</i>
<i>Puṟappotuvāḷ</i>	Proprietor of the external affairs of the temple
<i>Puḷukku</i>	Mixture of rice and meet-food
<i>Sabha</i>	The body of the Brahmins



<i>Sabhaiyār</i>	The member of the <i>Sabha</i>
<i>Sama-bhaṅga</i>	Standing posture
<i>Sandhara</i>	Temple with ambulatory inside
<i>Sangam</i>	Early Tamil literature
<i>Sankētam</i>	Autonomous Brahmin settlement of medieval Kerala
<i>Śankhu</i>	Conch shell
<i>Saptamātrika</i>	Seven goddesses
<i>Saptāṅga</i>	Seven elements
<i>Sarvatōbhadra</i>	Temple with four opening on cardinal directions
<i>Śayana</i>	Reclining
<i>Śramaṇa</i>	Jain
<i>Śrībali</i>	Offerings to the deity
<i>Śrīkāryam</i>	Temple matter
<i>Stānaka</i>	Standing
<i>Suṭuka</i>	Cremate
<i>Suṭuvōr</i>	Those who cremate (the dead body)
<i>Taccan</i>	Carpenter
<i>Taḷi</i>	Temple
<i>Taḷi Adhikarikal</i>	Officer in charge of the temple
<i>Taḷiyār</i>	Members of <i>Taḷi</i>
<i>Taḷiyālvān</i>	Officer in charge of the temple
<i>Tamiḷakam</i>	A cultural and linguistic zone in the Peninsular India
<i>Tāḷi</i>	Burial Urn
<i>Tēvatvam</i>	Dēvaswam, temple land
<i>Tēyam</i>	Regional settlement unit
<i>Teyvam</i>	God

<i>Tīnār</i>	<i>Dinār</i> , Roman coin
<i>Tiṟai</i>	Tribute
<i>Tirukkai or Trikkai</i>	Sacred hand (God or Brahmin)
<i>Tirukkōyil</i>	Temple
<i>Tiruvakkiram</i>	Brahmin feast
<i>Tiruvamṛitu</i>	Offering to the deity
<i>Tiruvārātanai naṭattumavar</i>	Temple priest
<i>Toppikkallu</i>	Cap stone
<i>Tulāvarsham</i>	South West Monsoon of Kerala
<i>Tūṇippāṭu</i>	A measure of seed sufficient for 100 yards of paddy field
<i>Tuṟai</i>	Coastal settlement unit
<i>Turu</i>	Goat/sheep
<i>Tuṭiyan</i>	The person who play <i>Tuṭi</i> (drum)
<i>Uccappili</i>	Midday offering
<i>Uḷpāṭan</i>	Sanctum keeper
<i>Umaṇar</i>	Salt makers
<i>Uṇṭāṭṭu</i>	Biggest feast
<i>Upanayanam</i>	Initiation of the learning process of the Brahmins
<i>Upavīta</i>	Sacred thread wore by Brahmanic deity
<i>Ūr</i>	Agrarian village
<i>Urabhandhana</i>	Belly band, an ornamental band that encircles the belly
<i>Ūrāḷar</i>	Proprietor of the temple or the <i>Ūr</i>
<i>Ūran</i>	The member of the <i>Ūr</i>
<i>Ūr Pati</i>	The chief of the <i>Ūr</i>
<i>Ūruṭaiya</i>	The chief of the <i>Ūr</i>
<i>Uttama</i>	Excellent

<i>Uttamākkiram</i>	Brahmin feast
<i>Ūṭṭu</i>	Feast to the deity
<i>Uvaccan</i>	Drummer
<i>Uḷavar</i>	Tilling communities
<i>Vaippin</i>	Coastal zone
<i>Vaḷaṅciyar</i>	Trade guild
<i>Vanpulam</i>	Kuṟiṅji, Mullai cultivation areas
<i>Varada</i>	Boon- bestowal
<i>Vāram</i>	Landlord's share
<i>Varman</i>	Kshatriya title of the ruling power
<i>Vaṭakkirikkal</i>	Sitting towards north, a Jain ritual practice- fasting unto death
<i>Vaṭṭeluttu</i>	Ancient script used for writing old-Malayalam
<i>Vaṭukar</i>	People from North
<i>Vayal</i>	Wetland
<i>Vēḷir</i>	Hill chieftains
<i>Veḷḷālar</i>	Cultivators
<i>Vēṅāṭu</i>	The southernmost Nāṭu of pre-modern Kerala
<i>Vēntar</i>	Titles of the early ruling powers of Tamiḷakam
<i>Veriyāṭṭam</i>	Ritual dance
<i>Vēṭar</i>	Hunters
<i>Vēṭṭakkaḷvar</i>	Hunters performed as robbers
<i>Vēṭṭuvar</i>	Fishermen
<i>Viḷakku</i>	Lamp
<i>Virutti</i>	Rent free service tenure to the occupationa groups of the temple
<i>Viyanpulam</i>	Open pastoral tracts
<i>Yavanar</i>	Traders from Ionian Sea (Mediterranean)- Greek, Roman

