

SOCIAL FORMS OF RELIGION IN WAYANAD - A HISTORICAL STUDY (1800-2000 CE)

THESIS

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

Submitted by

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the Thesis entitled, **Social Forms of Religion in Wayanad – A Historical Study (1800-2000 CE)** submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, University of Calicut is a record of bonafide research carried out by Suja K.S., under my supervision. No part of the thesis has been submitted for the award of any Degree before.



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This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Social Forms of Religion in Wayanad-A Historical Study (1800-2000CE)**” submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History, is a record of original work done by Ms. Suja K S, under my supervision and guidance and the thesis, has not formed the basis for awarding any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title of recognition. She is allowed to submit thesis to the University for Evaluation.

It is further certified that she has diligently carried out the corrections/suggestions that the adjudicators have recommended to the thesis submitted, and the final thesis is resubmitted as such. The contents in the thesis and the soft copy are one and the same.



Place: Farook College
Date: 16.06.2025

Dr. T Muhammedali
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DECLARATION

I, Suja K.S do hereby declare that this thesis entitled, '**Social Forms of Religion in Wayanad - A Historical Study (1800-2000 CE)**' is a bonafide record of research work done by me and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree. The contents of the thesis are undergone plagiarism check using iThenticate software at C.H.M.K. Library, University of Calicut, and the similarity index was found within the permissible limit. I also declare that the thesis is free from AI generated contents.



SUJA K.S.



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Date: 18.09.2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have immense pleasure in expressing my heartfelt gratitude to a number of people and institutions for their untiring assistance and encouragement during this research work and thesis preparation.

Foremost, I would like to extend my deep sense of gratitude to my supervising teacher, Dr. T Muhammedali Associate Professor(Rtd) Department of History, Farook College, Calicut, for his encouragement, suggestions, comments, and resourceful advice, without which this thesis would not have been materialized. I express my sincere thanks to Dr. C.A. Anaz, Assist. Professor and Head of the Department of History, Farook College, Calicut, whose valuable suggestions and motivation was a great source of inspiration for me for publishing research papers in journals. I am thankful to Dr.G. Mujeeb Rehman Asst. Professor, Govt College Perambra, Dr Udayakumar P, Associate Professor, Govt College Mankada for their timely help in the completion of this work. I am thankful to Dr. M.R. Manmathan, Dr Shumais U, and Dr. Abdul Nissar, M., and entire Department of History. I am thankful to Abussabah Library, and centre for social history of Malabar of Farook College, for providing me valuable references. My thanks also to the Principal, Farook College, for providing me all the institutional Assistance.

I express my sincere gratitude to Dr Sebastian Joseph (Associate Professor, UC College Aluva), Dr. K. S. Madhavan, University of Calicut and Dr.KN Ganesh for their valuable suggestions for this work. I also thankful to Directorate of Research of the University of Calicut who had extended me great help for the completion of this work. C.H.M.K. Library, University of Calicut for provided me the great source of information regarding my topic. I express my sincere thanks to officials of the CHMK. I express my sincere thanks to Dr. Rani S Pillai. (Assistant Professor Department of History, Pazhassi Raja College, Pulpally), and Dr Joshy Mathew (Head, Department of History, Pazhassi Raja College, Pulpally) for their helps and valuable suggestions. I had fruitful discussion with Sri. Malayankeezh Gopalakrishnan, news Editor (Rtd), Mathrubhumi News, Trivandrum, Sri. Cheruvayal Raman (Traditional Farmer, Wayanad), KK Annan, Madaparambu Bhaskaran, (Traditional Farmer), Appu Chettiar, Karimban, P. Venu, Ajayan

Madoor (Civil Police Officer, Meenangadi) Narayanan Sankaran (Assistant Professor, ITRS, Chedleth) which provided me great insight for this work.

I remember with heartfelt gratitude the Principals NMSM Govt. College Kalpetta, Dr. Subin K Joseph and Shaji Thaddeus (Principal in charge), in course of this work. Further, I remember my colleagues Dr Anoop Thankachan K, Smt Bindu Mathew, Sri. Afeef KJ, Smt. Sunu Muhsin, Smt. Prasanna A.C, Sri. Unnikrishnan VM . librarian and sri Dinesh K, Sri. Rajesh GB, Sri Siju CM, Sri. A.P. Aneesh Smt. Radha EV, Smt Sheeja, PM, Rajan RM, Vineesh Paul, Sri Muhammed Zakkir NK, Satheesh MV, and other staff members of N. M. S. M. Govt. College, Kalpetta, for their motivation during this research work.

I am grateful to those who found time to share me their valuable thoughts and memories. Sri. K.J Martin (Parish Council secretary Vythiri church), Sri. Noushad (Mahallu committee secretary of Kalyanathu palli), Late Sri. Arumukhan (Kandamala), Janaki Niravath (Shed, Pulpally), Sri. Dineshan (Mundanadappu colony), Sri. Rajeesh (Mundanadappu), and Sri. Venu (Cheriyamala), Sujatha (Bathery), Vineeth VK, centre for Development Studies Thiruvananthapuram are some of them. Their views and opinions have added value to my research work. I am also indebted to Sri. Abdul Majeed and Sri. Samuel Varghese of Regional Archives, Kozhikode. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of Regional Archives (Kozhikode), K. N. Raj library of Centre for Development Studies (CDS Thiruvananthapuram), Forest Headquarters Library (Vazhuthakkad, Thiruvananthapuram) Institute of Social and Economic Change (Bangalore), C. H. Muhammed Koya library (Calicut University), Kerala Institute for Research Training and Development Studies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Kozhikode), Regional Agricultural Research Station (Ambalavayal, Kerala Forest Research Institute (Peechi), State Central library (Thiruvananthapuram), Kerala State Land Use Board Thiruvananthapuram, District Planning office Kalpetta, M.S.Swaminathan Research Foundation (Puthoorvayal), Integrated Tribal Development Programe Office (Kalpetta), Department of Rural and Urban Sociology, Mananthavady Campus, Scheduled caste Development Office Kalpetta. Principal Agriculture Office (Kalpetta), District office of Economics and Statistics Department (Kalpetta & Kozhikode), State library of Economics and Statistics Department (Thiruvananthapuram), Offices of the Executive engineer of Banasurasagar Irrigation & Electricity Projects (Padinjarathara), Office of the Executive Engineer of Karappuzha Project (Karappuzha), Solidarity Library

Mananthavady, Pazhassi Granthalayam Manantha vady, Sub Registrar office at Vythiri and Mananthavady, Kerala Council for Historical reearch Library , Thiruvananthapuram, District Tourism Promotion Council (Kalpetta), Directorate of Tourism (Kalpetta), District office of Mining and Geology Department (Meenangadi), District Office, Soil Conservation (Meenangadi), District Office of Kerala Groundwater Department (Meenangadi), Personal linbrary of Late Member of parliament MP Veerendrakumar, and library of St. Mary's College Sulthan Bathery, N. M. S. M. Govt. College, Kalpetta.

I express my sincere thanks to Smt Tessiamma Thomas (Former Principal NMSM Govt College Kalpetta) for the timely helps extended by her on the completion of my thesis. I acknowledge the support and help extended by my beloved father S Selvan, Ammini Selvan and other family members. My heartfelt appreciation for my spouse TN Sudheer , daughter Anagha Sudheer and son Advaith Sudheer for bearing with my eccentricities and being a constant source of motivation while I was struggling with my work.

I am thankful to Sri. Balu and other members of Bina DTP centre, Chenakkal for promptly helping me with printing of the thesis. Freeland photographer Sri Sali Thankappan, has given relevant photograph for this thesis and Gopalkrishna P.P. Planning Officer, Town Planning office, Kalpetta who had provided me with required maps for the study I owe much to the inspiration and active co-operation given by my friend Mr Anilkumar PK(Irulam), and my fellow researchers Febin Sithara, Roshna PP, Sabna K, Thahseem SE, Shameer K, Neenu V , Shana Paerveen, Jiji Francis and Mimi KM, Vasisht MC and Shamli CK

I express my deepest gratitude to all my friends who stood by me. I dedicate this work to the people syncretic culture of Wayanad, of whom I am only a miniscule fragment.

SUJA K. S

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- CDS - Centre for Developmental Studies
- HA - Unit of Area in in the metric system equal to 100 Ares or 10,000 square metres
- INR - Indian Rupees
- Lb - Is a written abbreviation for for Pound, when it refers to weight 1 Pound= 0.45359237 Kg.
- PEEP - Peoples Action for Education and Economic Development of Tribal People
- RAK - Regional Archives Kozhikode.

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ABSTRACT

This is a study of the religious beliefs and practices prevailed among the people of Wayanad of Kerala in India. Religion comprises two basic forms; forms of faith and forms of practices and rituals. Religion possesses potentials to molds social relations and social identities of human beings. The study however seeks to delineate the influence of ecological, economic and social influences that the religion absorbs and accommodate so that it changes in accordance with it.

Wayanad region in Kerala is a meeting place of many religions like Jainism, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and tribal religion. It is also an area where people from around migrated to it. Nestled in the Western Ghats mountain ranges, the area is also ecologically significant.

It had already been argued variously that the forms of religion are shaped by material world. Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Max Weber and many others following them had been engaging with the same theme.

Thus the social form of religion in the present study connotes how the material conditions including ecological settings, conditions of productions and conditions individual choices determined the religious behavior of the people of Wayanad. Social form also implies change. As the material world is in constant motion, the society might also be changing accordingly and is the religious beliefs and practices. The social form of religion therefore also involve the depiction of successive changes in the realm of socio cultural life of the people.

The geographical context of the area also call for a keen consideration of the ecology and environment. The present study therefore draws upon the concept of 'mode of resource use' as it is more suitable to discuss the environmental and religious life of this area in a tribal and ecological factors plays a more visible role.

The study pursued with and fulfilled the objectives including studies of geo-eco- historical setting, contexts of the tribal religion , the impact of migrations on the Socio-religious life of the area of study, the eco-social influences on religion, and tracing the changes in the religious beliefs and practices through time.

The study follows historical method and has benefitted from the methodologies of other domain wherever it is called for. At some levels the study used representative data to do justice to time and the theme.

The study confirms that there is a correlation between the stages of social life based on different modes of resource use determines many core areas of religion of the people.

The changes of the settlements and subsistence from *malayoram* based on hunting gathering to *vayaloram* based on settled agriculture and then to *vazhiyoram* based on the industrial mode of life had corresponding changes in the social life and institutions that shattered and reconfigured the livelihood as well as ideological horizon that provided new edges in the existing set of beliefs and practices that resulted in an ultimate transformation of the religious life of the people. The changes thus propelled produced a change from simple, direct, cheap and syncretic forms of rituals and practices of religion to a more complex, mediated, expensive and monolithic forms of religion. This is visible among all the religious communities lived in the area of study.

Key words: Wayanad Social form of religion, Material world, Mode of resources, vayaloram, Malayoram, Vazhiyoram, Religion , Pastoral Mode, Hunting Gathering Mode, Industrial Mode, Settled Cultivation Mode.

സംഗ്രഹം

ഭൗതികസാഹചര്യങ്ങളിലെ മാറ്റങ്ങളും, പാരിസ്ഥിതിക മാറ്റങ്ങളും മനുഷ്യന്റെ മതവിശ്വാസങ്ങളെ സ്വാധീനിക്കുന്നുവെന്ന നിഗമനത്തെ ആസ്പദമാക്കിയാണ് ഈ പഠനം. നിരവധി ഗോത്രവർഗ്ഗക്കാരും, വ്യത്യസ്ത മതവിഭാഗങ്ങളിൽപ്പെട്ടവരും (ജൈന, ഹിന്ദു, ക്രിസ്ത്യൻ, മുസ്ലീം മതങ്ങൾ) ഉൾപ്പെടുന്ന വയനാടൻ സമൂഹത്തെയാണ് ഈ പഠനത്തിനായി സ്വീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്.

പാരിസ്ഥിതിക, സാമൂഹിക, സാമ്പത്തിക മാറ്റങ്ങൾ വയനാട്ടിലെ ജനങ്ങളുടെ സാമ്പ്രദായിക മതവിശ്വാസങ്ങളെ ഗണ്യമായി മാറ്റിമറിച്ചു എന്നതാണ് ഈ പഠനം മുന്നോട്ടുവെക്കുന്ന വാദഗതി. “മോഡ് ഓഫ് റിസോഴ്സ് യൂസ്” എന്ന് പരിപ്രേക്ഷ്യമാണ് മുഖ്യമായി ഈ പഠനത്തിന് സ്വീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്.

നവീനശിലായുഗം മുതൽ മനുഷ്യാധിവാസം രേഖപ്പെടുത്തപ്പെട്ട വയനാട്ടിലെ ജനങ്ങൾ വേട്ടയാടലും ഭക്ഷ്യശേഖരണവും (Hunting Gathering), കന്നുകാലി വളർത്തൽ (Pastoralism), സ്ഥിരമായ കൃഷി (Settled Cultivation), വ്യാവസായികകാലം (Industrial Age) എന്നീ ഘട്ടങ്ങളിലൂടെ കടന്നു പോയിട്ടുണ്ട് എന്ന് മനസ്സിലാക്കാവുന്നതാണ്. ഇത്തരത്തിലുള്ള സാമ്പത്തികമാറ്റങ്ങൾ മതവിശ്വാസങ്ങളെ സ്വാധീനിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടെന്ന് തെളിവുകളുടെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ മനസ്സിലാക്കാവുന്നതാണ്.

ഈ പഠനത്തിൽ ഹിസ്റ്റോറിക്കൽ മെത്തേഡും മറ്റു സാമൂഹിക ശാസ്ത്രപഠന രീതി ശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളും യഥാവിധി ഉപയോഗിക്കാൻ ശ്രമിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഭൗതിക, പാരിസ്ഥിതിക, ചരിത്രപാശ്ചാത്തലത്തിൽ ഗോത്രവിശ്വാസങ്ങൾ, കുടിയേറ്റം മതവിശ്വാസങ്ങളിൽ ഉണ്ടാക്കിയ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ, സാമൂഹിക, പാരിസ്ഥിതിക, സാമ്പത്തിക മാറ്റങ്ങൾ എങ്ങനെയാണ് മതങ്ങളിൽ മാറ്റമുണ്ടാക്കിയത് മുതലായ കാര്യങ്ങൾ വിശദീകരിച്ചുകൊണ്ടാണ് ഈ പഠനം പൂർത്തീകരിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നത്.

ഉപജീവന മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളിലെ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ, ജനങ്ങളുടെ ആവാസ കേന്ദ്രങ്ങളിലും മതവിശ്വാസങ്ങളിലും കാതലായ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാക്കിയെന്ന് മനസ്സിലാക്കാൻ കഴിയുന്നു. വേട്ടയാടലും, ഭക്ഷ്യശേഖരണം നടത്തിയും ജീവിച്ച ആദിമനിവാസികൾ മലയോരങ്ങളിൽ താമസിച്ചുപോന്നു. വയൽകൃഷി വ്യാപകമായപ്പോൾ അവർ താമസം വയലോരങ്ങളിലേക്കും, വ്യാവസായികകാല ജീവിതത്തിൽ വഴിയോരങ്ങളിലേക്കും മാറ്റി. സമാന്തരമായ മാറ്റങ്ങൾ മതവിശ്വാസങ്ങളിലും, ആചാരാനുഷ്ഠാനങ്ങളിലും ഉണ്ടായി. ഗോത്രവർഗ്ഗക്കാരുടെ തനത്

ആചാരാനുഷ്ഠാനങ്ങളും വിശ്വാസങ്ങളും ഹിന്ദു വിശ്വാസങ്ങളിലേക്ക് മാറ്റപ്പെട്ടു. സമന്വയസംസ്കാരത്തിലധിഷ്ഠിതമായ മുസ്ലിം, ക്രിസ്ത്യൻ, ജൈന വിശ്വാസങ്ങൾ ഏകശിലാരൂപങ്ങളിലേക്ക് മാറ്റപ്പെട്ടു. ഇതോടൊപ്പം വളരെ ലളിതവും, മധ്യവർത്തികളില്ലാത്തതുമായ വിശ്വാസാചാരങ്ങൾ ചിലവേറിയതും, സങ്കീർണ്ണവും മധ്യവർത്തികളുള്ളതുമായി മാറിയത് ഗോത്രവർഗവിശ്വാസരൂപങ്ങളിൽ പ്രകടമാണ്.

പ്രധാന വാക്കുകൾ: വയനാട്, മതം, ഗോത്രവർഗക്കാർ, വേട്ടയാടലും ഭക്ഷ്യശേഖരണവും, കന്നക്കാലിവളർത്തൽ, സ്ഥിരകൃഷി, വ്യാവസായികകാലം, മലയോരം, വയലോരം, വഴിയോരം, വയനാട്

INTRODUCTION

Religion is defined in multiple ways. It is very difficult to offer an all-encompassing definition of religion. Still religion comprises two basic forms; forms of faith and forms of practices. Religion is further an institution that possesses authority on the life of the people by maintaining a set of rites, rituals and beliefs over them. It thus possesses potentials to mould social relations and social identities of human beings. A basic notion of religion is that it validates the social value scheme with divine sanction and thus reinforces the social order. It also provides a scheme for man's place in the cosmos and explains some profound human experiences like success, death, failure etc.¹ Religion maintains control over the entire society; it imparts moral values and keeps a social order. On the whole, maintaining and validating a set of values that articulate itself through a set of beliefs, rituals and practices constitute the main considerations of religion.

The Social form

This naturally brings in the concern of the sources of values; and therefore religion. Serious considerations of this issue have been a major theme in sociology, anthropology and history. Hinging upon the position of Methodological holism, Durkheim proposed to understand social phenomena considering the 'social facts' as primary rather than individual facts. The ideals and sentiments which constitute the cultural inheritance of the members of a society, according to Durkheim, are impersonal and socially evolved². Viewing from this position, he upheld that religion is preeminently a social phenomenon.³ This preeminence of the social fact kept the agency under the former's control. Man here became a passive element, but many thought that man has autonomy of action. Georg Simmel and Max Weber understood social phenomena, primarily, as the result of individual actions in

¹ HS Bhatti, *Folk religion change and continuity*, New Delhi, 2000, p.11.

² Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and modern Social Theory*, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p.67.

³ Romila Thapar, *interpreting Early India*, New Delhi, 1993, p.33.

society. Simmel's concept of 'sociation'⁴ was attracted to a number of sociologists and anthropologists who took up the processual foundations of Simmel and explained social processes. Simmel declared that the job of the sociologists is to explain the social form generated through sociation. This is to identify and classify different forms of social interaction: to analyze their subtypes; to study the conditions under which they emerge, develop, flourish, and dissolve; and to investigate their structural properties⁵. A consideration of religion from this point of view lead us to explain a social form of religion, ie., how the religious beliefs, practices and values emerged and sustained through the choices of the people which are evolved through interactions within a social network. Approaching social forms in this way was further refined by anthropologists⁶. Process implied change from one state to another of any phenomena. Though it ensues consideration of history, Fredrik Barth never accept history a dependable form of knowledge that would help understanding things properly. But he thinks that presence of a previous period never impact the present. Still he never negate the consideration of time for the understanding the process of how various elements of a social system are generated in spatio-temporal continuum⁷.

Social Form of Religion

It had already been argued that the forms of religion are shaped by material world. Ludwig Feuerbach argues that God is a human intervention based on human needs and desires and that religion reflects the alienating of human qualities in to divine being.⁸ The essence of Christianity according to Feuerbach is the projection of human qualities in to god who represents abstract human traits such as love,

⁴ Lars-Erik Cederman, "Computational Models of Social Forms: Advancing Generative Process Theory" in *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 110, No. 4 (January 2005), pp. 864-893.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.866.

⁶ Adam Kuper (ed.), *Process and form in Social life: Selected Essays of Fredrik Barth* Vol 1, Routledge & Kagen Paul, 1981, p.688.

⁷ *Ibid.* p.688.

⁸ Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, Marxist internet archive, 1841. page no. is not found, accessed on 1 November 2023.

justice and wisdom⁹. Feuerbach says that "grand characteristics of religion and Christian religion especially is that, it is thoroughly anthropo theistic the exclusive love of man for himself."¹⁰ Feuerbach elucidate with many examples that human nature is directly reflected through the religion. "God is the mirror of the Man" is its fine sample. Crucified christ is the symbol of human sufferings and the 'holy family' which includes Father, son, and the the holy spirit reflects family bondages based on love. Likewise, Islam religion also exhibits its social forms while analyzing its origine, and flourishing it had gone through many stages of socio economic adaptations. "The cause of dramatic success of Islam was spiritual as well as social and political, it was more pure than the system of Zoraster and more liberal than the laws of Moses".¹¹ Prophet Muhammed granted the people with security, freedom of their trade, and toleration of their worship, these are the factors responsible for the tremendous growth of Islam in Arabia. MN Roy in one of his famous work states that "Islam religion imposed upon the entire nation with the potent weapons of economic boycott Ca abba was cleared of its idols and became the shrine of 'Mohammeds god' once the standard of new religion raised, the whole nation flocked under it".¹²

Both Karl Max and Max weber tried to historicise religion in their own ways. Marx explained the world of ideology and religion in consonance with the material conditions persisted in the successive modes of production.¹³ Forms of religion, according to this view, have been set in accordance with the ideological need of a particular mode of production. The development of bhakti and sufi ideas in the medieval India is explained to have been taken shape to disseminate and reproduce the value of loyalty and devotion which played the key role in the functioning of the

⁹ *Ibid.*, page no not found.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, 1841.

¹¹ MN Roy, *Historical role of Islam, An Essay on Islamic culture*, Marxist internet archive, 1939, p,37. Accessed on 1 November 2023.

¹² *Ibid.*, p,28.

¹³ Anthony Giddens, *Op. cit.*

medieval feudal system¹⁴. Max weber, on the other hand , tried to place religion and religious ideals responsible for the presence and absence of capitalism¹⁵. For him, the ‘spirit’ of Protestant ethics produced the cultural ambience that promoted capitalism in Europe and the ‘spirit’ of *varna* system in India impeded the capitalist developments. Through a critical engagement with the concept of mode of production of Marxist method, Ramchandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil proposed a more encompassing concept of ‘mode of resource use’. This concept embraces the ecological factors as more determining the social life in addition to the conditions of productions and ensuing relations as in the modes of production.

Thus the social form of religion in the present study connotes how the material conditions including ecological settings, conditions of productions and conditions individual choices determined the religious behavior of the people of Wayanad. Social form also implies change. As the material world is in constant motion, the society might also be changing accordingly and is the religious beliefs and practices. The social form of religion therefore also involve the depiction of successive changes in the realm of socio cultural life of the people.

Wayanad is a district of the state of Kerala in India which is situated in a position of significance for our study. It lies in the tail end of the Deccan Plateau in the higher altitude and consists of mountains which are part of the Western Ghats ranges. Its population consists considerable number of tribes including Kuruma, Kurichiya, Paniya, Kadar etc. It is bounded by Tamil Nadu in the south east and Karnataka in north east. With the Malabar coast lying to the west, this is also a meeting point of people, languages and ideas of northern plains with that of people from the coastal Malabar. The richness of its resources and channels of accessibility is seemed to have attracted many peoples into this area. Being a point of convergence of people throughout its history, it is currently the land of many religious communities. As a place of commingling of migrants from outside and

¹⁴ Sathish Cahndra, *Historiography, religion, and state in medieval India*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications. 1996, pp. 105-200.

¹⁵ Max weber, *The protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism*, Routledge, 1992; *The Religion of India*, The Freepress, 1958, pp.336-343.

comparatively indigenous tribals, the land possesses multiple forms of religions cultures and related communities. Though part of South India, the area of Wayanad is thus a fertile area for social and historical enquiries as it offers multiple experiences for comparisons leading to understanding and explanation of social and cultural life.

The Problem

Brought up in a Hindu family in a village in Wayanad, I often visited temples and kavus with my parents. When I grew up I also got familiarized with the rituals and practices of tribes of the area. I got many chances to visit where the tribes settled in the region. As a student of history, I also observed the religious practices of Jains, Chettis, Muslims, Christians and others. Through my education and trainings in schools and colleges I had understood many things about religion. For the one it was learnt that different people follow different religions of their own and secondly, each religion possesses its own set of beliefs and practices which are permanent and therefore unchangeable. It was also felt that religion determines predominantly the social life of the people. But as I get on with, I found, at a point of reflection, that the practices of all these religions including the ones in my private domain had undergone transformations of various kinds along with the progress of time. Further, it could be noticed that though belongs to different religions, many rituals and practices are shared by multiple religions in the area. This incongruence between what I formally learned and what I personally experienced always ended led me to a basic question. Why religions which are generally understood to be a prominent source of values and culture took different shape in different spatio-temporal entities? It is found that philosophers, sociologists, anthropologist and historians have addressed the same question in connection with many regions and religions in the world over with varying concerns and perspectives. Their investigations end up in multiple understanding and explanations. Most of them are macro level ones attempting covering laws regarding the development and transformation of religion. An important section of scholars believe that the religious beliefs and practices have moorings in the material and social conditions of the

followers of respective religion. Another sections tends to give larger role to religion in the formations of social and cultural life. The concept of ‘cultural symbiosis’ is an example of the considering the interplay of material conditions and religious behavior of the people of Kerala of the medieval period¹⁶.

Wayanad is a land of many peoples and many religions in an ethnic religious settings, Jainism , Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Hinduism had been here from pre modern period itself. Buddhism and Jainism had lost their prominence in course of time. Now Jainism exist in few pockets of Wayanad such as Kalpetta, Panamaram , Venniyodu etc by losing their tradition .Jains were almost completely absorbed in to Nair community and Budhists in the ilava community, both typical of Kerala¹⁷. Other religions like Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity became powerful there after some migrations here as merchants, rulers, planters and cultivators. Since Wayanad is historically is a meeting place of many religious traditions like jains, Budhists Christian, Hindu, Muslim etc. in a tribal setting in South India, the area offers a lot of possibilities for such a study. It is a land of composite cultures which has a rich ethnic, tribal traditions. Along with that different stages of migration from different parts of Kerala and Karnataka actually molded the cultural setting in Wayanad. Even a cursory observation would reveal that all religious traditions underwent marking changes at certain point of time. The current generation itself has witnessed lot of changes in the structures, perceptions, practices regarding religions general in Wayanad.

Wayanad thus offers a potential terrain for a detailed enquiry about the socio historical setting of the processes involved in the emergence and transformations of religious beliefs and practices with spatio-temporal differentials. The question of the changing nature of religion further leads to many connected questions. How faith forms and religions are generated and took shape in the area? How different religious traditions coexisted and influenced each other in Wayanad during this period? Whether socio-economic conditions did influence the religious beliefs and

¹⁶ MGS Narayanan, *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*, Trivandrum, 1972.

¹⁷ MGS Narayanan, *Cultural symbiosis in Kerala*, Kerala Historical Society, 2000, p.ix.

practices? Did a caste society existed in the area of study? What are the major factors that transformed the religion of the different groups in the area of study? What role did religion play in shaping social norms and community identity? Are there any historical reasons for the presence and absence of different forms of religion in the area of study? Did different waves of migrations produced any telling impact on the religion of the area? Answers to these questions could be sought through the following objectives that the present study set to proceed with.

Objectives of the Study

- To describe geo-eco- historical setting of the Wayanad.
- To discuss the contexts of beliefs and practices of the tribals in Wayanad.
- To explain the impact of migrations on the Socio-religious life of the area of study.
- To examine the eco-social influences on religion in the area of study.
- To conduct a case study of the structural changes of the places of worships in the area of study.
- To find out the emergence of new cultic expression among the selected tribes in Wayanad.
- To trace the changes in the religious beliefs and practices of the area of study.

Review of the Literature

Religion is an important subject on which a lot of studies have been come out from various points of view.

Golden Bough written by James Frazer clearly states about the various religious traits existed among the primitive people across the world. Primitive religion possess certain unique characteristics like belief in totem, magic fear of dead and so on. Tree worship occurs a central point in this work golden bough. Character like king of wood is designated for plucking a bough or golden bough

from a wood in sacred grove.¹⁸ This work is using the metaphor a bough from the tree in a sacred grove to explain his theme. Viewing from the standpoint of a comparative anthropology, he states that tree worship as the basic stage in the evolution of human religion. This work deals with fear of dead soul to the human beings which can be still seen among the primitive people across the world. Golden bough describes various magic s used by the primitive people such as sympathetic magic to trap the enemies. Comparing the cultural behaviour of multiple communities around the world, he unveiled the functional basis of ritual and mythology. This extended our knowledge further to the materialist understanding of the cultural behaviour.

Primitive Culture by EB Taylor (1871) is a commendable analysis of the characteristics of Primitive religion in the world . Through this work he proves that animism , magic , superstitions that survives even in the modern religious practices had its root from primitive religions. Through this work Taylor says that animism arises from the emotional background and awe developed in the mind of primitive man from his experiences of death, dreams, trances and hallucinations. In this work Taylor states that animistic believes of primitive men like belief in ancestor emerge from the fear of dead soul, which is still exist as a feature of world religion. Ancestor worship exist lively among the primitive tribes like Mullukurumas , Paniyas, and Kurichyas . On every occasions of their life like death , birth, marriage, hunting they seek the blessings of their ancestors. In kurichya and Mullukuruma faith” Mutthappan” adorn a central position. Kurichyas believe that every soul will reach in the world of” four mothers” after the death . They have many Muthappan also. crop failure, natural calamities, immature death so on may be count by them due to the wrath of predecessors. Taylor trace the root of idolatry from the ‘fetishism, or veneration of sacred object by the primitive people,

¹⁸ James Frazer, *Golden Bough A Study of Magic and Religion*, The floating press publication, 2009, p.10.

In short, through his interesting analysis of primitive religion, Taylor asserts that modern religions are the surviving traits of primitive practices which had in vogue in early times itself.

Magic, Science and Religion and other essays by Bronislaw Malinowski, compare and contrast various dimensions of science and religion in healing human stress and awe. In this work Malinowski says about the relevance of sympathetic magic in ups and downs of human life which had a universal application. Some of such instances are put forward by him like this, "at marriage ceremonies, good luck for married couples is obtained by the stringent observances of several magical methods such as throwing the slippers and spilling of rice."¹⁹ "He exemplifies the fact that" the richest domain of magic however is in civilization as in savagery is that of health. Roman Catholicism opens its sacred shrines and places of worship to the ailing pilgrim. The main function of Christian science is that the thinking away of illness and decay, its metaphysics are very strongly pragmatic and utilitarian; and ritual is essentially a means to end health and happiness.²⁰ Through these examples Malinowski tries to ascertain that magic and religion are two tools of adaptation; both of them aim to help man to save himself from difficulties and discomforts.

Religion and Social order, chapters in this work examine the stresses between Mormon intellectual community and hierarchical tradition in the church. *The sociology of religion* by Grace Davie (2007), discusses the role of religion in the modern world. She uses various multi-layered theories, examples and anomalies to narrate frequently seen disjunction between secularization theory and religious practices by individuals and communities throughout the world. This work also tries to explain the relevance of sociology of religion in the contemporary world. He stresses the fact that the spirit of Islam was based on its rich heritage and the glory of Prophet Muhammad lies on his ability to understand the value of rich heritage and bind his fellow men after making them conscious of it.

¹⁹ Bronislaw Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays, selected and written introduction by Robert Redfield*, Beacon press, Boston, Massachusetts, 1948 p.40.

²⁰ *Ibid.*,

The elementary forms of the Religious life written by Emile Durkheim (1912) is bringing before the readers the core argument that "religious representations are collective representations which expresses collective realities"²¹ Durkheim proves this by evaluating elementary forms of primitive religion. He narrates the primitive totemism in Australia to prove that all religion possess something in common. He analyses the evolution of religion through various stages and argues that primitive religion could shed light upon advanced modern religions. *An introduction to the sociology of religion classical and contemporary perspectives*(2006) by Inger Furseth and Pad Rapstad gives us an over view of sociological theories of contemporary religious life. It put forward certain questions like Is religion is a fundamental driving force? or whether leaders are using it for political purposes? Do all religion have the traits of oppressing women? Likewise. In the *Essence of Christianity* (1841), Ludwig Feuer bach shows that every aspect of God reflects different requirements of human beings. God is outward reflection of man's inner nature.

The Historical role of Islam: An essay on Islamic culture(1937) by MN Roy is critically analyzes the astonishing success of Islam across the globe was primarily due to its capability to lead the masses in to hopeful situation from the desperate decline of Greek Roman and Chinese civilizations.

This Fissured land an Ecological History of India(1996) by Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha gives a theoretical base for this study which shows the transformation of society on the basis of changes in mode of resource use. It vividly describes how human beings change their belief system and ideology when they reach in the new mode of resource use with fine examples. Through this work Madhava Gadgil and Rama Chandra Guha tries to warn the ecological set backs caused by the Industrial mode of resource use in which human beings are exploiting nature to increase their profit.

Mythum Samoohavum (2013) is a remarkable work of Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Warriar which states about the social functions of bhakthi, diffusion and

²¹ Emile Durkheim, *The elementary forms of the religious life.*, Paris, 1912, p. 22.

diversion of different deities from tribal folk tradition and assimilation of some gods in to pantheons of other religions . This work says about the absorption of Lord Sreekrishna as the twenty seventh Thirthankara of Jainism.

The Sociology of Religion (1963) says about the significant role of religion in social changes throughout history. Max Weber narrates the elementary forms of primitive religion such as Magic, Charisma, belief in spirit as magic have certain effects on meteorology, healing, divination, and telepathy. He says that charisma is a natural endowment and it is a feature of primitive religion. He Characterize the belief in spirit is a part of primitive religion. Spirit is neither soul, demon, and nor god, but something indeterminate material yet invisible, impersonal yet somehow endowed with will. Through this work the author is successful in analyzing different characteristics of folk and primitive religion but he could not trace out transitions if primitive religions.

In his monumental work *Religion and Anthropology* (2006), Brain Morris says that each village have a number of hereditary caste which are linked together by ritual obligations and economic ties, and also this castes are focused around members of land owning castes. He also shows how the theory of Purity and Pollution segregating the low caste agrarian community socially and economically. Also he says that through continues communication between little local traditions resulted in the merging of these two seen through the festivals and deities. Only residual fragments of the religions of such a little community can be conceived as distinctive or separable.

DD Kosambi made a revolutionary attempt in the study of social and economic aspect of religion in India through his works like *Myth and Reality* (1962). This work was a path breaking contribution on the on the study of religion in its social implications. He analyzes the economic as well as social conditions contributed for the cultic emergence of certain gods like Siva and Krishna in this work. "Siva grows out of rather primitive aniconic cult along several parallel tracks

in to a sublimated highest god.”²² Through this work DD Kosambi also analyze the social and economic aspect of Bhagavatgitha.

Suvira Jaiswal had studied the development of the Vaishnava sect in India and how it became synonymous with the Hinduism through her work *Origine and development of Vaishnavism from 200BC to AD 500* (1981). She describes the different stages through which Vaishnavism could assimilate tribal deities in to its fold .She uses a wide range of sources for making this study fruitful like Buddhist , Jaina texts and coinage in Gupta and Maurya period without loosing its historical sense. She also tries to bring forth various cultic integration through the examples of Narayana Sankarsana, Balarama etc.

Romila Thaper in her monumental work *Interpreting Early India* (1992) wrote about imagined religious communities in India. She tries to bring out Hinduism as a coherent community . She high lights difference of Hinduism with Islam and Christianity due to the lack of Prophet or founder and revealed sacred book and an ecclesiastical organization. She reveals the historical ways through which so called Hinduism developed as a Brahmin dominated one by observing the percepts of Sruti – Vedas and Smriti. She attempts to say how Hinduism became a synonym of Brahmanism closest to having sub continental identity largely through ritual function and use of common language

In the article “Imagined Religious communities in India ” she exposes the fact that the notion of Hindu community does not have as long an ancestry as is often pursued. Even in the normative text of Brahmanism, the Dharmasastras it is conceded that there were a variety of communities. Determined by location, occupation, and caste none of which were necessarily bound together by common religious identity.

Thaper also reveals the assimilative character of Vaishnavism, and it is actually preferring to absorb tribal and folk cults and epic heroes. She indicates that

²² DD Kosambi, *Myth and Reality, Studies in the Formation of Indian Culture*, Bombay, 1998, p.2.

the assimilation of other cults were used by the notion of 'Avatara' or incarnation of Mahavishnu.

“*Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical outline* (2001) by DD Kosambi gives a detailed description of techniques adopted by brahmins for assimilation of ethnic folk in to Hinduism and marginalization of women due to bleeding in their course period, and stoppage of 'gurusi' or pouring red colored water over their deities in the name of Vegetarianism. Even though it provides a flood of information it is in a form of narrative rather than analytical, Chronological order are not so mattered in this.

Romila Thaper discussed widely about the issue of changes in belief systems simultaneously with socio economic changes in her work *Early India From the origins to AD 1300*(2002). Most interesting part of this work is that it describes about a range of societies which are still under stone age conditions. This 'living pre history' as it has been called underlines the continuity of cultural survivals.²³ This work provides me a model of cross discipline examinations such as ethno archeology and ethnographic studies , which is particularly pertinent for the study of religion. Thus this book provides some theoretical frame for my studies about the cultural survival of primitive societies in Wayanad.

Religion Tradition and ideology in Pre colonial South India (2011) by R. Champakalakshmi, provides a detailed account of Saiva Vaishnava conflicts, she is picking live examples from different regions in Tamil nadu like Thiruvavoor as a back ground for this struggle, She says that "Bhakthi saints almost launched a crusade against the Jains and Budhists and done total annihilation of non-Brahmanical religions."²⁴ This social scenario have some application upon the religious history of Wayanad as it reflects the Vanishing of Jain dominance and establishment of Vaishnavate Hinduism here. This work is Mainly concentrated the area of Tamilnadu only and not much references about the ethnic traditions too.

²³ Romila Thaper, *Early India : From the origins to AD 1300*, Haryana, 2002, p.xx.

²⁴ R Champaka Lakshmi, *Religion Tradition and Ideology in Precolonial South India*, New Delhi, 2011, p.448..

MN Srinivas is a doyen of Indian Sociology who had made a serious attempt to study Indian caste system in an empirical way. The notion of 'Sanskritization' was first coined by MN Srinivas in his work Religion and society among the Coorg of South India (1952). To describe the cultural mobility in the structure of Indian society. Term Sankritization means that the lower caste people or tribes are trying to escalate their social status by imitating the cultural ideals of high castes especially brahmins. MN Srinivas used the term 'brahminisation' to describe this social phenomena. Later he changed it as Sanskritization in a broader sense. Sanskritisation is a process by which a lower caste or tribes change its customs, ritual, ideology, and way of life towards the direction of Brahmins. Sanskritization have some effect on economy too. Many of lower caste people are declining their traditional jobs due to the lack of dignity for that. Other significant terms also used by MN Srinivas to denote certain sociological development such as 'Westernization' Dominant caste and so on. Dominant caste for him means, a group of people who belonged to same caste have much numerical strength and sizable number of landed property.

Keralathinte Innalekal written by KN Ganesh gives a detailed description of eco -geography of Kerala. He has some specific observations on Wayanad. The fertility cult seen in the megalithic monuments of Wayanad and Edakkal marks the shifting to food producing communities.²⁵ Early inhabitants of hilly regions like kurichyas of Wayand may be migrants to these regions.²⁶

Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala (1972) Written by MGS Narayanan explains the composite culture in Kerala created by various religions like Hinduism, Budhism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam as 'cultural symbiosis'. Symbiosis is a phenomena happens in the world of flora as many plants are living in support of each other in a harmonious way. This term is applied by MGS Narayanan in cultural fabric of Kerala through this work.

²⁵ KN Ganesh, *Keralathinte Innalekal*, Department of Culture, Govt. of Kerala, 1997, p.27.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.23.

Perumals of Kerala (1996) is regarded as the masterpiece of Dr MGS Narayanan. MGS Narayanan could able to fix the chronology of second chera rulers at Mahodayapuram. Fixing of chronology of Chera history based on epigraphical evidence which was written in Vattezhuthu, was quite hazardous. MGS proved himself success ful in doing it in a fair manner. He could find out the period of second Chera Empire from Eighth century CE to Twelfth century CE from obscure evidences.

There are several ethnographical works used which are directly provide us with the tribal life and its A A D Louiz in *Tribes of Kerala* (1962) gives a vivid picture of various tribes in Kerala. A Colourful description of different tribes such as Paniyas Kurumas and Kurichyas are there in the work and their rites and rituals are given in a detailed way. But it is only in a narrative manner. Nothing can be seen in it about the ethnic life and religion in an analytical way.