## APPENDIX I

### LIST OF RESEARCH PAPERS PUBLISHED AND PRESENTED BY THE PRESENT RESEARCH SCHOLAR

#### PUBLICATION

##### *UGC Referred Journal*

1. Arya Nair, V.S. “Saptamatrikas in Kerala: Iconography and Distribution Pattern.” *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, University of Kerala 4 (2016). pp.376-400. ISSN 2347 – 5463
2. Arya Nair, V.S. “Early Medieval Temples of Eranad: A Study of Karikkat, Pulpatta and Trippanachi,” *Heritage: Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies in Archaeology*. Thiruvananthapuram: Department of Archaeology, University of Kerala, 5 (2017).pp. 556-566. ISSN 2347 – 5463

##### *Chapter in Edited Book*

3. Arya Nair, V.S. “Saptamatrika Temples of Early Medieval Kerala.” G. Gopeekrishnan (ed.). *Temples in Medieval Kerala Heritage and Dynamics of Patronage*. Changanachery: NSS Hindu College Press, 2017. pp.74-92. ISBN-978-81-933197-3-4
4. Arya Nair, V.S. “Early Medieval” in the History of Kerala’ Rajesh S.V, Abhayan G.S, Preeta Nayar, Ehsan Rahmath Ilahi (Ed.). *Human and Heritage: An Archaeological Spectrum of Asiatic Countries (Felicitation to Professor Ajit Kumar)*. New Delhi: New Bharatiya Book Corporation, 2019. pp. 672-680. (ISBN: 978-81-8315-361-4)
5. Arya Nair, V.S. “Kṣētrangaḷum Pūrvvamadyakāla Samūhavum.” (Malayalam) Sateesh Palanki (Ed.) *Proceedings of VIth International Conference of Kerala History*. Kottayam: Sahithya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society,2019 pp. 67-79. (ISBN: 978-93-88992-71-8)

## PAPER PRESENTATIONS

1. Arya Nair, V.S. “Saptamatrikas of Kerala: Iconography and History.” in *UGC National Seminar on M.G.S. Narayanan A Living Legend (Contribution of MGS Narayanan to the History and Historiography of Kerala and South India*. Organized by the Dept. of History NSS College Manjeri on 5-6 February 2016
2. Arya Nair, V.S. “Early Medieval in the History of Kerala.” in *38<sup>th</sup> South Indian History Congress- thirty eighth annual session* at the Dept. of History, University of Calicut from 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018.
3. Arya Nair, V.S. “Kṣētraṅgaḷum Pūrvvamadhyakāla Kēraḷa Samūhavum.” in *The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual International Kerala History Conference* at Thunchath Ezhuthachan Malayalam University Tirur from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> November 2018.
4. Arya Nair, V.S. “Archaeology and Early Medieval Temple Architecture.” in *Three Day National Seminar on Archaeology and Science* at the PG Dept. of History, NSS College Manjeri from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

## APPENDIX- II

### FIGURES

#### Chapter II

### PRE-TEMPLE SOCIETY: HISTORICAL ANTECEDENCE

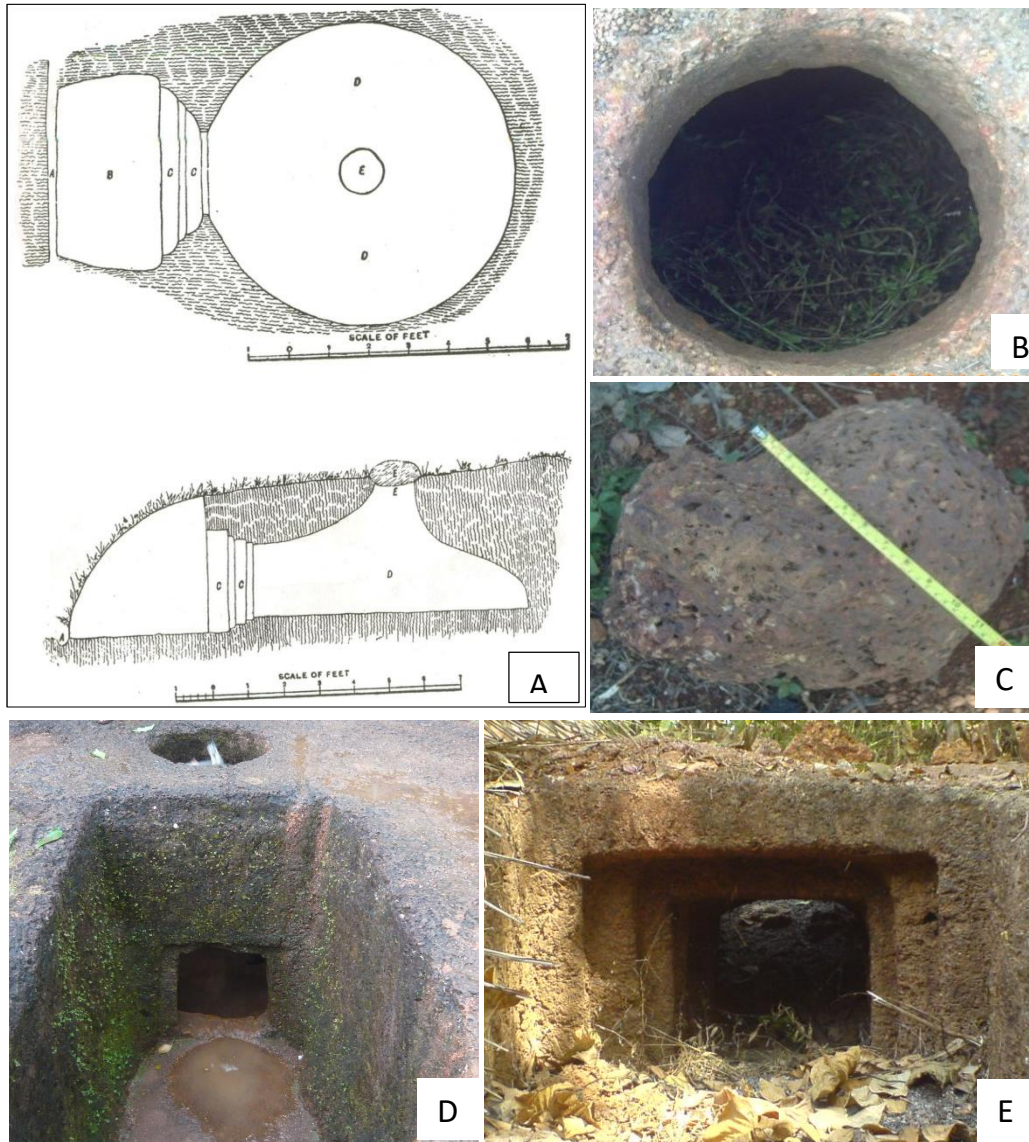


Fig. 2. A-Port hole chamber- *Top Plan* (William Logan), B-*Port hole* and C-*Port hole lid* (Cherupūla, Kasaragod dist.), D-*Port hole chamber*(Chowanur, ASI, Thrissur), E-*Doorjamb of the port hole chamber* (Chunda, Kannur dist.).