Keralathile Africa (1963) written by K Panoor mentions different rituals among various tribes in Kerala. In that book he mentions various exploitive methods used by migrants to snatch the property of the kuruma community in Wayanad. He also describes the slave life of the Paniyas in his work, he says that, Paniyas are the most unlucky groups among the tribes of Wayanad. How the Paniyas became the slaves of guandas and chetties is also well described by him. The life and culture of Kurichias are narrated by him in this work. Even if it gives a general description of alienation of tribal lands, least references are there about their religious aspects and acculturation.

Nettur P Damodaran *Adivasikalude Keralam* (1974) mentions about 45 categories of scheduled tribes in Kerala. It is an explanation of the socio economic life of different tribal communities in Kerala such as Irular, Kanikkar, Kurichyar, Karimbalar, Mullukurumar. Their livelihood depends, mainly on cultivation, hunting, cattle rearing etc., their birth rites, marriages, death rites are described vividly.

PRG Mathur had attempted to study deeply about the backward position of various tribal communities in Kerala through his work *Tribal situations in Kerala*

(1977). It describes the language, landlessness, alienation of adivasi land, indebtedness, bonded labor, and the position of women are his matter of reference in that work. Rites and rituals of various scheduled tribes and their financial positions are also described in the work.

Chacko Kannattumodi in his famous work *Kurichiarude Lokam* (1994) describes the myths related to origin of Kurichia community, their joint family set up, position of women, ritual hunting, marriage ceremony, festivals and auspicious days, puberty celebrations are mentioned. The author is thoroughly assertive on the coercive nature of Kurichiya religion, no inclination made on the acculturation and conversion among the Kurichya community in Wayanad.

Paniyas of Wayanad (2008) written by Sandhya Reshmi, elucidate the dilapidated conditions of Paniya tribes. Historical evolution of slavery among them, and “bonded labor existed among them are major factors described by her through this work. Along with that, their food gathering, marriage ceremonies and death ceremonies are vastly described.

Gothra Samskara Padanangal (2010) by DR Kumaran Vayalery (2010) gives a vast narrative about the Kurichiya community in Wayanad and their distinct culture, family organizations, different art forms etc. give us a clear cut picture about the rich cultural heritage of Kurichya community.

Paniyas (1976) by P Somasekharan, depicts the ethnographic aspect of Paniya tribe and how modernity destroys their language and culture. This work provides us with the details of different rites and rituals existing among them.

A Aiyappan and K Mahadevan jointly presents a commendable and comprehensive work on Kurichiyas through *Ecology Economy Matriliney and Fertility of Kurichiyas* (2008) in this work they provides us with the details of the ethnography of Kurichya community and how their matriliney disappeared along with the dilapidation of Kurichiya Tharavadu. Authors also concentrates on the issue of how Travancore migration and cash crop cultivation affected the tribal life especially Kurichiya community. Certain amendments of law by govt also altered

their religious and ritual life it also affected their health position too, but it gives only a general references about the acculturation process of the community and conversion to Christianity.

Paniyas - An Ex slave Tribe of South India (1992) by A Aiyappan critically analyze different aspect of Paniya life in Wayanad. Author shows the world view of tribes in this work in symbiotic way. An elaborate description of their religious life is depicted in this work and their transformation in to Hindu faith also, but it failed to provide us a clear picture of Paniyas interaction with upper caste as well as other tribes and the process of Hinduisation among them.

Local historians also attempted descriptions about the social and cultural life of the people of the region. *Wayanad Rekhakal* (2010) by OK Johni a detailed description of different religions in Wayanad such as islam, Jains etc. He also sarcastically describes the plight of converted tribes and the progress of different developmental programs of Govt. He brilliantly describes various phases of Pazhassi riots against the British and the development of Kurichya revolt against the false tax practices of the British. In his view tribes such as Kurichiyans and Mullukurumas began permanent cultivation, instead of Punam cultivation only after the arrival of Jains. Due to the scarcity of agricultural land after the arrival of Jains and cultural contact with them forced the tribes to start cultivation Permanantly. He has also brought out other titles on the same themes.

Charithramurangunna Wayanad (2022) prepared by Bala sabha, Kudumbasree Mission is a perfect one as it pictures the local history of Wayanad completely. It is published in two volumes in which they refers about the geographical peculiarities, early Migrants of Wayanad, Resources of Wayanad, plantations, Different rites related to tribes of Wayanad, political riots like it touches all spheres of the History of Wayanad.

Bava K Palukunnu vividly describes the history of different 83 villages in Wayanad through his work *Wayanadan Gramangal* (2023). It is an interesting narration of Prehistory, worship centers, Etymology etc. of Villages in Wayanad. It

also provides valuable information on the life of ethnic tribes too. This work seems quite narrative even though it provides many information generally

Kurumporai (2014) by Mundakkayam Gopi gives a narrative picture of History of Wayanad. He mentions about details of Pazhassi struggle, Slavery and the punishment for escaped slaves, Kurichiya revolt and capturing of Kavus like Pazhoor Kandan pulikavu of Wayanadan chettis, Ponmudikkotta kavu, Thonoichal Malakkari temple, etc. by Namboothiri brahmins.

Wayanadan Ramayanam by Azeez Tharuvana (2011) is an interesting addition. It is the collection of the local version of Ramayana prevailing in Wayanad in modern period. The Wayanadan Chetti community probably. He says that there are several local varieties of Ramayana existing in different parts of the world such as Cambodia, Indonesia etc. Tharuvana in this work opines that, the story of Ramayana may be spread among the tribal communities in Wayanad through the methods of story-telling or 'katha parachil'. It was a common practice among the Adiyas also. There are several origin stories among tribes among which epical heros plays a dominant role. Through this work, author is doing a commendable effort to reveal the spread of Vaishnavism in the virgin soil of Wayanad. This work shed light upon some of Temples in Wayanad especially in South Eastern Wayanad which are strong centers of Vaishnavism in Wayanad.

Methodology and Sources

Such a study demands a combination of Geographical descriptions, historical methods, ethnographic depictions, ecological enquiries, structural and iconographic comparisons for a meaningful approach to the study. The description of geography, landscapes and the settlements have been attained through the perusal of secondary works including colonial reports and documents. Mapping the landscape could be completed through a method of interpolation of the available maps adding the required markers based on other data. The study intends to compare the changes in the social life and the forms of religion. Tracing and tracking changes always bring in the need for a historical method availing the records and the artefacts of the past. Historical method can be most suitable method for this study to form a picture of the

historical past of different communities and religious life here. The study conceives analyses of history of cultic tradition and folklore. Past experiences of worship and present worship should be compared under this method, or so that we can identify changes in the study used considerable lot of colonial records available in the archives in the form of colonial settlement documents, geographical sketches, forest reports, local documents and the sources to trace the pathways of changes in the social life. Still it is very difficult to trace back the pre modern history of the area on account of the lack of written records. Here the study massively depended upon the regressive method of reading the past on the basis of the present. Regressive method means digging up of past from the living societies. It was a method that was successfully availed by great authors. Kosambi's ethno-archaeology of tribes considering his materials as that of "living pre-histories" gave the study an adoptable mode of regressive research. Colonial and native anthropological reports offered considerable data for the understanding of the historical processes. The material pertaining to all the tribes did not have represented in this study. Tribes who are currently following three levels of social life are represented in this work through Kurichiyars, MullaKurumars and Paniyas. Practices such as rituals and celebrations offered a credible sources to read the social history of the people. To understand the ritual and cultic behaviours, this research benefited from extensive field work and keen participant observation.

The theoretical position this study followed require some explanation. A compelling frame work that has been used for the study is of the changing "modes of resource use" set by the ecological historians. The idea is a critical reformulation of the concept of "mode of production". Mode of resource use is the idea that all aspects of life of the people are basically influenced by ecological and environmental factors where people are living as societies. All elements of the 'base and superstructure' involved in the mode of production thus is , to a great extent, determined by the ecology. Wayanad, being an area where a considerable number of tribals living predominantly in pre modern conditions, is found more suitably explained with mode of resource use. As per this concept, the stages of social life of the people are defined by the predominance of modes of resource use such as

hunting/gathering stage, pastoral stage, settled cultivating stage and Industrial stage. When the materials of Wayand is considered under these concepts, their social life is found to have belong to two visible stages. The study consider the first as pre-Industrial stage and the second Industrial stage. There might be some doubts cropping up while the study mentions an Industrial stage in Wayanad. The study is concerned about the social form of religion. When we consider the Industrial age of Wayand, It is not on the basis of the industrial development of the area of study. The pre-industrial life is functionally local. But the Industrial society is global. Capitalism is basically a world system that extends its hands to the whole local societies of the globe. Wayanad was incorporated to the Industrial world between 1800 and 2000CE. By this time Wayand became the part of an industrial society; of course not in the core but in the periphery. For Wayanad it is the period of the British colonial dominance. Still, the people of the area of study began to feel and avail the modern facilities, amenities and its problems as well under the colonial dominance. The study therefore consider this period as the Industrial stage of social life of Wayanad that has impacted the religious forms of the people there. The case study part is materialized through continuous site visits and field works to add clarity to data extended by the secondary works. The understanding of early societies has been helped by anthropologists studying pre modern societies and by those analysing pre capitalist systems.²⁷ The regressive method can be adopted in this regard. Ethno historical method, anthropological method and post structural methods can be applied for the study of religious symbolism and ritual performances. Methods of field archaeology and tools and concepts from Arts History is also useful for the study of iconography.

Scope of the study

The study intends to bring the Wayanad district of Kerala under its purview. The culturally diverse nature of the district formed out of migrations of various people from various regions to Wayanad offers a meaningful setting for such a study. The study would like to bring the period between 19th century and 20th

²⁷ Romila Thaper, *Early India, from the origins to AD 1300*, Haryana, 2002, p.54.

century under the scope of study. Spark of Modernity and urbanization became inevitable during this period due to the arrival of Tipu Sulthan,. The British arrived here to defeat him and they established plantations and political power too. Muslim merchants came here to have trade with Wayanad, then arrived Nairs under Kottayam rulers, Vestiges of Buddhism had been seen in the Edakkal caves, existing evidences shows the vital role of Jain merchants here. Arrival of numerous migrants through ages and consecutive changes in the mode of resource use of inhabitants might have contributed certain changes in the religious practices of tribes here. The study is intended to cover the colonial period and related developments. The study further brings many developments in Wayanad after the independence of the country.

Relevance of the Study

The present study would contribute the history of Wayanad and Kerala in general. As the study covers the history of a segment of Kerala situated at meeting point of different cultures, the study intended may bring out a microcosm of Kerala's cultural history. The understanding and explanation of the religious phenomena of Wayanad might contribute to initiate discussions regarding the nature of Kerala culture. A logical explanation of the religious phenomena of the region probably be benefitted for discussions of contemporary religion. Since Wayanad provide source of many religions like Jainism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam, such a study may also throw fresh lights into the syncretic cultural ambience of the region. This study also discuss various agents involved in the process of syncretism which is phenomena happens across the whole area of Kerala.

Scheme of Presentation

This study aims to complete through five core chapters along with introduction and conclusion. Introduction comprise the Research problem, objectives, hypothesis, and Methodology scope and relevance of the study

First chapter titled " *Wayanad- Land People and Resources*" describes the geographical features considering them as the resources for the maintenance of its population. Naturally, it consists of the types of soil and rocks, the spread of minerals, the distribution of water bodies and the expanse of vegetation. The chapter also attempted to illustrate the ecological and environmental changes that had an impact on its people and history. It also portrays the ways of life of the people with details about the description of the spread of the tribals and non-tribals in relation with their living related resources.

Second Chapter titled as "*Changing Modes of Resource us*" makes a detailed study on the economic activities of people in different modes of Resource use Such as in Gathering mode, Pastoral mode, mode of settled cultivation, and Industrial mode and its reflections on the life Kurichya, Mullukuruma, Paniya, Chettys and other communities of Wayanad generally in their socio economic life . Others in Wayand arrived mainly in the second half of twentieth century. Hence their history stated here is pertaining to industrial mode only. Based on various sources including archaeology and folklore, the study tried to draw the picture of pre-modern and modern socio economic life including ecological factors and factors of production ,exchange and distribution.

"*Religion in Wayanad in Preindustrial Phase*" is the third chapter in which an attempt is made to explain the ecological and social roots of religious beliefs and practices followed by the population in Wayanad. Being related with the pre industrial and pre modern period and the sources about the period are very limited, an ethnographical description with view to having a regressive analysis is made in this chapter. Modes of resource use and related political economy is considered for explaining the changes that have taken place in the religious beliefs and practices. The chapter shows how the restrains and requirements that the socio economic factors set on the people influenced their ideology and culture.

Fourth chapter titled ” *Religion in Wayanad in Industrial phase*” is one that explain the impact of industrialisation and modern culture on the people of Wayanad. Hinging up on it, the chapter tries to link such developments with the religious developments of the region. It has a special focus on tribes like Kurichiyans, Mullukurumas, Paniyas and Chetty community of 20th century. The breakage of Marumakkathayam and joint families among Kurichias, Changes in demographic patterns etc. Consecutive economic and social changes also visible in life of the tribes in Wayanad and in their religion too are described in it. There is a trend of transformation towards nationally and globally homogenous forms of religion conspicuous in twentieth century.

Fifth and final chapter named as "*Transformation of religious spaces-Case Studies*". This chapter consist of a set of case studies in which five Hindu temples, one Jain shrine, one Muslim mosque and a Christian church are included. It brings before us a point of comparison between them. In general case we can see that there is a tendency for transform from simple to complex mode of worship in all cases under consideration. Further we can notice that syncretic mode of worship in pre-industrial phase had been lost in twentieth century, when industrial mode of life became dominant. Changes happened are unique for different religions. Tribal *kavus* were grown in to Hindu Temples in its ritual, mediation and practices. In the jain temple all jain traits of worship lost and replaced with Hindu worship. In the case of Christian church and Muslim mosque syncretic worship progressively change towards a monolithic worship pattern. This chapter also present an evidential frame for the present study. Major structural changes happened in this *kavu's* iconography and rituals. Simple practices of worship are changed to complex and mediated practices of worship. *Kavus* had grown in to temples in Tantric lines. Market became an agent which decides the trends of *bhakthi*. All these changes were came in to practice through different processes including *prashnamveppu* or through some kind of astronomical predictions. These aspects were strongly stressed in this chapter.

Conclusion of the Study attempts to brief the findings of the study and explains what the present study communicate with the already available studies in the study area. It also tries to contextualise the finding of the study in the light od existing proposals and conclusions regarding the relationship between society and culture ,especially religion. The conclusion also bring up some of the limitations of the present research. It also indicate some new areas of research which would probably solve some issues related with the current topic.

CHAPTER 1

WAYANAD - LAND, PEOPLE AND RESOURCES

The Wayanad Taluk is a continuation of the great Mysore plateau and lies above the crest of the western ghats. The country is rugged and picturesque, especially in the south west, where range after range of hills undulate, some hills with peaks of more than 7000 feet. The average height of the plateau is about 2000 ft above the sea level, but many of the peaks are higher than that ; Vellarimala is (7,364 feet), Elambileri is (6806 feet) and Balasore or Banasura is (6762 feet) , where the legendary giant Banasura is said to have built his fort. Wayanad taluk is lying between 11°27' and 11° 68' N lat and between 75° 50' 40" and 70° 41' E long.¹ There are different hypotheses regarding the evolution of the place name "Wayanad". Mariyamman kovil inscription at Sulthan Bathery mentions about Wayanadu as "veera vayal nadu" and it also mentions about the "Poothapadi padai nayar". Style of the script in the inscription says that it may belong to twelve century AD as opined by Adoor Ramachandran Nair. The Madras manual administration says that the Sanskrit name of Wayanad was 'Mayakshethra'. This sanskrit connotation became 'Mayanadu' and later shifted to Wayanad.² Vayal nadu, Vananadu, Vazhinadu etc., are also related to Wayanad; but it is more reasonable to assume Wayanad as its name evolved from 'Mayakshethra'. Sometimes the Malayalam version of Mayakshethra, Mayanad may have turned as Wayanad³. Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair says in his work that the term Vananad or land of forest may have turned as Wayanadu. Wayanadu is a hilly area more than 2000 ft above the sea level with fertile soil. Nilgiri hills are situating on eastern part and Mysore plateau is bordering north west.⁴ In 1877, Cherankod, Munnadan, Nambalakkod

¹ Ed CB Mac Lean, *MacLeans Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency* Vol 1, New Delhi, 1987, p.143.

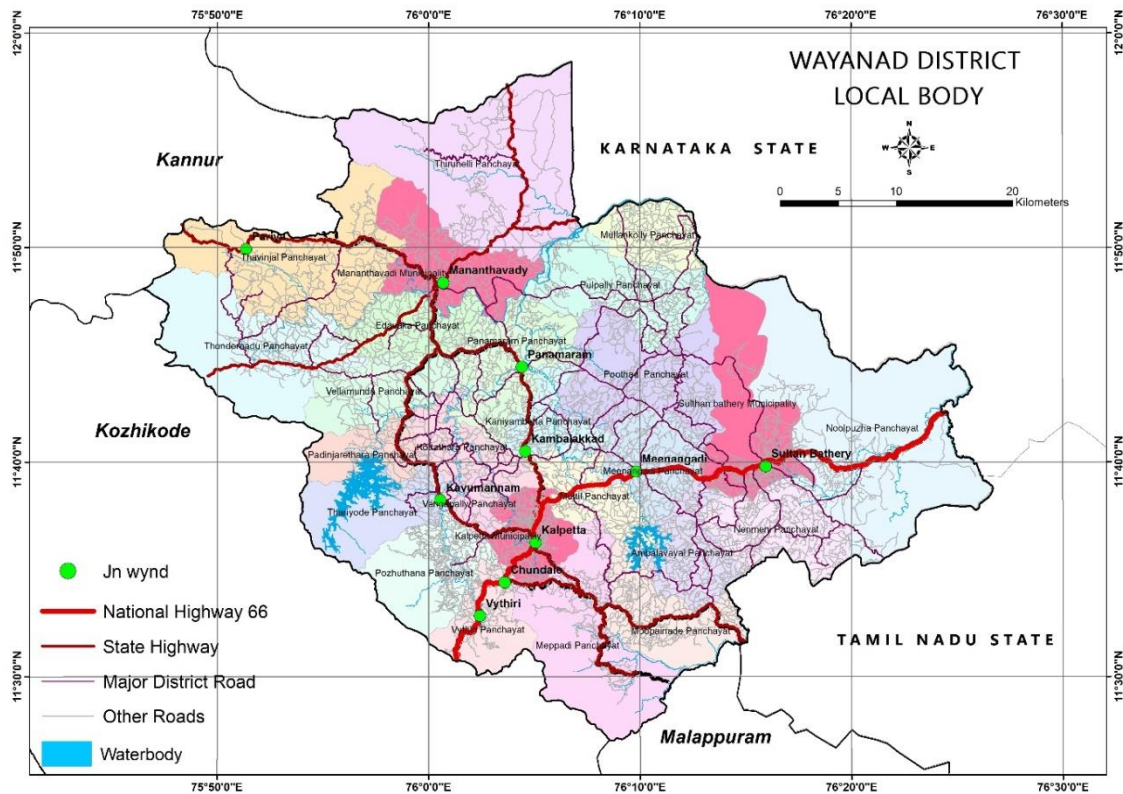
² *Madras Manuel of administration*, Vol iii, p 1025.

³ Rao bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parampariyavum* (Mal), K.K.N. Kurup (Tr.), Modern books S.Bathery, 2006. p.17.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17

regions which were situated in Nilgiri Division of Wayanad had been transferred to Nilgiri District of Tamil Nadu for administrative convenience.⁵

Map 1: Physical Map of Wayanad



Source: Town planning office Wayanad District, Civil Station Kalpetta.

Climate

Climate of Wayanad plateau is fairly cool due to its higher altitude.⁶ Temperature is around 15° C in the cold season, but in summer season temperature of 29° C or above may be recorded. Mist is common there from November to February, especially in higher elevations. Between October and February atmosphere becomes dry and hotter. High velocity of winds are common in high

⁵ OK Johni . *Wayanad Rekhakal*, Sulthan Batherly , 2010, p.102.

⁶ V Saji Kumar, *Working Plan*, South Wayanad, Forest Division, 2012--2022, p. 8.

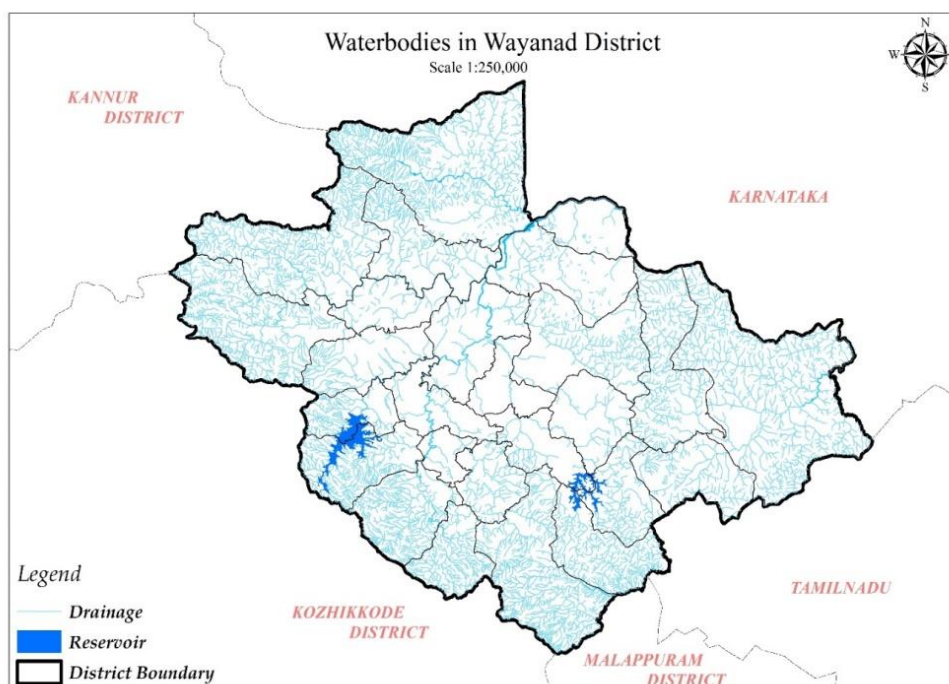
altitudes during south west monsoon. This region also experiences severe cold during this period . Winter is very severe in the month of *Makaram*.⁷

Resources

Water Resources

Kabani river is one of the three east flowing rivers of Kerala. It is the tributary of river Cauvery. Kabani and its tributaries produce a powerful river system in Wayanad. Panamaram river originates from Pookkode lake, later this river joins with Mananthavadi rivulets. Mananthavadi river is a tributary of Kabani river draining the ‘Kuruva’ reserve on all its sides, The reserve being an island in the river.⁸ Almost entire Wayanad is drained by the Kabani river and its tributaries namely Panamaram, Mananthavady, Thirunelli etc.⁹

Map 2. Water bodies in Wayanad



Source: map from District Town Planning office, Civil Station, Kalpetta 2005

⁷ Vellamunda Grama Panchayath, *Vikasana Rekha*, 14 th Five year plan, 2022-27, p .20.

⁸ *Working Plan*, South Wayanad, Forest Division , 1977-87, p .13.

⁹ *Forest working Plan*, South Wayanad Forest Division, 1911 -21, p .9.

There are two river systems and many rivulets in Wayanad region. Some of them are east flowing and some are flowing west wards.

Important west flowing rivers are

- a. Aranapuzha – Drains Mundakkai section.
- b. Vellarimala Puzha - Drains the Muppainad area.
- c. Kalladi Puzha – Drains the chulika *malavaram*.

Important East following streams are

- a. Kadamanthodu - Drains the Thrissileri slopes.
- b. Vallanpuzha – Drains Thrissileri slopes.
- c. Panamaram puzha – Drains Vythiri and Achooranam area.
- d. Mananthavadi Puzha - Drains the VF of Periya range.
- e. Narasipuzha and kadamanthodu – Drains the eastern and western portions of Padri reserve¹⁰ and joins ‘Mananthavadi puzha’¹¹ Murmavu and its important tributaries, Kurichiyat puzha, Dodappallam waterfalls streams draining the Kurichiayat reserve.

Nulpuzha drains the Noolpuzha, Rampur and Mavinhalla reserves.

Mavinhalla streams draining the eastern portion of Mavinhalla and Rampur reserves and joins Nulpuzha streams. Ammanvayal thode starting from and draining the Kurichiat reserve, joins the Nagarhole streams, a tributary of Cauvery. “Manjathodu” draining portions of Kurichiat reserve, Kuppady reserve and Rampur reserve, Joins Nulpuzha streams.¹²

In short Kabani river one of the three east flowing rivers in Kerala, a tributary of Cauvery river, produce a powerful river system in Wayanad. Almost

¹⁰ *Working Plan*, South Wayanad Forest Division, (2012 -2022), p .9.

¹¹ *Working plan*, South Wayanad Forest Division – 1977-87, p.13 .

¹² *Ibid*.

entire Wayanad is drained by the Kabani river and its tributaries namely Panamaram, Mananthavadi and Thirunelli.¹³

Streams and Meadows

There are several streams across Wayanad nourishing different river systems in Wayanad and serving as the back bone of paddy cultivation in Wayanad. There are numerous streams in Mooppainadu panchayath such as “Jaihind, Koleri, Arappatta, Thinapuram, Nallannur thodu, Pulloorkunnu, Kadalmadu thodu, Varipra and Nedumudi thodu, that join with Karappuzha and later with Kabani river, which finally irrigates the Kaveri river basin. Other streams such as Anadikappu, Aramangalamchal thodu, Valathur thodu, Arappara 6th number thodu, Kundu paramban thodu, Laksham veedu thodu, Rippon 2nd number thodu, Puthukkad thodu, Kadassery thodu, Vattathu vayal thodu etc drain the Kantham para puzha”.¹⁴ Vadakkanad thodu, and Kakka thodu in Noolpuzha join with the Nuku Dam in Karnataka¹⁵

Ezham chira, Mundu para thodu, Vellithodu, Mani vayal thodu, Puthoor vayal thodu, Manjalam kolly thodu, Kottanad, Kunnampatta thodu, Pakkalipallam thodu, in Meppadi panchayath join with Chaliyar and finally merges with Arabian sea¹⁶

In the Meenangadi region, there are certain important streams such as Narasippuzha, Purakkadipuzha, Chundalippuzha and Kolmbetta thodu, All these streams drain Karappuzha¹⁷

In the Ambalavayal grama Panchayath there are many streams such as Aama thodu, Aanappara thodu, flowing towards Kottur river and Kuppamudi thodu,

¹³ *Working plan*, South Wayanad, Forest division, 1911-21, p . 9.

¹⁴ Mooppainadu Grama Panchayath , *Vikasana Rekha*, 14th Five Year Plan, 2022-27, p.12.

¹⁵ Noolpuzha Grama Panchayath, *Vikasana Rekha*, 14th Five Year Plan, 2022-27, p.22.

¹⁶ Meppadi Grama Panchayath, *Vikasana Rekha*, 14th Five Year Plan 2022-27, pp.20-21.

¹⁷ Meenangadi Grama Panchayath, *Vikasana Rekha*, 14th Five Year Plan, 2022-27, p. 44.

Pathirambam thodu, Arimula thodu, Karingolodu thodu, Athimattam thodu, Puttadu Manal vayal thodu etc which drain towards Karappuzha.¹⁸

Availability of enough water and the alluvium brought by the streams and rivers actually invited migrants such as Chettys and Jains to settle here and expand the paddy cultivation.

Soil

Generally Wayanad District has five distinct classes of soil namely coastal, alluvium, Laterite and forest loams. Chief soil type of the area is forest peat and sandy loam. The Laterite soil seen in some areas of Wayanad is reddish brown in colour, formed under tropical monsoonal climate with alternate wet and dry seasons. There is presence of iron content locally known as 'chemburava' (red layer of standing water in rice field in the soil).¹⁹ In the Wayanad Taluk only paddy fields soils have been classified. The soils there belong to red ferruginous series. The red ferruginous soils are of various shades of red and brown due to the presence of iron in the rock.²⁰ Due to the thick decomposition of organic substances, fertility is mostly good. Tea and coffee can thrive well in the soil.

Being placed on the southern tip of western plateau, its prime glory lies in the majestic western ghats with lofty ridges, interspersed with gigantic forests, tangled jungles and deep valleys. Hills in the Centre of the district are lower in height. The low hills are full of different plantations like tea, coffee, Pepper etc. All valleys have paddy fields in on extensive areas.

The important varieties of soil in Wayanad are classified under the category of bench marked soils. Major bench marked soils found in Wayanad are the following.

¹⁸ AmbalaVayal Grama Panchayat, *Vikasana Rekha*, 14th Five year plan, 2022-27 p. not known.

¹⁹ *Working Plan*, South Wayanad Forest Division, 2012 -2022, p .3.

²⁰ *Statistical atlas – of the Malabar District*, Revised and brought up to the decennium ending Fasil 1360 (1950-51), Director of Statistics, Government of Madras, 1963, p.22.

1. Battuvady series
2. Pulpally Series.
3. Mananthavady Series.
4. Sulthan Bathery series
5. Perya Series
6. Meppadi Series.²¹

Rainfall

Wayanad had heavy rainfall in the last decades of 19th century. Wayanad was famous for its fortieth number rain which has been totally disappeared now due to climatic imbalances²². The following statistics shows the of rainfall in Mananthavadi, and Vythiri in Wayanad in different months.

Table 1.1: Rainfall in Mananthavady and Vythiri in 1870-03

| Station | Year Recorded | January to March | April and may | June to September | October to December | Total |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------|
| Vythiri | 1870-03 | 1.98 | 10.82 | 140.16 | 16.36 | 169.32 |
| Mananthavadi | 1870-03 | 1.76 | 7.94 | 87.56 | 9.17 | 106.43* |

*Cainnes ICS Malabar Gazetteer, Govt of Kerala

Kerala Gazetteers Dept 1997, p.280

Average rain fall of the area is 2322 mm. Lakkidi, Vythiri and Meppadi are high rainfall areas in Wayanad. Annual rainfall in these areas ranges from 3000 mm to 4000 mm²³ The South west monsoon have starts from the last week of May and lasts up to September. The south west monsoon is locally known as ‘*Edavappathi*’ or ‘*Kalavarsham*’. North east monsoon or ‘*Thulavarsham*’ also gives good rain in

²¹ *Benchmark Soil of Kerala*: Govt of Kerala, Soil Survey Organization, Agriculture (SC Unit) Dept. 2007, Addition Director and Head , Soil Survey Organization, p.444.

²² Vellamunda Grama Panchayath, *Vikasana Rekha*, 14 th Five year plan, 2022-27, p .20.

²³ *Working plan*, South west Forest Division, 2012-22, p.6.

the afternoon accompanied with thunder and lightning. Due to the heavy rainfall seasonal crops and like paddy, ragi etc and forest plantation and forests can thrive well.

Table 1.2: Rainfall data in Wayanad from 2001 to 2010²⁴

| | | Total annual rainfall |
|----|------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2001 | 1144.10 |
| 2 | 2002 | 1108.50 |
| 3 | 2003 | 1520.60 |
| 4 | 2004 | 1899.80 |
| 5 | 2005 | 2168.20 |
| 6 | 2006 | 2047.80 |
| 7 | 2007 | 2023.20 |
| 8 | 2008 | 1781.00 |
| 9 | 2009 | 2077.00 |
| 10 | 2010 | 185.80 |

Source: Forest working plan from 2012 to 2022, South west forest division

Forest

One of the main resource and wealth existed in Wayanad was its fabulous forest. The forest of Malabar in Wayanad Thaluk consisted of bamboo forest, deciduous, shoala forest etc. Unlike the Kôchi and Thiruvithamcore area, there are private forest vested with the land lords. The land lords considered their rights over forest as ‘*Janmam*’ right or right by birth. In Wayanad regions major portion of forest land were occupied by the local Naduvazhis. Their chief form of revenue was exporting of precious woods and capture of elephants. Hadfield started capture of elephants in Nilambur through pits. In Wayanad capture of elephants started in 1885 in pit system.²⁵ Between 1896 and 1903 eighty-three elephants were captured and

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Working plan, 2022, p. 6.

²⁵ Karunakaran C K, *Keralathile Vanangal Noottandukaliloode*, Kerala Bhasha Institute Thiruvananthapuram, fourth edition 1992, pp. 90- 91.

seventy one brought to kraals and trained²⁶. Several local place names are reminding of this system such as “*Moonnanakuzhi*” a place where three elephant pits existed . There are two "*Moonnanakkuzhi*'s" near Sulthan Bathery. All Nair land lords namely Varayal Nair, Kalpetta Nair, Kuppathodu Nair and Thonder Nambiar possessed their own Janmam forests. These Nair Janmis extracted much wealth from tree trading as well as pit falling of elephants. Chief revenue of pulpally Seethadevi temple Devaswom was tree trading and elephant selling.²⁷

When Malabar came under the British rule, even though they had attempted to reserve the forest widely ,they cannot prove that it was under the possession of the British. Jenmis showed the elephant pits to prove their claim over the reserved forest. While Civil courts were dealing these cases, the courts issued order like this; “if a particular forest land is not under the ownership of govt. by escheat or contract will be the private property of local land lords”.²⁸

Large scale tree felling and commercialization of forest started with the arrival of the British on May 20 180. Malabar district became part of Madras Presidency²⁹ and a collector was appointed and a sub collector to assist him. Wayanad possessed a flourishing forest range. When captain James Welsh came to Wayanad for the suppression of 1812 Kurichia revolt, he was stunned to see the size and height of gigantic trees in Wayanad.³⁰ Chief causes behind the destruction of natural forest was the plantation and Monocrop cultivation. An enquiry in to the claims of government in 1859 revealed that the private claims had been allowed to spring up in violation of the sole rights of the government over the whole of the forests. Shifting cultivation was being practised widely and a wave of coffee cultivation which commenced in 1840 had resulted in the formation of vast coffee

²⁶ C A Innes ICS, *Malabar Gazetteer*, Govt of Kerala , 1997, p.242.

²⁷ Interview with Kuppathodu Rajasekharan, Trustee, Pulpally temple on 01 November, 2022.

²⁸ C K Karunakaran, *Op cit.*, pp.86- 87.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.23.

³⁰ Joy C V, *Wayanattile Karshaka Kudiyettavum Paristithiyum*, Modern Books, Sultan Bathery, p.61.

In the 18th C, Tippu sulthan constituted Teak as “royal tree”.³³ But conservation was nominal. Forest of Malabar were considered to be no man’s land till 10th C when they were taken possession by the feudal lords.³⁴ Even then the people had enough freedom to extract the timber and burn the clearing forest for shifting cultivation was also in vogue cleaning in the relations with plantation were also there. By 1840 coffee plantation emerged.

Hill tribes such as Kurichyas, Mullukurumbas and Paniyas lived in the forest.. They practiced punam cultivation. Even though Kurichias claim the aristocratic status, their habits are more akin to those of Nairs and are very fond of hunting and are experts in the use of bows and arrows. Kurichias are also shy and reluctant to do coolie labour. The paniyas are Aboriginal race owning no land but doing paddy cultivation for their Chetty, Nair Jenmis. They can be obtained for work in the forest if the local subordinates are in cordial relations with their Chetty masters³⁵. Up to 1874 -75 number of reserve forests had been formally announced. In 1885, the total area of “reserved forests” in the entire district amounted to 1.38 square miles only ³⁶ The reserved forest now forming part of the Wayanad division were framed as such between 1892 and 1912. At the time of forest settlement Kurichias demanded ‘*Patta land*’, right to collect pepper and areacanut and right for *punam* cultivations. They were however allowed to live within the reserve as ‘tenants at will’ of the forest department and allowed to enjoy the pepper in their garden on payment of annual assessment of Rs 6.20 per hectare.³⁷ They were also allotted to do *punam* cultivation within and allotted area at rent of 3.50 per hectar.

³³ *Working Plan, Revised working Plan* for the Wayanad forest division, 1962 to 1972, p.21 .

³⁴ P R Adiyodi, *Seventh Working Plan*, For the Wayanad Forest Division 1974- 1984, p.24.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Natarajan chettiar *Revised Working plan 1962-72*, *Op. cit.*, p.25.

³⁷ *Seventh Working plan*, Adiyodi, *Op. cit.*, p.14.

Policy of assigning lands to Kurumbas and other hill tribes for cultivation inside the reserve forest, started with a view to procure their labour for departmental works.³⁸

Table -1.3: Forest working plans

| Division | Working Plan Officer | Period |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Wayanad | Folks | 1902-1922 |
| Wayanad | Koude | 1929-1938 |
| Wayanad | Sarma | 1932-1941 |
| Wayanad | T V Venkiteswara Aiyar | 1941-1949 |
| Wayanad | C M Cariappa | 1950-1961 |
| Wayanad | Natarajan Chettiar | 1962-1971 |
| Wayanad | P K Adiyodi | 1972-1982 ³⁹ |

Source: CK Karunakaran, Keralathile Vanangal Noottandukaliloode,4th edition, Thiruvananthapuram,1992

Forest working plan had been setup for the management of forest for next 10 years. The year 1902 saw the initiation of the first working plan for the Wayanad by Mr. Foulkes⁴⁰ in 1902-22.

This plan had given details of maximum number of specified species that could be felled. Fire protection and fire patrols were recommended. Lantana was also said to controlled along with restriction on punam cultivation. Artificial regeneration of teak was insisted presumably by restricting punam; 120 acres in chedleth and 30 acres in Begur was prescribed. (see the revised working plan for Wayanad forest division (1950-51 to 1959-60) By BA Cariappa p23)

Valuable species of trees were converted in to railway sleepers. The logs were brought to Mysore through rivers and elephants dragged the trees to the nearest

³⁸ B A Cariappa, *Revised Working Plan for Wayanad Forest Division*(1950-51 to 1959 - 60) Working plan officer, Madras ,1955, p.4.

³⁹ C K Karunakaran, *Op. cit.*, pp 109-241.

⁴⁰ BA Cariappa, *Op. cit.*, p.24 .

depot for sale. A new sale depot was opened at Nanjangod in Mysore.⁴¹ Timber from Sultan Bathery ranges were brought there for sale. A saw mill powered by two rest on Horn by engines was put up in 1926 at chikkanji in chedaleth range.⁴² Extraction and working of timbers from the forest was undertaken by sawmill extraction division established in 1926. The working of the mill was unsatisfactory due to the ill health of the staff in the fever ridden area. Second factor was the low supply of wood; only 40000 cubic feet of timber was supplied instead of 70000 cubic which was the mill's actual capacity. Later mill was faced with closure on 31st March 1930.

When Dr. Cleghorn, The first real conservator visited Wayanad in 1858 in search of teak wood which was getting scarce,⁴³ recommended the reservation of some valuable species of timber and abolition of shifting cultivation. Even though the recommendations were approved by the govt., it could not be enforced properly. In 1859 an officer was appointed to settle the boundary between Mysore and Malabar.⁴⁴ The first district forest officer was, Captain Gib who joined on duty in 1860.

In 1863 Captain Bodome classified the Wayanad forest as one of the twelve first class forests of Malabar.⁴⁵ The British introduced the first working plan in 1902 prepared by Mr. Foulkes. This plan allowed annual coupes and maximum number of species to be felled in a year. Fire protection was suggested and routine patrolling of the forest also. The average cost of protecting a square mile from fire was higher than in 1900 -1901⁴⁶. There was also great increase in the number of animals grazed with license especially in the case of sheep and goats. Large area of forest was marked as grazing prohibited. Trees such as Rose wood Ebony and *karimaruth*

⁴¹ CA Innes, *Op. cit.*, p.241.

⁴² BA Cariappa, *Op. cit.*, p.31.

⁴³ Natarajan chettyar, Revised working plan (1962-1971), *Op. cit.*, p,21.

⁴⁴ BA Cariappa Revised working plan for the Wayanad, forest division, *Op. cit.*, p.22.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Report on the Administration of the Madras presidency, 1901 – 1902, Center for Development studies , Thiruvananthapuram(here after CDS), p. 14.

were in high demand abroad. Teak wood was commonly used for construction of ships and putting railway sleepers.⁴⁷ In 1900 sleepers were supplied to the railways from Wayanad. The original offer of 15000 broad gauge sleepers 2-8-0 coach passed and delivered at Calicut, was finally reduced to 4000 at much higher rate owing to the failure of the contractor due to miscalculation. Both Teak and *Teremania tomtosa* sleepers were supplied. The wastage was high – The percentage of wastage of sleepers to logs was 38 and much timber was left unconverted in the forest.⁴⁸ The total tree fell from Begur range and kurichiat range were 70,000 Qubicks and got 3,26,000 Rs in 1887. 100,000 Qubicks trees were cut down from Wayanad. Railway sleepers were laid rapidly to make commercial growth more easily and military movement easy. It led to large scale clear felling in Wayanad forest, for laying railway sleepers from Mangala Puram to Calicut which used 400 sleepers.⁴⁹ The ideal material for making railway sleepers was teak wood with good fiber quality. Teak grew to a good size in relatively short time. It was calculated that an annual cut of 2000 mature teak trees would produce 2230 cubic meter of timber required for the construction of a ship⁵⁰

Large number of trees had been sent to other states such as Karnataka and Hyderabad. Draft rules under section 35 were submitted for the approval of the government and rules for the transit of timber,⁵¹ between Kurnool district and Nizams territories. Document obtained from Thoriyambathu Nair family shows there was a continues wood supply from Pulpally in Wayanad region to Karnataka. That letter mentions about obstacle they faced during carting woods from Wayanad.

⁴⁷ Joy C V, *Op.cit.*, p. 61

⁴⁸ B A Cariappa, *Op. cit.*, p.26.

⁴⁹ Joy C V, *Op. cit.*, p .62.

⁵⁰ P N Unnikrishnan, "Forests in 19th century" in William logans', *Malabar Manual*, Gazetteer's Department. Govt. of Kerala, 2000, XXII

⁵¹ *Report On Administration of Madras Presidency, 1883-84*, CDS Thiruvananthapuram p.26.

Table showing the quantity of timber and other produce felled and sold during the 1883-84 in comparison with 1882-83⁵².

Table 1.4: Quantity of Timber felled and sold in the years 1882-83 and 1883-84

| | | Quantity felled | | Quantity sold | |
|----------------------|------------|-----------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| | | 1882-83 | 1883-84 | 1882-83 | 1883-84 |
| Teakwood | No | .... | 17 | .... | 51 |
| | Cubic feet | 22,561 | 38,191 | 68,408 | 51,995 |
| Teak saplings | No | 83,297 | 63,712 | 25,821 | 39,919 |
| Blackwood | Cubic feet | 12,803 | 14,301 | 16,284 | 14,724 |
| Rosewood | Do. | .... | .... | 290 | .... |
| | Do. | 56,146 | 49,903 | 63,634 | 44,931 |
| Other junglewood | No. | .... | 4,277 | .... | 1,518 |
| Redwood | Tons. | 200 | 775 | 400 | 628 |
| Sandalwood | Maunds | 7,361 | 6,288 | 6,878 | 5,307 |
| Firewood | Tons. | 3,953 | 3,926 | 5,305 | 3,421 |
| Charcoal | Cwt. | .... | .... | .... | 2 |
| | Cart loads | .... | 2 | 9 | 2 |
| Bamboos | No. | 43,173 | 47,941 | 39,328 | 55,634 |
| | Maunds. | 9,118 | 58,410 | 14,224 | 30,594 |
| | No. | 9,118 | 58,410 | 14,224 | 30,592 |
| | Maunds. | 9,118 | 58,410 | 14,224 | 30,592 |
| Minor forest produce | Cart-loads | .... | .... | .... | 695 |
| | Bottles | .... | .... | .... | 28 |

Source Madras administration Report 1883-84.

Granite quarries

Another important source of minerals were provided by the granite deposits found in the Aarattupara, Manjappara area of Ambalavayal Panchayath and

⁵² *Ibid.*, p .85.

Vengappally panchayath It also provided a conducive situation for the migrants for construction activities and making stone implement which is substantiated by the archaeological evidence.

Gold Mines

There was a widespread rumor among the Europeans about the fabulous gold deposit here in Wayanad. On the basis of this hear say Withers, an Australian established a company called 'Alpha' for the extraction of gold in 1875. Extensive gold mining had been there at Vythiri, Meppadi, Devala, Cherambadi etc but it did not yield expected profit.⁵³ By 1880 thirty-three English companies came and established here for gold extraction⁵⁴. A letter dated 23 February 1881 shows that the Board instructed collectors to depose of application in accordance to the rules laid down in connection with gold mining.⁵⁵ Another proceedings of the board mentions about a letter to the collector requesting to prepare a thorough report on the gold fields of Vythiri, Teriode and Sulthan Bathery. This report also mentions the fact that, there is ample evidence of the existence of gold in several parts of South Wayanad and if the Govt will consent to their request, an impetus will be given to industry.⁵⁶

Archaeological remains

Edakkal Engravings

Edakkal caves is the oldest antiquarian existing in Wayanad. It was discovered by Faucett in 1894. Edakkal cave, situated 4 miles south west of Sultan Bathery on the western slopes of Edakkal hill, is an interesting natural cave with 5 feet width or a fissure in the rock. Engravings on the walls of the cave have raised the curiosity of many archaeologists and anthropologists. The cave contains certain

⁵³ OK Johni, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, Mathrubhumi Books, Calicut, 2010, p.107.

⁵⁴ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad janangalum parampariyavum*, KKN Kurup (Tr), Sulthan Bathery, 2006, p. 19.

⁵⁵ Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, 6 April, 1881, No.590, Revenue Department 1881, RAK.

⁵⁶ Proceedings of Board of Revenue, dtd 28 January 1883, No. 194.

inscriptions and carvings, small figures, and symbols. Carvings in Edakkal caves clearly represent both figures of animals and human beings. The most interesting features of the culture are the frequent human figures with peculiar head dress.⁵⁷ The symbols frequently seen on the cave walls were "Swasthika" in various forms and specimens of familiar circular "Sun symbols." Faucet suggests that carvings and engravings on the cave wall are handy work of Mullu Kurumas of early days. Their reluctance to approach the cave and their reverence to it ensure this fact. Faucet assume that possibly the artists of Edakkal cave may be ancestors of present day Mullukurumas of Wayanad who also call themselves Vedas.⁵⁸ Some magical squares are seen among the Carvings which is common in oriental fortune telling. Scholars like EO Tilner opines that, the cave may be a veneration Centre.⁵⁹ He assumes that some tiger cult may have existed there as it is testified by the inscription in Brahmi "Palpulithananthakari" as read by Dr Hultzch; this writing means one who killed many tigers. Faucet in a narrative about Edakkal caves in "Indian antiquary" mentions the annual pilgrim done by the Chetty community to do offering to "*Mudiyampilli Bhagavathi*."⁶⁰ The cave exists as a Centre of veneration to Mullukurumas and chetties. There had been a hunting sports among the tribes of Wayanad called "Narikkuth".

Recent development in the Edakkal cave studies is that of Dr. Raghava Varrier's, who finds similarity between the Edakkal engravings and that of Harappa. One knelt figurine carrying a pot in arms near a tree is seen in Edakkal caves, which could be also seen in Mohenjadaro as well. Repeated figurines of crab, fish, and sun are seen in both areas and have similarity too⁶¹. Another important study about Edakkal cave is done by Professor T Pavithran, who argues that the script found in

⁵⁷ A. Sreedhara Menon (ed.), District Gazetteer Calicut in C.K. Kareem (ed.) Kerala State Gazatteers, Govt. Press. Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p.68.

⁵⁸ Fred Faucet, *Indian Antiquary*, volume xxx, October, 1901, Bombay Education Society Press, Bombay, p .414.

⁵⁹ Ok Johny, *Op. cit.*,p.29.

⁶⁰ F Faucet, *Op .cit.*, p .413

⁶¹ Dr M R Raghava Varrier, 'Edakkal Guhayil Harappayude Minnalattam', in *Mathrubhoomi News supplement*, 19 February, 2017, p. 03.

Edakkal cave is Saindhava Brahmi script between I century BC and I century AD in Kushana-Bhatti polo Brahmi style. “Boostrofeden” style of Brahmi script are seen on the Northern wall of cave in five lines. Another three lines in the same style are seen on Southern wall of the cave. It is written in a way that first line is from left to right, second line is from right to left and third line is from left to right ⁶².

Tovarimala engravings

Another group of rock engravings had been discovered 5 km away from Edakkal cave in Nenmeni village. It is also important site of beautiful carvings and drawings, seen on the Tovari hills. It has certain similarity with Edakkal engravings. Tovari engravings are smaller and thinner incisions on spherical stone with a roof like structure. They depict implements such as stone arrow heads and crow bar of triangular shape, set in such geometrical shapes as squares and circles⁶³. Epigraphists like Raghava warrior opines that the engravings at Thovari hills may be made of sharp chisels in Mesolithic age. These engravings may be of much younger in origin than the Edakkal engravings. Local people call this rock “Aksharappara” or a rock with alphabets.⁶⁴ Both Tovari and Edakkal rock shelters are located on the same hill called Ambuthimala in Wayanaad District.

Megalithic Burials

Apart from Tovari and Edakkal Hills, there are several megalithic monuments found of in Wayanad region. A few cist burials were seen in different parts of Wayanad district; it includes dolmens from Vythiri and Kaniyambatta.⁶⁵ Several megalithic monuments had been obtained from different parts of Wayand, Such as Edakkal cave valley and Kuppakkolly, Ayiramkolly, and Mangalam Karp. This megalithic burial shows the presence of iron objects throughout Kerala. From

⁶² Bava K Palukunnu, *Wayanadan Gramangalilude*, Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 2023, pp. 93-94.

⁶³ Rajan Gurukkal, Raghava Varrior, *History of Kerala, Pre Historic to the Present*, Orient black swan, 2018, p .39.

⁶⁴ Interview with Balakrishnan a native of Thovari area on 23 February2021.

⁶⁵ Rajan Gurukkal, Raghava Varrier,*Op. cit.*, p .46.

Kuppakkolli, epigraphists like Raghava Varrier and Subbarayalu obtained potteries of different shapes and colour. Usually, these types of burials consisted of iron and copper implements, tripod stone chains, Iron implements such as daggers swords, spears etc⁶⁶. Faucett noted down that he found a quartz flakes and Mr Collin Mackenzie found in 1890, on his coffee estate about 5 miles distant to South East, a frequency of well-shaped celt.⁶⁷ Pulpally had been vital and live with thick populations during those days as evidenced by the existence of many scattered archaeological evidences. Stone axe and a neck ornament were obtained from these regions which is more than 5000 years old. More than 200 megalithic monuments had been obtained from Edakkal cave region. Sir Mortimer Wheeler who studied the megalithic monuments fixed their age in between BC700 and 400AD while Garden opines their age as between BC 700 and BC 400.⁶⁸ These regions were known for human settlement area of Mediterranean people, who had arrived in South India by BC 500 as opined by Christav Von Furer Heyman Dorf⁶⁹. Several dolmens have also been found out from Krishna Giri ,9 Km away from Meenangadi town and Aarattupara also 14Km Aaway from Meenangadi,(see appendix) which are the continuation of Megalith culture in Edakkal caves.⁷⁰ Several urn burials, articles such as iron spoons, potteries, house hold articles were also obtained from different parts of the district such as Cherumad , Padinjarathara ,Arattuthara etc .All these evidences reveal the existence of well-organized human life here in pre historic period itself and that a prosperous society had been here for last 2000 years⁷¹.

⁶⁶ K N Ganesh *Karathinte innalekal* (Mal), Department of Culture, Kerala Government, 1997, p.36.

⁶⁷ F Faucet,*Op. cit.*,pp. 409-421.

⁶⁸ C T Joseph,' Wayanadinte Mahathwam', (Mal),in St marys Forane church, Mullankolly , Pulpally, *Souvenir of Pulpally Immigration and Dedication of Newly Built Church*, 1950-88, p .57.

⁶⁹ Meenangadi Panchayath Vikasana Rekha, 14 th Five year plan, 2022-27, p.44.

⁷⁰ Interview with Biju Arattu para, 48 years old, on September 20, 2023, at his residence at Arattu para.

⁷¹ Meenangadi Grama Panchayath *Vikasana Rekha*,14 th Five year plan.2022-27, p.03

Hero Stones

Numerous hero stones were obtained from Rampalli, Marakkadavu near Mullankolly bordering Karnataka. These hero stones may have been erected for commemorating Heroes who accompanied the caravans of merchants.⁷² Now in many places hero stones are worshipped as idols. Hero stones procured by Heritage Museum Ambalavayal depict the pictures of female figurine in padmasana, horse seated warriors Bhairava Moorthi etc

Thazhekkavu Inscription

Thazhekkavu inscription obtained from Thazhekkavu near Pulpally, mentions about a trade guild called "*Nalpethennayirathavar*" who established a 'nakaram' or commercial center and also mentions about the donation of land for funding the expenses for lamp for yaksha.⁷³ Details of the inscription and its translation are included in the appendix.

All these archaeological evidences ensure the human existence here in Wayanad from early medieval periods itself. Continuous turmoil caused by Chera-Chola war in eleventh century may be the reasons for the decay of Jain temples here.⁷⁴ Inscriptions like Thazhekkavu temple inscription shows the existence of brisk trade in Wayanad in early medieval period.

Mullukurumas

Wayanad district stands first with 35.94 percent of the scheduled tribe population of the state followed by Idukki (12.42%) Kasargod (11.21%) and Palakkad (11.01%).⁷⁵ There are around 12 categories of ethnic tribes here in Wayanad.⁷⁶ All of them have their origin stories and many of them claim to have

⁷² OK Johni, *Op.cit* pp. 52-53 .

⁷³ Mundakkayam Gopi, Ariyappedatha Wayanad, Kalpetta, June 2002, p.179.

⁷⁴ OK Johni, *Op.cit* ., p. 53.

⁷⁵ Scheduled Tribes Development Department ,*Scheduled Tribes of Kerala: Report on the Socio-Economic status*, , Govt of Kerala, November 2013, p.5.

⁷⁶ *Report of Survey conducted by KILA*, 2008.

arrived here as migrants. Faucett in Indian antiquary mentions about the presence of Paniya and ullukuruma community in the premises of Edakkal caves and he attributes the authorship of Edakkal engravings on Mullukuruma community (pass in the previous paragraph in this chapter). It is believed that they are the autochthones and descendants of the veda kings who had been the early rulers of Wayanad. The engraving "Vishnu Varma Kudumbiya Kulavardhanasya" states about the predecessors of Mullu Kurumas who evolved from "Kudumbi dynasty".⁷⁷ This tribe is concentrated in the southern Wayanad region up to the river Panamaram. Noolpuzha, Kidanganad, Sulthan Bathery, Muttill, kuppathodu, pulpally, poothadi, purakkadi and Gudallur talook of Nilgiri which had been a part of Wayanad.⁷⁸ None of the Mullukuruma settlement can be seen in the northern Wayanad. They are only seen in 25 km radius of Sulthan Bathery.

They highly excelled in archery and formed major militia against the British under Pazhassi raja. There are several myths regarding their origine; one version of it says that Mullukurumas are the descendants of a soldier of the king of Calicut who eloped with his lover princess and trod upon the thorns in the forest which owes their name 'Mullukuruma.' Another version of the myth says that they had fled across the forest by treading the thorns to escape from Tipu's invasion and reached n Cheengeri hill near Meenanagadi, from where Tipu was attacked by bees and the Mullukurumas escaped.⁷⁹

Mullu kuruma settlements are known as "kudi." Each kudi has "Porunnon" to control their social mechanism 'Porathavan' to assist him in the same matters⁸⁰. "Kunnu mooppan" or "Karanavar" will be the authority of many kudis in an area."Thalachil" is a chieftain who looks after the cluster of Mullukuruma kudis in a

⁷⁷ CV Joy, *Wayanattile Gothra Samudayangal Jeevithavum Samskaravum*, Kottayam, 2017, p.95.

⁷⁸ CV Joy, *Ibid.*, p p.99-100.

⁷⁹ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan Wayanad, *Gothrangalilude*, Date of Publication is not known, 2006, p.98.

⁸⁰ Scheduled Tribes Development Department, Govt of Kerala , *Op. cit.*, p.14.

vast area. Thalachil will be assisted by "Nalappadi"⁸¹. It is believed that Mullukuruma community had an elder's council representing elder members from different localities such as Cheriya mala, Illiyambam, Thirumukham, Karanjivayal, Kandamala, and Kurichippatta. Pakkam near Pulpally was a strong centre of this council which had existed till the mid of 20th century⁸². These strong bodies decided the life cycle rituals of Mullukurumas.

Kurichias

Kurichyas are believed as early migrants to Wayanad. The traditional accounts of the Kurichia's advent into this country is that the Kottayam Raja brought them for fighting against the Veda rulers, Arippan and Vedan⁸³. The Wayanadan Kurichias and their counterparts in Kannavam forests, practice severe untouchability to all castes except Brahmins. A Parayan has to keep 40 ft away from a Kurichia and a Paniya has to keep the distance of 12 feet; and if a Kurichian happened to meet a Pulayan, he has to dip 14 times in water to avoid impurity, if it is with a Paniya the dip will be 7 times⁸⁴. Kurichyas are known as "Malanamboodiries" or "Hill Brahmins" as they practice untouchability to others.

The name "Kurichias" was given by the Kottayam Raja to this class of people as they were adepts in archery; the expression is "Kuri vechavan"⁸⁵. Even the kurichia tribes of Wayanad are believed to be the "Kari Nairs" brought by Pazhassi Raja from southern Malabar as his soldiers. As they have passed through the unknown areas and passes, their native community excommunicated them⁸⁶. So, they married the local women and settled down here in Wayanad as the earliest

⁸¹ Interview with Karimban, Muthanga, 100 yrs, *Op. cit.*

⁸² CV Joy, *Wayanattile Gothra Samudayangal Jeevithavum Samskaravum*, *Op. cit.*, p.p 107-108.

⁸³ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Malabar series; Wayanad people and its Tradition*, Higginbotham & Co, Madras, 1911, p.50.

⁸⁴ Dr Kumaran Vayaleri, *Kurichiarude Jeevithavum samskaravum*, (folklore), Payyannur, 2016, p.16.

⁸⁵ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Malabar series; Wayanad people and its Tradition*, *Op. cit.*, p.59.

⁸⁶ KumaranVayaleri, *Op. cit.*, p .202.

immigrants. The tribes in Wayanad were spoke a mixture of Tamil or Kannada and Malayalam. Kurichiya community was more advanced than the others. It is believed that they are the kins men of Edachana Kunkan, the right hand of Keralavarma Pazhassiraja. They received huge extend of land without tax ⁸⁷.

Wayanadan Kurichias are mainly confined to Northern Wayanad region such as Vellamunda, Thondernadu, Mananthavady, Kaniyambetta, Thavinjal, Kottathara, Panamaram etc⁸⁸ (details of Kurichias are included in the next chapters) They are actually divided in to four groups such as jati Kurichyan of Wayanad, Kunnam Kurichyans of Kannur, Anchillam Kurichiyans of Thirunelli, and Pathiri Kurichiyans of Pallikkunnu region, who embraced Christianity.⁸⁹

Kurichiyans of Wayanad follow joint family system called *Mittom* consisting of members from 40 -100 and above. Joint family is organized under the elder male member of the family known as *Pooppa* and assisted by his wife "pooopathi". *Udayakkaran* and *Udayakkari* are their synonyms. The kurichiyas are best paddy cultivators among the scheduled tribes of Kerala and have expert knowledge in identifying medicinal plants for curing diseases and are experts in archery too.⁹⁰

Paniyas

“Paniyas,, the largest community among the scheduled tribes of Kerala,, is mainly distributed in Wayanad district. About 74.49 percent of Paniya population is settled in Wayanad followed by Kannur(13.55) Malappuram (8.10%) and Kozhikode (3.07%). In Wayanad district, all Grama panchayaths(25) and kalpetta Municipality have the representation of Paniya community.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Santha Thulaseedharan, *Keralathile Adivasikal Jeevithavum Samsakaravum*, Mathrubhoomi Books , 2015 , p.37.

⁸⁸ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Kurichiar Oru Naravamsa Sastra Padanam* (Mal.), Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 2022, p.2.

⁸⁹ Scheduled Tribes Development Department, Govt of Kerala, *Op. cit.*, p.12.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.13.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 24- 25.

Paniyas are traditional bonded labourers and slaves under respective jenmis and lords. They have been freed by the enactment of abolition of Bonded labour system since 1976.⁹² Labour is their only human capital which is exploited by land lords and jenmis in due course of time. Life cycle rituals of Paniya like birth, marriage, death etc., are decided by the head man of their settlement called 'chemmi'. He will settle disputes among them also⁹³

Adiyans

Adiyans are inhabitants of North Wayanad area. They are also bonded labourers like the Paniyas. Their name is reported to have originated from an old rule that they should maintain a distance of 6 (six) Adi (feet) to avoid pollution.⁹⁴

They are more trust worthy than the Paniyas as they will not run away from the land lords. Adiya settlements are very close to the paddy fields, and they were low paid agriculture slaves in the early years. The adiyans used to speak a dialect of Kannada.

There are many legends regarding their origin. One legend says that they are descendants of Siva Dwija Brahmins who married a non-Brahmin girl. Another legend is that they are the progeny of a Brahmin who lost his status by eating rice given to Lord Siva.⁹⁵ There may be rays of truth in that as their arrival to Kerala was along with Chetties and Brahmins of Mysore and remained here as their agricultural serfs. They worship their important deities such as Karinkali, Malakkari, and Kuliyon and they conduct Thira for propitiating these gods.⁹⁶

⁹² *Ibid.*, p.24.

⁹³ Interview with Balan 48 yrs, Mangavayal colony, Kalpetta, on 4 February, 2021 at his residence Kalpetta.

⁹⁴ AAD Louiz, *Tribes of Kerala*, The kerala state Tribal enquiry committee, Bharatiya Adima Jati Sevak sang, linkroad Jhandewelani Newdelhi, p.27.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ Rao Bahadur, C Gopalan Nair, Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum (Mal), *Op.cit.*, P.86.

Kunduvadiyar

They are only 40 families in Poothadi, Purakkadi region⁹⁷. They like the kurichias excelled in archery. Their main deities are "Poovilly" and "Ilavilly"⁹⁸. They are also keeping "front Kuduma" and following matrilineal form of succession. This shows that their roots might be in Malabar. They are basically agriculturalists who are reluctant to do coolie labour under other people; they prefer to work among themselves only.

Karimbalar

They are only seven families residing in Kalpetta Muttill Purakkady regions⁹⁹. They have certain resemblances with kurichias in their dress, matrilineal form of succession and "*Mun kuduma*". Like the kurichias they are professing hunting and cultivation.

They serve as Oracles in Bhagavathy temples; their chief deity is Pamboori Karuvan.¹⁰⁰

Kadar

These tribes are seen in Thondar Desam Thariyod Mangalassery regions. They are believed to belong to Nair community, as they settled down in the forest they came to be called as "kadar." Their chief deity is the hunting god "Malakkari". Majority of them are cultivators like the Kurichias; they are also good archers. Like the Kurichias they are excellent bowmen and experts in archery.¹⁰¹ They have unapproachability with certain castes like Paniyas and Kattunaikkas. Crimes against caste were judged by seven elders from the following families such as

⁹⁷ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, Wayanad People and its Tradition, *Op.cit.*, p.74.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.77.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.78.

¹⁰¹ A. Sreedhara Menon (ed.), District Gazetteer Calicut in C.K. Kareem (ed.,) Kerala State Gazatteers, Govt. Press. Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p.207.

Mavaliyan - 2 Nos
Palodan - 1 Nos
Kallan thara - 1 Nos
Pilacheriyans - 3 Nos¹⁰²

Pathiyar

They are living in the eastern boarder of Wayanad near to Mysore. They are a small minority, possibly migrated from Punnad in Mysore.¹⁰³ It is said that they migrated to present Wayanad region during a famine, Kottayam King did not allow them to go back and advised them to live in accordance with the native traditions.¹⁰⁴ So they accepted matrilineal system of succession, *Kuduma, Talikettu kalyanam* etc. As they wear head turban like the Jain Gowdas in Punnadu and have “Masthi pattar” or Jain Brahmins as chief priest in their marriages point out that they might be descendants of Jain Gowdas.¹⁰⁵

Uridavar

Another migrant tribal minority in Wayanad are Uridavans or owner of the “Uru” or village. The prefix to the name is originated from a Malayalam nick name ‘*urundu vannavar*’¹⁰⁶. They were hunters in early period, later when all forest become reserved lands they turned to cultivation. They are believed to have migrated from Chithradurga in Mysore. Now they can be seen in Poothadi amsam also.

Thachanadan Mooppan

Another migrant tribe of Wayanad is the Thachanadan Mooppans. The prefix of their name owe it to the amsom where they live . The real story behind their arrival is quiet interesting as two gods, such as Karvelli and Manjala Pothi do

¹⁰² Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad People and it's Tradition, Op. cit., p.82.*

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid., p.83.*

¹⁰⁵ Rao Bahadur, Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum parambaryavum, Op. cit., p.76.*

¹⁰⁶ AAD Luiz, *Op. cit., p.249.*

not have any devotees.¹⁰⁷ they sent three Mooppans and their wives. One couple were expired in the meantime. Rest of the two couples were came and settled down in karankandan and valathur in Moopainadu. They are seen only in Moopainadu and Kottapadi amsom.

They speak Malayalam do agricultural work and serve as laborer on tea estate as Punam cultivation dwindled due to the clearing of forest for tea cultivation.¹⁰⁸

In this study I am taking three samples such as kurichias Mullu Kurumas and paniyas. Kurichias are seen in North wayand regions such as Padinjarathara and Mananthavady. Mullu Kurumas are seen in south and Central wayanad regions such as Meenangadi, Purakkady, Poothadi, Bathery, Pulpally etc. Paniyas can be seen everywhere in Wayanad probably close to the Janmi houses, to have agriculture labour. These three categories belong to different steps of social ladder and possess distinct social and economic status; So, it would be worthy to evaluate their status.

Other Migrants

Nairs

Nair community is another group who migrated to Wayanad, Ward and Conner in their work 'Descriptive memoir of Malabar' gives a detailed description of the early population he could see at Ganapathivattam modern Bathery, Kalpetta, Poothadi and Purakkady. At Ganapathivattom, there were few Maplahs and at Mananthavady there were Brahmins and chettis. At Poothady and Porakkady, situated S E of Mananthavadi, ,cultivation is extensive. The population, is comprised of Nairs, Chetties, Kurichias and many lower classes or slaves¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair , Malabar series; Wayanad People and it's traditions, *Op. cit .*, p. 99.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, P. 84.

¹⁰⁹ Lieutenants Ward and Conner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, Govt of Kerala, 1995, pp. 180- 181.

As Pazhassiraja could not consolidate his power over Wayanad, he brought 60 Nair families from Cannanore by breaking down all their relations there and from them six Nair families were entrusted with the authority of Naduvazhis. They received enormous landed property; Craftsmen and merchants were sent from the plains to ease the life of the Nairs¹¹⁰

Muslims

The period of the arrival of Muslims in Wayanad is not evident. Earliest Muslim merchants referred in Pazhassi records were Chovvakkaran Moosa and Chovvakkaran Makki, who were prominent Muslim merchants who had been highly affluent to intervene in the political affairs of Malabar as they were money lenders¹¹¹. Many Muslim merchants mainly from Vadakara and Nadapuram had arrived to different parts of Wayanad carrying day to day provisions or *thalachappa* but they had shown little interest to settle down here due to the lack of mosques¹¹² and *qabarsthan* to bury the dead. The existence of place names such as 'Bavali' in the Kerala boarder of Karnataka shows that Karnataka Muslim merchants used to arrive in Wayanad. Bava Ali was a Muslim priest in the trade guild, who died and was buried there; the burial place came to be known as 'vapali' and later 'Bavali'¹¹³

Early Muslim settlements in Wayanad

Early Muslim settlements in Wayanad can be seen in the North eastern Wayanad. Vellamunda region of Wayanad has the largest number of Muslim populations. The Muslim community here claims their tradition of 4 centuries in Wayanad. It is believed that Kottayam kings brought them here from Nadapuram and made them settle down here for trade purposes."Vaishyan" family was the first Muslim family to arrive in Vellamunda, and they were endowed with a mosque by

¹¹⁰ KG Madhavan Nair, *Wayanadum Pazhassi Thamburanum*, Sangeorgia offset press, S Bathery, Date of Publication not found, p .22.

¹¹¹ Dr Joseph Scaria, *Pazhassi Rekhakalile Vyvaharabhasha*, (Mal.),SPCS, Kottayam, 2015, P.34.

¹¹² Gopi Mundakkayam *Ariyappedatha Wayanad* (Mal), Sahya publication, Kalpetta, 2002, p.196.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p.196.

Kottayam kings. Gradually this merchant community extended and settled down in the areas of Korom, Kunjom , Kandathuvayal, Varambetta etc. Manumammad Haji, Sooppi kattu Koran, Moidu Haji were important personalities in the early days¹¹⁴.

The earliest Muslim mosque in Wayanad is Kalyanath Palli situated in Edavaka panchayath and Pazhanchana mosque in Vellamunda Panchayath. Both the mosques have the Kerala style of architecture unlike the Persian style of traditional Muslim mosques. Pazhanchana mosque may be donated by the Pazhanchana Nairs nearby¹¹⁵. There is a myth regarding the origine of Kalyanathu palli, one day a Kurichian noticed a Muslim saint sitting beside the river with two tigers on his side. The Kurichian informed the matter to Alancherry Mooppil Nambiar; Even after a long search they could not find that saint; later they found him on the hill top. Understanding the divinity of the saint, Mooppil nambiar requested him to cure a bed ridden lady at his house. Miraculously, by drinking a glass of milk given by the saint that patient got saved from the diseases. As a token of gratitude Moopil Nambiar bestowed him with a land for the construction of a mosque. On the day of this donation, there was a marriage in the family of Nambiar, and so this mosque came to be called as “Kalyanathu pally”¹¹⁶. The mosque was constructed in the meeting place of Ozhakkodi, Edavaka, and Edachena deshams¹¹⁷ As this donation was done by Nair jenmis it can be assumed that the period of this mosque as 17th or 18th century. So, it was Shahul Murthala, the founder of Kalyanathu palli and the sheik in Periya were the’ pioneer Muslims in the land of Wayanad.¹¹⁸

Rawthers

Rawthers are believed to be the cavalry of Attaturk of Turkey. They arrived

¹¹⁴ *Vikasana Rekha*, Vellamunda Grama Panchayath, 1996, p.12.

¹¹⁵ OK Johni, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op.cit.*, p.77.

¹¹⁶ Mundakkayam Gopi, *Ariyappedatha Wayanad*, *Op.cit.*, p.197.

¹¹⁷ *Valiyullahi sheik Shahul Murthala(kha,si)*, *jeevacharithram*, Hidayathul islam sabha, Kalyanathu pallikkal Kannur, Date of publication is not known, p.9

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.8

in Tamilnadu under the service of Pandya Chola Kings and married Tamil women and converted them to Islam religion and thus the community of Rawthers were born.¹¹⁹ Another version of their origin says that Turkish Cavalry who served under the Mughals married women of Pathan race; this argument is defended by putting forward the examples of calling their father as "atha" and paternal grandfather as "Dada", "Dadima", "Nana", "Nanima", and paternal aunt as "Kuppi Ma" etc., as Patan do. And they also call their maternal relations as *Akka, Amma, Mama, Machan* etc., in Tamil lines.

Rawthers were another merchant community who settled down in Karyambadi near Meenangadi, some of them were cultivators too. Exact date of their arrival is not known. In the personal diary of K K Krishnan, it is written that Rawthers arrived in Wayanad between 1790 and 1805 along with Tipu sulthan from Mysore and Palghat¹²⁰. Rawthers are Tamil speaking Muslims with an alien origin. They are believed to have come from Puthunagaram in Palghat district.¹²¹

Christians

Early references about churches and Christianity is lacking in the history of Wayanad. First Christian church was set up at Vythiri in 1841 in the name of ST John and a cemetery on the banks of Pookkot lake. Later churches were established at Mananthavady, Meppadi, Bathery under the initiative of Church Mission society of Ootty diocese.¹²²

When plantations were established in Wayanad, many low castes convert from coastal areas of Mangalore and lower caste from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka came in Wayanad as plantation labourers.¹²³ These people followed Latin services under Mysore diocese. First church under this category was built at Vythiri in 1845 in the name of ST Joseph. Church at Mananthavady was established under the name

¹¹⁹ CA Rasheed Rawther, *Keralathile Rawthermar*, Kottayam, 2022, p.5.

¹²⁰ Krishnan K K, *Wayanadinte charithram*, Unpublished work p. 22

¹²¹ C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum* (Mal), *Op.cit.*, p .47.

¹²² Mundakkayam Gopi, *Ariyappedatha Wayanad*, *Op.cit.*, p.200.

¹²³ AH Lash "*ayanad Mission*", the church Missionary Gleamer, 1898, p.105.

of Virgin Mary in 1847 and church at Meppadi was erected in the name of ST Francis Xavier in 1872.¹²⁴ Mysore Mission societies started their activities in the plantation areas of Wayanad to meet the spiritual needs of labourers on the plantations.

Jainism in Wayanad

The existence of many Jain basthis in Wayanad shows that a rich Jain tradition was there in Wayanad. There are several affluent Jain families here in Wayanad, who had given valuable contributions for the development of Wayanad and for Indian independence. Late MP,MP Veerendrakumar is a Jain. Their family has contributed a lot in the social, economic, educational, and political sphere of Wayanad. Presently the Jain settlements are concentrated in Mananthavadi, Kalpetta, Panamaram, Kaniyambetta, Varador, and Anjukunnu. One of the earliest Jain settlements, Sulthan Bathery has no Jains now.¹²⁵ Sulthan Bathery was also known as 'Henaru beedi' which means twelve Jain streets which were live in the medieval period. There is a myth regarding the disappearance of these Jain streets due to the curse of a *sanyasi* who left a pot with a man in this village to keep until his return. This pot contained liquid gold but had a leak. Through its leakage all the iron in the area turned to gold, When the entire iron things turned in to the gold the people burned the house where the pot had been kept. When the *sanyasi* came back and asked for the pot, he realized that the pot had been lost. he cursed the people in anger and Hennarubedi was disappeared. Jainism in Wayanad was patronized by Hoysala kings of Karnataka. Architectural styles of dilapidated Jain temples exhibit hoysala bellala and Vijayanagar styles as DR Raghavarrier points out. It consists of *mukhamandapam*, *garbhagriham*, *sukanasi*, *navarangamandpam* which is a peculiarity of Hoysala style. Most important Jain temple now existing in Wayanad is that of Janardhan guddi at Punjavayal, Neervaram road. In this temple we can see elaborate sculptures of fish, tortoise incarnations of Vishnu along with Jain sculptures. It is to be borne in mind that some of the Vaishnava symbols like

¹²⁴ Mundakkayam Gopi, *Ariyappedatha Wayanad*, *Op. cit.*,pp.200- 201.

¹²⁵ Johny O K, *Wayanad Rekhakal* , *Op. cit.*, p.61.

Matasya{fish}, kurma{tortoise} are *lachanas* or cognizance of Jain Thirthankaras. As Fergusson has rightly pointed out, in the medieval period Jains allowed the existence of Hindu gods and admitted them in their pantheon.¹²⁶ Decay of Jainism started in Wayanad due to lack of royal patronage as Vishnu Varman who had promoted Jainism earlier moved to Vaishnavism.

Geographically Wayanad is continuation of south Karnataka regions especially Coorg in the north east and Gundalpet and Kamaraj Nagar in the east which were centers of Jainism in early medieval period. There is path through the forest from the eastern side of Pulpally Talekkavu region to Bandipore and from there to Gundalpet; so these places had access to Wayanad both by land and Kabani River routes. River Kabani served as trade highway between Kerala and south Karnataka. Chettis from Karnataka and Tamilnadu use the Bandipore- Pulpally route till now. So, it is evident that a brisk trade route existed between Wayanad and Karnataka for a long time. The existence of many hero stones and inscriptions in this region testify this. The Talekkavu temple inscription obtained from Pulpally shows that a live Jain trade guild called "*nalpethennayirithavar'* had made their business in this region and constituted a *nakaram* and set apart certain amount of paddy for a perpetual lamp for the Yaksha.¹²⁷ Wayanad continued to remain as an important Jain center right from the early medieval period to the present day. *Jaladhara pitha* of varadur Anantha natha swami basti contains the details of donations given to six Jain bastis in Wayanad by Lalithappan, the grandson of Bommarasan of Karkkala aramana basti. The inscriptions show that these donations were received by araipathi. Bennaigodu, palagonthu, Hennerudubeedi, identified as Venniyode, Palukunnu, Sulthan Bathery, Puthangdi, Mananthavady. The donations included various equipments like *shodasha bhavana yanthram*, *velli mukkuda*, *dondasrutha valayam*, *dashabhavanayanthram*, *sarathchandra* image made of silver. All these donations came from Karkkala aramana basti approves the fact that Jains from

¹²⁶ Dr. Raghava Varier, "Jainism in Wayanad", in *Inner spaces*, Bilingual half yearly multidisciplinary research journal, June-December, Vol:1, Issue 1, June 2016, Dr Priya Pilicode (Ed.), Research and Publication wing, NMSM Government College, Kalpetta, pp.12-13.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.9-10.

karkalla were the protectors of Jains in Wayanad¹²⁸. The Jains in Wayanad and South Canara share some peculiar social customs and manners. They are followers of Digambara sect. The priestly and peasantry dichotomy was prevalent among them. The priestly class in south Canara and Wayanad speak Kannada at home. The Jains in Wayanad who belong to non-priestly class are known as Gaundas. Their mother tongue is Kannada and they abstain from non-vegetarian diet and night food and prefers to follow patrilineal system of inheritance like that of Jains in south Canara. Like their predecessors at south canara, the Jains at Wayanad also claim to be kshatriyas. All these similarities show that the jains in Wayanad are the true descendants of the immigrants from South Canara.¹²⁹ Jains concentrated mainly on trade and cultivation as they began to settle down on the banks of river of north Wayanad even though their early settlements were in north Wayanad. As their migration was from different areas of India due to drought, they realized the importance of each drop of Water; so their water conservation methods are unique. For irrigation purpose they constructed several “*chiras*’ and bunds; kovilakamchira at kolyadi, aathara chira at kazhambukunnu are examples¹³⁰. Mysorean invasions in the eighteenth century and the continuous war between Pazhassi and Tipu and the continuous inflation of Saiva vaishnava sects are the important reasons behind the decay of Jainism in Wayanad. In Eighth century AD Southern Karnataka and parts of present North Kerala were ruled by Hoysala Ganga kings, they patronized both Vaishnavism. and Jainism. Due to the influence of Bhakthi movement many Jains joined the Hindu fold. In Kerala, the Hindu revival under Sankaracharya proved fatal for decline of Jainism. Many Jain shrines like Koodal Manikiam temple which was dedicated to the first Jain Thirthankaras son Bharatha transformed to Sreerama’s brother Bharatha.¹³¹ After a large influx of migrants to Wayanad, Jainism became a microscopic minority here. Jains in Wayanad began to be recorded as Hindus in the

¹²⁸ Johny O K, Wayanad Rekhakal, *Op. cit.*, pp.56-57.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*,pp.,9-10.

¹³⁰ Joy CV, Wayanattile Karshaka kudiyyettavum paristhithiyum(mal) *Op.cit.*,p.53.

¹³¹ John Ochanthuruthu, ‘Jaina kala keralathil’, In *Amrutha Varshini*, 2008, p.96.

census column of religion, and Jain in place of caste.¹³² Jainism shrank into the fold of Hinduism and many of their rituals are designed in accordance with Vedic lines. Wide spread nature of "Nandi" figurines in different parts of Pulpally region shows that Jainism was very popular in this region; this fact is approved by Panthalayanikkal Kuttappan, who had migrated to Pulpally in 1954.

Trade routes

There are strong inscriptional evidences regarding the existence of brisk trading activities carried over on the soil of Wayanad. Thazhekkavu temple inscription obtained from Pulpally says about the traders who passed through that route. The trade guild mentioned in the inscription is "Nelpethennayirathavar" who built a "Nakaram" testifies that brisk trade route existed in Wayanad through the forest of pulpally to Karnataka and through Ponkuzhi and Bathery etc. There existed a trade route to Tamilnadu which pass through Krishnagiri, Ambukuthi, Thovarimala, Chulliyode.¹³³ Bathery inscription at Mariyamman Kovil mentions about another trade guild called "Pathinettu Pattanathar" which was testified by Zamorin's records. Sulthan bathery or Ganapathivattam, which was known as "Hennerudu beethi" consisted of 12 Jain streets and Ganapathivattam was a strong hold of Jain traders for a long time.¹³⁴ Presence of Jain community in Sulthan Bathery is testified by the existence of Jain temples there. There existed a Jain Basti which had been covered by Lantana.¹³⁵ This Jain Basti existed 500 metres away from kidanganadu Basti. When all jains had left Ganapathivattom, the basti got destroyed and Mullukurumas occupied it. Now this is known as "Thalachilwan" temple under Devaswam. Sulthan bathery was locally known as "circle or range of God Ganapathi": It came to be known as Sulthan bathery after Tipu Sulthan who had conquered there.

¹³² Interview with AD Yasodharan, at his residence Kainatty on January 21,2020.

¹³³ Gopi Mundakkayam , *Ariyappedatha Wayanad* , *Op.cit.*, p.41.

¹³⁴ CA Innes, Evans FB(Ed.) , *Op. it.*,p.505.