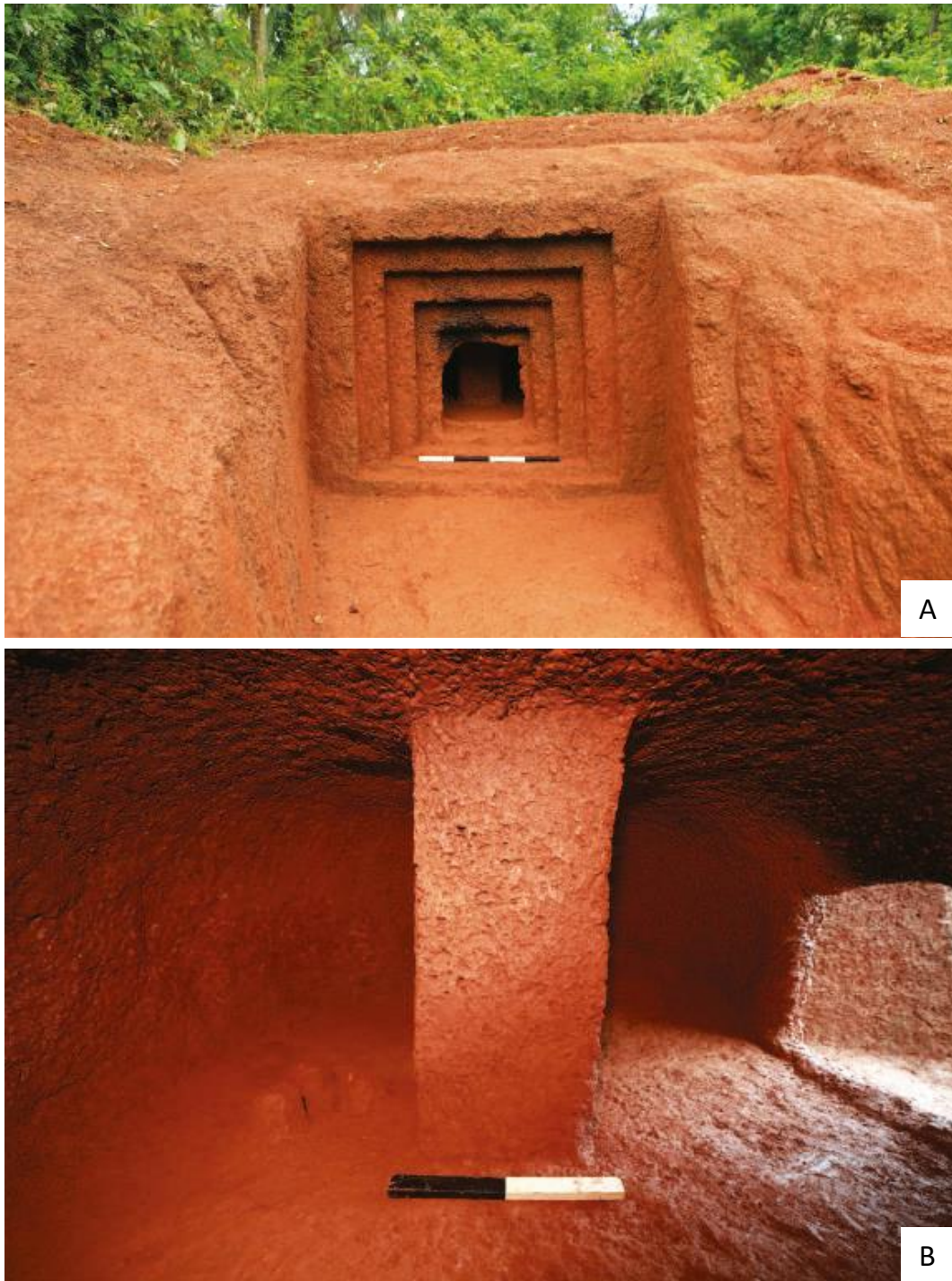


Fig. 3. A-Pillared chamber, B- Pillar (Paṭyam, Kannur dist. Courtesy: K. Krishnaraj 2015:75-75)