¹³⁵ Sreedhara Menon, Kozhikode District Gazetteer , *Op.Cit.*, p.71.

Early temples

Ganapathivattam temple is a noted ancient temple in south Wayanad. It belonged to Kottayam Raja. It was destroyed by Tipu Sulthan during Mysore invasions and the idol and a few monolithic stones are all that are left. Another ancient temple is Mariyamman temple which was also in ruined condition, but is renovated recently; there are stone inscriptions here. Another old temple is that of Jain basti which had been forgotten for a long time. Another prominent old temple in North Wayanad region is "Thirunelli temple"

This temple name carries the prefix "Thiru" that denotes Vishnu temples like Thirumittakkode, Thiruvalla, Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala.

"Thirunelli inscription by BhaskaraRavi refers to the Perumals of Kerala who had sway over this region. It shows its antiquity also. As per legends the temple is established by Brahma and dedicated to Vishnu. Thirunelli temple is known in Sanskrit as *Amalaka kshetra*, *Amalakam* means *goosberri* or *neli* in Malayalam and its village as *Amalaka gramam*.¹³⁶ References about Thirunelli can be seen in Padmapuranam, Garuda puranam and, Unniadi charitham.¹³⁷ There are seven holy water fountains connected with the temple viz *papanashini* literally extinguisher of sins, *panchatheertham iranamochini*, *Gunnika theertham*, *saptavindu*, *varaham* etc.¹³⁸ Gunnika Theertham is believed to have been the abode of God Siva as *Swayam bhoo*. There is a small cave temple near Gunnika Theertham. This cave temple indicates a Budhist or Jain origin for Thirunelli Temple¹³⁹ It is from *varaham* that water is fetched for temple use through aquaduct. The water of the *papanashini* falls on the rock known as *pinnappara* where offerings to the spirit of departed are made.¹⁴⁰ This rock is a bone of an Asuran or demon, named

¹³⁶ C Goplan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum*(Mal), *Op.cit.*, p .10.

¹³⁷ P.M. Krisna Warriyer, *Thirunelli Temple Charithravum Ithihyangalum*, Thirunelli, 2014, p.15.

¹³⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon (ed.), District Gazetteer Cannanore in C.K. Kareem (ed.), Kerala State Gazatteers, Govt. Press. Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p.746.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.745.

¹⁴⁰ CA Innes, Evans FB(Ed.), *Op., cit.*, p.506.

Pashanabhedhi slain by Vishnu, whose body because of his prayer converted to a rock extending from Thirunelli to Gaya.¹⁴¹

It is said that in early Nineteenth century, many saints had meditated in the caves near Thirunelli temple; such as pakshi pathalam, pakshi pashanam, Garudappara etc. When Malabar sub collector Babar visited Pakshipathalam, he built steps for the saints. Uralers of the temple such as Moosad caste and Ebranthiris and a few Nairs and temple servants live around the temple. Two old copper plate preserved in the temple belongs to Bhaskar Ravi, The Chera emperor of 999-1000 and on 37 regnal year or 40 regnal year, that is 1008 CE issued this ,who made arrangements for expenses for daily poojas and donation of cherikkal land for the temple. For the same *keezhakathu*, *Pozhacherikkal* land was given in *attipper*; by Kurubranadu moothakoor Kunjikuttavarma alias veera Kurumburayar.¹⁴²

During the Mysore invasion great atrocities were done against Wayanad. In a private correspondence dated 6 September 1797, it is mentioned that cattle and people were rounded up and captured by Tipu's soldiers.¹⁴³ The Tirunelli temple had been demolished partially during Mysore interlude and the total village around it was devastated. On 28th June 1798. Kurumporainadu Viravarma Raja wrote to James Stevens, the Superintendent of Thalasseri factory that Tipu's raids had created untold miseries for Brahmins and ordinary citizens alike.¹⁴⁴

A Swamiyar is said to have brought Embrandithiris (Karnataka Brahmins) and a Moosath to look after the temple. Later the ownership of the temple was bestowed upon Moosath.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² Mundakkayam Gopi, *Ariyappedatha Wayanad (Mal), Op., cit.*, p.47.

¹⁴³ Rajan Gurukkal , Raghava Varrier ,*Op., cit.*, p.228.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*,p .229.

¹⁴⁵ Mundakkayam Gopi, *Ariyappedatha Wayanad (Mal.)*, *Op.cit.*, p .45.

There were four guardian shrines of Thirunelli, they are the Valliyoorkavu temple in the east. Thrissileri and Trichorakunnu temples on the south and west and a temple dedicated to Subrahmanyam in Brahmagiri.¹⁴⁶

Existence of many live trade routes and temples shows that Wayanad provided a conducive arena for human settlements and trade activities etc from early Medieval period itself. Plenty of her natural resources attracted the settlers here from the pre historic period itself. Due to her abundance of wealth many conflicts and clashes were also staged here in due course of time.

Early Rebellions

Mysore Attacks; Invasion of Hider Ali and Tipu

Mysore invasion was an important event in the history of Wayanad. As soon as Hider Ali ascended the throne of Mysore in 1761,¹⁴⁷ he decided to start his expansionist policy towards Kerala. He got an invitation from Ali Raja of Cannanore to interfere in the internal affairs of North Kerala. In 1766 Hider Ali marched his army to North Kerala. After a series of encounters Haider captured the palace of Kolathiri and then proceeded against Kottayam. After conquest of Kottayam, Mysore army marched towards Kadathunad and conquered zamorin. As Zamorin failed to accede to the demand of Hyder for one crore of Gold mohur, he blew up the palace.¹⁴⁸ As the monsoon was imminent, he left to Coimbatore by entrusting the conquered areas with Madanna, a brahmin revenue officer and 3000 troops. Hyder made a second attempt on Malabar in 1773 following his capture of Coorg. Hyders army passed through Thamarasseri pass in December 1773 along with Sayyid Sahib, Hyder Ali's favourite commander, and Sreenivasa Rao, a mighty commander of Mysore.¹⁴⁹ During his second attempt Hyder Ali conquered several places like Kochi and again they conquered Chettuvai , Pappinavattom, and, Crangannor. During this

¹⁴⁶ CA Innes ICS ,FB Evans (Ed.), *Op., cit.*, pp.506- 507.

¹⁴⁷ A Sreedharan Menon, *A Survey of Kerala History*, DC Books, Kottayam, 2014, p. 243.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.244.

¹⁴⁹ Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varrier, *Op., cit.*, p.223.

time Mysore army was under Sreenivasa Rao and Syed sahib. In the meantime, Mysoreans expelled rulers of Chirakkal, Kottayam, Kadathanad and those rulers sought the help of Tellichery factory against Hyder. But they denied it; but gradually the company became the enemy of Hyder and it paved way for the first Anglo Mysore war.¹⁵⁰

The second Anglo- Mysore war was fought as sardar khan, officer of Hyder tried to capture Tellichery. In May 1781 reinforcements arrived for the British under major Abington, and Tellichery was saved.¹⁵¹

During second Anglo Mysore War Hider Ali passed away and son Tipu Sulthan continued the war with the English. By the treaty of Mangalore the British occupied places were reinstated to Mysoreans. Thus, again Malabar came under the reign of Tipu. By this treaty Arshed begkhan, Governor of Malabar was appointed by Tipu raised the tribute of Kottayam kingdom including Wayanad to one lakh rupees in 1783-84.¹⁵² Pazhassiraja ruler of Kottayam joined with British against Tipu in the initial stage. Later Tipu and Pazhassi became allies against the English. In 1796 Tipu Sulthan provided army and ammunitions for Pazhassi as seen in Tellichery factory records.¹⁵³

After the third Mysore war by the treaty of Sree Rangapattanam in 1792, the entire Malabar including area between Kawwayi river to Kochi went under the dominance of the British.¹⁵⁴

But the question of Wayanad belonged to whom had been there. A series of debates and correspondence occurred over the questions about the ownership of

¹⁵⁰ Dr.KKN Kurup, *Pazhassi Samara Rekhakal*(Mal), 3rd edition, Mathrubhoomi Books, Kozhikode, 2018, p.24.

¹⁵¹ A Sreedhara Menon, *A survey of Kerala History, Op.cit.*, p.246.

¹⁵² Dr KKN Kurup, *Op., cit.*, p.28.

¹⁵³ Dr. Skaria Joseph, *Pazhassi Rekhakalile Vyavahara Bhasha*, SPCS, National Book stall, Kottayam, 2015, p.30.

¹⁵⁴ Dr KKN kurup, *Op., cit.*, p .34.

Wayanad; Chief dispute was whether it belonged to Tipu sultan, English East India company or Pazhassi Raja¹⁵⁵

Mysore rule established an organized system of land revenue under Arshad Begkhan . Revenue from wet lands was fixed by Arshad begkhan on the supposition that one purrah of seed sown will give a medium produce of 10 parah in each year. Of this 5½ will go to the cultivator and 4½ will remain to be divided between *jenmakkar* or or land holder and the Government.¹⁵⁶

Garden tree tax was already fixed at the rate of Rs.2 for every palm tree bearing coconut, Rs 4, every fruit bearing jack, 8 pies for every nut bearing areacanut palm , and Rs 12 for every pepper vine, estimated to produce 15 *seers* of green pepper.¹⁵⁷ But these rates were never accessed in practical; they assessed all fruit bearing trees to collect a uniform method of taxation.¹⁵⁸ Heavy tax system followed by Hider and Tipu invited the enmity of the people of Malabar.

Pazhassi Rebellion

Kerala Varma Pazhassiraja belonged to Padinjare Kovilakam in Kottayam dynasty. He had helped the British against Tipu sulthan, but after the withdrawal of Tipu they actually neglected Pazhassiraja and entrusted Kottayam with Kurumbranadu Raja for the period of one year for the collection of taxes there. The wrong revenue policy of the British here in Wayanad also invited the personal wrath of Pazhassi Thampuran. During the period of Tipu they had collected Tax directly from cultivators, it was relief for the farmers, but the British had reversed their policy and leased out the collection of revenue to different Rajas for lumpsum. Pazhassi Raja stopped all collection of revenue from Kottayam on 28th June 1795

¹⁵⁵ Shumais U, 'Coffee Plantations in Nineteenth Century in Wayanad :Colonial State, Europeans and Indigenous Society,' (Eng), in *Inner Spaces*, bilingual journal, June 2016, p.103.

¹⁵⁶ Innes CA, ICS,Evans FB(Ed.),*Op.,cit.*, p.324.

¹⁵⁷ Innes CA ,ICS, Evans FB(Ed.), *Ibid.*, p.325.

¹⁵⁸ J Reji Kumar (Ed.), *Report on Northern Division of Malabar*, Kerala state Archives Govt of Kerala, 2010, pp. 16-17.

and openly challenged the British Authority.¹⁵⁹ As Pazhassi Raja was popular and more influential in this areas, the British had also decided to stop tax collection for one year. In the meantime they renewed tax collection lease of Kurumbranad Raja for the next five years. It actually fanned up the hostility between the British and Pazhassi Raja in to an open fighting. In 1796 April Pazhassi's fort was cordoned by East India company's forces under the leadership of James Gordon. Pazhassi Raja took assylum in Wayanaden forest.¹⁶⁰ Company established military post at Periya and Dindimmal. On 18 December 1716 Pazhassi's trusted people such as Kannavath Sekharan, Kaithery Ambu, Kaithery Kammaran and so on, were declared culprits and traitors. Pazhassi Raja organized guerilla warfare against the British officials. Pazhassi got whole hearted support from Tipu sulthan. He had provided 6000 Kannada soldiers at Kakana Kotta.¹⁶¹ When Tipu sulthan died the Legal heir of Wayanad had disappeared and Pazhassi was adamant not to give Wayanad to the British. So the company decided to start an open fight.

Pazhassi organized a large army against the company by including Muslim fighters of Tipu, Nair and Kurichia, Warriors. He got the support of local land lords such as Athen Gurukkal, Unni Mootha Mooppan, Kombrath Nambiar, Peruvayal Nambiar and Kannavath Nambiar.¹⁶² The company blocked all passes in Wayanad to deprive Pazhassi's army of essential goods. They established military post at Kakanakotta by May 1801 and all strategically important areas came under the control of the British. Panamaram military post attack was a notable event in the Pazhassi revolt. under the leadership A group of tribals.under leadership of Thalakkal Chandu, a Kurichiya leader of Pazhassi Raja attacked the military post and killed all company soldiers there. Edachana Kunkan a Nair chieftain accompanied them, and they were able to kill seventy British soldiers under the 4th Bombay infantry of captain Dickenson, They put the entire military camp on fire.

¹⁵⁹ Sreedharan Menon, *Survey of Kerala History*, *Op., cit.*, p.260

¹⁶⁰ O K Johni; *Wayanad Rekhakal* (Mal), *Op., cit.*, p.84.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.85.

¹⁶² Dr. K K N Kurup, *Op., cit.*, p.84.

The British Government declared inam or gift for those who help to the capture of Pazhassi raja. Before the death of Pazhassi Raja his close companion Thalakkal Chandu had been captured by the British military. Edachana Kunkan committed suicide; Palloor Rayerappan and Palloor Eman were deported to ‘Prince of wales in 1806.’

Popularity of Pazhassi Raja and his allies among the common people was a great obstacle for the East India company to capture Pazhassi Raja. In the long series of struggle, Wayanadan Chetties were provided strong back up for Pazhassi Raja. Chetties were able to procure necessary commodities for Pazhassi’s army, from Mysore. They were merchants and in order to collect necessary items, they deputed their relatives to Punnad, Kakanabetta, Poodoor area.¹⁶³ Pazhassi’s allies were settled mainly in Parakku Meethal region. A British Military general in a letter mentions that the Goudas and Chetties in this area are totally untrustworthy.¹⁶⁴ The Company trained 1200 Kolkkar to fight against Pazhassi’s Guerilla warfare.

For the final encounter all the preparations were done at Ganapathivattom. The British protected local lords in Pulpally region against Pazhassi. They agreed to provide the service of their Paniya slaves to do spy work. Paniyas were forced to take Oath in the name of their gods to keep secret.

In 1805 November 30 Baber and his crew containing 50 sepoys, one officer and 100 Kolkkar attacked Pazhassi’s new assylam near Kankarappuzha.. T H Baber attests that in the encounter between the two forces, the first person to fall down was Pazhassi Raja and his court Cutchery Chief Karunakara Menon became fortunate to kill Pazhassi Raja.¹⁶⁵ The company could obtain no other properties except a gold *cuttaram* or knife and waist chain.¹⁶⁶ *Cuttaram* and waist chain was kept by TH Baber himself and chain was under the possession of clapham. Pazhassi Raja’s

¹⁶³ Collection of , K K Krishnan, Un published work, p.606.

¹⁶⁴ O K Johny, *Op. cit.*, p.90.

¹⁶⁵ B-2, SL-19 ,Revenue folded file, RAK, p.14.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.12.

body was carried to Mananthavady in palanquine and was buried with customary honours done by Brahmins.

The end of Pazhassi Raja brought about significant changes in the land relations of Wayanad. He established a feudalistic order by dividing Wayanad in to 10 nadus under 10 Nair lords respectively. The Deshavazhis looked after the civil and criminal laws of their respective areas. Those who violated the rules and committed crimes had to pay fine in front of senior rules at Kottayam. Wealthy people had to pay 64 Panams Middle class guilters had to pay 32 panams and the poor people 16 panam. There existed three types of fines such as *Ezha*, *Kozha* and *Thappupizha*. Escheat of land of those who expired without a legal heir is known as *Ezha*. *Kozha* is fine extracted from those who violate the rites and caste rules. *Thappu Pazha* is a fine for criminal cases.¹⁶⁷ These types of rights enjoyed by Naduvazhis were stopped by the English East India company later. There was a voluntary contribution of Deshavazhis to Naduvazhis on the auspicious festive season and on the occasions of birth, death etc., in the family of Naduvazhis, It was known as *Kazhcha* or *Vechu kanal*. It was also abandoned by the company by the treaty of 1793 January 9 (Treaties xxv p173).¹⁶⁸ Pazhassi Raja had divided the entire land of Wayanad in to 10 Nadus- (Include Chart)

Table 1.5: List of Ten Nadus under Pazhassi Raja

| No. | Name of Nadus | Area | Deshavazhis |
|-----|---------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 1 | Moothor Nadu | Periya, Thavinjal, Edavaka | Thavinjal Nair, Aayiraveetil Nair, Varayal Nair, Aalathil Nair, Mulliyan Keezhil Nair, Vazhathattil Nair(Aaru Varambathu Jenmakkar) |
| 2 | Ellornadu (Elamkoor Nadu) | Vemom, Thirunelli | Edachana Nair, Vemom Nambiar. |

¹⁶⁷ O K Johni, *Op. cit.*, p.80.

¹⁶⁸ Rao Bahadur, C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad janangalum Parambaryavum*(Mal),*Op., cit.*, p.131.

| No. | Name of Nadus | Area | Deshavazhis |
|------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| 3 | Wayanad Swaroopam | Kuppathodu ,Purakkadi, Anjukunnu, Poothadi. | Kuppathodu Nair, Thondar Nambiar, Pulppadi Nair, Cheekkallur Nair. |
| 4 | Porunnannur Swaroopam | Vellamunda, Porunnannur | Karingari Nair, Mangalasseri Nair, Manjan Nambiar, Vattathodu Nambiar, Cherukara Nair. |
| 5 | Nalloor Nadu | Nalloor Nadu | Manjan Nambiar, Karingari Nair, Edachana Nair. |
| 6 | Kurumbala Nadu | Kurumbala, Kottathara | Thana Mangalath Nair, poylnail |
| 7 | Edanad koor | Kottappadi, Kalpetta, Vythiri | Kalpetta Nair, Kanthamangalathu Nair |
| 8 | Thondar Nadu | Thondar Nadu | Thondar Nambiar |
| 9 | Pakkaswaroopam | Muttil, Pakkam | |
| 10 | Veliyambam | Veliyambam | Vazhunnavar |

Source Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, Wayanad janangalum parambaryavum, Sulthan Bathery, pp .26-28.

During this feudal rule Adivasis in Wayanad lost their cultivable land. Rule of Deshavazhis made them utter agricultural labourers who lost their access to cultivable land, forest for resource collection and their temples also. Position of the tribes in Wayanad had been degraded to that of slaves. After Pazhassi Revolts the British East India company escheated all the properties of Pazhassi Raja and his allies for Rs 2. It increased the enslavement of tribes in Wayanad. The documents found from Edachana Kunkans house endorsement no dated shows all the properties of Kunkan had been escheated(See Appendix).

By the proclamation dated 16th June 1805 the whole of estate and property of Raja and his principal adherents were confiscated by the state.¹⁶⁹ So feudal administration of Pazhassi Raja gave way to the colonial rule under East India company. Even after the reign of Pazhassi Raja British rule ensured the privileges of Deshavazhis. So Deshavazhis could annex the temple lands to their *Tharavadu* property. This double layer slavery worsened the plight of Adivasis.

Kurichiya Revolt

After Pazhassi revolt the British followed a policy of revenge against the tribes in Wayanad as they stood as the back bone of Pazhassi's militia. The company escheated the landed property of these peoples and followed a policy of revenge upon this native people; They were not allowed to do slash and burn (Punam cultivation) in the forest land. The British also insisted on paying tax incash instead of produce. large share of produce being cash payment.¹⁷⁰ The price mechanism which had existed in the early decades of 19th C was quite Indigestible to the tribal people.

Their products such as cardamom and pepper didn't fetch even the reasonable price for peasants. So, they could not pay the revenue to the company on time. Most of the movable properties possessed by the peasantry and tribals were sold in auction to realize the arrears of revenue. This un precedent situation brought about by the company was a fatal blow to Agrarian classes.¹⁷¹ Police and revenue officers ill-treated the tribes of Wayanad, sometimes they were considered as slaves. The Kurichias and Kurumar were truly suppressed by even the native servants of English east India company; it nourished the anti-British sentiments of Kurichias

¹⁶⁹ *Selected Records – No, 123, Ganapathivattom, RAK, p.3.*

¹⁷⁰ KKN Kurup, "Peasant protest and Revolts in Travancore and Malabar" in P J Cherian, (Ed.), *Perspectives on Kerala History, The second millennium Kerala state, Gazetteer vol II , part II, Government of Kerala, Kerala Gazetteer, 1999, p.412.*

¹⁷¹ The catalogue of the movable properties sold in auction by village officers showed. The poorest condition of the people. The items were 509 brass guindies and Kinnams or Plates. 45 Kaikkots or spades and 104 castle for an amount of Rs 800 where as Market price exceeded several times of sale amount. See judicial consultations vol 174. A fort St. George 12th June 1812, RAK.

and Kurumbas who were Veteran fighters under Pazhassi Raja. Their aim was the total liberation from Europeans called *Vattathoppikar*.¹⁷² They were encouraged to fight in the name of their gods and goddesses particularly in the name of *Murikkanmar* of Pulpally.¹⁷³ Nayars and Thiyyas of Wayanad also joined with Kurichias and Kurumbar. So it can be considered as a popular revolt. The rebels captured the control of certain passes like Kuttiadi pass and Elachurem. The leader of the rebels was Raman Nambi. Other important leaders of this upsurge were Plakka chandu, Aayiraveetil Konthappan and Manpilathodan yamu and so on.¹⁷⁴ The British deployed their military regiments from different parts to crush the rebellion, as requested by T H Baber.¹⁷⁵ The military aid from Seringapatam was rushed to Wayanad with a military contingent of 2000 for protecting the boundaries. His majesty's 30th battalion deployed under Lt. Col. Webber at Manantoddy to strengthen the troops was no match for the ability of Kurichias.¹⁷⁶

After suppressing all these rebellions British began to concentrate on plantation economy in Wayanad. They made several trials on planting trees on a commercial basis. Coffee, cinchona, Tea, Pepper etc were the chief plantations started by the British here.

Plantations

In addition to the large-scale forest exploitation the British started several monocrop plantations such as eucalyptus, Bamboo, cinchona, rubber, coffee, tea etc. Large scale deforestation was happened due to the establishment of plantations. The

¹⁷² Dr. P B Salim, N P Hafiz Muhammed, M C Vasist (Ed.), Dr. Indira D, Kurichiarude Cheruthunilpu (Mal), in *Malabar, Paithrakavum Prathapavum*, Mathrubhumi books, Kozhikode, p.189.

¹⁷³ KKN Kurup, "Peasant protest and Revolts in Travancore and Malabar" in PJ Cherian (Ed.), *Op., cit.*, p.411.

¹⁷⁴ Dr. Indira D, "Kurichiarude Cheruthunilpu (Mal)," in Dr. P B Salim et.al. (Ed.), *Malabar Paithrakavum Prathapavum*, p.190.

¹⁷⁵ Letter from Baber to officer commanding of the province, 1st April, 1812, Judicial consultations, 12th June, 1812, pp. 3273 -3403, RAK.

¹⁷⁶ James Welsh, *Military Reminiscences*, vol II, extracted from A journal of Nearly forty years Active service in the east Indies, Third edition, Smith elder and co, Cornhill, Went worth& press, p.30.

giant bamboo planted in Wayanad thrive exceedingly well, and some experiments were also made with success in Nellore.¹⁷⁷ The monocrop plantations were introduced in the first decade of Nineteenth century. In 1841 Pari and company had initiated a coffee plantation after clearing 1000 acres of forest land. During those days many applications had been received, seeking permission to have forest to start plantation. By 1866 more than 200 large coffee plantations were there in Wayanad as reported by Clement Mekham¹⁷⁸. In 1837 British citizen were allowed to earn landed property in the colonies. It led to the expansion of plantations. In 1843 they prohibited slavery in order to perpetuate basic ideologies of capitalism such as free labour and open market as argued by K K N Kurup¹⁷⁹. Through this measure they aimed to bring the slave labourers to plantation jobs from the yoke of feudalism yet they were forced to bring labourers from Eranad, Coimbatore and Salem¹⁸⁰. Labourers were plentiful on all the plantations but a large number of the more experienced Canarese coolies were enticed away the high wages which were paid at the gold mines of Wayanad.¹⁸¹ Evidence of first coffee cultivation may be traced to 1820 in Mananthavadi, a partner Messrs. Parry & company, was on his way from Madras, across the peninsula to Calicut went up the Kuttiyadi ghat and he was much impressed with the growth of the trees and quality of crop, and on his return to Madras sent Mr King to purchase grass hills near Mananthavady and opened 75 acres of land coffee.¹⁸² Mr Pugh from Ceylon, an experienced planter, then visited Mananthavady and established the first coffee estate known as the 'Pew' estate¹⁸³. The exact year is not known, but it was between 1830 and 1840¹⁸⁴. As coffee cultivation became more successful, European companies began to purchase lands at

¹⁷⁷ *Report on the Administration of Madras presidency 1889 -1890*, CDS, p.79.

¹⁷⁸ Joy C V, *Wayanattile karshika kudiyytavum paristhithiyum*, *Op. cit.*, p .61.

¹⁷⁹ O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal(Mal)*, *Op. it.*, p .105 .

¹⁸⁰ Deepika Malayalam daily, 1980 November 3.

¹⁸¹ Report on the administration of Madras presidency, during the year 1883- 84, p.78.

¹⁸² TK Gopala Panicker ' Extracts from Malabar and It's Folk, 1990, Plantations in Wayanad in MGS Narayanan(Ed.),Malabar Mahotsav Souvanir, 1994,p,138 ,RAK.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

cheapest price from local land lords. This local land lords received *pattam* for 99 years. The title deeds obtained from Pozhuthana Edom shows this type of land transfer to Harisons Malayalam plantations for 99 years on lease¹⁸⁵ Dharmaraja Aiyar an early settler and freedom fighter of Wayanad, mentions about a gentleman from England and demanded land here to pursue plantations and set his eyes on the Purkkadi Devasam land. Even though temple *uralars* agreed for the transactions, *oracle* in the temple objected saying that not to give land to the cap wearer or a European. In 1841 Pari and company started Wayanad coffee plantations¹⁸⁶ By 1875 more than one dozen major coffee plantations had been raised in Wayanad. The Ceylon method of cultivation, removing shade was not successful here. In the mean time a fungal infections called “Hemeleavastries” destroyed the coffee plantations¹⁸⁷.

When coffee cultivation yielded only losses European companies begin to concentrate on tea plantations. In 1829 Pari and company planted tea in Kalpetta in South Wayanad. Many European companies had acquired thousands of acres of land for tea cultivation. Pepper plantation was started by Mr. Powel in 1900. Rubber cultivation was started by CA Abbot in Vythiri in 1904. There were a long list of applicants for acquiring land in Wayanad.,which is enlisted in the report of G A Billard, R Nichol(1000 acres) Alexander Gibri (3000) Donald M Grigor(3000 acres) Col, J W Warlidge (1000 acres) F J Fargusson (2000 acres) and so on.¹⁸⁸ Land lords in Wayanad have also ceded lands in hectares to the Europeans for plantations. Belu Chathu Nair has ceded large extent of hill slopes to Alexander Romington, jace Boosy, Henry Dunant, Carturite in 1859 which lead to the beginning of Chundayil

¹⁸⁵ Documents obtained from Pozhuthana Edom, a prominent Nair family at Pozhuthana.

¹⁸⁶ Johny O K, *Op.cit.*, p.106.

¹⁸⁷ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Vol 1 Madras, 1887, p.47.

¹⁸⁸ O.K. Johny, *Ibid.*, pp.93,94.

estate in Southern Wyanad.¹⁸⁹ Cherangottu Chathu kidavu ceded land to Alfred Rite in 1839 which laid the foundation of Went worth estate.¹⁹⁰

As the tea cultivations demanded extensive cultivation large funds the tea estates were vested with European companies especially based in England .¹⁹¹ When the coffee and cinchona cultivation became a failure many plantations turned to tea plantations and the production was also satisfactory.

Table 1.6: Tea production in Wayanad from 1901 to 1909

| Year | Acre | Production |
|------|------|---------------------------------|
| 1901 | 4531 | 1749,062 Rathal |
| 1908 | 4686 | 1751,526 Rathal |
| 1909 | 5078 | 2,283,429 Rathal ¹⁹² |

Source; Rao Bahadur Gopalan Nair, Wayanad janangalum parambaryavum,2006, Sulthan Bathery, p.41.

In the Second half of 20th Century many of the European plantations had exchanged their estates with native capitalists Pari and company the earliest planation' owners sold the estate to Kottaram plantations under the ownership of Kottaram Anantha Siva Aiyar. Harrison's and Cross field company started Malayalam plantations by integrating Thovarimala estate, Arappatta, chundale, achool. sentinel rock estate etc.

¹⁸⁹ Dr KKN Kurup, "Malabarile European Mooladhana Nikshepangal", "Aadhunika Keralam" in *Malabar Mahotsav Souvenir*, MGS Narayanan (Ed.),1993, p.432.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ *Family History of Dharmaraja Aiyar*, unpublished, p.62.; He is also known as Wayanadan Gandhi. The first political conference in Wayanad was held in 1921 under the leadership of Dharmaraja Aiyer.

¹⁹² Rao Behadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanadu Janangalum Parambaryavum*, *Op.cit.*, p .41.

Table 1.7: Details of Important plantations in the Late 19th and 20th c

| | Estate | Place | Owner |
|-----|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. | Mundakkai Estate | Vellarmala | H Pari |
| 2. | Putumala Estate | „ | „ |
| 3. | Centinel rock estate | „ | „ |
| 4. | Poonu poya estate | „ | „ |
| 5. | Chooralmala estate | „ | „ |
| 6. | Cheranbadi Tea company | „ | „ |
| 1. | Rangoda Estate | Vythiri | RL Walker |
| 2. | Koottakkavil Estate | „ | |
| 3. | Choolloor Estate | „ | |
| 4. | Chumban Estate | “ | |
| 5. | Chundiyl Estate | “ | |
| 6. | Ada laid | “ | |
| 1 | Achoor Estate | Vythiri | R.F walker |
| 2. | Adavathodu Estate | Vythiri | H Winter Bothe W.F |
| 3. | Bankathodu Estate | Vythiri | karasalekku |
| 4. | Bovali Estate | Mananthavadi | Albert not and company |
| 5. | Chennalyi Estate | “ | A Huston |
| 6. | Chulika Estate | Meppadi | George Romilly |
| 7. | Clonshovay Estate | Meppadi | EBLMSH Palmar |
| 8. | Koottamunda Estate | Vythiri | HB Winter Botham |
| 9. | Koorchiar Mala | Vythiri Kurichiar mala | W F car slake |
| 10. | Jessy Estate | Mananthavadi | A News ton |
| 11. | Kadalatt Estate | Meppadi | JC SCE Abbot |
| 12. | Lowerclon Showay Estate | Meppadi | EBLM SH Pawalkumar |
| | | Meppadi | Albert not and company |
| 13. | Meppadi Estate | Meppadi | W Mackinlay |
| 14. | Muppainad peak Estate | Meppadi | Albert not and Company |
| | | Kalpetta | Royal and company |
| 15. | Muratti Estate | Vellormala | W Mackinlay |
| 16. | Muttill peak Estate | Vythiri | H Winter Botham |
| 17. | Munniyapoya Estate | Meppadi | A Trollope |
| 18. | Murikar Estate | | |
| 19. | Neddumkarna Estate | | |

Rao Bahadur, C Gopalan Nair, Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum(Mal), translated by K K N Kurup, Sulthan Bathery, 2006.

Colonisation Scheme

Government lands lay barren in the Sultan Bathery region. These lands were in Nenmeni, Mooppainadu and Noolpuzha Amsoms. In 1894 Madras government passed a law to allot these lands to ex-service men. It was totally 36000-acres of land and it was decided to distribute 5 acre land and 2 acre paddy fields to each ex-service man along with 2900 Rs for meeting the expenses.¹⁹³ But many of the recipients of this land accepted RS 2900 offered to them by the Govt , only a few ex-service man decided to remain here...

A letter from the collector of Malabar Ref read 19601/47 dated 29/11/47 states that there were over 1500 aboriginal families with a population of over 600 living in the proposed area for colonization. They were aboriginal tribes including Kuruman and oorals who following the community living and generally enjoy properties in common. They are generally reluctant to leave their houses or villages ;they are also illiterate and uncivilized that it is hardly possible to make them understand the significance of the colonization scheme. An ad hoc committee recommended for the appointment of a social worker to gain the good will of the aboriginals in favour of colonization scheme and make them understand the beneficial aspects of the colonization scheme.¹⁹⁴ So it is evident that the British government was very keen to introduce the colonization scheme in Wayanad.

Travancore Migration

Migration of Jains, Nair and Various tribal communities can be regarded as the first phase of migration to the Wayanad territories. The second phase of migration was marked by the steep flow of migrants, especially Syrian Christians and Ezhava from south Kerala to Malabar and to old Kasaragod in south Karnataka. Large tracts of land lay barren due to the land policy followed by the British in Malabar. The British rule in Malabar acclaimed land monopoly of Jenmi Tharavadus and collected fixed amount of taxes from them. The Nair Jenmis showed little

¹⁹³ CV Joy, *Wayanattile Karshaka Kudiyettavum Paristhithiyum*(Mal) *Op.cit.*, p.31.

¹⁹⁴ R. Dis. Revenue file B No: 38 ,SI No;34, RAK.

interest in expanding agriculture on these lands. The existing matrilineal mode of succession and the joint family system etc. made the partition and distribution of landed property a complicated one. So, all these feudal Jenmis possessed thousands of acres of forest. They had Jenmam rights over this land. There were several push and pull factors which were responsible for the large-scale migration of peasants from Travancore. The pressure of increasing population on land is generally identified as a major common factor.¹⁹⁵ The peasants of central Travancore taluks of erstwhile Kerala like Meenachil, Thodupuzha, Muvattupuzha, Vaikkom and Changanassery migrated to hilly regions of thick forest of Malabar district¹⁹⁶ to earn a better living. Migrants consisted of Nairs, Muslims, Syrian Christians and Ezhavas. Considerable number of migrants arrived to Malabar between 1930 - 1955. This migration had taken place due to the pressure of population and scarcity of cultivable land in Travancore which was an important push factor for the migration of the people. It is also seen that population of Travancore increased by 119.57 percent between 1911 and 1951, while it rose only by 57.18 percent in Malabar¹⁹⁷ The Christian population of Travancore increased to 154000 in the year 1951 from 53000 in 1911.¹⁹⁸ Syrian Christians were the major group among the migrant community to Malabar. They mainly hailed from Meenachil, Muvattupuzha, Thodupuzha Taluks. The average size of the land holdings were very small in these areas. Steep increase in the population and small size of land holdings made cultivation profitless. A normal Syrian Christian family consisted of six to eight children, production and earning from this small land were not sufficient to meet their expenses. Equal property share for all son in the family also increased the pressure on land.

¹⁹⁵ Michael Tharakan, 'Migration from Travancore to Malabar (1930-1950)', *CDS working paper, No 194*, CDS Trivandrum, p1.

¹⁹⁶ Dr. Joshi Mathew, 'Agrarian migration and Socio Economic changes in Kerala, A case study of Wayanad (1928-2000)' (Eng) in *Inner spaces*, Bilingual Half yearly – Multi Disciplinary, Research journal, June – December, Vol 1, issued June 2nd, 2018, p .45.

¹⁹⁷ P K Michael Tharakaran, *CDS working Paper No:194, Op.cit.,P.4.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.17.

Table 1.8: Average size of land holdings in selected Taluks of Travancore.

| Taluks | Average size of Land Holding |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| Vaikkam | 50 cents |
| Kunnathunad | 73 cents |
| Kottayam | 97.5 cents |
| Muvattupuzha | 1.03 Acres |
| Thodupuzha | 1.73 acres |
| Cherthala | 1.98 acres |

Sources, T K Velu pillai, Travancore state manual, Intra regional differences agrarian systems and internal migration: A case study of the farmers, p.745.

By the late 1920's farmers in Travancore, were actively engaged in the cultivation of rubber and other crops. But after worldwide depression, prices of agricultural produce nose dived. Sharp decline in agricultural income had several setbacks on small farmers.. They had no alternative means to reinforce their agricultural income. Moreover, they were in a state of severe indebtedness in the present economic conditions.

Table 1.9 : Prices of selected Agricultural products of Travancore 1925 -31

| | Commodity | Year | | | | | | |
|---|---|--------|--------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|-------|
| | | 1925 | 1926 | 1927 | 1928 | 1929 | 1930 | 1931 |
| a | Pepper (average per canty in Rs) | | | 630 (27-28) | 500(28- 29) | 250 (29-30) | 140-200 (30-31) | |
| b | Tapioca (Average per canty in dried chips in Rs as ps) | | | | 20 | | 8.14 | |
| c | Lemon grass Oil (per ib in Rs as Ps) | 2.4 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 1.14 | 1.11 | 1.4 | .14 |
| d | Copra (average price) | 105.26 | 89.144 | 110.128 | 95.3 | 75.81 | 57.88 | ---- |
| e | Rubber Price | 93 | 206 | 125 | 72.13 | 47 | 34.07 | ----- |

Source: *Travancore Economic Enquiry Committee Report 1931*, Government Press, Thiruvananthapuram, 1932, pp.51-72.

Notes: Lemon grass cultivated mainly in Kunnathunad, Muvattupuzha and Thodupuzha Taluks covering 12000 acres.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ *Travancore Depression Enquiry Committee Report, 1931*, Government Press, Thiruvananthapuram, p.68.

The number of mortgages and hypothecations in Travancore increased by 72 Percent between 1903- 04 and 1928-29, while their value rose by 128.4 Percent²⁰⁰

It was in the hilly tracts of Malabar that most of Travancore wished to settle down as this hilly land was particularly suited for the commercial crops, in which migrants were interested, It was also available in plenty in Malabar.²⁰¹ The economic crisis after the first world War, also affected the economy of India. The Indian peasants were caught on the horn of dilemma when the depression over whelmed them.²⁰² There was also severe scarcity of food grains and people had to take bajra. The rice consumers couldn't accept wheat or bajra instead of rice.²⁰³ The Second World War is considered as the immediate and significant push factor for the Agrarian migration. When Japan captured Burma in 1942, an acute shortage occurred in Travancore due to the cessation of rice imports from Burma. The price of rice, however almost doubled by this time from six rupees to eleven rupees per bag of 160 lbs.²⁰⁴ The difficulty to obtain rice led to the expansion of paddy cultivation.

Pull factor of Migration

The people of other parts of Kerala such as Thiruvithamkoor and Kochi had little relations with Malabar regions. The beginning of plantations there in Travancore invited many migrant labourers from Malabar. The migrant Mappila labourers, who migrated to the plantations of Travancore disseminated the information on the availability of land in Malabar.²⁰⁵ The availability of enough waste lands, and the availability of Devaswam land, Private Janmam land and

²⁰⁰ Michael Tarakan P K, *CDS working Paper No194, Op. cit.*, P. 10

²⁰¹ Michal Tharakan P K , "Intra- Regional differences in Agrarian systems and internal migration; A case study of the migration of Farmers from Travancore to Malabar – 1930 – 50", *CDS Working Paper 194*, 1984, p.3.

²⁰² Deltmer, Rothermund, *India Great depression 1929 – 30*, South Asia Books, New Delhi, 1992, p.79.

²⁰³ See, Travancore Economic Depression Enquiry Committee, 1932, p.93.

²⁰⁴ Shiva swami K G, *The Exodus From Travancore to Malabar Jungles*, serve India, Kerala Relief Centre, Coimbatore, 1945, p.123.

²⁰⁵ Dr Joshi Mathew, in *Inner Spaces* p.49.

revenue land was the attraction of migrants to Wayanad. More over the price of land in Malabar was comparatively very low compared to that of Travancore. An acre of land in Malabar cost five to ten rupees while in Travancore it was 150 to 200 .²⁰⁶ The severe scarcity of food occurred after the second world war induced the governments to introduce ‘grow more food’ campaign in 1943– 44. The Government started the” Grow more food” campaign to increase food production in the country by encouraging the people to bring maximum possible area of land under the plough.²⁰⁷ A letter to the collector of Malabar seeking the permission for second crop cultivation recommends that, if the fields are level and there is sufficient water for irrigation and if this is properly cultivated with varieties like *Thekkan Cheera, Navara and Palthondi*, in the second crop from December - April, The average that can be obtained is about 1280 ib per acre.²⁰⁸ The people of Travancore discouraged the migration to Wayanad due to Malaria and climate.²⁰⁹ According to available information early migrant farmers settled in sultan Bathery zone of south Wayanad in 1928.²¹⁰ Later migrants settled in Mananthavady, Nadavayal, Pulpally etc. Majority of farmers obtained land through a lease known as *Marupattam*.

In short the history of Wayanad has gone through several process of transformation from stages to stages Such as the egalitarian self-sufficient ethnic societies under Veda kings, Feudalistic order under Pazhassi Raja and his Naduvazhis age of modernity after Tipu Sulthan and the foreign domination under the British. All these stages had altered the material life of the tribal sects here. Changes in the material are naturally reflected in their spiritual and religious life. The following chapter analyses the fore said factors.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.50.

²⁰⁷ H Farmer, *Agricultural Colonization in India Since Independence*, Oxford and IBM, London ,1974, pp.15-17.

²⁰⁸ R Dis file, Revenue, B / 628,13, Si No.13,RAK.

²⁰⁹ Jose Thomas Thekkanattu, ‘Aranootandu ormayude Olangalil,’ St. Mary’s Ferrone Palli, Mullankolly, Souvenir of Pulpally immigration and the dedication of newly built church- 1950 -1988, pp.5-7.

²¹⁰ Dr. Joshi Mathew, Agrarian migration and socio economic changes in Kerala, A case study of Wayanad (1928-2000)article in Inner spaces, 2016, p51.

CHAPTER 2

CHANGING MODES OF RESOURCE USE

History of Polity

Any serious consideration of religion cannot evade the question of material and social life of the people concerned. The social form of production and distribution is explained to have corresponding implications at all levels of cultural life. The straight forward materialistic explanation of the religious life has been critically engaged by Marx through his concepts of mode of production through which he put forth the idea of dialectics between the economic base and the ideological superstructure¹. Though there was a focus on reproduction than production, the neo- Marxist concerns did not exclude the economic dimensions of the ideology. The scope of explanations are further expanded by the environmental historians. In order to express the same , a new concept of ‘mode of resource use’ is proposed. In the long sweep of human history, according to this proposal, four distinct modes of resource use existed with spatiotemporal differences among various communities /people. They are of a) food gathering, b) nomadic pastoralism, c) settled cultivation and d) industry². The root source of economic, social and cultural life, according to this concept is, the stages of modes of resource use. All these are to be kept in consideration while examining the changes in the forms of religion in general and this chapter attempts to describe the economic and social setting of Wayanad with an intention to seek the context of religious life in Wayanad.

As already mentioned, Wayanad is an earliest settled area wherefrom we do have atleast clear evidence of Mesolithic and Neolithic life. Some hypothesis of presence of Indus script on the Edakkal caves is also proposed. Later scripts are also

¹ RS Sharma, *Material culture and social formation in ancient India*, New Delhi 1983, p.9.

² Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *The Use and Abuse of Nature This Fissured Land an ecological history of India*, Oxford university press, Delhi,1992, p .14.

present there. All these indicate the presence of a thriving population in Wayanad from the stone age onwards. Generally, the development of advanced forms of life are understood to be emerged from rude beginnings to refined levels. A technology centred explanation of such development is visible in the classification of historical times from early Stone Age to Metal age. Such a teleology is an impediment for a clearer understanding of the processes of history; and so is the case of Marxist teleologies. Still, some of the Marxist theoreticians have recognized the presence of multiple modes of production in a single society of contemporary times. The notion of mode of resource use also restrain from postulating a single mode of resource use at a time in a society. Considering the tribals as the earliest inhabitants of the region, let us examine the social and economic life of the people of Wayanad.

An important problem that comes in the way of a clearer understanding of this is the paucity of sources. Still many ethnographic works are there to form a picture of their life. Information from these works could be juxtaposed with the archival materials. Further, an observation of the current life of tribals of Waynad gives a lot of insight into the processes of social development in the area. Notwithstanding multiple waves of migrations to the area, the tribal people seems to have been keeping off any drastic changes that was prompted by the pulls of the migrant population till recently. What follows is a description of pathways of changes among the tribals of the Waynad on the basis is of a comparative understanding of the Mullu Kurumar, Kurichiyar and the Paniyar tribes.

We have seen the area of settlement of each tribe in the previous chapter. Generally, Mullukurumar resides in the middle Southern area of Wayanad; Kurichiyar in North Wayanad and the Paniyars are spread all over Wayanad. We have also seen the significance of the Edakkal in connection with the earliest habitation of the area, though we are not quite sure about who were the original inhabitants in Edakkal. Still we have lot of indications of the material life of the people through the pictorial representations and inscriptions available at Edakkal.

The field work in this area has shown that the area around the Edakkal caves are currently inhabited by Mullukurumar³.

Early Historic Life

Though very meagre, archaeological and literary evidences shed light on the early historic life in the area. The crudeness, refinement and other features of the tool that people then used constitute an important evidence of the low level of the exploitation of the environment and ecology. Early historic cultures generally represent the first three modes of resource use. The Stone age people generally followed in a hunting gathering mode of life and pastoral mode as well. Neolithic revolution is said to have a watershed of the settled cultivation. As already pointed its very difficult to form a picture of the time at which the lithic cultures thrived in Wayanad. To dig the life of the past from the vestiges available in the present alone is conducive to draw a picture of the life of the societies in these period. It is known now that many drawings seen in Edakkal Caves are of Neolithic period. We are not quite sure about the expanse of the neolithic settlers. It is important that so many neolithic sites are identified in the surrounding areas in Karnataka allow us to think that the area was an abode of the neolithic settlers. At least some of the tribes of Wayanad could be the descendance of the Neolithic settlers of the area. Edakkal Cave engravings represent a human figure with bow and arrow accompanied by a hunting dog. F Faucett who had discovered the cave assumes that figure as a Mullukuruma chieftain. Dr. Hultzch also supports this view.⁴ For a long time, Mullukurumas were reluctant to visit the cave due to certain mysterious fear and there is also a Mullukuruma tharavadu named “Edakkal”, situated beneath the Edakkal caves. So, it is concluded by Faucett and Dr. Hultzch that Edakkal engravings are the creation of the predecessors of modern Mullukuruma community. Their mode of resource use is also well depicted in the Edakkal cave paintings. They were purely gatherers and food collectors and done hunting widely in this mode of resource use. They are known as hunters or vedas in their myths of Veda dynasty.

³ Field work of the researcher.

⁴ OK Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, Mathrubhumi books, Calicut, 2010, pp. 35-36.

When they became little more advanced, they practiced shifting cultivation too. Human existence in Wayanad was marked from the Stone Age itself, Edakkal cave is noted for the early vestiges of human habitation. Early known rulers of Wayanad belonged to Vedar dynasty. Mullu kuruma community in Wayanad are believed to be the descendants of vedar kings. Known history of Wayanad begins with the story of Veda kingdom. Local historians, depending upon the earlier anthropologists, says that Veda kings like Arippan and Vedan had ruled here. Arippan ruled over north of Panamaram *desham* and Vedan ruled over south of Panamaram *Desham*⁵. Edakkal cave inscriptions recorded that an ancient dynasty existed in Wayanad, that is "sree Vishnu varma Kudumbiya Kula vardhanasya", This Kudumbiyil race is identified by CA Innes as one of the old dynasties. Dr Oppert opines that kudumban, kurumban etc are derived from the term 'kudumbi'⁶. From that it can be inferred that, the territory of Wayanad was under the reign of Kuruma or kudumbiya dynasty, the veda kings such as arippaan and vedan were the descendants of Kudumbiyil race, the existing songs and stories and epics, among the kurumas show that veda kings ruled Wayanad for a long time. Arippan and Vedan were the last rulers of the dynasty, their sway over Wayanad came to an end with the attack of Kottayam – Kurumbranadu kings⁷. Some of the place names and remains of ancient edifices show that Veda kings had sway over Wayanad. Arippan's headquarters have been at Arippattakkunnu in Thavinjal amsam and the pilgrimm centers of Mullukurumas such as Veliyambam kotta and Pakkam kotta are related with Veda king Arippan, Vedankotta near Cheeral, is also an important place for the Mullu Kurumas. There are three temples of Mullukurumas established by the Mullukuruma princess Iravi in Northern Wayanad such as Iravi Mangalam in Anju kunnu, Iravi mala in Thavinjal and Iravinalloor in Kuppathodu. The Madras journal of literature and science (1889) supports their claim of nationality. "We are very insufficiently informed about the early history of the Kurumbers. Before they settled down to anything like domestic life they roamed as Vedas in the virgin forests

⁵ Balasabha , Kudumbasree Mission,Wayanad,*Charithramurangunna Wayanad* (Local History) Vol.1, p.64.

⁶ O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op. cit.*, p.73.

⁷ *Ibid.*

hunting the deer for its flesh and wild animals for their own safety. Dr Oppert speaks of 'Kudumban' and it is possible that the Kurumbers were the original inhabitants of Wayanad during the reign of the Kudumbiyil family"⁸

Mode of resource use practiced by them during those days was hunting and food gathering. During CE 10th century, till 930 CE Wayanad was ruled by Ganga dynasty, their area had been extended up to Kalpetta. Gangas patronised Jainism greatly. Kadamba kings ruled over parts of Wayanad between 10th and 12th century CE, They have ruled over this land by dividing Wayanad into three such as Bayal Nadu, "Veera Vayal Nadu" and "Chagi Vayal Nadu". Inscription at Mariyamman Temple at Sulthan Bathery refers to Veera Vayal nadu king and Poothadi pada Nair who executed the reign of Kadambas here in Wayanad⁹ (see references in the first chapter land, people and resources). Later the Hoysala Kingdom established their rule over Wayanad, During the period of Hoysala King Vishnu Vardhana CE1104 to 1147 Wayanad and Nilgiri came under the Hoysalas. Chamaraj Nagar inscription gives clear evidences about the Hoysala rule in Wayanad.¹⁰ Thirunelli inscription and Unniachi Charitham give ample references about the Hoysala kingdom in Wayanad. It was during this stage that Jainism got deep rooted in the soil of Wayanad. Hoysalas gave Jains land in plenty in Wayanad. Nature of cultivation changed from shifting cultivation to settled one. Extensive paddy fields in Wayanad originated in this period. Agriculture here became well organized and drastic changes occurred in relations of production and means of production.¹¹ The extent of the area of Hoysalas were from Veeraj petta in Karnataka to Vythiri in Wayanad. It is believed that, they have given vast areas of cultivable land to their dependent Jain Gaudas in Wayanad. Maniyankodu Subba Gowder and

⁸ OK Johny (Ed.), *Edakkal cave Carvings A visitors Companion*, Mathrubhumi books, 2006, p.45.

⁹ Balasabha, Kudumbasree mission, *Op. cit.*, pp.71-72.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.74-75.

¹¹ CV Joy, *Wayanattile Karshaka Kudiyettavum Paristhithiyum*, Modern Books, Sulthan Bathery, 2013, pp.4-5.

Maniyankodu Ananthayya Gowder were the jenmis of Thariyodu deshams as per No 43 the settlement register.¹²

Vedas were treacherously defeated and killed by the Nair lords from Kottayam dynasty. There are several legends regarding the decline of the Veda dynasty, one of such stories is that when a Kumbala prince arrived at Thirunelli temple, he was made hostage by the Veda king and forced him to marry a Veda princess; he reluctantly agreed to marry according to the kshaytriya rituals. In the meantime Kumbala king, father of the captive made alliance with Kottayam – Kurumbranadu kings to save the prince by attacking the Vedas. On the day of the marriage they jointly attacked the Vedas and the marriage of the princess was done with Nandilath Nambiar, and they made him the ruler of Veliyambam kotta. As a token of gratitude, the Kumbala king entrusted the rule of Wayanad to the Kottayam-Kurumbranad kings and divided the kingdom between them as north west Wayanad to the king of Kottayam and the south east Wayanad to the Kurumbranad Raja. The area under Kurumbranad raja is known as Parakkumeethal. C Gopalan Nair in his work *Wayanad- people and its Tradition* mentions about the existence of Ramamangalathu kovilakam of Kurumbranad king in 1911.¹³

During the reign of Kottayam dynasty the entire Wayanad was divided into small units known as 'Nadus' and placed under the control of Nair chieftain for administrative convenience.¹⁴ Chief crop cultivated under the Kottayam rulers were Paddy itself. Agricultural scenario was oriented with feudalistic characters. Whole land came under the control of Nair Naduvzhis. Tribes such as Kurichiyas and Mullukurumas became cultivators on this land by paying the *pattam*. Tribes like Paniyas and adiyas were reduced to the position of agricultural slaves and became landless too.¹⁵ Forests which were chief source of resource for the tribes also came

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

¹³ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad people and its tradition*, p.13.

¹⁴ Dr Seetha Kakkoth, Hareendran P, Dept of rural and urban sociology, Mananthavady campus, Wayanad, *Tribal urban complex of Mananthavady, The nature of transformation in Wayanad region of western ghats*, p.1.

¹⁵ OK Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal, Op., cit.*, p.82.

under the Naduvazhi jenmis. Lands under them were under two categories such as devaswam and brahmaswam. Wood selling and elephant selling were the important revenue of the Naduvazhis. Traders from Mysore and Kozhikode used to cut down the big trees from the Pulpally forest at the rate of RS/ 2, *murikkanam*. There were elephant pits at Madappalli, Devargadha, Alathur, Cheeyambam etc.¹⁶ Chettis, Mullukurumas, ooralikurumas and Kattu naikas helped in the capturing of elephants.

The Kottayam domination came to an end with the Mysore invasion. By Mangalapuram treaty signed between East India Company and Tipu Sulthan in 1784, whole of Malabar came under Tipu.¹⁷ By the Sree Ranga pattanam treaty Malabar came under the control of the British. As per Pazhassi rajas treaty with the company, the rule of Wayanad again came under Pazhassi Raja. Due to the unnecessary intervention of the British into Pazhassis rule and illegal taxation a conflict arose between them that culminated in the death of Pazhassi in 1805. After the death of Pazhassi raja Wayanad merged with Malabar district. In those days District of Malabar consisted of Nilgiri region too. In 1843, areas like Moonnanad, Cherankod, Nambalakkod amsoms were retained in south eastern Wayanad Division and rest of Nilgiri merged with Coimbatore district. But in 1887 these amsoms merged with Nilgiri in the Coimbatore district. Thus only 13 amsoms remained in Wayanad Taluk, such as Periya, Edavaka, Nalloornadu, Elloornadu, Kuppathodu, Poothadi, Kurumbala, Porunnanore, Thondernadu, Vythiri. Ganapathivattom, Edanassakkoor, Mooppainadu etc. with its head quarters at Mananthavady.¹⁸

During the British rule also Jenmi-Naduvazhi system was retained here. During the British period, collection of land revenue in Wayanad was arbitrary and it was fixed by revenue collectors¹⁹. Agricultural lands were categorized into

¹⁶ Dr Joshy Mathew', Pulpallyyude Charithram' in *Signature*, Suvarna Jubilee Smaranika, Vijaya Higher Secondary School, Pulpally, 2015-16, p.71.

¹⁷ C V Joy, *Wayanattile Karshaka kudi yettavum Paristhiyum*, *Op. cit.*, p.6.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.8-9.

¹⁹ Dr Joy Varkey', Impact of Colonialism in Tribal Communities in Wayanad' in *Inner spaces*, Dr Priya Pillcode, (Ed.), Vol I, Issue I, June 2016, Bilingual Half Multidisciplinary Research Journal, p. 40.

dry and wet lands. Thomas Warden introduced a new revenue settlement for wet lands, it proposed the deduction of three ‘pothis’ for each ‘pothi’ of seed sown to meet the expenses of cultivation and the rest was divided between the government, Janmi, and the cultivator equally²⁰. The compulsory taxation created a crisis for the Kurumas and Kurichias.

First Forest working plan officer Mr. Coode opined that “There are Kurumber shrines dotted about in the reserves, which it is desirable to respect by refraining from felling to keep the Kurumbas in humour. They are as a class, independent and unreliable, though they have been successfully persuaded to take ponam”²¹. They cultivated cereals like sama,raggi, gingelly and garden rice known as ‘*karuthan*’ through the mode of ponam cultivation.²² Their ability to store food and other materials was also very limited and they could not transport materials over long distances.

The burial remains obtained from Edakkal cave valleys and plenty of bows and arrows sickles and plough-share testify the fact that the metal craft had been excellent in this stage itself. Ooralikurumas excelled in iron smelting and making of bows and arrows, *kortha* to catch fish and other household potteries too.²³ A hunters’ song that is kept in the oral tradition of kurumars as a pattu is given below

"Purapettu vedar Naayattinayi
Othungichuttippayum Churuttavalem
Karalethinnunna chorachokkanum
Padanaduvil chadum Pandamallenum
Mukkimuralunna mulleppattiyum
Itharam naalu nayikkalokkeyum
Icheyil vedar kayarumittuthe

²⁰ J. Rejikumar(Ed), *Greame’s report on the Revenue Administration of Malabar*, 1822, Kerala State Archives Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010, p. 289.

²¹ B A Cariappa, *Working plan for Wayanad Forest Division (1950-51 to 1959-60)*, p 12.

²² *Vikasana Rekha* , Poothadi Grama Panchayath, 1996,p,7.

²³ *Vikasana Rekha*, Ambalavayal Grama Panchayath,1996,p .8.

Kayari panniyum malayamarnnuthe
*Kaduka vedarum manamurukunnu*²⁴

So comparing the contemporary ethnographic materials with the available literature allow us to see the continuation of stronger traditions of hunting and gathering with at least some of such traits and practices lasting even up to the recent past. Sangham text like "Pathittupathu" and 'Periya Puranam' of Sekkilar also makes references about Mullukuruma community or Vedas Sekkilar points out that Saiva saint Kannappa Nainar was belong to Kurava community and he made an inter-caste marriage between Naga and Dantha, a veda girl of Mullukruma or veda community. One male child 'Thinnan' was born to them. When Nagan became old and he want to entrust the position of 'Kurava chieftain' upon his son Thinnan, for that Thinnan is sent for his first ritual hunting along with hunting dogs and co hunters according to custom., later this Thinnan became a staunch devotee of Siva and came to be popular as 'Kannappa Nainar' , as he sacrificed his eyes for lord Siva.²⁵ Kannappa nainar from Kalahasthi is regarded as oldest among the 63 Saiva Nainers. 7th Pathikam or part of Pathittupathu says that Chera kingdom had adopted twice from the vettuva rulers as this lines testifies

"Mariyavullamodu Mattor pininja
*Nedu noon Kelviyanthuvarkkoru Thanthai"*²⁶

It mentions about the adoption of war expert Anthu and his sister from Vettuvass in Kalabhra in Konku nadu, to the Chera kingdom. Kalabhra region was the northern boarder of Chera Kingdom so it is evident that Kannapa Nainar was a Keralite.²⁷

²⁴ Dr S R Chandramohan, *Wayanattile Adivasikalude pattukal*, Mathrubhumi Books, 2013, p 87. (Vedar or Mullukurumar are going for hunting along with four dogs. On way, a wild pig their was killed by them and hunters felt sad over that)

²⁵ Chekkizhar Swami , *Periya puranam*, KPK Menon,(Tr .),Kerala Sahitya academy, Thrissur, 2006, pp.67-70.

²⁶ *Pathittu pathu*, G Vaidya Natha Aiyer (Tr.), Kerala Sahithya Academy Thrissur, 1997, p .169.

²⁷ Chekkizhar Swamikal, KPK Menon (Tr), *Op. cit.*,p.163.

Among the villages of Pakkam, cheriyamala, Appad, Mundeneduppu where I did extensive field work, let me describe what I could know from Cheriya mala²⁸, a Mullukurumar hamlet. A cluster of 42 houses, this hamlet has more than 100 people belonging to various *kulams*. Organized under their Moopan (chief) Velutha (82 years), the inhabitants are living predominantly on agriculture with secondary role for hunting gathering. It is interesting that more than 15 persons are employed under government service now in this colony. Paddy fields around 75 acres near by is cultivated by both chettis as well Mullukurumas. Mullukurumas alone have 50 acres. 100 Yards behind this colony in the midst of thick forest Pakkam kotta temple is situated. Mullukurumas of this colony regards this area of the forest as their common property. It is said that the location of the present Pakkam kotta temple served as *pappu* or place for sharing the hunting meat in the early medieval times by the Mullukuruma ancestors.²⁹ It is interesting to note that the center of their ritual hunting gradually transforms in to veneration centers and later temples. In the medieval period itself entire Mullukuruma community was organized under certain political cum religious centers known as *kottas*. There were totally 18 'Kottas' like Veliyambam Kotta, Pakkam Kotta, Vedankotta, Kurumbalakkotta etc.³⁰

It is again very difficult to reconstruct the history of Kurichiya tribe of Wayanad on the basis of contemporary evidences. Folklores, traditions and the analysis through field work and observation form the main openings to the history of this people along with the inputs coming from rare ethnographic literature. The frame these sources give about the history and culture of this tribe shows again a kind of the existence of multiple modes of resource use from premodern period onwards. The mix up of various modes of resource use especially prior to modern period is embedded in the life of kurichiyas of modern period. This could be understood through a deep reading of the present practices and the memories kept in the folk stories of the tribe.

²⁸ Visit of Pakkam kotta temple and Cheriya mala colony of the researcher on 15/01/2024.

²⁹ Interview with Sekharan 54 yrs, Helper in the Pakkam kotta temple and inhabitant of Cheriya mala colony. On 15/01/24.

³⁰ Interview with Govindan, 72 yrs old, at his residence Edakkal on 5/09/24.

On the evolution of human life, Gadgil says about four stages over four historical modes of resource use such as gathering, nomadic Pastoralism, settled cultivation, and industry³¹.

We are not in a position to differentiate the period between the presences of various modes of resource use among the kurichiyas. The only thing we can assume is that the Kurichya community have passed all such stages. Field work in the modern period attest the vestiges of all modes of resource use in the modern period. It is clear from the rituals and practices that they were previously subsisted on hunting wild animals and they excelled in using bows and arrows. On the birth of a male child, they will send arrow to announce it and on the birth of female child, they will make sound of an arrow and bow. A bow and arrow will be kept stuck on the burial of a Kurichya. Meat is a staple part of their diet³². In order to save themselves from the wildlife attacks, they stayed in clusters, probably kin groups too. They had a natural economy. They collected tubers and vegetables from nature itself.

Kurichiyas are understood to have been migrated to Wayanad from outside at some time in the past. In the absence of any written records, circumstantial evidence has to be sought for the period of their migration to Wayand. There are several myths and oral stories regarding their arrival in Wayanad. First version of their arrival is marked by Rao Bahadur Gopalan Nair as they are *Thekke kari Nair* from Travancore.³³ Another myth says that Kurichyas are Perumbadavam Nairs from Kochi. All these myths have no historical evidences. Kurichya language resembles the language from eastern Kannur region and carries the male names such as 'Kopi', 'Kunkan', 'Kelu', 'Eru', 'Kelappan', 'Chandu', and female names of 'Kumbha', 'Theyi', 'Uppatti', 'Chakki', 'Mathu', 'Cheeru' of Nairs and Nambiars of North Malabar³⁴. Kurichiya pooppa used to wear hair knot (kuduma) same as Nairs

³¹ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

³² M R. Pankajakshan, *Wayanattile Adivasikalude pattukal* (compiled work), Kerala Sahithya Academy, Thrissur, 1989, p 14.

³³ Rao Bahadur, C Gopalan Nair, *Malabar series; Wayanad People and its tradition*, Higgin Botham & Company, Madras, 1911 , p.59.

³⁴ Dr.N Viswanathan Nair, *Kurichiyar Oru Naravamsa Sasthra Padanam*, (Mal.), Thiruvananthapuram, 2022, p.10.

in the pre modern period. Kurichiyas in Wayanad have rich tradition of folk songs which have close similarity with northern ballads (*Vadakkan Pattukal*) of Malabar. All these evidences say that Kurichyas in Wayanad may have come from regions of Northern Malabar but exact period of arrival is not known.

Every life rituals such as birth, death, puberty, marriage are closely related with arrows and bows. Their chief deity Malakkari is disguised Siva as a hunter. They have an emotional attachment with hunting. Their hunting included both hunting of fish as well as animals. There are two types of hunting known as *Vili nayattu*, *Vala nayattu* and *Vilinayattu* is related to rituals, by inviting many nearby people. 'Valanayattu' is conducted purposefully to kill the disturbing animals like the tiger, bear and cow stealing Panther etc.³⁵ Kurichyas in Wayanad do not derive much satisfaction from the trapping of animals as a small animal could not satisfy the food necessities of a big joint families.³⁶

They are experts in fishing too. Even the women draws great interest in fishing in gang. They use a special kind of arrow known as 'charam' to catch big fish. They are also catching fish by using net, 'Meen kora' etc.³⁷ Their expertise in hunting proves that they have a glorious hunting past. 'Nara', 'Noora', 'Chapla' are the important tubers which they dig up from the forests ;when they start to grow as creepers, kurichyas will mark and dig it on their maturity.³⁸ They also practiced punam cultivation in this stage. They will clean up the area in the months of Makaram and Kumbham and burn it in the month of Meenam before the first rain. Chief sown seeds were Sama, ragi, Maize etc. In this mode of resource use itself Kurichyas began to live in joint families as they settled down in the remote wilderness and on hill slopes.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.70.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

³⁷ Interview with Raman, Kaithakkolly 67 yrs old, at his residence Tharuvana.on 6/08/2019.

³⁸ Interview with Kumbha, Alakkal Mittam, Padinjarathara, 73 years old, at her residence, Padinjarathara on 19/07/2020.

Paniyas form another prominent tribe of wayanad. At the same time , they never confine themselves in Wayanad. Even in the last century, they are there all over the Malabar Region. But major part of its population lives in Wayanad (see Table 2.1). They are described to have been “misfortunates among the misfortunates.”³⁹ They possess little resources and means of production. On the basis of the etymological considerations the meaning of the term ‘paniyar’ indicates that they earned their livelihood from labour.⁴⁰ This may not be true because, traditionally they were said to have been caves people. They never have address of their own that is they were groups unsettled. During the pre modern period ,they used to be known after their Janmis such as Goudas Paniyas, Nairs Paniyas, Chettis Paniyas,etc .⁴¹ Paniyas, then, were actually agrestic slaves bought and sold with the land to which they were attached as slave laborers and most numerous of the jungle tribes in Wayanad.⁴² By the beginning of the twentieth century, they had become agricultural coolies. Like most of the hill tribes, they also did cultivate hill rice in the patches of forest which they clear by burning and shift from year to year. They are also employed as wood cutters and elephant mahouts.⁴³ Their physiognomy is negretoid type, blackish in color, curly hair and broad noses. They lived in a gathering mode of life and they depend almost exclusively on human muscle power and wood fuel as the sources of energy and naturally available plants, animals, and stones to fulfill their material requirements. The tribal people’s main source of livelihood is based on the forest. Their mode of thinking about the forest as universe, their social and cultural practices and work culture in Wayanad transforms their universe into a living space, emerges from egalitarian values and practices ⁴⁴. They

³⁹ K Panoor, *Keralathile Africa* (Mal), Kottayam, 1963, p. 95.

⁴⁰ Sandhya Rashmi,*Paniyas of Wayanad*, Modern books , Sulthan Bathery, 2008, p.20.

⁴¹ K Panoor, *Op. cit.*, p 83.

⁴² A Ayyappan, Secretary of Aboriginal Tribes Enquiry Committee, *Report on the Socio-economic conditions of Tribes of Madras*, Government press, 1948, p .98.

⁴³ C A Innes, I.C.S., Malabar Gazetteer, Vol I and II, F.B. Evans, (ed.), I.C.S., Government of Kerala, 1997, First published on 1908 , Publishers: State Editor, Kerala Gazetteers, Thiruvananthapuram,10, p .135.

⁴⁴ Sandhya Rashmi , *Op., cit .*, p. 16.

consider the sky as father and earth as mother⁴⁵ Paniyas being landless and slaves from known historic period itself, they were used by the land lords to cultivate the hilly region which was a play ground of Malaria.⁴⁶

There are several guesses regarding the antiquity of the existence of Paniyas as slaves. A Aiyappan is of the opinion that slavery of the Paniyas may go back to the early centuries of Christian era when the iron age farmers of the neighbouring regions of Wayand both in Kerala on the West and Mysore in the east penetrated into the Wayanad . As labour was scarce in Wayanad, the farming immigrants found it easier to enslave the native tribals and their subjugation became total’’⁴⁷ They were slaves from known history of Wayanad itself, Slavery came to them not as the result of Peasant migration of 20th century Malabar. When a group of peasant community living upon cultivation arrived here, possibility of food gathering became scarce for the Paniyas. Thus they gradually stopped their food gathering mode of resource use and went as agricultural slaves under the jenmis or cultivators⁴⁸

Table 2.1: Distribution of Paniya Community in Kerala (2001 Census)

| Sl No | District | Rural | | Urban | | Total | | Total | % |
|-------|-----------------|---------------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------|
| | | Male | Female | Male | Female | Male | Female | | |
| 1 | Kannur | 5297 | 5511 | 73 | 80 | 5370 | 5591 | 10961 | 13.38 |
| 2 | Wayanad | 28654 | 29875 | 1105 | 1167 | 29759 | 31042 | 60801 | 74.2 |
| 3 | Kozhikode | 1189 | 1213 | 36 | 46 | 1225 | 1259 | 2484 | 3.03 |
| 4 | Malappuram | 3262 | 3632 | 9 | 3 | 3271 | 3635 | 6906 | 8.43 |
| 5 | Other districts | 338 | 364 | 38 | 146 | 376 | 412 | 788 | 0.96 |
| 6 | Total | 38740 | 40597 | 1261 | 1342 | 40001 | 41939 | 81940 | 100% |
| 7 | Grand total | 79337 (96.82%) | | 2603(31.8%) | | | | | |

Source census -2001

⁴⁵ Sarva siksha Abhiyan , Gothrangalilude, Wayanad, p.66

⁴⁶ Sandhya Rashmi, *Op., cit.*, p .22.

⁴⁷ A Aiyappan, The Paniyas, An Exslave Tribe Of South India, Calcutta, 1992, p.3.

⁴⁸ Baslasabha, Kudumbasree Mission , *Op., cit.*, p.134.

There are several myths regarding their origin. These resonate a life of hunter gathering mode. Their forefathers are Ippimala Uthappan and Ippimala Uthamma. They lived in Ippimala, a mountain near Banasura peak. The existing legends and lores circulated among the paniyas resonate their way of life in the past and their change of life on account of the pulls from the cultivating people. The telling part of these about the Paniyas is that they have been leading a gathering life within the forest and used to come out during the night to destroy crops. As per one story, the Goudas provided them cooked food and caught them in nets and made them their slaves. When a Jain Gounden saw them eating cooked meat, took them ⁴⁹. Since Ippimala Uthappan and Uthamma were brother and sister, Gounden advised them to live as brother and sister above waist and husband and wife below it. This is evidenced by an oral song of paniyas as:

*“Arayana Meethalekku
Ankaleyyum Penkaleyyum
Arayana takekku
Anum Pennum”*

Gopalakrishnan Nair in his work, ‘Wayanad People and its Traditions’ testifies that the Ippimala is somewhere near Thamarassery, they were cave people who used to destroy crops at the night, thus Gounden captured them in nets.⁵⁰ Paniyas used to cry “ippi, ippi”, when they are alarmed or surprised ⁵¹ shows some indications about their origin. A common belief based on their general appearance, prevails among the European planting community that the Paniyas are of African origin and descended from ancestors who were ship wrecked on Malabar coast and they might be of a Negritoed origin ⁵². Edgar Thurston in his ‘*Castes and Tribes of Southern India*’ brings out there an anatomical similarity with the Negroes in Africa.

⁴⁹ Sandhya Rashmi, *Op. cit.*, p21.

⁵⁰ Gopalan Nair C, *Wayanad People and its Tradition*, translated: K K N Kurup, First published in 2006, Modern Books, Sulthan Bathery, pp.88-90.

⁵¹ Edgar Thurston , Rangachari, *Castes and Tribes of South India*, Low price publication, Vol VI—PtoS 2010, p.57.

⁵² Rao Bahadur Gopalan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

Their gene frequency was studied by Professor A Ayyappan, a famous Indian Anthropologist and Lehmann and the following data are obtained.

Table 2.2 Gene frequency of Paniyas

| GENE FREQUENCIES | | | | |
|------------------|-------|-------|------|------|
| A | B | O | M | N |
| 0.468 | 0.085 | 0.447 | 0.88 | 0.28 |

(Ayyappan, 1936) (Lehman and Cutbash, 1952)⁵³

The high frequency of group among the Paniyas surprised the early investigators. It proves that Paniyas are similar to Negritoed race. Since the known period itself, the paniyas have been agricultural slaves. But their life confined around hunting and gathering mode. The Paniyas, Adiyas and other backward tribes probably represent the earliest food gathering settlers of Wayanad.⁵⁴ The following Paniya song reflects the gathering mode of resource use:

"Varithama Achilale Vettakku Poku
 Meeenu Vettakku Poku
 Njandine Modanu Meenine pidikkanu
 Enkale Makkale Jeevitham Kayyenu
 Thampiripulle Thampiripulle
 Enkava Ponje
 Ankadu vayalu Thampuraru Koyyan Ponje
 Nello Koyy Nello Koyy Kayy nontha
 Ettu panam than ketti nanju nontha"⁵⁵

Pastoralism

It is very difficult to identify the period of pastoral life of the Mullukurumar due to lack of sources. The only source we can depend upon is the oral traditions

⁵³ A Ayyappan, *The Paniyas, An exclusive Tribe of South India, Op., cit., P. 4.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid., p.5.*

⁵⁵ Peter Ambatharu, 50 years old, Teacher and Tribal activist, sung on 16-05-2021, at his residence.

among the tribals and a regressive reading of contemporary practices.

The Mullu Kurumas used their cattle stock for transporting surplus production and in agricultural chores and milk, ghee and curd. It seems that they were not having a purely pastoral mode of life. They followed more or less an agro pastoralist livelihood⁵⁶. Shifting cultivation generally come into existence among the people on the move. Mullu Kurumas practiced *punam* or *modan* form of paddy cultivation along with pastoralism. Their cultivation was replenished by the dung of the animal stock. They considered cultivation as a festival and ritual. A peculiar method existed in Wayanad for threshing the paddy which is called “*okkal*”. They will tie up 10 or more bullocks or cows on a stump in the ground. They will spread the paddy bundle and make the cows tread around to thresh the paddy⁵⁷. By 1970s, they gave up *okkal* and introduced a new technique called *Mettikutty*. This is an improvement on *okkal*. Instead of using 10 cows, only two bullocks are used in this method. A large stone was attached to the cows yoke and rolled it over the paddy which is spread in sheaves under the stone. It was only by the end of 1980s, *Mettikutty* was replaced by tractor. The threshing machine is used widely nowadays⁵⁸.

Their chief form of property during this period was their cattle. Numerous cattle in possession denoted the economic status of a person⁵⁹. There were several contracts and mortgages between the people based on cattle wealth such as *pottan kodukkal*, *chumalida*, etc. In *pottan kodukkal*, calf is given for fostering it and the borrower will get first delivery calf and milking. When the cow becomes pregnant for the second term, it has to be returned to the owner. *Chumalida* is another contract based on the cattle stock. According to that, those farmers who do not have cattle wealth can hire the cattle and accept the responsibility of fostering them on the

⁵⁶ Rajan Gurukkal and Raghava Varier, *History of Kerala Pre historic to the Present*, orient black swan , Delhi, 2018, p. 41.

⁵⁷ C V Joy, *Wayanattile Karshaka Kudiyettavum Paristhithiyum*(Mal), *Op., cit.*, p.56.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Vikasana Rekha*, Mananthavady Grama Panchayath,1996, p.43.

remuneration of this for a *pothi* paddy. All these dealings were based on trust⁶⁰. *Vidukali* was another peculiar system existed in Wayanad by which cattle stock will be released to graze outdoors, sometimes in the paddy fields after harvest or downhills. The Paniya children will be employed to graze them outside. To identify the mischievous ones, a wooden bell will be tied on their neck known as “*Thatta*”⁶¹.” *Vidukali* system is helpful for the paddy fields with enough nutrition from cow dung and at night they will stay in the temporary shed in the paddy fields known as *Pdathi*.⁶² Such cattle stock used to consist of 100 to 200 in number. The herders were usually Paniyas. Number of cattle determined the economic status of Mullukurumas. On the occasion of marriages, the number of cattle has been checked; even though they used milk, curd, ghee, butter etc they never eat beef or cow meat. They never harness the cattle too.⁶³ The Mullukurumas used to milk the cow and make curd, ghee, etc out of it. Selling of ghee was a special earning for Kuruma tribe. Uncountable amount of cattle stock of Chettis, Kurumas, and Kurichias were attested by Sree Panthalayanikkal Kuttappan, one of the earliest migrants from Travancore in 1954. Several busy cattle markets existed in different parts of Wayanad such as Meenangadi, Kalloor, and Chulliyode. The market day at Meenangadi was Sunday and that of Chulliyode was Friday. A brisk cattle market had been existed in Valliyoorkkavu in Mananthavady too⁶⁴ Land documents obtained from Vythiri sub registrar office shows that it was a mandatory to provide *one kuppi* or a bottle of ghee to the jenmis on 30th *Makaram*, when the period of *pattam* expires⁶⁵. One of the curious things regarding the agro pastoral stage was that they never sold their cattle for slaughtering.⁶⁶ The myth of Manikavu Siva temple also depicts the agropastoral economy of that stage, the self-originated

⁶⁰ C V Joy ,*Op., cit.*, pp 56-57.

⁶¹ *Vikasana Rekha* , Ambalavayal Grama Panchayath, 1996, p.8.

⁶² Interview with Bhaskaran Madaparambu 65 years, at Pulpally on 20-06-2022.

⁶³ ET Raju, *Op., cit.*, p.60.

⁶⁴ *Vikasana Rekha*, Mananthavady Grama Panchayath, *Op. cit.*, p.43.

⁶⁵ Various *land revenue documents like title deeds and patta cheettu*, obtained from Vythiri sub registrar office on 16/04 /2019.

⁶⁶ Interview with Onathi, 85 years old , Nayikkolly colony ,Appad on 21/08/19 at her residency.

(swayambhu) Siva idol had been found out by a Paniya cattle herder of Ayanippura Mullukuruma family who went in search of a missing cow.⁶⁷

Agricultural land had only limited demand during this period as their means of living relied upon subsistence farming only. They had abundance of virgin forest for them to pasture their cattle wealth. Access to the forest was not a constraint for them. Furthermore, there was no tradition of tribal people giving any kind of tax to the government or other authorities before the company rule⁶⁸

Pastoralism would have developed in different periods and places among the people. Pastoralism was an important stage in the life of tribal people in Wayanad. Folk songs and traditions and rituals of life show strong traces of pastoralism among the kurichyas. They used to sing *narippattu* during *Muthappan thira*. It says about the *Kothalichi pie* or cow which was the only property of *Pierumala Muthachi*, saved by a cowboy sending an arrow on the dotted leopard who tried to prey on *Kothalichi pie*.⁶⁹

"Anganathe payyalle Kothalichi payyu
Payikkuthaannalle Ena Pidikka samayam
Engane Kittunnu Mooriena elle
Ennalle Payyikku Budhiyilla Daive
Onnundu Kekkano Kothalichippayye
Nenakku Ena Pidikkan Kuttana illa
Ennalu Kekku Kothalichi payye
Naaledam Naalu Koyilam Poyi nokkkattappa"⁷⁰

A live pastoral stage had been there among the Kurichyas as testified by this

⁶⁷ Manju AP, "Manikavu Kalaprahathinte Mazhavill sobha" in *inner spaces*, Bilingual half yearly multi diciplinary research journal, Vol1, issue1, June 2016, p,145.

⁶⁸ Dr Joy Varkey, "Impact of Colonialism in Tribal Communities in Wayanad" , in *Inner spaces*, Bilingual half yearly multi disciplinary research journal, Vol1, issue1 ,June 2016, p.40.

⁶⁹ Dr S R Chandramohan, *Op.cit.*, pp. 152-153.

⁷⁰ Sung by Theyi, Athikkolly tharavadu, 82 years old Vellamunda on 28-01-2023 at the tharavadu.

song.⁷¹ The kavus had been emerged in the pastoral stage. In the pastoral stage, they thought that they were different from nature. They began to conserve and protect their holy water bodies, streams or rivers and their holy trees. Such places gradually turned into kavus or serene areas for veneration. A kavu is generally an unpretentious structure, mainly of wood with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables⁷². Idols may be polished or raw stone or trees Al (Ficus Religiosa), Pala (Alstonia), Scholaris or Kanjiram (strychnos). It is a concept (sankalpam) that the deity resides or regularly resorts to and uses grove⁷³. There are several folk songs which reflect their pastoralist mode of life. The myth related with the origin of Valliyoorkkavu is confined around a Kurichya boy, who is a cow herder. It is a local tradition which says about the origin of Valliyoorkkavu temple. Naaluveetil Nambiars the oracles of Kodungalloor temple, on their way to Thirunnelli temple lost their way in the jungle. Then they decided to take a bath. They kept a sword near an ant hermit and found it disappeared on their return from bath. They could not find the sword for a long time. Then a Kurichya cow boy informed them that he found a sword hanging on a creeper. The Nambiars uttered a request “Valliyoorkkavu”, in malayalam ‘Valli’ means creeper ‘ooru’ means release or let off the sword. ‘amma’ means mother but here means goddess thus the request was to release the sword from the creeper. But they failed in their attempt to release the sword. Then the Desham rulers or concerned Nair Janmis of that area, Edachena Nair and Vemohtu Nambiar came there and they tried to capture the sword. After many attempts, the sword fell suddenly and pierced into the soil with a revelation, “I will stay here after in the form of *Vanadurga, Jaladurga, and Bhadrakali*⁷⁴. In a song called *Njarapperumveetil Kunjikkelu* one gives assurance to his mother that he will look after her even by herding the cow.