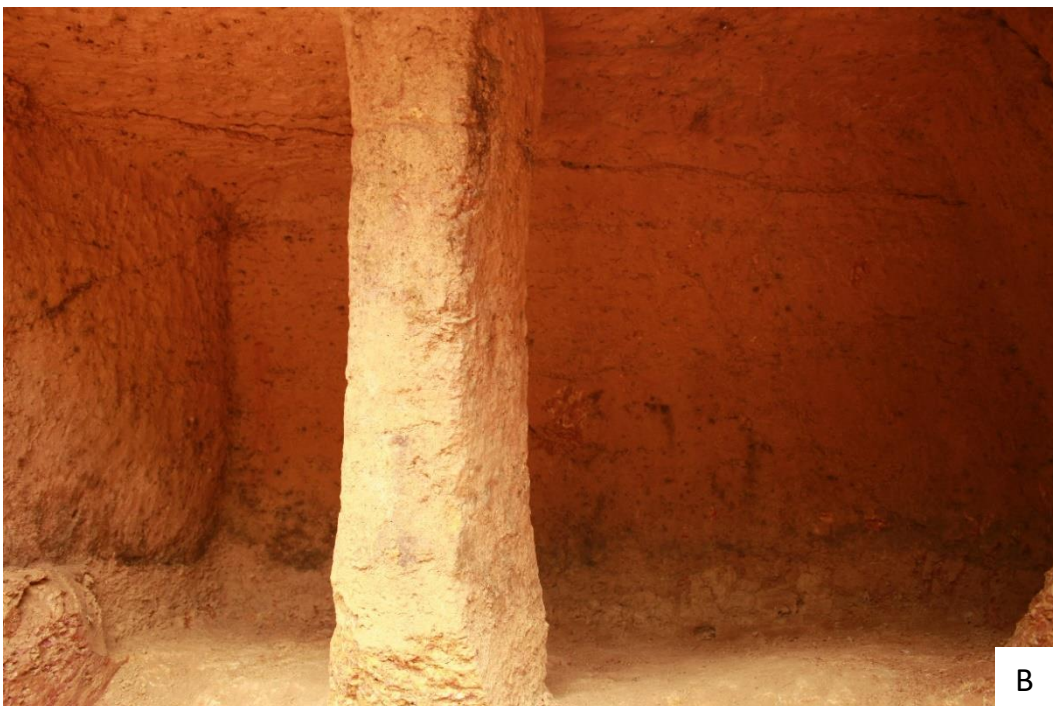


Fig. 4. A-Chamber with square or rectangular inner surface and Pillar (destroyed) B- Pillar(Paithōthu Calicut dist. Courtesy: K.P. Rajesh 2014:24).





Fig. 5. A- Multi-chamber (Menachur, Kannur dist.), B- (Irvetti Kannur dist.)





Fig. 6. Chamber inside the stone circle (Anakkara, Palakkad dist. Courtesy: Rajan Gurukkal:2009)



Fig.7. Umbrella stone (Cheramanangad, Thrissur dist. ASI Thrissur Circle)





Fig. 8. Pattanam, North Paravur, Ernakulam dist.; A- Burned Brick Floor structure, B- Room structure, C- remains of the wharf structure.