⁷¹ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁷² C A Innes ICS , *Op.cit.*, p. 152.

⁷³ JR Freeman, *Gods, Groves and the Culture of Nature in Kerala*, Modern Asian Studies Cambridge University press, 1999, p 262.

⁷⁴ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Paramaryavum*, KKN Kurup (Tr.) *Op.cit.*, pp. 105-106.

"Neeyippo engane Polathum enne
Poomiye padachone pettammodu
Aarante Kaliye Nokkittamme
Ningale Nano Polathum Keppin
Pinneyum parayunnu Pettamodu
Neeyengane enne Polathum enne
Aarante thottam Kilachittamme"⁷⁵

Even in the beginning of the 20th century, pastoralism continued in Wayanad. Madras Administrative report of 1901-02, records like that forest offences were considerably increased especially, unauthorized felling and illicit grazing. There is a satisfactory rise in the number of animals grazed under licenses. The increase being particularly marked in the case of sheep and goats.⁷⁶

In the pastoral mode, they have considered cattle as their wealth and relied largely on cattle muscle power to draw the plough and cart for transportation. Kurichyas never killed their tamed animals for meat. Their cattle worth served an important source of food such as egg, milk, ghee, butter, curd, etc. The mobility of the pastoral people was very high in search of pastoral tract. They also served as carriers of information about new resources. As cattle belonged to separate houses, there emerged sense of private property among them⁷⁷.,

The Paniya children used to herd the cattle stock of Janmis in return for their *kooli* in paddy known as *valli*⁷⁸. They were highly skilfull in using cattle to thrash out paddy sheaves known as *okkalu*⁷⁹. Paniyas who were in charge of herding the cattle had to keep them safely in the temporary cow stable in the paddy fields (pdathi) during the summer also. Paniyas were also strong enough to drive bullock

⁷⁵ M R Pankajakshan, *Op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁷⁶ *Madras Administrative Report*, 1901-02, p XIV.

⁷⁷ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁷⁸ Professor K T Narayanan Nair, *Wayanadum Nair Kudumbangalum* (Mal), Modern offset prints, Sulthan Bathery, p. 119.

⁷⁹ Sandhya Rashmi , *Op.cit*, p.30.

carts to fetch the agricultural products to distant areas.⁸⁰ Even though they prefer to eat pork, avoid beef. In addition to beef they are avoiding meats of ox, Buffalo and cow perhaps due to aversion to eat their laboring animals. Only because of Beef eating they are keeping untouchability to Wayanadan Pulayas. And consider them below in the caste hierarchy.⁸¹ Usually they are reluctant to accept food from Christians as they are beef eaters.⁸²

A look on the strength of the cattle wealth of the modern Wayanad indicates the significance of the same in the life of the tribals in Wayanad.

Table 2.3 List of animals grazed under license

Table 2.3: Animals Grazed Under License⁸³

| Year | Buffaloes | Bulls & Cows | Sheep | Goats | Other animals |
|---------|-----------|--------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| 1901-02 | 133,002 | 1,354,881 | 2,155,843 | 3,300,069 | 498 |
| 1900-01 | 128,884 | 1,300,118 | 1,361,947 | 135,704 | 1217 |

Sources: Madras administrative Report 1901-1902, p xiv

All these allow us to assume that the tribal life of Wayanad was so entangled with pastoral activities till the modern period. Evidences also indicate the change of the modes of life from hunting gathering/pastoral mode to a more sedentary and settled mode of life.

The brisk life at this stage seems to have generated a semi-state society in Wayanad. This would have been the outcome of the continued presence of settled society in the region.

⁸⁰ Interview with Yusuf Rawther, 74 years, at his residence at Channali on 5/4/23.

⁸¹ Bava K Palukunnu, *Wayanadan Gramangal*, Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 2023, p, 25.

⁸² Sandhya Rashmi, *Op.cit.*, p.31.

⁸³ *Madras Administrative Report, Op.cit.*, p. 42.

Settled Cultivation

It is not clear when the tribals of Wayanad reached a stage of settled life and where they did live as a fully settled cultivators prior to nineteenth century. Still, as we saw before, traditions and lore reflect the tribal people becoming cultivators and laborers. In a settled mode, where cultivation played the central role of subsistence, a corresponding new mode of social and cultural life normally came into being. Any enquiry into the questions related with the development of settled life in Wayanad must consider the contribution of the migrants for the same. Muslims, Chettis, Jains, and Nairs were the early dominant migrants to this area. Muslim merchants had been here from early medieval periods as traders of forest products and had carried out trade through Arabian sea . Chief forest produce were honey, resin, timber, forest spices etc. Rawthers who had migrated to Wayanad were the main collectors of forest produce from Mullukurumas at Kongiyambam, Appad, Nayikkolly, manikavu, Kolambetta etc. Kariyambadi near Meenangadi was a main center of paddy collection and forest produces. Tribals such as Chontha Mooppan and Velli Mooppan used to take away tobacco, betal leaves, and clothes from Rawther merchants in exchange for honey.⁸⁴ Existence of some antique mosque like Kalyanath Palli in Pallikkal Edavaka and Varambetta mosque, both of which are in Kerala architechtural style here testifies the early coming of Muslim community in Wayanad.

Remaining Jain Bastis at Venniyodu, Puthangadi near Panamaram, and Sulthan Bathery testify to the presence of Jains here, even if agriculture was against their ideology, they preferred to do it here due to the existence of enough labor supply of tribes and availability of vast barren fertile land. A group of Jains were engaged in trade activities, who had been known as 'tharakas'. They are the successors of early merchants of Jain Community. They settled down in Venniyodu region in Wayanad as per the order (*Tharaku*) of Kottayam king, thus they own the

⁸⁴ CA Rasheed Rawther, *Keralathile Rawthermar*, Kottayam, 2022, pp. 46.47.

name *Tharakas*.⁸⁵ Even then paddy cultivation flourished under the patronage of Jain community here due to the above said favourable circumstances. A myth says that migrants like Jains and Chettis coming to the tribal setting saw Ippimala Uthappan and Uthamma the forefathers of Paniyas. They were guards of the forest living on the branches of trees. A Jain Gaudan from Karnataka and Brahmin Chetti from Tamil nadu trapped them. Thus they became the slaves of Chetti and Goundan.⁸⁶ From these stories it is understood that early settled cultivation of paddy had been started by the Chetty community and Jains in Wayanad. Many of the songs of Paniyas testify to this also. References about other migrants in to Wayanad through the ages have been mentioned in the first chapter (pass in to first chapter)

At the same time, migrant people who came from various places and times settled in different regions of Wayanad at different times were more instrumental in developing themselves as the settled cultivators of the region. The arrival of Chetty community and the jains lead to the expansion of paddy cultivation widely in this area. It is believed that the jains have arrived here as both agriculturists as well as traders. The existing Jain temples in Wayanad show their antiquity from 9 th to 14 th century AD⁸⁷. The Thazhekkavu temple inscription obtained from Pulpally shows its period as 9thc AD which mentions about the 'Veethilayam' which may be identical with 'kidanganadu jain basti. It also says about a trade guild called as '*Nalpethennayirathavar*'⁸⁸ which had roots at Thiruchirappalli, Ramanatha puram and Chinkelpet etc., shows their wide network of trade also. They brought about many innovations in agriculture too. Their nature friendly cultivation was a model for later cultivators. Their water conservation method was unique and they built water bodies called *chiras*.⁸⁹ There are several place names resonating this like *Padichira, Kenichira*, etc. This *chira* system was an excellent method for conserving

⁸⁵ Mundakkayam Gopi, *Ariyappedatha Wayanad*, Sahya Publication, Kalpetta ,2002, p.194.

⁸⁶ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad; people and its tradition*, *Op., cit.*,p.

⁸⁷ Ok Johni, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op.cit.*, p.55.

⁸⁸ Mundakkayam Gopi ,*Op. cit.*, p.179.

⁸⁹ Vigasana Rekha, Nemeni Grama Panchayat, 1996, p. 27.

the rain drain in the hill slopes which helped a lot for the expansion of Paddy cultivation under the jains.

The etymological origin of its name of Wayanad is said have been derived from *bayalunadu* or the land of paddy. Whatever may the fact behind it, it cannot be denied that this area was the abode of sixty varieties of paddy. All of those varieties are indigenous and on the verge of extinction. Some of the twenty different groups of adivasis, were expert rice cultivators and a store house of indigenous methods of ecofriendly cultivation of naturally evolved exotic varieties of paddy.⁹⁰

The Chettis, who are believed to be arrived in Wayanad in the 18th century, also played a vital role in the expansion of paddy cultivation here. They were excellent cultivators both in fields' as well as in the garden land⁹¹. The place names such as *Chetty Pambra*, *Chetty Alathur* etc shows the dominance of this community. Wayanadan chetty, Edanadan chetty, and Mandadan chetty were three dominant chetty communities in Wayanad. Edanadan chetties are the major community inhabiting In the Chekadi region 12 Km away from Pulpally in the midst of forest, Chekadi is known as the granary of Pulpally. Extent of paddy cultivation is around 200 acres among which a thumbing share is dedicated for the aromatic paddy known as *Gandhaka sala*. They are not ready to give up the paddy cultivation due to the fear of god's wrath⁹². Arrival of jains and chettis helped for the expansion of paddy cultivation considerably. After the establishment of sway of the Kottayam kings, Nair lords under them, spread the varieties of paddy genus here⁹³. They have sown many unique varieties of paddy such as *Veliyan*, *Chettu veliyan*, *Thondi*, *Chenthondi*, *Onamottan*, *bhoothakkali*, *Chomala*, *rakthasali*, *Kayama*, *urunikkayama* etc, which were suitable for the soil and climate of Wayanad.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ TG Jacob, *Wayanad Misery in Emerald Bowl*, Mumbai, 2006, p .20.

⁹¹ Rao Bahadur Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum*(Mal) , KKN Kurup (Tr.), *Op.cit.*, p.52 .

⁹² Dr Bava K Palukunnu, *Op.cit.*, p.122.

⁹³ Balasabha , Kudumbasree Mission, Wayanad , *Op. cit.*, p.215.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.216-217.

Mullukurumas lived in the areas of what is comprised of modern Wayanad and Gudalur. Mullukuruma habitation had been divided into four Nadus such as Pakkanadu (Pulpally), Karanadu(Thrikkaippatta), Kallunadu(Edakkal), Neriyyanadu (Bathery).

Further, they organized themselves in *kudis* and *Kunnus*. *Kudis* are cluster of families staying in a group. *Kunnus* are cluster of *kudis*. There were three *Kunnus* such as *Kottoorkunnu*, *Edoorkunnu*, and *Madoorkunnu*. Each *kunnu* had their own leaders.⁹⁵ Clues from the field work prompt us to think that Mullukurumar followed a mixed mode of resource use till the Industrial age. The vestiges of this could even be visible in the contemporary life of Mullukurumars.

The mullukuruma community is said to have encouraged the paddy cultivation. The ethnic tribes like Kurichias and Kurumas were the protectors of traditional paddy cultivation. According to one view, the Kurichiyas and the Mullukurumas were perhaps the first farming communities from the Malayalam speaking region to the west of Wayanad to migrate and settle down in Wayanad, while the urali kurumbers, Kattu naikkens and other tribes speaking dialects of Kannada language came down from the areas to the east of Wayanad.⁹⁶ Though there are traditions of settled cultivation among the Mullukuruma, they seem not to have developed any idea of private property. As and when the social relations became more complex, a code of conduct and a set of rules known as *Eivvu* had been accepted by them in order to regulate their social life.⁹⁷ As per the *Eivvu* private property is not included in Mullukuruma life. Use of bamboo is part of their life, so it is included as *mulam cheelu chambar vidhi*.⁹⁸ Generally, tribes are using bamboos for food, cattle shed, houses, cloths, weapons, musical instruments and such other purposes. Though all tribes are using bamboos commonly in Wayanad, Mullukurumar seemed to have had special significance for bamboos in their life.

⁹⁵ ET Raju , *Op.cit.*, p.28.

⁹⁶ A Aiyappan, *The Paniyas An exslave Tribe of South India, Op., cit.*, p.5

⁹⁷ Interview with Narayanan Sankaran ,43 years, at Tribal College Chedleth on 18/06/23.

⁹⁸ ET Raju, *Op. cit.*, p.61

Nuances of settled cultivation emerges from the field work. They have done the paddy cultivation in a collective effort in numerous acres of paddy fields. Their houses were on the banks of paddy fields In order to protect the paddy fields⁹⁹. All Mullukuruma houses were in the *Vayaloram*. Unhusking of the paddy or *koolam kuthal* was one of the chief occupations of the Mullukurumas including women and men. They are said to have sold their husked rice.¹⁰⁰ One *pothi* or five *Para* paddy will be boiled and unhusked by the Mullukurumas and they will bring back Twenty *seers* of rice and will take five *seers* as their remuneration¹⁰¹¹⁰². They considered the paddy cultivation as a serene ritual.They have shown great reverence to the paddy fields. The rituals like *Thulapathu*, *Puthari* etc developed during the period of settled cultivation. Many of their seasonal festivals like *Uchal* are done after the harvest in the Month of *Makaram*. Surplus paddy production must have propelled exchanges in the economy. Muslim merchants are said to have reached Wayanad from Nadapuram. Karnataka merchants from Punnad regions also used to bring various merchandise such as coconut oil, garlic, jaggery, dryfish, salt, onion etc, in exchange for paddy¹⁰³. Hundreds of bullock carts used to arrive in Meenanagadi market during the flourishing stage of settled cultivation.¹⁰⁴ However, the economy of Wayanad in the premodern period, according to social historians, was one of the kinship based production, redistributive consumption and reciprocity based (goods for goods) exchange.¹⁰⁵

Local historians, ethnographers and the oral traditions tell us a vague picture of life in Wayanad in premodern period. The oral traditions among the Mullukurumas resonate with the story of Veda kingdom. Veda kings like Arippan and Vedan ruled here according to this tradition. Arippan ruled over north of

⁹⁹ *Vikasana Rekha*, Ambalavayal Grama Panchayath, *Op.cit.*, p.27.

¹⁰⁰ Interview with Mukundan 68 years, at Pakkam in his residence at Pakkam on 16/08/22.

¹⁰¹ *Nadavayal Kudiyetta Suvarna jubilee smaranika*, 1998, p.73

¹⁰² Interview with Mukundan, Pakkam on 16/08/22 at his residence at Pakkam.

¹⁰³ Interview with Achappan, Athikkolly Tharavdu, Vellamunda 14/04/22.

¹⁰⁴ *Vikasana Rekha*, Meenanagadi Grama Panchayath, 2022-27, p..47.

¹⁰⁵ Rajan Gurukkal, Raghava varier, *Op. cit.*, p.41.

Panamaram desam and Vedan ruled south of Panamaram Desam.¹⁰⁶ Edakkal cave inscriptions record one ancient dynasty existed in Kerala, that is 'sree Vishnu varma Kudumbiya Kula vardhanasya', This Kudumbiyil race is identified by CA Innes as one of the old dynasties. Dr. Oppert opines that kudumban, kurumban etc are derived from the term 'kudumbi'.¹⁰⁷ From that it can be inferred that, the territory of Wayanad was under the reign of Kuruma or kudumbiya dynasty. The Veda kings namely Arippaan and Vedan were the descendants of Kudumbiyil race. The existing songs and stories and epics, among the kurumas show that Veda kings ruled Wayanad for a long time. Arippaan and Vedan were the last rulers of the dynasty, their sway over Wayanad came to an end with the attack of Kottayam – Kurumbranadu kings.¹⁰⁸ It is believed that Ooralikurumar are the successors of vedan. The Mullakurumas in Wayanad believe that they are the successors of `Arippaan. There are several legends regarding the decline of the Veda dynasty, one such story is that when a Kumbala prince arrived at Thirunelli temple, made hostage by the Veda king and forced him to marry a veda princess; he reluctantly agreed to marry according to the kshaytriya rituals. In the meantime Kumbala king, father of captive made alliance with Kottayam – Kurumbranadu kings to save the prince by attacking the Vedas. On the day of the marriage they jointly attacked the vedas and made the princess marry with Nandillath Nambiar, and enthroned him as the ruler of Veliyambam kotta as a token of gratitude. The Kumbala king entrusted the rule of Wayanad to the Kottayam-Kurumbranad kings and divided the kingdom between them as north west Wayanad to the king of Kottayam and the south east Wayanad to the Kurumbranad raja. The area under Kurumbranad raja is known as Parakkumeethal. C Gopalan Nair in his work *Wayanad people and its tradition* mentions that the existence of Ramamangalathu kovilakam of Kurumbranad king had been there in 1911. Some of the place names and remains of ancient edifices show that Veda kings had sway over Wayanad. Arippans headquarters have been in the Arippattakunnu in Thavinjal amsam and the pilgrim centers of Mullukurumar

¹⁰⁶ Balasabha , Kudumbasree Mission,Wayanad, *Op.cit.*, p .64.

¹⁰⁷ O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op. cit.*,p .73.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

such as Veliyambam kotta and Pakkam kotta are related with veda king Arippan. Vedankotta near Cheeral, is also an important place for the Mullu Kurumas. There are three temples of Mullukurumas established by the Mullukuruma princess Iravi in Northern Wayanad such as Iravi Mangalam in Anju kunnu, Iravi mala in Thavinjal and Iravinalloor in Kuppathodu. The Madras journal of literature and science (1889) supports their claim of nationality. "We are very insufficiently informed about the early history of the Kurumbers. Before they settled down to anything like domestic life they roamed as Vedas in the virgin forests hunting deer for its flesh and wild animals for their own safety. Dr Oppert speaks of 'Kudumban' and it is possible that the Kurumbers were the original inhabitants of Wayanad during the reign of the Kudumbiyil family"¹⁰⁹

Mullakurumbers differ in general appearance, dress, customs, etc from Kurichias. But unlike Kurichias, they follow '*makkathayam*' law of succession.¹¹⁰ They were divided into four *kulams* such as *Villippa kulam*, *Kadipa kulam*, *Venkada kulam* and *vadakku kulam*¹¹¹Wayanad came under the reign of Kottayam kings in the last decades of 13 th century.¹¹²Under them, Wayanad was said to have been divided in to ten nadus for administrative convenience. With this, a new sort of interest began to play crucial role in redefining the power and rights over land. Even though the supreme authority was vested in the Kottayam Raja, civil, criminal affairs were looked after by the Naduvazhis and Deshavazhis wh belonged to affluent nair families. Under them rights of tribes over the land and forest were restrained. All the lands and forests came under the domain of deshavazhis and categorized in to Devaswam and Brahmaswam. Their freedom to use land and forest at their will was controlled ; they did not possessed the ownership document of the lands at their possession. The characteristic features of the settled cultivation is expressed in the new political interventions. Land under the possession of Chettis

¹⁰⁹ OK Johny (Ed.), *Edakkal Cave Carvings A Visitors Companion*, Mathrubhumi books, Calicut, 2006, p.45.

¹¹⁰ O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op. cit.*, p.74.

¹¹¹ Interview with Devaki, 56 years, former Wayanad District Panchayath Member, Mullukuruma community member on 11/11/2021.

¹¹² OK Johny *Wayanad Rekhakal* , *Op. cit.*, p.79.

and MulluKurumas now came under the authority of different devaswams. It is mandatory for Mullukurumas have to give the liver and a leg of hunted animal to the Deshavazhi.¹¹³ Mullukurumas have shown great interest in educating their children, in 1890, there started a school at Nellarachal under 'adimajati sangham'. In this school all Tribes except Kurumas were denied admission.¹¹⁴

Among all tribes in Wayanad, Kurichiyas brought more land under cultivation than other tribes. They used bullock and ploughs for wetland cultivation supported by sufficient irrigation.¹¹⁵ Their familiarity with paddy of multiple varieties such as *Thondi*, *Palthondi*, *Gandhakasala*, *Jeerakasala*, etc. vouch for their tradition in the paddy cultivation. Garden cultivation was very less during the modern period. Paddy cultivation in this stage was expanded enormously by using the collective work force in the Kurichya joint families. They also cultivated tobacco, green chilli, and maize in the garden. In some areas, land paddy or 'Karuthan' was also cultivated.¹¹⁶ Sometimes the Nair lords assigned land for them to do punam cultivation. In the first year of cultivation jenmi will receive one portion of crop as *kanam*. After two years jenmis would take over the land for coffee and pepper cultivation. In the settled cultivation mode of resource use, they viewed nature as being subject to human control.¹¹⁷ With the use of iron implements and hoe they cleared large area of forest and hill slopes, started other cultivation like, Ragi, Maize, etc. The co-operation of village community was assured in reaping and threshing the paddy.

During this period, some of their groves and sacred trees had been cut down for the expansion of agriculture. Money transaction was very less during this period. They exchanged excess paddy, plantain, etc., for salt, coconut oil, clothes, onion, garlic, etc. Usually, the merchants (Punnadans) arrived there from Karnataka and

¹¹³ K Panoor, *Op. cit.*, p.125.

¹¹⁴ *Vikasana Rekha*, Ambalavayal , Grama Panchayat, *Op.cit.*, p,22.

¹¹⁵ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Op.cit* .,p.23.

¹¹⁶ Annakutty PM , *Karshaka Jeevithathinte Kanappurangal*, Spell books, Calicut, 2020, pp. 47-48.

¹¹⁷ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

Chettis from Kuttiady.¹¹⁸ It is said that Kurichyas are religiously truthful and innocent and they were exploited by clever traders, who advanced them small sums of money until their paddy crops find their way to their shop in course of two or three years. They had to part with their lands to satisfy their creditors.¹¹⁹ In the settled cultivation stage due to the expansion of wet cultivation surplus yield lead to complications in their social relations which resulted in the development of certain administrative bodies among them to regulate their social as well as community behaviour. Their chief administrative wings are the following:

Social Organisation

An examination of Kurichiyas socio-political institutions in the modern period shed lights on what must have been the kind of social life they followed in the past centuries. Kurichians are organised under matrilineal clans known as *Kulam*, they believe that all the members of Kulam have originated from the same ancestors. The term *Kulam* can be translated into anthropological term called “clan”, Each clan have their own deities, ancestral spirits and temples. These clans are exogamous in nature. The members within the clan are not permitted to marry among themselves. Kurichias believe that they have 108 clans of which sixty two were existing at the beginning of 20th century.¹²⁰ Five of these were excommunicated as they acted against and transcended the caste rules and practices. The rest of fifty seven are divided into two main branches or phratries; one consists of twenty six clans and the other contains thirty one clans. . Marital relations are allowed not within Bandhu list and not within Panthi list. Permissible marriage alliances are between Bandhu and Panthi families alone. Marriages within the clan are regarded as incestuous.

All the clans have equal status but some clans like Thalakkara enjoys higher ritual status such as the brahmin in outer society, and were invited for the

¹¹⁸ Interview with Darappan, 83 years old Kurichya Karanavar, in a talk with him at Athikkolly tharavadu on 28/01/23.

¹¹⁹ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad; its people and Tradition*, *Op.cit.*, pp.63-64.

¹²⁰ A Aiyappan, K. Mahadevan. *Ecology, economy, matriliney and fertility of Kurichias*, Delhi, 2008, P17.

purificatory ceremony by the rest. All the clan heads meet together to take decisions on important matters. (see Appendix Table II D) The membership of a Kurichya to a Tharavadu is decided through mother's clan. The Kurichyas call their maximal matrilineages *Kulam*. All persons descended from a common ancestor belong to a kulam.¹²¹ For scientific purposes kurichiya kulams can be regarded as sibs; Each Kurichiya sib is named after their deity, ancestral spirits and shrines .

The central point of each tharavadu is known as the *Tharavadu Mittam*. When population increased in the tharavadu and resources became scarce, some lineages began to stay in the *pandal* or in a she, this settlement gradually changed into *eripuras* or a branch of Tharavadu. The permission of *nattu mooppan* or *Tharavadu karanavar* is necessary for permanent residence This consent is given based on the agreement that hunting, grazing and cultivational area of other Tharavadus in respective zones will not be encroached. Before establishing *Pandal* they will make sure that the proposed site is apt for hunting and cultivation. *Eriperas* which is set up first is known as "Aathara" or first thara or Tharavadu. Each tharavadu has their own tutelary deity.¹²² The aligned *erupuras* and *Aatharas* have the same deity. Gradually these eriperas built temples with sub deities of Tharavadu. Each Kulam or clan insist exogamous marriages. On the basis of marriage, clans are divided in to *bandhu Kulam* and *Pandhi Kulam* (fraternal clan).

The members of same Kulam or pandhi kulam have kin relations,¹²³ they can seek marriage relations with bandhu kulam (affinal clans) only. on the occasion of marriage and death the pandhi bandhu kulams will cooperate with each other. The

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p.16.

¹²² Interview with Achappan, Thonichal in an interview on 14/11/202 at the Thonichal temple.

¹²³ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p 8. Eripura mittams are the separate *Panthals* or temporary residence constructed for those lineages going away from the 'Tharavadu' Such *Panthals* will become houses only after three years when *nattu pooppan* agrees that that area have a conducive situation for hunting, grazing for the new settlers. *Nattu pooppan* does not let allow to do hunting or grazing in the foraging areas of other tharavadus. When population increases and lack of resource use occurs many other *eripuras* develop then the first *eriperas* turns to become *aathara* and later Tharavadu. (Dr N Viswa Nathan Nair, Kurichiyar oru Naravamsa sashtra padanam, Thiruvananthapuram, 2022. pp 82, 83.

membership in the family will be decided by female succession. Geographically the *bandhu kulams and pandhi kulams* are seen in mixture. Usually men do not marry more than one lady from the same clan, this may be perhaps for enhancing the relations with other clans. Normally they marry from within a radius ranging from 5 km to 45 km. *Thalikettu kalyanam*, an important ceremony of the Kurichias, was decided to be abandoned by the council of elders fifty years back as they could not afford its heavy expenses¹²⁴

These changes were coeval with other processes. During that period migration from Travancore had been started and the debt burden of the tharavadus had raised and their land began to be alienated. They are following joint family system; at least there will be fifteen families in a Kurichia tharavadu; each family lives in a room. The matters and expenses of the family were looked after by the Karanavar or Pittan. Orders of *Pittan* have to be obeyed by all members of the family. Even though the Kurichia woman got married, she would not have right in her husband's family. After the death of her husband she will return to her own *tharavadu* with an empty hand. The father has no right over his children. After 1994 many Kurichia families broke up and became nuclear families.

Udayakkaran and Udayakkari

Tharavadus and eripera mittams are following the joint family set up. Each *aatharas and eripurams* have their *udayakkaran* or head man to collect resources and look after the agricultural operations. He is also responsible for buying necessities for the *Tharavadu* and sell the agricultural products etc. Gradually this *udayakkaran* enters in to the position of *karanavar* or chieftain of the tharavadu. His wife is known as *udayakkari*, she has to mobilize the female folk in agricultural works, also informs *udayakkaran* about the requirements of women.

Karanavar or Pooppan

He is the supreme authority of a *Tharavadu*. *Pooppan* or *Karanavar* may be an efficient elder member of the *Tharavadu*. To ensure the efficiency of proposed

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 114.

Karanavar, it is mandatory that he should be prior *udayakkaran, moonnan, enthron* etc. Enthron is the assistant of the previous *Karanavar*. The main duty of the *Karanavar* is to regulate the conduct of the life cycle rites and rituals on time. He also coordinates the *Thirandu kalyanam, gursi, nercha vilanatti* etc. He also conducts the *Thirandu kalyanam* of the matured girls in the *tharavadu*. If there is a death, the *karanavar* and *eriperu udayakkari* decide the date of death rites, the relatives of the dead should bring rice vegetables and money for the death rites at the *tharavadu*. Festivals and rituals will be decided jointly by *karanavar* and *nattu pooppa* or local chieftain. It is the highest position of the clan among *kurichias*. He will observe the activities of fellow *kurichias* and punish them for the offences and excommunicate the members for serious offences. His wife is known as *nattu chachi* or *nattu muthach*. *Pooppa* also had the duty to collect fine for the moral, and anti communal offenses usually 3.5 rupees and put in to the *tharavadu* temple. And he also settles different disputes among *tharavadu* members under him.

Ownership of the property was common. Every member of the family are contributing their labour as they could. Cultivation of paddy, hunting, fishing and pastoring are done by them in kin groups. They never considered land as property.¹²⁵ They never seek land as a property in, marriage alliances. In marital relations only health, hard work mattered concerning either men or women. On the occasion of marriage, all are giving *kanappanam* (bride price). It is interesting that still the family of the groom deposit a sum of three and a half rupees in the *Tharavattu* temple of the bride prior to the marriage.

There is neither destitute, nor orphans among the *Kurichias*. The widows, children who lost their parents live in their *Tharavadu*.¹²⁶ As sense of private property, nuclear family etc., were absent among them, their life was quite happy and egalitarian. It is only after 1970, with the various developmental programmes of the government, the concept of private property and nuclear family emerged among them.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Interview with Kelu othayoth, on 2/02/20 at Thonichal Malakkari Temple, Mananthavady .

The Paniyas were clever and tactful agricultural laborers in the paddy fields especially for rice cultivation. They have only poor huts near paddy fields. They adore their Nair and Brahmin Janmis as *Thampira* and their women as *Thampiratty* and high ranking ones among them as *Pappan* and women as *Pappathi*. They address seniors and younger men, 'Elammal' and women as *Elakka*. They called migrant Christians *Chettans*, Ezhavas and Tiyers are addressed as *Achan* and women as *Amma*,¹²⁷ to show their subservience in the feudal organization. Usually, they sold their labor to the Janmis through *Kundalppani* by raising advance for celebrating Valliyoorkkavu festival. It was a common practice in Wayanad, among the Paniya and Adiya community that raising the advance (Nippu panam) from the Janmis for celebrating Valliyoorkkavu festival along with a 'karikkan(piece of cloth)and three. *Kolakams* of paddy (a measurement existed in Wayanad which is believed to be came from Punnad or Karnataka). Three *kolakam* paddy is equal to 7.5 sir of Paddy. The position of this tribal labourers were similar to that of slaves.¹²⁸ Kolagappara' the place near Sulthan Bathery may have owned its name from *Kolakam*. The most significant feature of this contract is that these tribal people pledge their labor and their family against a loan until the debt is paid back¹²⁹. This practice not only existed in Valliyoorkkavu temple premises alone, but also in the other Kavus as attested by the *Mulamkaranam* obtained from Madaparambu Chetty family, near Pulpally, which says about transfer of a Paniya family along with a transaction of land in 1940. It was a peculiar slave system of Wayanad. The oath they take before the deity to serve their master until the debt is paid off, forced them to stick on under that Janmi. They were always fearful about their promises before God. So, 'Valliyooramma' became their chief deity during the pastoral, settled agricultural period.

Paniyas of Wayanad were subjected to bonded labour system existed mainly among the four tribal communities of Wayand viz, Paniyas, Adiyas, Wayanad

¹²⁷ A Aiyappan, *The Paniyas, an exslave Tribe of South India, Op.cit.*, P. 25.

¹²⁸ OK Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal, Op. cit.* ,p .170.

¹²⁹ P K Bhowmick ,(ed.), *Man and life*, A Journal of Institute of Social Research and Applied Anthropology, Vol 23, No 182, 1997, p. 38.

Pulayans and Kattu Naikkans.¹³⁰ Paniyas and Adiyas were employed as agricultural labourers by land owning cultivators and they were often treated as slaves¹³¹. The following song of the Paniyas sung on marriage occasion depicts how they became slaves

"Valliyurkkavu Bhagavathikku
Janmamayittulla Padathil
Moovayiram vittu vithakkanund
Moovayiram vitthin kili Thelippan
Randolam Nalloru Paithangalum
Nithyathizhil kili Thelippan
Kuttikal padath irangunneram
Chippu Malamelu Chinnu mooppan
Thenum Kondanottaduth chennu
Kandu bhayappettu odunnallo
Pinnale odunnu Chinnu Mooppan
Anneram Kuttikal vyram vilichu
Kottiyoor Perumal Thunachidenam
Muthappan Daivam Thunachidenam
Sathyavum Dharmavum Kathu rakshikkanam
Panjodi Vallooru Kavilethi
Kandupidichallo Valloorachan
'chinnine Pidichu Kettunnallo
Udane Parayunnu Chinnu Anneram
Enne onnum cheyyaruth Vallooracha
Ivide Adimayayi Nilkkum Njanu
Vallooru Adimayayi Ninnu Chinnu
Kollathil Vallooru Kondadunnu
Thudimutty Chingini Kdettiyadum

¹³⁰ P R G Mathur, *Tribal Situation in Kerala*, Trivandrum, 1977, p.96.

¹³¹ R D I S B488, SI No: 13- Periodical returns- *Report on the condition and Progress of Aboriginal Tribes and very backward communities*, pp.8-43.

Malayathil Vazhum Bhadrakali

Valum Kondu njangal Kondadunnu"¹³²

It is interesting to point out that there are twenty Devaswoms (trust) in Wayanad and majority of them are owned by Nair and Varrier communities. However, the Goundens are also the owners of a few Devaswoms. So most of the tribal groups were attached to one or other landlord, particularly Nairs, Varriers, Goundens and Muslims¹³³. The Paniyas are attached to the land as 'Kundal Panikker' as they need only homestead and assured food supply. The Kattunaikkans might have adopted bonded labour when they gave up hunting and food gathering. Kurichias may be forced to accept bonded labour when they faced ex-communication.

The Paniyas were recruited as bonded labourers by advancing loans for celebrating the Valliyoorkkavu festival. Paniyas are pledging before Valliyoorkkavu bhagavathy for the guarantee of advanced amount. Until they clear off the debt, the debtor as well as whole of the family had to work for the landlord. The stage of pastoralism and settled cultivation have gone hand in hand in Wayanad. Practically the whole rice cultivation in Wayanad is carried out by Paniyas attached to 'Edoms' (Nair houses or places) or *Devaswom* (Temple property) of great Nair lords¹³⁴. Their land lords were Nairs, Chettis, Gowdas, etc. So, they came to be known as *Chettiyana paniyaru*, *Chettana Paniyaru*, *Theeyana Paniyaru*, *Achanu Paniyaru*, *Naira Paniyaru* etc.¹³⁵ They never possessed an address of their own. One of their burial songs reflect their long lasting slavery, which is sited here:

"Ippimale Chetteem

Ippimale Kauvundanum

Baayo Baayo baayo

¹³² K Panoor, *Op. cit.*, pp.89- 90.

¹³³ P R G Mathur, *Op. cit.*, p.98.

¹³⁴ Edgar Thurston, Rangachari, *Caste and Tribes of South India*, Low price Publications, Volume VI p to s, 2010. p. 60.

¹³⁵ Soma Sekaharan Nair P, *Paniyar*, National Bookstall, Kottayam, 1976, p.59.

Ippimale Kauvundan
Ippimale Kauvundan
Baayo Baayo Baayo
Ippimale Korappally
Naa baathi lava
Ithiri ponja
Kanchumche Chadiyenum
Baayo baayo baayo
Innale Kaala
Punchem Poomeem
Thona petta kaala" ¹³⁶

During this stage, their social relations became complex. Certain institutions like *kuttan*, *Mooppan* etc were needed by jenmis to mobilize the work force of the Paniyas in their fields. So they conferred certain titles like these. Along with that when the social relations became strong and complicated, it became necessary among them to have some rules and regulations and enforcing authority too. So social organization like 'Urukoottam', Chemmi' Koima etc developed during this stage, Chemmi or Mooppan of the colony serves as the supreme authority in rites and rituals as well as in the judicial matters too. All the disputes between the community members such as family disputes, Marriage issues, encroachments etc are settled under him. The decision of the Mooppan is known as 'Mooppan mozhi'. Violation of Mooppan mozhi is believed to have invited the wrath of god . So every body is liable to obey the mooppan or Chemmi. Chemmi has the right to get gifts of money or 'dakshina' on the occasion of marriages, death rites, and other festivals. The Post of Chemmi is heridetary in nature. If any function is organised without informing Chemmi, a fine may be extracted from the culprit, this fine is known as *ayavu kettuka*.¹³⁷ The position of Chemmis wife is also significant, she should come to bathe the paniya girl on her first menstruation, and she also will receive

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.93.

¹³⁷ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan , *Gothrangaliloode*, Wayanad district, 2006, pp. 80-81.

Dakshina.¹³⁸ Urukootam is a committee of senior members in the colony. They will settle all the disputes in the colony under Chemmi. In those days they never relied upon court or Police station to settle disputes."¹³⁹ There are two sthanams (titles) "Kuttan" and "Muppan" conferred by the jenmi. They settle disputes and disobedience of their orders are being fined. In cases of adultery among the Paniyas a fine of 16 panams being the brides price and a sum equal to the wedding expenses is imposed by a Council of their head men."¹⁴⁰

The role of Muppan is not only limited to administrative and judicial matters, he has several roles such as Komaram, Velichapadu, Patalykaran, Kuttan, Muthali etc. He had the right to permit the digging of the grave for burials and was entitled to a payment called 'Vizhintavari'(death tax).¹⁴¹ He could punish persons guilty of violating norms with fines of which a share goes to himself and another to Koyma. In smaller settlements a Mooppan used to be appointed by the Land lord, by gifting an amulet to a Paniya¹⁴²

They believe that the whole Paniyas are divided into 101 families now it has reduced to 15 families. They are Chirakkal , Manjalath, Padikkal, Kayathil, Idachulli, Kommatt, Varambel, Pongalath, Illikkal, Anjilamar, Karamadanmar, Payaran, Valliyan. Kattu valliyan, Choorikkodan¹⁴³ etc. These Tharavadu names may be accepted in the Settled cultivation period as they have certain similarities with their means of livelihood. Eventhough they have names for their houses , Paniyas seldom use it due to hesitation. Under settled cultivation stage they were slaves of Nairs in North Wayanad, Chetti s and Nairs in South Wayanad, and

¹³⁸ Interview with Vinu Peter Ozhankal, teacher in eka adhyapaka vidhyalayam, Cheeyambam. 51 years old, at her residence, Ambatharu on April 16,2020.

¹³⁹ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.81.

¹⁴⁰ C Gopalan Nair, Malabar Series; *Wayanad People and Its tradition*, *Op.cit.*, p.103.

¹⁴¹ SandhyaRashmi , *Op.cit.*, p.32.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan , *Op. cit.*,pp. 66-67.

had gone for agriculture labour under Muslims too in the Bathery and Muttill region. Joined are rare among the Paniyas.¹⁴⁴

INDUSTRIAL AGE

The phenomena of modernisation is an outgrowth of Industrialisation in the world over. The emergence of new modes of production based on factory system which grew along with ideas of enlightenment and expansion of capitalist trade produced unprecedented change in the life of the humanity. This could also be understood as a fresh mode of resource use that set a new stage of life for the men/women in the world over. It is now well accepted that the capitalism is a world system. Any part of the world can keep off the system- created channels of the same. Wayanad, being in Malabar which was under the control of the British colonialism since 1800, was very much linked to the development world over. Various handles of trade and politics played this role in changing Wayanad to a mode of life that is corresponding to the pulls and pushes of the contexts. Wayanad is seemed to have developed itself as a point of significantly contributing periphery of the capitalist world. The questions of industrial mode of resource use in connection with the Wayanad area ,therefore consists the general participation of an area under the control of colonialism, which was a scene of systematic incorporation of the region to the world capitalist needs and the corresponding exploitative resource use established there. What follows is the description of the changes in the material life of the people in Wayanad under the colonial modernity.

We have already seen that the pressure of migrants in the pre modern period has resulted in the formations of areas of settled life in Wayand. The interests of migrants in the cultivate land, the opportunity for mobility of various kinds inside and outside the region and the ejection of the tribals from their hereditary spaces leading to their subjection and subordination by the superior interests in the region. The mode of production and resource use was controlled by the jenmi kudiyan mode of rights distribution among the people. By the time of Tipu Sulthan's dominance

¹⁴⁴ SandhyaRashmi,*Op. cit.*, p.24.

itself, this system was done away with. British followed the same policy of seeking ownership to the land in such a way that fixity of land revenue was ensured.

Proprietary ownership of land

Land colonization scheme and large scale migration of the people from Travancore changed the crop pattern. From 1960 lemon grass cultivation became common along with the tapioca.¹⁴⁵ Instead of subsistence farming cash crops such as pepper, ginger, tea, coffee etc became prominent in this stage.