(KCHR. P.J Cherian (ed.) 2015a: 62, 84; 2015b:52,58

Chapter III

EVOLUTION OF EARLY MEDIEVAL TEMPLES

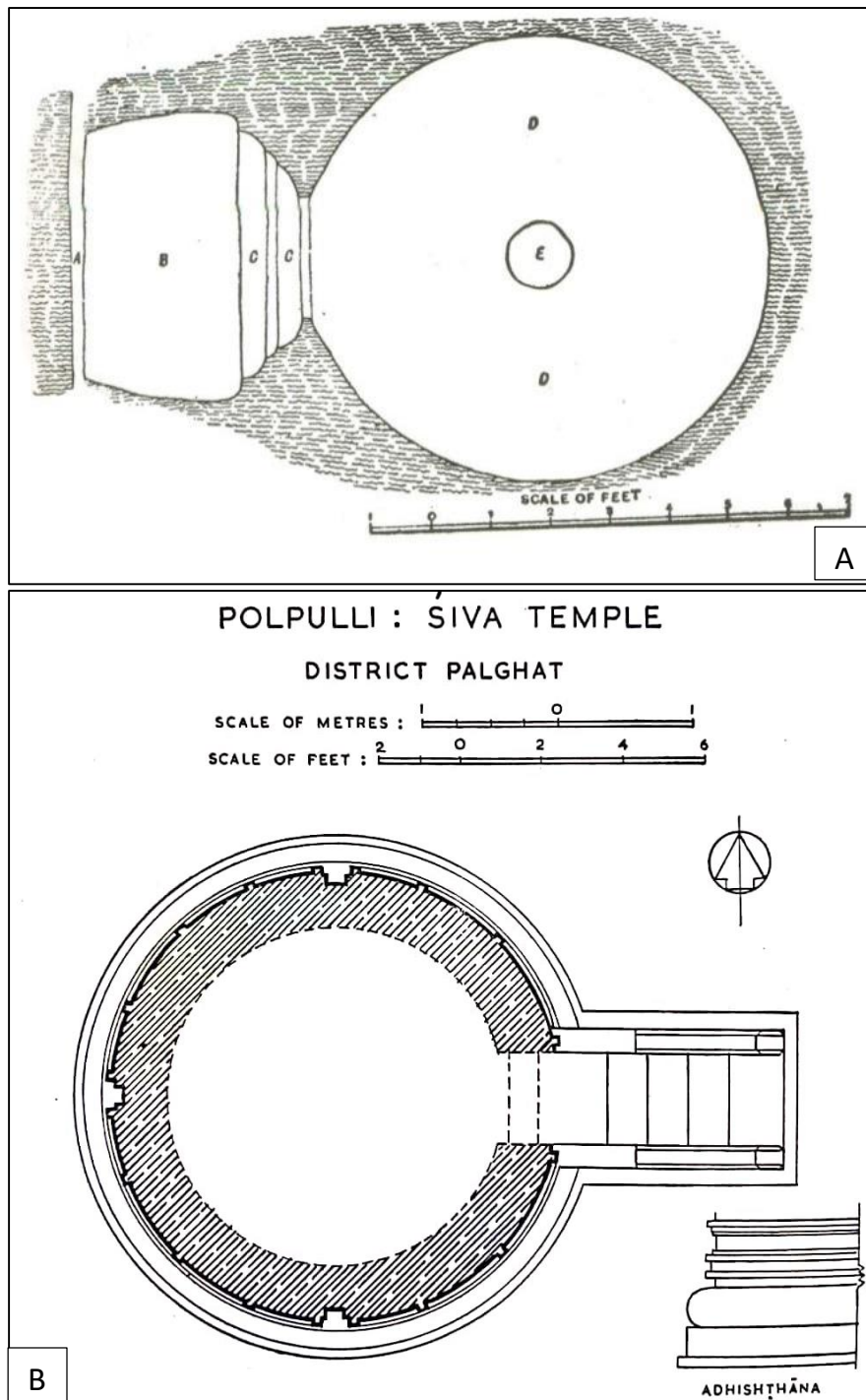


Fig.1. A-Top plan of the Rock-cut chamber of Pre-Temple megalithic phase (William Logan). B- Circular Temple (H. Sarkar 1978:164) of the early medieval Kerala.





Fig.2. Temples with Granite basement, laterite wall and wooden roof; A- Pulpatta temple, Malappuram dist. B- Pullanur temple Malappuram dist.





Fig.4. Inscriptions. *Vatteluttu* script; A- Sukapuram, Malappuram dist. B- Maniyur Kannur dist. C-Kavuntara Kozhikode dist. D-Ponamaḷa. *Grantha* script; E- Kurumattur, Malappuram dist.