Resettlement of Land tax by the British 1928

During the British period, collection of land revenue in Wayanad was arbitrary and it was fixed by revenue collectors¹⁴⁶. Agricultural lands were categorized into dry and wet lands. Thomas Warden introduced a new revenue settlement for wet lands, it proposed the deduction of three *pothis* for each *pothi* of seed sown to meet the expenses of cultivation and the rest was divided between the government, Janmi, and the cultivator equally¹⁴⁷. The compulsory taxation created a crisis for the Kurumas and Kurichias.

Permanent fixation of land tax by the British began from 1888 with their first survey. They classified the agricultural land on the basis of its productivity. Wet, dry, productive land and unproductive lands were classified and tax fixed accordingly. In order to solve the inadequacies in the 1888 assessment, Pattaya number, details of Kudiyan Resurvey was done in 1928 and land Survey number, Pattaya number, details of registered Kudiyan(cultivators), sub division and amount of taxes were also stated accurately in that.¹⁴⁸ It also had included details of cattle stock, Population on basis of religion, lists of different crops cultivated in

¹⁴⁵ *Vikasana Rekha*, Ambalavayal Grama Panchayath, 14th five year plan, 2022-27, p.20.

¹⁴⁶ Joy Varkey, "Impact of Colonialism in Tribal Communities in Wayanad" in *Inner spaces*, Dr Priya Pillcode, (ed.), Vol I, Issue I, June 2016, Bilingual Half Multidisciplinary Research Journal, NMSM Govt. College, Kalpetta, p.40.

¹⁴⁷ J. Rejikumar (ed.), Kerala State Archives, *Greame's Report on the Revenue Administration of Malabar, 1822*, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010, p. 289.

¹⁴⁸ *Vikasana Rekha*, Mananthavady Grama Panchayath, 1996, p.22.

the wet and dry zones. etc. It included the categorization of land such as Permanent Wet (PW), Fugitive Wet (FW) Estate Developed(ED), Developed Dry(DD), 'Puramboke''(P), undeveloped Dry (UD), Estate undeveloped(EU), Un Assessed (U)¹⁴⁹. The taxes for *Punja* cultivation was not included in settlement register as it was collected at the time of harvest.¹⁵⁰ Before Resettlement the Pattas (tax) paid were almost half of total production. If the production is Rs. 30 the Kudiyan have to pay Rs 10 and if the production is of RS 1000 the cultivator have to pay RS 500. But in the Resettlement the land tax fixed was enormously huge like if the total production is Rs 30 the Kudiyan if he is a single owner have to pay Rs 58 and if it is a shared production cultivators have to pay Rs.76 and if the total production is Rs 500, a single producer have to pay Rs.329 and 14 annas¹⁵¹. The fixation of taxes which should be paid in terms of money, perplexed the Tribal kudiyan like Kurichiyas and Kurumas as they had paid their taxes or pattam in terms of paddy till then. Collection of Paddy in cash, and increase of taxes under Thomas warden were the important reasons behind the Kurichya Revolt of 1812.¹⁵² The net result of this policy was the introduction of proprietary ownership of the land instead of the varying rights and interest to various jatis. With this the private ownership of land was practically launched. The forest land were also began to be administered as the proprietary of the state where all other traditional rights legally ended.

In 1859, The Department of Forest had been established, with a British forest official named Hunter. In 1860 Mr Gabb was appointed as District forest conservator, he issued orders prohibiting the 'Punam cultivation', elephant hunting by jenmis or tribes for themselves in 1879 and felling of Teak by private persons in 1879. Total forest land in Wayanad was divided in to 14 blocks and appointed one forest officer , one sub assistant conservator, and 20 foresters for the protection of

¹⁴⁹ *Resettlement registers* , Periya Desam,1928, Regional Archives Kozhikod, (Here after RAK) , p.1.

¹⁵⁰ *Vikasana Rekha*, Mananthavady Grama Panchayath, 1996, p. 22.

¹⁵¹ *Resettlement Registers of 58 Deshams in Wayanad*, 1928, RAK, pp.2-6.

¹⁵² *Vikasana Rekha*, Mananthavady Grama Panchayath, *Op.cit* ,p.13.

the entire forest in the district. The Office of the sub assistant conservator was at Mananthavady.¹⁵³

Net work of roads and transportation

There was a marked improvement in the road network during the reign of Tipu Sulthan followed by the British government. This period brought drastic changes in the Social economic life of Mullukurumas .Many roads and transportation facilities increased considerably during this period, many of them initiated by Tipu Sulthan and later by the British. Before 1926 Calicut -Mysore road was metalled. Many bus services were also started such as Calicut Wayanad Motor service, Maruthi,Crown, Eeswara vilasam, Valli kumaran were important among them.¹⁵⁴ It increased the mobility of the people there.Drastic improvement of mode of transport was also marked during this period. In this period, their views of food gathering stage as human beings as a part of nature was totally shattered . They began to think man as separate from nature. He got the sole right to exploit as much natural resources as possible. Nature's religious sanctity faded away.

The Industrial or Modern age initiated by Tipu's aggression was hastened by the arrival of the British . Modern age or industrial age initiated in Wayanad along with Tippu's ravages into Wayanad. Numerous chains of roads were constructed by Tippu for the smooth movement of his military regiment. He built the present NH 766 connecting Bathery to Calicut and Vythiri – Kuthirapandy road. He also constructed bridges across the rivers of Wayanad. The first concrete bridge was built across Panamaram river. Mananthavady- Mysore Road which connects Wayanad with Karnataka, inter- district roads like Kozhikode to Manantoddy have been built in last decades of 18th century and first decades of 19th century. All these roads boosted up the commercial movements of Wayanad. More than a half dozen passes are there like South Kuttiady churam, Palchuram, Naadukaani Churam, and Thamarassery churam are prominent among them. proceedings of Board of Revenue which deals with road construction and ghat construction. Proceedings of Board of

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.14.

¹⁵⁴ *Vikasana Rekha*, Meenanangadi Grama Panchayath, 1996,p.45.

Revenue dtd 6 December 1862 is informing an order passed in public works department regarding the speedy completion of Thambracherry and Carcoor pass ¹⁵⁵. Special officers had been appointed with Rs 100 mensum. The Carcoor ghat had been put under the supervision of Sub Engineer Mr Baily and the Cottiaddy and Periya ghats as well as the lines from the top of Thamarassery ghats towards Gundalpettu Captain Sime. Rs 33,000 being placed for its expenses. ¹⁵⁶

Urbanisation in rural areas of Wayanad had been hastened by different reforms introduced by British. They have extended the network of roads, postal and telegraph connections. The dire need of planters in Wayanad such as the want of good roads, inadequacy of magisterial and judicial arrangements is reflected in the different proceedings of Board of Revenue.¹⁵⁷ The proceedings dated 3 December 1862 is submitting his recommendation to Board Collector recommending the construction of 12 lines of roads including Periya ghat to Manantoddy, from Manantoddy to Bowally, on the Mysore frontier, Cootiady ghat to Manantoddy. The following details are their recommendation:

Table -2.4: List of recommended roads to be constructed in Wayanad by Board of Revenue 1862

| Sl No | Route | Already Spend money | Required Sum |
|-------|--|---------------------|--------------|
| I | Periya Ghat to Manantoddy | 1982 | 16100 |
| II | From Manantoddy to Bowally or Mysore frontier | 10,732 | 10600 |
| III | From Cootiady ghat to Manantoddy | ----- | 12000 |
| IV | From Tambaracherry ghat via Terriote to Manantoddy | 12696 | 27300 |
| V | From do to do via Culpatty and Permurrun | 4222 | 21600 |
| VI | From Manatoddy via Permurrun to Goodalur | 1219 | 34400 |

¹⁵⁵ *Proceedings of Board of Revenue*, Dtd 6 December 1862, Vol I, RAK.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ *Proceedings of Board of revenue*, Dtd 3dec1862, Vol1, RAK.

| SI No | Route | Already Spend money | Required Sum |
|-------|---|---------------------|--------------|
| VII | From Tambaracherry ghat to S Bathery | ----- | 39600 |
| VIII | From S Bathery to Mysore frontier | ----- | 22400 |
| IX | From Carcoor pass to Mysore frontier via Gudalur and Tippacadoo | ----- | ----- |
| X | From Corote to Teriote | ----- | 11200 |
| XI | From Teriote to Culpatty | ----- | 6400 |
| XII | From Corote to Periya | ----- | 9600 |

Source: Proceedings of Board Revenue dtd 3 December 1862, Vol I, Calicut Archives. P 2.

All these have increased the mobility of tribes they came to know about noble idea of Freedom from outside world.

The network of roads improved the mobility of tribes too and it enabled them to come into contact with other cultures. Their traditional systems of self-rule have regenerated by existing civil laws. The Paniyas and Kurumas were mainly employed for capturing of elephants, felling trees, and as gold mine laborers. So they also learned the art of exploitation of natural resources which they had treated as holy or God. Kurumbers were appointed for gold washing¹⁵⁸ in mines and cutting of trees by Forest Department.

Many hospitals and churches were established by the British. It led to the emergence of civic life among the tribal people. Proceedings of Board of Revenue dtd 19 February 1870, Vol I, recommended for the introduction of iron pontoon rafts in 3 rivers such as Panamaram, Coodrapandy and Manantoddy river. Cost of their construction was ordered to be met from ferry receipts of Malabar district¹⁵⁹. All these shows British had done all efforts to Urbanize Wayanad eventhough it was in their own interest.

¹⁵⁸ Samuel Jennings, FLS W H Smith & Sons, *My Visit to the Gold Fields in South East Wayanad*, London, 1881, pp. 50-52.

¹⁵⁹ *Proceedings of Board of Revenue*, dtd 19 February 1870, Vol I, RAK. P. 1

Energy extracted - harnessed and mined

Karappuzha dam and Banasura sagar Dam are two hydroelectric projet commissioned in Wayanad for producing Hydro electric energy as well as for irrigational purposes. Karappuzha dam is situated in the Karappuzha river,a tributary of river Kabani. Construction of this dam started in 1977 and was completed in 2004. Banasura sagar dam, is the largest earth dam in india and second largest in Asia. It is a mini hydel project which was commissioned in 1979.¹⁶⁰

Use of artificial materials

The Industrial age inaugurated a period of mass material production and consumption. A large variety of man made materials such as metals, plastics, silicon chips, artificial pesticides, etc were used¹⁶¹. There were eighteen retail fertiliser shops in Kalpetta together in cooperative and private sector and eleven pesticide shop too.¹⁶² Being in the periphery of the world capitalism under colonial control, the increase in the production mainly concentrated on agro- industries based on plantations.

Global flow of resources

The introduction of large plantations of coffee, tea, etc brought the international market into Wayanad. Local economy of wayand got linked with the global market. The encouragement for plantation agriculture by the Madras government through land tax waver for coffee plantations and the suitable climatic conditions attracted British planters¹⁶³. By the end of the 19 th century, there was a total shift to tea plantations in areas like Meppadi, Vythiri in South Wayanad and Periya in North Wayanad. The British had measured the land and categorized into

¹⁶⁰ *Tourism Guide and Information Directory*, Wayanad District Information office, Wayanad, p.15.

¹⁶¹ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *Op.cit.*, p. 40.

¹⁶² *Vikasana Rekha* , Kalpetta Nagara Sabha, p. 24

¹⁶³ Dr Seetha Kakkoth, Hareendran P, Department of rural and Urban sociology Mananthavady campus, Wayanad , *Tribal-Urban Complex of Mananthavady; The Nature of transformation in the Wayanad Region of Western ghats*, p.64.

forest, jenmam, Devaswom and revenue lands. They reinforced private property in Malabar and had given the right to collect tax to the Janmis, especially Nair Janmis. Mullukuruma and Kurichiyas remained as cultivators on lease. Paniyas and Adiyas remained as agricultural slave laborers ¹⁶⁴. There was abundance of forest, paddy fields, and wet land before the British dominance. Major plantations were established after clearing the forest. So, the extent of the forest shrank by 25 percentage. ¹⁶⁵ By 1837, all restrictions on acquiring land by British officials were abandoned. It led to the establishment of private plantation by 1850. 36 coffee plantations in 3000 acres in which 1500 acres of private plantations were also established ¹⁶⁶. The British suddenly transformed Wayanad into an agrarian capitalist economy with tea and coffee plantations. British planters arrived in this region and established huge plantation cultivating tea and coffee on commercial basis. Interestingly, Many of these planters were originally Calcutta based, which resulted in many of these plantations being still registered with Calcutta stock exchange¹⁶⁷. Tea cultivation caught up in Wayanad in 1870s and organized planting started by 1892. Harrisons and Crossfield, Pierce-Leslie, and Kerala Tea company were the big European companies who established Tea plantations in the early 1900s. Tea was first introduced in Wayanad by Messrs Parry & Co on their Peringotti estate.

¹⁶⁴ Balasabha kudumbasree mission, Wayanad, *Op.cit.*, p. 43.

¹⁶⁵ TG Jacob , *Wayanad Oru Haritha Desathinte Duritham*, Sulthan Bathery. p. 117.

¹⁶⁶ Balasabha kudumbasree mission, *Op.cit.*, p.44.

¹⁶⁷ T G Jacob , Wayanad, *Misery in Emerald Bowl*, Mumbai, 2006, p,21.

Table 2.5: Extent of Tea cultivation in Acreage in Early Wayanad

| SI No | Name of the company | Acreage |
|-------|---|--------------|
| 1 | Harrisons & Crossfield Ltd. | 5012 |
| 2 | Eranad & Joint Co-operative Wholesale society | 3409 |
| 3 | Pierce-Leslie & Co | 1452 |
| 4 | WT Sergent & Sons | 375 |
| 5 | George Romilly | 284 |
| 6 | PGT Tipping & Irvin total | 181 |
| 7 | H A R Jaffer Muhammed sons | 153 |
| 8 | George Bros | 50 |
| 9 | T C Anderson | 31 |
| | TOTAL | 10947 |

Source: Achur Tea Museum Wayanad display from Planting directory of South India, 1897

There were 19 tea factories in the Taluk manufacturing about 97,0000 lb of tea per year. The factories are situated in the tea plantation. There were 35 tea plantations in the Taluk. Most of them belonged to English and Scottish Co-operative wholesale society ¹⁶⁸. (Tea factory machinaries which is kept in Achur Tea Museum Pozhuthana is included in the Appendix) The British Raj constructed large network of roads connecting Wayanad with coastal areas. They have also constructed the roads leading to Coimbatore via Ooty to the Tamil areas of Madras presidency. By 1956, due to the intervention of language, re - organization commission, Malayalam speaking areas of Madras presidency merged with Kerala on linguistic lines. In 1980, current Wayanad district came into being with the integration of southern part of Kannur district and Northern part of Calicut district with three Taluks namely Vythiri, Mananthavady, and Sulthan Bathery. Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady became Municipalities in 2015. The introduction of plantation marked with the growth of agro-industrial capitalism. Commercialization

¹⁶⁸ *A Statistical Atlas of the Malabar District*, Revised and Brought up to the Decinnium Ending Fasli 1360 (1950-51), Published by the Director of Statistics, Madras, 1963. p.35.

of agriculture was hastened with widespread cultivation of cash crops such as pepper,¹⁶⁹ rubber, tea, cinchona, etc.

Before the British Raj, Wayanad was scarcely populated. Large chunks of population were constituted by tribes, who collected forest products for exchange in abundance. Paddy cultivation was wide spread and it was owned by Chettis and Gaudas with the help of agrestic slaves like Paniyas and Adiyas. British plantations employed indigenous as well as outside employees. As Wayanad was thinly populated and it was not possible to get enough labourers on coffee and tea plantations. The laborers are mostly brought from considerable distances by contractors, who enter into agreements beforehand with planters for the services of their gangs. Local laborers belong to following clan or tribes, Naikers and Burgurs (Korumbars). Immigrants were Canarese, Mophlas, Wuddus, and Balkarans¹⁷⁰. The period of Independence eve and Post Independence period witnessed large scale migration of Syrian Christians and Ezhavas. Government of India actively encouraged the colonization of forest regions for agriculture. Through colonization scheme, soldiers got plots of land without much state interference. Soon, these settlers came to constitute the demographic majority in Wayanad, which is today note worthy for its high percentage of Adivasis (17.43%), Christians (23.39%), Muslims (25.87%).¹⁷¹ Early cultivation of migrants was paddy, tapioca, coffee, lemon grass, etc. The cultivation of Tapioca and Lemon grass became prominent by 1960. Lemon grass cultivation came to an end by 1970 as it requires enormous amount of firestick to extract the oil¹⁷².

In 1933 orange cultivation became popular in Kalpetta which later spread to different parts of Wayanad. The period between 1933-1950 was the golden period of oranges and got fair prices too. Orange cultivators co-operative society had been

¹⁶⁹ Interview with Bhaskaran Madaparambu, a land lord of Wayanadan chetty community, 64 years old, at his residence , Madaparambu on 28/12/2022.

¹⁷⁰ Samuel Jennings, FLS W H Smith & Sons, *Op.cit.*, pp.59-60.

¹⁷¹ Daniel Munster, "Farmers, Suicide and State in India: conceptual and Ethnographic Notes from Wayanad, Kerala", In *contribution to Indian Sociology*, Vo. 46, Issue 1-2, June 2012, p. 192.

¹⁷² *Vikasana Rekha* , Ambalavayal Grama Panchayath, *Op.cit.*, p.20

constituted. Military camps at Kalpetta was a usual buyer of oranges .Ripened oranges are still live in the memories of Madaparambu Bhaskaran and he remembers of different Orange traders who arrived here to purchase it. Later by 1950ees orange cultivation depleted due to climate change and diseases.

After 1970, most settlers shifted to cash crops. By 1975, coffee plantations were levelled and paddy cultivation dwindled. Farmers started large scale cash crop cultivation especially pepper. Latest market trends served the interest of farmers between 1980-1990 brought unusual wealth to Wayanad through the pepper boom. In late 1980s to 1990s, many farmers of pepper panchayats of Pulpally, Mullenkolly, Poothadi became wealthy. Wayanad became an earner of foreign currency in Kerala.¹⁷³ With the establishment of new mode of governments under feudalism and British the tribal autonomy had been shattered away. majority of adivasis were made slaves. The majority of the Adivasi tribes were reduced from their earlier position of autonomy to the position of serfs and semi serfs . They were allowed to collect minor forest products and practice shifting cultivation, which did not adversely affect the forest cover.¹⁷⁴Adivasis firmly stood for their freedom more than any thing else . The division between freedom lovers and enslaved may be the first major conflict among the original inhabitants. The shifting cultivation or Punam krishi or jhoom cultivation continued up to a couple of decades inspite of the colonial forest law even though in a small scale. The shifting cultivators had to give free labour for the feudal title holders. Serfdom was formally abolished by the colonialists, but the slavery and debt bondage continued even up to the 1960's.¹⁷⁵

To form an idea about increase in consumption require an elaborate measurement of materials used by the people in their everyday life. The present study has not addressed this question in detail. However, it is quite conspicuous that people began to use multitudes of new materials to cop with the standards of the modern life in nineteenth and Twentieth centuries. We have already seen that there

¹⁷³ Daniel Munster, *Op. cit.* p.192.

¹⁷⁴ TG Jacob, *Wayanad Misery in an Emerald Bowl*, *Op.cit.*,p. 21.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p,22.

was considerable expansion in the fields of housing, infrastructure, education and improvements in domestic and personal life of individuals. A description of some exceptional materials that came in to the life of people is mentioned here . (pesticides and chemicals mentioned later in this chapter)

By around 1935 there was a migration from Travancore to here in Wayanad, it was a 'land rush' by prospective settler farmers from the plains.¹⁷⁶ They taught the tribes the new cultivational methods like second crop of paddy(puncha), rubber cultivation and pepper.¹⁷⁷ Large scale production of cash crops and spices furthered its access to world Market. Tribal people also started the garden cultivation of cash crops widely. All these changes in Polity and economy have direct impact on the socio religious life of the tribal people here. In this chapter and following chapters analyse the same.'

Transportation facilities increased considerably during this period. Passes like Thamarassery pass, Kuttiady pass and Periya pass have improved mainly due to the aggressions of Tipu and British Pazhassi encounters. Vyhtiri- Kuthira pandi road was constructed by Tipu through Thariyodu. From the plains various mountain passes lead up to Nilgiri, Wynad and Coorg, along which plantation produce is brought for shipment to the coast¹⁷⁸

The new migrants arrived with their beliefs, religious institutions like churches, temples, mosque, etc. They also came with new ideological and political trappings imported from the different socio-political moorings of Travancore and the trading culture of Calicut and Thalassery.¹⁷⁹ The Urbanisation process was hastened with the introduction of hospitals, schools, etc, which were owned mainly by different churches. Large network of roads, schools, hospitals, churches, banks, courts became a reality in different parts of Wayanad. The spurting of new cities had

¹⁷⁶ Dr.Seetha Kakkoth, Hareendran P, Department of rural and Urban sociology Mananthavady campus, Wayanad, *Op.cit.*, p.2.

¹⁷⁷ Interview of Pokkaappan Mooppan , Edamala in Souvanir of Pulpally immigration and dedication of newly built church 1950-1988, ST Marys Church, Mullankolly, p.88.

¹⁷⁸ Statistical Atlas, 1923, RAK, p.13.

¹⁷⁹ Jacob T G, Wayanad Misery in Emerald Bowl, *Op.cit.*, p 26.

been marked in the areas of Vythiri, Kalpetta, Mananthavady, and Ambalavayal ¹⁸⁰. Apart from the big plantations initiated by the British, economical structure of Wayanad and its settlement pattern had been totally altered with the arrival of migrants mentioned in the previous chapter. Agricultural lands were converted to cash crop groves such as pepper, coffee, cardamom etc. Export quality of these cash crops opened a wide international market before them. The penetration of market economy in the cities, has transferred the production, and consumption patterns of tribal life. The early agricultural slaves like Paniya, adiya and vettukuruman communities were deprived of land and forest resources for their subsistence and were forced to go for wage labor and market system.

Major cities such as Kalpetta, the district head quarters and other two cities such as Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady had flourished in the mean time along with the market economy. The rural villages had been bound upon with the satellite towns and the main towns. Even the interior villages began to show the characteristics of both urban and rural traits. Wayanad cannot escape from the global trend of urbanization passing from agrarian to industrial society. Two cities in Wayanad such as Mananthavady and Sulthan Bathery sharing border with other districts and states like Karnataka and Tamil nadu, became central locations for procurement of commodities. Kalpetta, headquarters of Wayanad had been grown as the centre of many governmental offices such as Civil station, Municipality, many commercial and nationalized banks, hospitals etc. Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady have acquired the Municipality status in February 1915.

This turn of producing for market instead of traditional production for consumption is reflected in the decline of paddy cultivation along with the expansion of plantations in the area.

After 1970, there was large scale decrease in the extent of paddy fields. The cultivation of garden land increased rapidly."From 1985-1986 to 2019-2020,an estimated 75% of the area that had been under paddy cultivation was converted for

¹⁸⁰ Interview with Janikamma Niravathu, 88 years old, an early migrant to Pulpally, 27 May 2019, at her residence, shed.

other land uses in Kerala. The major competing crops in Kerala are banana and arecanut, both of which have high commercial value. Conversion to Banana cultivation is reversible one while conversion to arecanut, a plantation crop is irreversible. Once paddy land get converted to areca nut, it loses its wet characteristics and can easily make it a non wetland."¹⁸¹ The dwindling down of paddy cultivation affected the life of ethnic people such as Paniyas, Adiyas, Kurichiyas, and Kurumas who had largely depended upon paddy cultivation and labor as their means of livelihood. By 1956, 44 % of cultivated area was under food crops with further 14 per cents under food cum cash crops. Kerala was then producing just over half of its rice consumption; but by 1978, the proportion had fallen to little more than two fifth ¹⁸². The paddy land in Wayanad had been diverted into many other uses. Seasonal coversion of paddy fields were also there mainly for the cultivation of ginger and banana. The main factor behind the conversion of paddy fields was the shortage of rain. If a plot is converted , other farmers nearby are also forced to convert as there will be scarcity of water in their fields. ¹⁸³ Many of the traditional water sources such as 'thalachiras, Keni, etc were filled up as a consequence of conversion of paddy lands. In 1990's there was large inflow of Tamil agriculture laborers in to Wayanad. They came and settled in an area called Meenamkolly near Pulpally. Even small farmers started to employ the laborers at cheaper rate compared to local tribal workers. ¹⁸⁴ Thus the local tribal labors lost their employment opportunity under the farmers.

The following table shows the paddy filling through different periods.

¹⁸¹ Dr M Manjula, MSSRF, "Wayanad, Wet lands and Eco System Services: Emperical Evidence for Incentivizing Paddy Wetlands in Ecology Economy and Society" the *INSEE Journal*, 6(2): 33-57, July, 2023.

¹⁸² T J Nossiter, *Communism in Kerala*, Oxford press, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, 1982. p. 52.

¹⁸³ Interview with Madaparambu Bhaskaran, Traditional paddy farmer at his residence Madaparambu on 17 April 2022.

¹⁸⁴ KN Nair, CP Vinod, Vineetha Menon, "Agrarian Distress and Livelihood Strategies: A Study in Pulpally Panchayat Wayanad Dt of Kerala", *CDS Working paper*, 396 Thiruvananthapuram, p. 9.

Table 2.6: Statement showing particulars of the area cultivated with various crops in 1951

| Sl. No. | Name of crops | Acres cultivated in Hectar |
|---------|---------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Paddy | 50.800 |
| 2 | Ragi | 2800 |
| 3 | Maize | 300 |
| 4 | chillies | 100 |
| 5 | Tobacco | 100 |
| 6 | Tapioca | 3036 |
| 7 | Rubber | 346 |
| 8 | Coffee | 16220 |
| 9 | Tea | 14445 |
| 10 | Plantains | 5175 |

Source 1951, Census Hand book, Malabar District, Madras, 1953.

Table 2.7: Area of different crops cultivated in 1990 Wayanad

| Sl.No. | Crops | Area in Hectar |
|--------|----------|----------------|
| 1 | Paddy | 21032 |
| 2 | Tapioca | 1822 |
| 3 | Plantain | 1148 |
| 4 | Pepper | 23141 |
| 5 | Tea | 5360 |
| 6 | Rubber | 4124 |
| 7 | Coffee | 59564 |
| 8 | Coconut | 4046 |

Sources are from PK Prakash, *Anyadheenappedunna Bhoomi, Adivasi Bhoomi prashnathinte Charithravum Rashtreeeyavum*, Kozhikkode, 2002, p. 26 (Agricultural statistics 1990)

This table shows that by 1990 s paddy cultivation began to lose its glory . Paddy cultivation dwindled alarmingly during this period. In 1951 there had been 50.800 Hectar paddy existed which had got reduced to 21032 hectar in 1990. Food crops were replaced by the cash crops enormously.

Table 2.8: Extend of Paddy Converted to other uses in Wayanad

| Sl. No. | Purpose | Area in H a |
|----------------|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Paddy converted to built up(mixed type) | 547.79 |
| 2 | Paddy converted to built up(others) | 49.99 |
| 3 | Paddy converted to commercial built up | 36.59 |
| 4 | Paddy converted to Industrial built up | 11.57 |
| 5 | Paddy converted to long fallow land | 416.23 |
| 6 | Paddy converted to mixed crops | 1522.10 |
| 7 | Paddy converted to perennial crops | 8979.04 |
| 8 | Paddy converted to residential built up | 309.95 |
| 9 | Paddy converted to seasonal crops | 7733.42 |
| | Total | 19,606.68 |

Source: Data from Kerala Land Use Board, Thiruvananthapuram 2005

This table shows the statistics of filling up of paddy land for other uses which is an acute reason for dwindling of paddy fields in Wayanad. This indicates the state of the the first quarter of twenty first century.

Table 2.9: Paddy fields used for other Purposes

| SI No | Purpose | Area in Sqkm |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | Extend of Paddy remaining in Wayanad | 133.25 |
| 2 | Plantain | 25.96 |
| 3 | Other cultivation like Yam | 1.86 |
| 4 | House construction | 0.77 |

Source Land use board Wayanad district 2019

From this table it is evident that Plantain cultivation became dominant in the district in 2019. In 1990s Banana cultivation in Wayanad was limited in 1054 hectare which is raised to an area of 12,842 hectare.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵ *Mathrubhoomi daily*, 2022 November 23, Wednesday, p. 3.

During 1970s, the area under rice fell slightly, the proportion of high yielding varieties sown doubled from 18-33% (1978%) while area under commercial crops continued to increase. When 1956-70 area under paddy had rose up to 15% whereas the area under coffee had increased by 117%, arecanut by 81%, cashew and rubber by 76%, and coconut by 48%. Paddy fields came to be occupied by Plantain, arecanut, coconut trees. Construction of huge concrete buildings by filling the paddy land, using paddy fields for brick making also contributed largely for dwindling of production.¹⁸⁶ The steep decline in the extent of paddy fields changed the lifestyle and means of earning especially among agricultural laborers such as Adiyas and Paniyas. The traditional settlement pattern in Wayanad as a whole consisted of habitation areas in the lower ridges of the dry land on the edges of the marshy/wet land paddy fields *ie vayaloram*¹⁸⁷ which they found very suitable for dwelling, being close to water sources close proximity to fields to protect from wild animals.

But the curious thing is that now days in the industrial age with the decline of paddy fields the *vayaloram* settlement has been transferred to *vazhiyoram* settlement or settlement on the sides of main roads. When the Paddy cultivation decreased it was not necessary to stay in the edges of Paddy fields. Paddy land holding tribal sects such as Kurichyas and Mullukurumas and chettis used to live in clusters. Paddy cultivation dwindled considerably among them due the breakage of joint families among kurichyas and emergence of employed and educated generation and single families among Mullukurumas. They began to do extensive banana cultivation and dry farm land cultivation. They began to use powerful pesticides and fertilisers to ward off the agricultural pests. In 1996, in Kalpetta 18 fertilizer shops had been there under the ownership of individuals and in cooperative sector and 11 pesticide shops. The pesticides were applied on all agricultural crops including paddy, arecanut, plantain, vegetables and tea, most probably this was done

¹⁸⁶ *Vikasana Rekha*, Poothadi Panchayath, *Op.cit.*, p.8.

¹⁸⁷ Dr Seetha Kakkoth(pi) and Hareendran(co-pi) Department of Rural and tribal sociology, Kannur University Mananthavady campus, *Wayanad, Op. cit.*, p.75.

unscientifically.¹⁸⁸ It developed of a sense of infallibility among this people to believe in *medicine* than *Manthra* or rituals.

Growing Knowledge about the functioning of nature

Mechanisation in the existing Paddy field also reduced Paniyas job opportunities as land tillers, threshers etc. Vikasana rekhas prepared by various Grama Panchayaths show the number of agricultural equipment brought by them. Meenangadi Grama Panchayath brought 5 Power Tillers, 40 rocker sprayers, 16 naap sack sprayers and tractros also¹⁸⁹. These development told upon the life of the people in many ways. New people began to inhabit the area. The increase in the population due to migrations and corresponding social developments created conditions for the development of new social classes. 20th century Wayanad was marked by total changes in its Socio economic texture due to certain migrations. First of such migration happened when the Colonization scheme was introduced in Wayanad. This Scheme was to rehabilitate the ex-Jawans or soldiers from the Second World War by providing them with land here in Wayanad. Large amount of tribal land had been acquired for this project. Thus the tribal people and migrated people were forced to live together.¹⁹⁰ (details of colonization is given in the first chapter)

The defeat of Burma by Japan in the Second World War which cut off the supply of rice to several parts of India, resulted in the starvation of Travancore. Small land holdings in the hands of poor peasants in Travancore could not meet the required food supply, also steep increase in Land's price in Travancore emerged as a cause for peasant migration to Wayanad where land was cheaper. Selling 1 acre of land and buying 15-20 acres of land in the hills turned out to be a highly profitable venture.¹⁹¹ Malaria and wild animal threats reduced considerably by 1960. Competition to get labor work in abundance led to the emergence of land labor

¹⁸⁸ *Vikasana Rekha* Kalpetta Nagara Sabha ,*Op.cit.*, p.20.

¹⁸⁹ *Vikasana Rekha* , Meenangadi Grama Panchayath, *Op. cit.*,p.44.

¹⁹⁰ PK Prakashan, *Anyadheenappedunna bhoomi*, Kozhikkod, 2002, pp. 28- 29.

¹⁹¹ Jacob T G, *Wayanad Mysery in Emerald Bowl*, *Op. cit.*, P. 25.

market and labor-wages system. Another important reason which encouraged migration was the severe food scarcity during the Second World War which led to the “Grow more food” programme. A letter from Madras Board of Revenue dtd July 1949 is a recovery notice for well subsidy provided for “Grow more food” campaign¹⁹². Another letter obtained from Archives shows that Kuppathode Madhavan Nair, the Landlord of Pulpally Amsom and manager of Pulpally Devaswom is seeking permission to clear 2000 acres of private forest under him to make paddy fields to meet the pressure of “Grow more food” campaign¹⁹³. Due to the lack of valid documents, between 1940 and 1970, 1959 square kilometers of forest had been lost of which 1015 square kilometers lost for agriculture and habitation by assignments, encroachments besides 736 square kilometers lost for rubber, coffee, pepper, and other plantation crops¹⁹⁴. The arrival of numerous migrants brought radical changes in the demographic pattern of Wayanad region.

Travancore migration ultimately shook the roots of Tribal's, social as well as economic life. Due to land hunger they acquired as much lands as they could through encroaching the forest, tribal land etc.. It led to the fragmentation of tribal lands in Wayanad. The migrants lured tribes with illicit liquor and snatched their lands. Extensive oil grass cultivation reduced the fertility of soil. There was a tremendous increase of population in Wayanad taluk in 1951. In Wayanad Thaluk there was an increase of 59.2 percent, as there was Colonization scheme and large number of immigrants have settled down”. The increase of migration in the northern taluks, especially to Wayanad taluk, has been on a larger scale than in to the southern taluks as the former had vast areas of undeveloped lands and better communications and medical facilities that held greater attraction for immigrants”.¹⁹⁵ Large influx of migrants resulted in the consequent urbanization.

¹⁹² RDIS file, B No.628, SI No:13, RAK.

¹⁹³ RDIS file, B No.627, SI No:19, RAK.

¹⁹⁴ PK Michael Tharakan, "Intra -regional Differences in Agrarian Systems and Internal Migration: A case study of the Migration Farmers from Travancore to Malabar, 1930-1950", *Working Paper*, 194, CDS Thiruvananthapuram, 1984, p 3.

¹⁹⁵ *Census hand book* 1951 p.5.

Table 2.10: Variation in Population during fifty years in Wayanad from 1901-51

| Taluk | | Persons | Variation | Net variation 1901-51 | Males | Variation | Females | Variation |
|--------|------|---------|-----------|-----------------------|--------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| Waynad | 1901 | 75,149 | ---- | ---- | 41,632 | ---- | 33,517 | ---- |
| | 1911 | 82,549 | 7,400 | ---- | 45,489 | 3,857 | 37,060 | 3,543 |
| | 1921 | 84,771 | 2,222 | ---- | 47,473 | 1,984 | 37,298 | 238 |
| | 1931 | 91,769 | 6,998 | ---- | 50,877 | 3,404 | 40,892 | 3,594 |
| | 1941 | 106,350 | 14,581 | ---- | 57,952 | 7,075 | 48,398 | 7,506 |
| | 1951 | 169,280 | 62,930 | 94,131 | 92,099 | 34,147 | 77,181 | 28,783 |

Source: Census handbook, Malabar district, 1951, printed at Government press Madras, 1953.

Urbanisation

Due to the growth of trade and commerce, urbanization takes place in an area. Famous American Sociologist and demographer David Kingsly opines that there are three stages in the process of Urbanisation. The first stage is characterized by rural, traditional societies based on agriculture and disbursed settlement pattern. Second stage refers to acceleration stage where basic re-structuring of the economy and investment in social overhead capital including transportation, communication take place. Third stage is the terminal stage in which level of Urbanization remains more or less same or constant.¹⁹⁶ Large scale production of cash crops marked by the penetration of urbanization and marketisation at different centers of Wayanad like Kalpetta, Sulthan Bathery, Mananthavady, etc. Large scale network of roads paves the milestone for urbanization. and Manantody via Kalpatty and Teriote were entrusted under the charge of There are several proceedings of Board of Revenue which deals with road construction and ghat construction.

'Chettis in Wayanad have given more importance education from the early days of the settlement in Wayanad. they used to bring' Ezhuthassanmar' to teach

¹⁹⁶ Davis Kingsly, "The Urbanisation of Human Population", *Scientific America*, 213(3). pp. 40-53.

their children from outside Wayand. Ezhuthassan will provided with food , accommodation at their houses.¹⁹⁷ Remuneration for them is given in terms of paddy. Syllabus of their teaching included basic arithmetics, Malayalam alphabets, etc, they also will foster the ability to read and write. Recitation of the epics like Ramayana, bhagavatha will also be done by them, some times they narrated stories from it.¹⁹⁸ From different spoke persons of different communities it can be assume that the ‘Ezhuthassan’ played a vital role in pre schooling a generation in late years of 19 th century and early decades of 20 th century.

Forest act and changes in life of Tribes

Several restrictions imposed upon the life of Mullukurumas especially through the Madras Forest Act of 1882 such as the restriction on their ritual hunting badly changed their religious life. It was customary among them to have ritual hunting on ‘thulappathu’, ‘puthari’, ‘bandhuva day’, and on celebrating puberty day. The ethnic life and forest had undetachable relations. Madras Forest Act of 1882 proclaimed that pastoring cattle or permitting cattle to trespass within the forest may be offensive and punishable. Forest clearing for cultivation or breaks up any land for cultivation or any other purpose may be punishable and it also strictly restricted the bartering and selling of forest products as a severe crime. Any marks, taps, uproots, or burns or strips off the bark or leaves from the forest trees are also treated punishable. Thus, the Punam cultivation done by the tribes by which they produced ragi, millet, sama, etc came to an end. It banned cattle rearing and pastoring by this act. Even the collection of firewood was also prohibited. So, the tribes were forced to detach from the forest which was food giver for them. The British introduced license on cattle grazing and reserved the forest. The area of reserved forest was extended by more than 500 square miles to 1700 square miles. The reserved forest was totally closed for goats and cattle. There was a satisfactory rise in the number of

¹⁹⁷ Vikasana Rekha, Ambalavayal Grama Panchayath ,1996, p.229

¹⁹⁸ Interview with Appu Chettiar, Madayan Vayal, Chethalayam, 100 years, at his residence on August 8 2023.

animals grazed under license .¹⁹⁹ Under such restrictions, the tribes of Wayanad such as Kurichiyas and Kurumas reduced their cattle stock which led to the decline in the production of paddy also. Since their means of livelihood had changed, they began to go for 'kooli' labor under the migrants.

Madras Forest Act 1882

The 1882 Madras Forest Act has defined 'tree' that includes stumps, bamboos and brushwood; rivers include streams, canals, creeks or other channels, and forest produce had been defined as things when found in, or brought from forest it includes minerals, surface soil, trees, timber, plants, grass, peat, canes, creepers, reeds, fibres, leaves, moss, flowers, fruits, seeds, roots, galls. spices, juices, bark, gum, wood, oil, resin, varnish, lac, charcoal, honey, and wax, skins, tusks, bones and horns.²⁰⁰ So it was a comprehensive forest act which aimed to keep away the tribes from the forest for ever. Another provision was that any person who sold or bartered the forest produce could be punished with a fine of rupees 200.²⁰¹ It aimed to regulate or prohibit the clearing or breaking up of land for cultivation or other purposes. It also strictly prohibited the cutting of grass and pasturing of cattle. And also restricted hunting, shooting, fishing and made poisoning of river punishable²⁰². The Mullukuruma community had a ritual known as 'chalikettu' on the eve of uchal day. 'Chali' is an artificial bund made by Mullukurumas across Kabani river at Kuruva. After making this bund, they will spread substances like 'chethilakodi', 'thodanvalli', 'karakkamoodu', etc to catch fish on that day in the river for catching fish as a part of their religious observance on the 'chali'. Virgin hair of small girls will be cut on this day on the river. Through the Madras Forest Act of 1882, the British totally restrained them from 'chalikettu'. Through the different forest acts, their entry into forests is totally prohibited. So, their marriage hunting (bandhuva

¹⁹⁹ *Madras administrative Report*, 1901-02. P.xiv, Center for Development studies Thiruvananthapuram.

²⁰⁰ *The Madras land revenue assessment act 1876*, Madras act No 1 of 1876 as modified up to 1st June 1915, RAK, p6.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p13.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p16.

nayattu), puberty hunting, ‘puthari’ hunting, ‘thulappathu’ hunting, etc had totally stopped.