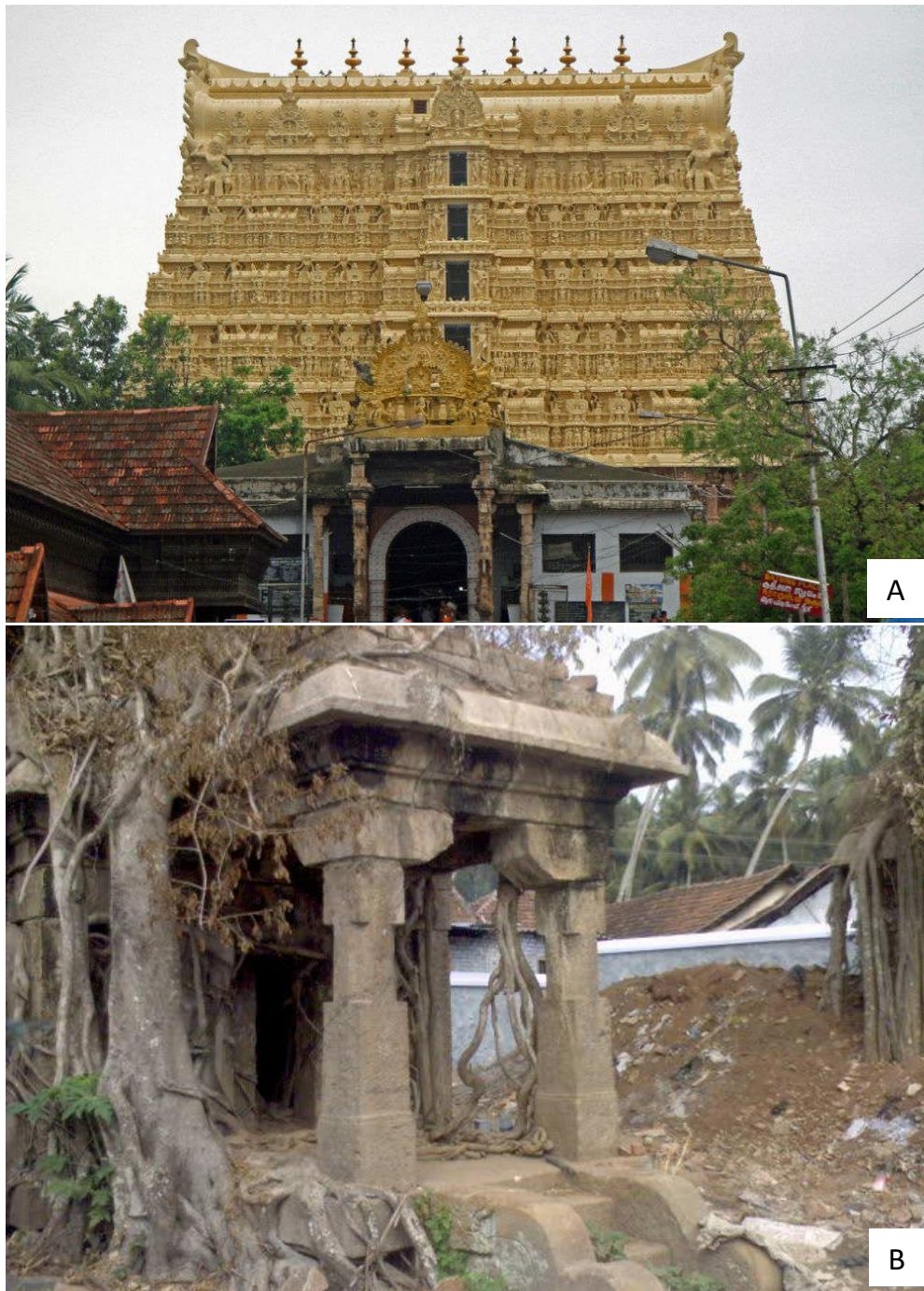


Fig.5. Dravidian Style Temples; A- Padmanābha Swāmi temple, B. Vilinjam Shore Temple, Thiruvananthapuram dist.





Fig.6. Square Temple; A- Pullūr Kodavalam, Kasaragod dist. B- Tiruvaṭūr, Kannur dist.





Fig.7. Circular Temple; A- *Ēkatala* (single Storied) Trippanachi, B-*Dwitala* (double storied) Karikkad, Malappuram dist.



Fig.8. Rectangular Temple; Viñjam Bhagavati Temple, Thiruvananthapuram dist.



Fig.9. Elliptical Temple; Trippanachi temple, Malappuram dist.





Fig.10. A & C- *Prāṇāḷa*. B- *Bhūta* figure removed from *Prāṇāḷa* for renovation work- Kulattur temple Kozhikode dist.



Fig.11. A & B- *Hasti-hasta* banisters with lion depiction (common feature of early Medieval temple).





Fig. 12. A -*Balikkal* in laterite; Tiruvaṭūr, Kannur dist, B- *Balikkal* in granite Karikkad Malappuram dist.



Fig.13- A- *Saptamātrika* panel- Iconic representations, Orṛasēkharamangalam, Thiruvananthapuram dist. B- Aniconic panel.





Fig.14. A- Naṭakkāvungal Śiva Temple (ruined), near Areekode Malappuram dist. B- Śivalinga, C- Prāṇāḷa, D- Hasti hasta banister (tilted).





B- *Balikkal*

C- *Dwārapālaka*





A



B



C



D

- 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.....tuvā|u
  - 5.....ku|a
  6. te celutta
  7. vikka
  8. kaṭavaru
  - 9.....itu
  10. ma potuvā|
  11. ....ce
  12. yu...manna
  13. yay u ma ce
- (Not legible)

Fig. 16. Trikkalāyūr temple, Malappuram dist. A- Circular temple, B. Ruined outer wall. C- *Hasti-hasta* banister with lion depiction. D. Broken inscription





Fig.17. Iravimaṅgalam Mahā Viṣṇu Temple Malappuram dist. A- *Dwitala Vimāna*. B. Inscription, C- *Hasti-hasta* banister, D. *Praṇāḷa*, E- *Niches*. F. *Kudus*





Fig. 19. Ruined Temple, Panamaram, Wayanad dist. Jain- Vaiṣṇava traditions. A- Jain *Basati* type ruined temple, B. *Daśāvatāra* panel with *Malsya*, *Kalkki* and *Varāha* sculptures. D. *Stānaka Viṣṇu* carvings.

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