All these prohibitions and restrictions severely affected the economic life of Mullukuruma community. Their cattle stock had been reduced considerably. It also led to the de-nutrition of their paddy fields and stoppage of paddy cultivation too. The above said restrictions were continued by the independent India government. As their revenue sources had been exhausted, they were forced to go for manual labor under migrant farmers such as Syrian Christians, Ezhavas, Gowdas, Chettis, etc.

Axe and bullockart –peasant mode;the chain saw and locomotive Industrial mode

All this factors aggravated to the poverty of Paniyas and they were forced to go for coolie labour in the garden land or in the *Parambus*. Now many of them go for painting works and other menial jobs too in other districts.²⁰³ This total displacement altered their life style and culture, they came in contact with new ideologies, religious spheres, Civic sense, etc. Now they largely depend upon courts and police stations to settle their disputes instead of ‘urukoottam’. The power of influence of Chemmi, their tribal chieftain and his assistant ‘Koima’ had declined considerably due to the growth of parallel legal measures offered by the government. Their economic conditions have also been changed. They began to earn their livelihood from different jobs apart from agricultural labor under Janmis ²⁰⁴. Large scale urbanization and decline in the extent of Paddy cultivation directly affected the community and it weakened the moral values among Paniya women as they are forced to fall in to prostitution. The following song shows a Paniya woman inviting a merchant ‘chettian’ to have intercourse with her

“Ukkumi Chettiyane ukkumi
Pullai kiranjalum kirayatte
Uppunte mulavinte

²⁰³ Interview with Gopi, 54 years, at Appad colony at his residence on 22 Nov. 2022.

²⁰⁴ Interview with Chandran Vazhavatta, 70 years old, at his residence on 02 April 2023.

Thinuvante kadam theeratte
Pantheru polinchalum poliyatte”²⁰⁵

She says that whether her baby is crying, whether the hut is broken up, let the debt of betal leaves, groceries be paid off by selling her body to a grocer.

The Paniya community are largely moved by the modern fashions and trends in the society due to the large-scale urbanization. They visit beauty parlors for painting motifs and cutting hair. They also avoid their traditional dress of ‘mundu’ and ‘aratti’ (a red cloth around their waist). Betal chewing among the youngsters had been reduced greatly as they felt it not suited to modern fashion. The tribal language had been transformed into bilingual mode. They conversed with other communities in pure Malayalam. It spoiled their rich linguistic heritage and their traditional songs.²⁰⁶ The youngsters among the Paniyas are hesitate to talk in their own language among themselves as they consider it disgraceful.²⁰⁷

Price boom and Set backs in pepper cultivation

During the latter half of 1990, the price of major crops like Coffee and pepper began to increase on enormous scale. Coffee prices rose up after the dismantling of the coffee board, which had been working as a marketing monopoly under the central govt. Price boom of the spices actually impacted upon the consumption pattern of the people. Large mansions, shopping complexes were constructed which led to the growth of markets. "The quality and quantity of food consumption had improved in all sections of people. All categories of farmers began to spend more on education and health, relying heavily on the private sector providers. Labor house hold began to spend more on clothing and food.”²⁰⁸

²⁰⁵ P Somasekharan Nair, *Paniyar*, National book stall Kottayam 1976 p.125.

²⁰⁶ Interview with Vellan, 70 years old, Mundanadappu colony, 24 January 2022, at his residence.

²⁰⁷ Interview with Ammini, 45 years old, Mangakandi colony, Eriyappall on 12 December 2022.

²⁰⁸ KN Nair, C.P Vinod, Vineetha Menon, Working paper 396, CDS, Thiruvananthapuram, *Op. cit.*, p.9.

1980's and 1990's brought immense wealth to Wayanad. In the late 1980's until 1990's pepper growers in the pepper panchayaths of Pulpally and Mulllankolly, Pooothadi became wealthy. Wayanad became the biggest market for Maheendera jeeps, which were being sold in premium.²⁰⁹ Pulpally, the pepper haven came to be known as the 'Dubai of India'²¹⁰ The pepper boom lasted till 1991 up to the liberalization era. In the mean time every one started to cultivate pepper by drawing loans from commercial banks. As the interest rate for agricultural loans was less many people were attracted to it.

Severe agrarian crisis hit Wayanad by the end of 1990's. First set back arrived, when the world market prices for cash crops dropped. Local rates for pepper (ungarbled) dropped from 270INR/ Kg in 1997 to 54 INR/KG IN2001. Coffee dropped from 161INR in 1997 to 16 INR per kg2002 and vanilla most dramatically dropped from 4300 INR/kg in 2003 to 251 INR /KG IN2006.²¹¹ Another challenge faced by the farmers during this period was the heavy fall in the productivity due to the over use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides to increase productivity. Many panchayaths became cancer wards due to the excessive use of chemicals and pesticides. Final blow to pepper cultivation was given by 'Quick wilt' disease and 'foot rot' disease. All these diseases led to the immediate destruction of pepper plantations. As the prices crashed and plantations dried many farmers met with heavy debts and on the recovery notices of the banks farmers had no other way but to commit suicides. Wayanad became the second capital of farmers suicides following Vidarbha in Maharashtra.

Kurichya's Joint Cultivation (Cash Crops and Fertility of Wayanad)

Kurichyas in the joint family followed collective agricultural ownership and cultivated ragi, paddy, etc. Rice was their staple food. Along with that, they cultivated banana, tapioca, coffee, etc for their common consumption. In Kurichya mittam, collective farming lead them to economic well being. There is no beggar as

²⁰⁹ TG Jacob, *Wayanad misery in bowl*, *Op.cit.*, p.65.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹¹ DanielMunster, *Op. cit.*, p.194.

well as destitute among the Kurichyas due to their joint family set up and collective economy. This joint family also kept large stock of cattle too. After the breaking of joint family system, individual farming increases based on intensive cultivation using modern fertilizers, manures, pesticides, machines, etc. Instead of rice and paddy, they are cultivating banana, ginger, arecanut, etc extensively in the paddy fields as single families cannot conduct paddy cultivation individually.

Cultivational pattern of tribes have changed a lot in Wayanad after the flow of migrants into Wayanad. New migrants obtained land from the local landlords like Nairs, Chettis, Kurichias and gowdas on 'Manusham' and 'randemukkal' (2 ¾) marupattam.²¹² As they got land at low rate, they first introduced tapioca cultivation for their subsistence.²¹³ Tapiocca and bird's eye chillies were their staple food for a long time. Oil grass cultivation was the first cash crop introduced in Wayanad by the migrants. The oil grass is also known as *theruva*.²¹⁴ Oil grass cultivation was highly favoured by the migrants because fertile land was available in plenty and was cheap too. Extraction of the oil from the grass required huge amount of fuel. There was large scale deforestation. The fertility of forest land used for cash crop cultivation and oil grass cultivation became depleted and the land faced soil erosion too.²¹⁵

Alienation of the tribal land

Kerala Department of Statistics have conducted a Survey regarding the alienation of tribal land in 1976-78 and they brought forth 35 reasons for the land alienation. 9858.98 Hectar land is totally lost for the Tribes accordingly.²¹⁶

²¹² *Nadavayal Kudiyetta Suvarna Jubilee Smaranika souvenir*, 1998, p. 31.

²¹³ Interview with Varghese Cheruthottil, 92 years old, at his residence, Shed, Pulpally, 16 August 2022.

²¹⁴ *Vikasan Rekha*, Poothady Gramapanchayath, *Op .cit.*, p. 04.

²¹⁵ A Aiyappan, *Ecology, Economy, Matriline and Fertility of Kurichyas*, Delhi, 2008, p. 129.

²¹⁶ S Ramanunn, *Ariku jeevithathinte Kanakazhchakal*, Kochi, 2017, p.31.

Majority of tribal land came in the hands of migrants under the venue of nationalization of private forest as well as land reform act in 1960.²¹⁷ Rapid changes occurred in the ownership of land which worsely affected agrestic slaves like Paniyas and Adiyas. The economic life of the Paniyas had been totally shattered. The migrants brought Adivasis under money economy. Social organization of Adivasis lost importance and their social and religious perspectives have been changed. Consumption of liquor increased enormously among the tribes as the migrants started illicit distilleries in their home.²¹⁸ Greatest economic change that occurred in this period was cash crop replacing the food crop.

Table 2.11: Major crop Cultivation in Wayanad in 1990 area in hectares

| Crop | Wayanad | Percentage | Kerala state | District Contribution in Percentage |
|-------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------|--|
| Paddy | 21032 | 13.82 | 583388 | 3.61 |
| Tapioca | 1822 | 1.20 | 160145 | 1.41 |
| Plantain | 1148 | 0.76 | 20991 | 5.47 |
| Pepper | 23141 | 15.26 | 167104 | 13.85 |
| Tea | 5360 | 3.54 | 34605 | 15.49 |
| Rubber | 4124 | 2.72 | 369474 | 1.04 |
| Coffee | 59564 | 39.28 | 75057 | 79.36 |
| Coconut | 4046 | | 832174 | 0.49 |

Source: Agricultural statistics, 1990, from P K Prakashan, Anyadheenappedunna Bhoomi, Kozhikode, 2002, p 27.

This table shows that the production of paddy in Wayanad had been reduced greatly in comparison with other products such as pepper, coffee, and plantain. So, it is very clear that paddy was replaced by cash crops in the last decades of 20th century.

²¹⁷ P K Prakashan, *Op. cit.*, p. 26.

²¹⁸ Interview with Appu Chettair, 100 years old, Madayanvayal, Chethalayam, at his residence, on 14 March, 2023.

Ragi Cultivation Affected

Ragi was the staple food of tribes in Wayanad for a long time, which kept them highly healthy. They used to cultivate ragi in 'punam' by burning the beneath growth of the forest.²¹⁹ Through oil grass cultivation, large extent of forest had been dwindled. In the earlier days, Kurichyas used to cultivate ragi extensively between the trees in private and forest lands.²²⁰ Due to the depletion of soil fertility, ragi did not flourish well in certain areas. Ragi plants cannot compete with the aggressively growing oil grass. Tribes knew that ragi can be grown in jungles and hills. As they could not cultivate ragi on the hill slopes as well as in forest they tried it on paddy fields. As ragi could not grow on paddy fields its cultivation came to an end. It led to the ill health of tribes in Wayanad. Consecutive changes occurred in the ecological system of Wayanad too through the cultivation of oil grass and cash crops. The decrease in the paddy crop cultivation and hunting adversely affected the nutritional status of tribes in Wayanad.

When their long walks in the forest for herding the cattle, had been stopped by the government, their health was adversely affected. Cattle based economy too shattered away.²²¹ Normally, a Kurichya family has a cattle wealth ranging from 100-200. Along with that, forest in Wayanad was a treasure of many rare species of herbal medicines. Through the clearing of forest for cultivation, majority of them had been lost or partially destroyed which created an adversity on tribal health too.

Rehabilitation Projects of the Govt

Sugandhagiri Cadomam Project was initiated under the Prime ministership of Indira Gandhi in order to rehabilitate the bonded free laborers in Pozhuthana Panchayath Wayanad district in 1976 and was to be handed over to the Adivasi in 1981. It has 1500 hectares of land meant to be planted with cardamom, The Purpose was to train the Adivasi in agriculture and cash cropping, and settle about 750

²¹⁹ P K Prakashan, *Op. cit.*, p. 32.

²²⁰ A Aiyappan, *Ecology, Economy, Matriliney and Fertility of Kurichyas*, *Op.cit.*, p. 131.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, p 132.

families of Adivasi who were liberated from bonded labour.²²² But the project failed to attain this goal . Insincerity of government officials and insufficiency of funds are reasons for the failure of the project. RS48.3 million had been spent till June 1995²²³. Cases of starvation and wage loss are there and the plight of tribes remained same under new masters .

Pookkot Dairy Project

It was another project for the rehabilitation of tribes between 19 Feb1993 and 18 August 1994,²²⁴ it also failed to meet the goal of the project as 127 cows died of disease due to negligence.

Certain construction in the district have led to the eviction of adivasis from their natural habitat. Karappuzha irrigation Project is an example for that,” in 1976, 280 adivasis were evicted for the Karappuzha irrigation project. They were promised a house and one acre of land per family. 100 families were given land in Cheerambam hill and Another 30 in koeleri hill and the remaining 150 were not given any land.”²²⁵ None of them received any financial assistance for building houses either. The eviction from their natural habitat made them poor by losing their means of subsitance.

Expansion of Knowledge

Different educational institutions opened in Wayanad even during the British period itself. Many among them are surviving even today. All these institutions provided the venue for expansion of knowledge.

²²² Anita Cheria, K Narayanan,Bijoy, Edwin ,*A search for justice, a citizen Report on the Adivasi experience on South India*, place of publication not known, p.116.

²²³ *Ibid.*

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.117.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.115.

Regional Agricultural Research station

An agricultural research institute has been set up at Ambalavayal 25 KM east of Kalpetta. It was established under Ex service man Colonisation programme Wayanad in 1946 by the then Madras Governmentt. It became a part of the Department of Agriculture, Govt of Kerala in 1956 and transferred to Kerala Agriculture university in 1972 and elevated as Regional Agricultural research station for high range zone in 1983.²²⁶

MSSRF

MS Swami Nathan community agro biodiversity centre(CABC) was established in 1997 at Wayanad District of Kerala as one of the regional centres of MS Swaminathan foundation located in Puthuvayal, 4 KM away from Kalpetta towards Meppadi in Vythiri Thaluk. Their Mission included three streams such as(1) biodiversity conservation(2), Education communication and training(ECT)in the areas of bio diversity management and sustainable agriculture(3) Sustainable livelihood and food security.²²⁷ They are working on “community bio diversity management” with the cooperation of Govt Departments and voluntary organizations for the conservation of genetic varieties of Wayanad

SKMJ High School

Present SKMJ Higher secondary school was the first aided school established in the district which had started in 1944 under the title "Wayanad high school.” In 1948 the school began to function in their own building under the title SKMJ High school.²²⁸

²²⁶ *Tourism Guide and Information Directory Wayanad*, District information office Wayanad, District Information Wayanad, 1979, p.15.

²²⁷ <https://mssrfcabc.res.in> accessed on 6/06/24.

²²⁸ *Rajatha Jubilee Souvenir*, Published by SK M J High School Kalpetta, Wayanad, 1971, pp. 4-6.

College of Veterinary and animal sciences Pookkode

The college of veterinary and animal sciences was formally inaugurated on 11 December 2004.²²⁹ The campus, spread over 100 acres of scenic hilly terrain of Wayanad offers courses on BVSC and animal husbandry.

Hospitals

Apart from the indigenous medicinal practises of the natives many allopathic hospitals have been established in Wayanad region in 20th century such as

Table 2.12: Number of Hospitals in Wayanad in 1951

| Si NO | Hospitals | Bed strength |
|-------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Govt Hospital Manantoddy | 39 |
| 2 | Govt Hospital Ambalavayal | 4 |
| 3 | Local fund Hospital Vythiri | 14 |
| 4 | Local Fund dispensary Sulthan Bathery | ---- |
| 5 | Rural Dispensary Meppadi | --- |
| 6 | Rural Dispensary Panamaram | ---- |

Source: Census Hand book, Malabar District, 1951, p.6.

Use of Harnessed Energy

Harnessing natural powers is a feature of industrial mode of resource use in the industrial period Wayanad experienced several innovations and novelties. New technologies were introduced here. Harnessing of natural powers had been here through the construction of several Hydro electric power projects for generating electricity and irrigational purpose. Important hydro electric project in Wayanad are the following

Banasura Sagar dam project

It is the largest earth dam in India as well as the second largest in Asia. It is a mini hydel project started to function from 1979 on wards.²³⁰ Thariyodu village

²²⁹ <https://www.kvsu.ac.in>, accessed on 17/06/24.

which was in the catchment area of Banasura sagar dam had been totally evacuated for the construction of the dam.²³¹

Karappuzha Dam project

Karappuzha dam project is one of the biggest earth dams in India which is located in the greenish and natural regions in Karappuzha river, a tributary of Kabani river. Irrigation as well as electricity generation are its purposes. Construction of the dam started in 1977 and was completed in 2004.²³²

Use of Pesticides

In order to subdue malaria in Wayanad several measures were adopted by the British. In 1938 Wayanad Malaria station was established by Public Health Department of Madras state.²³³ Malaria institute of India carried out the Malaria survey of Wayanad to assess the endemicity of the disease. As vectoral mosquitos caused Malaria, when the Govt of Madras launched 'land colonisation scheme' in the Villages of Kidanganad, Nenmeni, Nulpuzha, Muppainad they also started anti larval measures against mosquitos. Wide spread spraying of DDT in the post war period became more effective. DDT spraying of houses and cattle sheds was started in 1947.²³⁴

British intervention and colonial modernity in Wayanad Impersonal and codified laws

British had introduced many institutions here which were a tool for colonial modernity. Manantoddy served as a head quarters for them. Whole Wayanad administration was carried out under Sub collector, Thalassery. Mananthavady was the head quarters of North Wayanad Division Vythiri was the head quarters of South Wayanad Division. A cantonment was situated in Mananthavady, consist of a

²³⁰ <https://en.wikipedia.org> accessed on 17/06/24.

²³¹ *Malayala Manorama Daily*, Aug 8 2019, Mujeeb Parakkandi.

²³² <https://en.m.wikipedia.org>, accessed on 6/06/24.

²³³ A. Sreedhara Menon (ed.), *District Gazetteer Calicut* in C.K. Kareem (ed.) Kerala State Gazatteers, Govt. Press. Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p.698.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.699.

small redoubt, an artillery shed, a range of officers quarters, place of arms, hospitals. There was a double storied building in Mananthavady whose upper room, was used as a cutcherry.²³⁵

Vythiri was also an important town under the British due to the existence of many Plantations, Church. A munsif court existed there, and sub registrar office was opened there by an order issued by Fort ST George Gazette dated 23 rd Dec 1864 and the opening date of Registrar office was in January 1865.²³⁶ In Vythiri a special Sub jail was established in 1891 by the British near to the Munsif court.²³⁷

Wayanad Malaria Field station was established by Public Health Department of the Madras state for the study of epidemiology of foot hill type of Malaria and the possibilities of instituting rural Malaria control.²³⁸ This scheme was first introduced in Wayanad.

Naxal Movement in Wayanad and Tribes

It was a revolutionary movement started in the late 1960s inspired by the calling of "Mao Tse-Tung" to Siege the cities with the Villages. It was started in the Darjaleeng dt of West Bengal under the leadership of Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal. Kunnikkal Narayanan, AJitha, Philip M prasad, Com. Varghese were its leaders in Kerala. In Wayanad they came to involve with the eviction problems of migrants of Pulpally. Migrants were faced with the threat of eviction from Pulpally Devaswam. The Naxals attacked Pulpally police station on 24 Nov 1968.²³⁹ Com Varghese was influenced by the Naxal slogan of "liberation of the downtrodden through armed revolution" and worked along with a few tribal comrades to end the "Valli system" or bonded labour among the tribes of Wayanad. Karshakathozhilali union and Com Varghese fought against this slave system. In 1953 Karshaka

²³⁵ Lieutenants Ward and Conner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, Calicut, 1906, p.180.

²³⁶ ST George Fort Gazetteer dated 23 December 1864, Vythiri Sub registrar office.

²³⁷ www. Kerala prisons .com, accessed on 26/06/24.

²³⁸ A. Sreedhara Menon (ed.), District Gazetteer Calicut in C.K. Kareem (ed.), *Op. cit.*, pp. 698 -699.

²³⁹ OK Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, Kozhikode, *Op. cit.*, p.166 .

thozhilali union had been formed in Wayanad as a part of communist party and demanded for payment of RS 1 along with Valli or Paddy as wages. Com Varghese had conducted Sathyagrihas in the jenmis houses demanding increase in the wages of tribal labourers. Outer world came to know about the slavery existing in Wayanad only after the struggles of Varghese against jenmis under Karsh Thozhilali union. In 1970 February Com. Varghese with the help of other revolutionaries killed an unscrupulous land lord Vasudeva Adiga and a money lender Chekku at Thirunelli and Thrissileri.²⁴⁰ Only a few tribals had joined with Varghese in this incident who belonged to Adiya tribe of North Wayanad such as Thrissileri Kaithavalli Choman, Kappum kolly, KalanKoriyan, Marachathan so on. The revolutionary activities of Naxalites and especially Com Varghese had helped for imbibing consciousness of civil rights among the Tribes of Wayanad even if it was late. Slavery in Thirunelli reduced up to 70% only after the agitations of Naxal Movements in Wayand.²⁴¹

Codified transactions to communicate with far away people

Large network of communication were introduced in Wayanad in the early years of 20 th century. British had Initiated Many post offices and telegram centers here the following table shows the development of communication in Wayanad in 1951.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Branch Post office | 32 |
| Sub Post office | 1 |
| Post and Telegraph post offices | 6 |
| Total | 39. ²⁴² |

Table 2.13 Number of post offices in Wayanad in 1951

| Branch post office | Sub post office | Post and Telegraph sub offices |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 32 | 1 | 6 |

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 167.

²⁴¹ PK Ajith Kumar, *Varghese pavangalude Nethavu*, Ernakulam, 2010, p.7.

²⁴² *Malabar District Census Hand Book* , p5.

In 2023 there is a steep increase in the number of branch post offices and sub Post offices in Wayanad. Number of Post offices here are the following.

Table 2.14: Number of post offices in Wayanad in 2023

| Branch post office | Sub post offices | Head Post offices |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 141 | 19 | 1 |

Source. Sarada, Director of Postal Department Kozhikkode Division on 26/06/24.

Wayanad has under gone a series of economic transformations which had reflected in the Social life consequently. Both of these parameters, social and economic changes jointly worked together for tremendous changes in the religion of ethnic tribes. Even though changes had happened in the faith system of every tribe in Wayanad, it was at a quick pace in the matter of financially well of tribes such as Mullukurumas and Kurichiyas. While we consider the deprived sections of society such as Paniyas and Adiyas, changes happened slowly.

The Kottayam domination came to an end with the Mysorean invasion, By Mangalapuram treaty signed between East India Company and and Tipu Sulthan in 1784, whole of Malabar came under Tipu.²⁴³ By the SreeRanga pattanam treaty Malabar came under the controll of the British. As per Pazhassi rajas treaty with the the company, the rule of Wayanad again came under Pazhassi Raja. Due to the unnecessary intervention of the British into Pazhassis rule and illegal taxation war arouse between them culminated with the death of Pazhassi in 1805. After the death of Pazhassi raja Wayanad merged with Malabar district. In those days District of Malabar consisted of Nilgiri region too, in 1843 areas like Moonnanad, Cherankod, Nambalakkod amsoms retained in south eastern Wayanad Division and rest of Nilgiri mergved with Coimbatore district. But in 1887 this amsoms merged with Nilgiri in the Coimbatore district. Thus only 13 amsoms remained in Wayanad Taluk, including Periya, Edavaka, Nalloornadu, Elloornadu, Kuppathodu, Poothadi, Kurumbala, Porunnanore, Thondernadu, Vythiri. Ganapathivattom, Edanassakkoor, Mooppainadu etc. with its head quarteras at Mananthavady.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ C V Joy, *Op. cit.*, p.6.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.8-9.

CHAPTER 3

RELIGION IN WAYANAD IN PRE-INDUSTRIAL PHASE

Having discussed the economic and socio-ecological conditions, let us look into the religious life of the people. We have already seen that the religious life of the people are significantly determined by the economic and ecological conditions. A discussion on this therefore must have to consider both the social and religious developments. In the first stage of human life while he was living on 'hunting gathering', his ideologies were influenced by identifying himself with nature. Living in small groups in certain localities, they always have face to face communications with each part of the nature where they reside. He scarcely inputs a large amount of energy to keep himself up. It is said that during this period, they viewed themselves as just any other being in nature such as streams, rocks plants, animals, rivers etc.¹ Being part of nature, he developed some forms of veneration, love, fear etc. in relation with other beings in nature. The faith and belief the man thus constitutes is the first form of his religion. This chapter deals with religion of Kurichyas, Mullukurumas and Paniyas while they passed through different modes of resource use such as Gathering mode, Pastoral mode, and settled cultivation. Industrial mode of resource may discuss comprehensively in the next chapter named "Religion in Industrial phase".

From the archaeological evidences and oral tradition of the different tribes it is clear that human existence had been here from neolithic period itself as evidenced by the carvings in Edakkal caves. Edakkal carvings may be done in the last phase of Neolithic age, when human beings are seriously engaged in shifting cultivation along with hunting. Megalithic burials obtained from the valleys of Edakkal cave and Thovarimala. Dolmens of numerous numbers had been seen from Aarattupara, Krishna giri, Pathirippalam etc, shows strong evidences human

¹ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *This Fissured land an Ecological History of India*, Delhi, 1993, p.18.i.

inhabitation here. Aayiram kolly, Kuppakkolly, which are the adjacent areas of Edakkal cave and Mangalam karp valley of Thovari hills are rich with megalithic monuments.² Establishment of megalithic monuments are the signs of settled life. Burial objects from these megalithic monuments included polished stone axe chisel, spade, pick axe, sickles, made of iron etc which shows the beginning of settled cultivation among the megalithic settlers in Wayanad.³ Sangam literature produced in megalithic age also mentions about the growth of agriculture technology in Megalithic period. Various Sangam works mention about agricultural implements such as axe, sickle, spade etc. There mentions about specialist crafts men who are making iron weapons like blacksmith, potter, carpenter etc.⁴

Thirunelli inscription issued by Bhaskara Ravi in his forty third regnal year had made a donation of *Pozhacherikkal* land in *attiperu* for the *Thiruvamrith* and *vada vilakku* of 'Thirunelli Thevar'. It provides pantheeradi rice, munnazhiyal (naivedyam), six nazhiyum, and one nandavilakku too for the Thevar or God. Inscription says that people who had taken this decision were Ezhunoottavar, Vellalar, nikal from kurumbranad Moothakooru etc.⁵ By analysing the character of other inscriptions issued by Bhaskara varman like Thrikkakara, Thrikkodithanam, Perunna etc, the period of Thirunelli inscription may be between 950AD- 1050AD.⁶ This inscription gives clear indication about the expansion of settled cultivation in 11th AD in Wayanad. Mariyamman kovil inscription at Sulthan Bathery says about the *Veera vayal nadu* and *poothapadi* Nair and Sekhararaman, who belonged to the family of *Padikumbath padai Nair*. By analysing the nature of the script it is assumed that it was written in Twelfth century This inscription also shows that

² OK Johny, (Ed.) *Edaakkal Cave Carvings A Visitors Companion*, Calicut , 2006 pp.7-10.

³ KN Ganesh, *Keralathinte Innalekal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997, p.61.

⁴ *Ibid*, p.63.

⁵ Dr Puthusseri Ramachandran, *Kerala Charithrathinte Adisthana Rekhakal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, p.75.

⁶ MGS Narayanan, *Perumals of Kerala, Brahmin oligarchy and Ritual Monarchy*, Thrissur, 2013. p,68.

there was a settled cultivation in Wayanad in Twelfth century AD itself.⁷ From the political history of Wayanad referred earlier before the establishment of Kottayam rule, Wayanad had more affiliation to Karnataka. In AD 930 Wayanad was under the control of Ganga dynasty. Later Hoysalas established their sway over Vythiri to Veerajpetta in Karnataka. Hoysalas were the great patrons of Jainis. Large migration of Jains in to Wayanad may caused during this period due to the land grants from the Hoysala kings. Still Jain settlements can be seen in the areas of Kalpetta, varadoor, Panamaram etc in between Vythiri to Veeraj petta.⁸ Thus it is evident that Jain migration during this period and chetty migration of the same time may spread paddy cultivation extensively. In the venue of surplus production that other migrants such as Nairs, Muslims etc arrived which have background of tribal setting. Thus all these religious conglomeration formed the later religious sphere of Wayanad.

Nineteenth century in the history of Wayanad marks the beginning and establishment of the colonial rule. It is also the first century that began to feel the weight of the industrial growth in the world over. The religious beliefs and practices also began to be changed during this century though at a very gradual pace. Some anthropological literature sheds light on the religious life of nineteenth century Wayanad. But it is very difficult to form a detailed idea of the trends in the religion from them. The present study makes use of the researcher's field work to identify the nature of changing perceptions of religion in Wayand depending upon the regressive method by which we can read into the state of the past through reading current practices and beliefs to identify the the vestiges of the past. What follows is a relevant description of the religious life of Wayand including myths, traditions, rituals and practices which have links to the religious life of the people.

What is clear from the sources and observations that the tribes and other people inhabiting in Wayanad followed religious beliefs and ideas that are identified to be of different mode of resource use. Kurichiyas, Mullukurumas and Paniyas still

⁷ OK Johny, *Wayanadu Rekhakal*, Calicut, 2010, pp.51- 52.

⁸ CV Joy , *Wayanattile Karshaka Kudiyettavum Paristhiyum*, Sulthan Bathery, 2013, p.p.2-3.

followed the religious ideas and practices of food gatherers, pastoralists and settled cultivators in varying measures along with the Chettis and other migrants. An analysis using regressive method of research on the past would make matters clear and the changes visible. Let us go through them and find out the patterns juxtaposing the available anthropological reports with them.

Ancestor worship

Certain peculiar traits across the world have been identified as that of tribal religions. Ancestor worship is most common. Primitive people believed that souls of human beings were immortal. Primitive men attributed all their virtues and failures of life to the intervention of spirits.⁹ The worship of dead ancestors as a guardian is recorded from all parts of the world.¹⁰ Kurichyas worship the souls of deceased known as 'nekal'. All spirits of the departed are not venerated, only the spirits of the people who have contributed significantly for the prosperity of the family are venerated¹¹. Spirits of women are known as 'pena'. Kurichyas believe that spirit of the dead go to the 'world of four mothers' namely Akathuttamma, Arayil Bhagavathi, ChenchidichiAmma, and Karimpili Bhagavathi.¹² Ancestors are venerated as guardian deities of tribes. There are special days for ancestors among these tribes like aadi 14 for Mullukurumas and Kurichyas on which day they prepare special dishes for the ancestors.

Paniyas strongly believe in the benevolence of their ancestors; their great ancestors are known as 'Pena'. They are keeping a raised mud platform called *Tina* in side their houses in memory of their departed souls. A wick I also will be kept there on the Tina. Paniyas believe that their great ancestors have supernatural powers and regard them as their guardian spirits. They sing *penapattu* for those souls who did not attain salvation. Crow song is another important song for the

⁹ Dr Manjula Poyil, "Ancestor worship as tribal religion", *Research thesis* submitted in the Department of History, University of Calicut , 2006, p.292.

¹⁰ EB Taylor, *Primitive Culture*, Vol 2, London , 1871, p.187.

¹¹ A Aiyappan, K Mahadevan, *Ecology economy Matriliny and fertility of Kurichyas*, 2008, p.85.

¹² Dr Manjula Poyil, *Op. cit.*, p.298.

dead. A few lines of the crow song are given below.

Karana muthappanmare
Muthappa daivame tunaccidenam
Itinellavarum chernitenam
Ellavarum nangal Muttipadum
Ithinu ellavarum ningal thunachidenam
Ithinu ellavarum ningal chernnidenam
Onnum varathe thunachidenam
Makkalkkum njangalkkum onnum
Varathe kathu rakshikkenam
Vallooru amma thunachidenam
Thudimutti chingini ketti padum
*Kottiyoore devan thunachidenam*¹³

Paniyas perform *nekalattam* for their ancestors. While the Mooppan performs *nekalattam* he will advise the family members about the debts of their ancestors which should be paid off, and about those who are lurking to deceit the family etc.¹⁴

Mullukurumas strongly believe in life after death. They bury bows, arrows, knife, bunch of plantain, fried rice, coconut, betel leaves along with the dead body. Evidences of their belief in life after death is testified from the Urn burial remains obtained from Kuppakkolly near Edakkal cave. This excavation was led by Prof. Subbarayalu, famous archaeologist. Report of the excavation says like this “The Cists are found arranged in three lines in North-South direction. The South / South east portion of this Megaliths field is at present set apart for the burial ground of the Mullukurumas of the adjacent settlement.”¹⁵ The Sepulchral objects obtained from there include glass ornaments, pot shreds, agnate and Carnelian beads, iron implements etc. They celebrate *Karkkidakam* 14 as the day of the ancestors for

¹³ K Panoor, *Keralathile Africa*, Kottayam, 1963, pp. 96-97.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.94.

¹⁵ Kuppakkolly Megalith (1987) Excavation Site Note book, unpublished work produced by excavation team including NT Narayanan, MGS Narayanan, Y Subbarayalu, MR Raghava Varier, PK Uthaman, p.54.

whom they will prepare special dishes like chicken, crab and sweets and place them for the ancestors in their, houses.¹⁶

Ancestor worship is the common factor of all tribal religions . They believe that ancestors will protect them from all evils and dangers. Will of the ancestors are executed through the oracles and Theyyams.Kurichyas and Paniyas have their theyyams who reveal the wishes and good will of the ancestors. Ancestors are pleased with ritual offerings, burial rites etc. Cult of Theyyam also incorporates hero worship too. Worship of Muthappan by the tribes and thira conducted for him are the reflection of hero worship. Hero worship too is a common feature of all primitive civilizations.¹⁷

There is a story regarding the origin of matrilineal succession among the Kurichias. At some time in the past, a tiger approached the Kurichia chief and demanded a young Kurichia girl as his bride. The tiger threatened to kill all in the family if his demand is declined.The old Kurichia man asked the consent of his daughters, whether any one of them was willing to become the wife of the tiger ; nobody agreed. Then he asked his sisters' daughters; one of them agreed to be the tiger's bride. The tiger and the old man became happy;all at once the tiger turned in to a young prince. The old man drove away all his daughters and accepted his sister's daughter as his legal heir¹⁸. Considering myths as the poetical representation of the life of the people, this story could be understood as a representation of the fact that at the stage of the formulation of this story, people lived so close to nature that they understood themselves as part of the nature where other living beings in the habitat are treated as equals. A tiger extending proposal to marry a girl represents such an ideology and religion.

¹⁶ ET Raju, *Eivvu*, Fedina Hilda, PB NO 13, Sulthan Bathery, 1995, p.52.

¹⁷ KKN Kurup, *Cult of Theyyam and hero worship in Kerala*, Calcutta, 1973, p.3.

¹⁸ PK Devan, *Tribal folklore an Introduction*, Information and Public relations department, 2005, p 24.

Edakkal engravings are believed to be carved in the Neolithic age. In south India the Neolithic age falls in between BC 10000 TO BC 4000¹⁹. It depicts magical squares and sun symbols as well as a hunter with a dog. Hence the people who are the authors of these engravings are Mullukurumas as opined by Faucett as this people are still practicing hunting in the company of hunting dogs like the engravings. There is also an engraving in the cave like 'palpulithananthakari' which means one who killed many tigers. There is a mudiyampuli kavu also in Edakkal belonging to Mullakurumas and chettis where they make annual pilgrimage as reported by Faucett.²⁰ Thus it is evident that the Mullakuruma community professed a 'Tiger' cult and have a hunting sport known as 'narikkuthu. They perform 'narikkuthu 'to plead for Permission from Mudiyampalli Bhagavathy and ooralan to kill disturbing tigers. There are many place names such as 'Narikkandi' in Wayanad where such hunting rituals were practiced. The carvings and drawings at the Edakkal caves give some more indications about the religious life of early Mullukuruma community. The most repeating features of sculptures are the frequent human figurines with peculiar head dress, various figures of animals, Sun symbols and some magic squares such as one is familiar is familiar with all oriental fortune-telling ²¹. It reflects that Mullukurumas venerated natural phenomena in the food gathering stage. They worshipped gods like 'Kirathan' who had been converted in to *Kiratha Sivan* later. They were also the worshippers of '*Kandam puli* too.

As they realized that nature was beyond human control, they venerated natural water reservoirs called "Keni". It is still rarely seen in the district in places such as Pakkam, Mundaneduppu colony near Kolagappara, and also at Appad near Meenangadi. They are still attributing a divine feeling towards its water. They call it "*Deivakeni*" or God's Keni. All these kenis are situated within the Mullukuruma settlement premises. They are also venerating river in Kuruva island which is a tributary of river Kabani. There are 18 branches for Kabani River at Kuruva. The

¹⁹ OK Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op. cit*, p.39.

²⁰ Ok Johny,(Ed) *Edakkal Guha Chithrangal*, *A Visitors Companion*, *Op. cit.*, p.13.

²¹ F Faucett, "Indian Antiquary", *A Journal of Oriental Research*, Volume XXX, Bombay Education Societie's Press Bombay, October 1901, p. 413.

Mullukuruma community who are the majority at the Pakkam region considered that these 18 branches of the river originated amid Krishna- Banasura war to release Anirudha, the son of Krishna. He was hostaged by Banasura. During the war, Lord Shiva felt thirsty and he knelt to drink water from river Kuruva. Then he shook his beard, the water drops fell out of it and turned into 18 branches of the river. So, they still venerate the water of river Kuruva. Still, they kneel to drink water from it²². Almost all Kurichya Tharavadus possess water bodies known as 'Kenis'. Each Tharavadu has at least three 'kenis' one for drinking, one for washing cloths, and the third for washing utensils.²³

There are only a few songs which reflect their social life. The following song reflects on the hunting, gathering mode of resource use among the Mullukuramas (See Chapter2, p). Their ability to store food and other materials is also very limited and they could not transport materials over long distances.

Paniya tribe possessed crude ideas of religion. They believe in devils of all sorts and sizes²⁴. Anthropologists generally call tribal religion animism.²⁵ Their chief deity is Kuli whom they worship on raised platforms of Kulithara, offering coconuts. CA Innes opines that animistic beliefs and devil worship are common among the Paniyas and the temples are often mere platforms of stone, piled up under the shadow of some lofty trees, where bloody sacrifices and weird rites are performed²⁶ "The god' kuli' is of neither sex, malignant and terrible too. At their rude shrines they contribute as offerings to Swami(god) rice boiled in the husk, roasted and pounded, half a coconut and small coins. The Banyan and other lofty tree, apparently of the Fig variety are revered by them. They also believe that evil

²² Pazhukkaran Jose, *Kappimooppante Kadanubhavangal* (Mal), Kairali Books, Kannur, 2011, pp. 100-101

²³ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Kurichyar oru Naravamsa Sastra Padanam*, Kerala Bhasha institute, Thiruvananthapuram, p.37.

²⁴ Edgar Thurston and K Rangachari *Caste and Tribes of Southern India, Volume vi—Pto S*, Delhi, 2010, p.62.

²⁵ SandhyaRashmi, *Paniyas of Wayanad*, Sulthan Bathery, 2008, p.37.

²⁶ C A Innes, I.C.S., *Malabar Gazetteer, Vol I & II*, F.B Evans, I.C.S., (ed.), Government of Kerala, 1997, First published in 1908, Publishers: State Editor, Kerala Gazatteers, Thiruvananthapuram, 10, p.501.

spirits haunt these trees at times. Trees so haunted must not be touched, and if the Paniyas attempt to cut them, they fall sick.”²⁷ Fred Faucett had mentioned in his notes on Edakkal engravings that Kurumas of Edakkal caves appear to held the cave in some sort of reverence, which they try to hide. ²⁸ But the Paniyas did not show much respect to the cave, from whom, Faucett could draw the work force. From the surviving evidence of Cairn of stones found in Paniya colony under a tree, which they call as ‘Deivathara’ or ‘Koolithara,’²⁹ we can assume that their mode of worship in gathering stage may be tree worship as well as the heap of stones. Each of the stones in cairn represents different gods. Other important gods of Paniyas currently are Bhadrakali, Kooli, Kuttichathan, Kattu Bhagavathi, so on. Shamanism and sorcery are important parts of their religion. Their mooppan performs theyyams. Ancestral worship also has dominant place in ‘Koolithara.’ They show great reverence to water bodies such as ‘Keni.’ There is a ‘Keni’ in Mundanedappu colony which is worshipped by both Mullu Kuruma and Paniya community. We can see a few such Kenis throughout Wayanad. They show great faith upon the *Keni* and never want to pollute its water. Women can not fetch water from the Kenis on their menstrual days. In the Mundanedappu colony, the water from the Deiva Keni is used for performing rituals on their Deivathara, where *Kozhivettu* is performed both by Paniyas and Kurumas ³⁰. They regard sky as the father and earth as the mother. Their myth itself says that their forefathers are brother and sister; *aangalappuyu* and *penkalappuyu*. The Sun and Moon are equally important deities for Paniyas, they consider Sun as “Pakal Pakavan” and Moon as “irupakavan”³¹.

Even their transformed belief system afterwards is found to have been attached to natural forces. The ceremony of Kavukayattam is placing their gods (*Kudiyiruthal*). They will collect stone in accordance with the number of their deities and keep those stones in water bodies such as river, pond, streams etc. They

²⁷ Edgar Thurston and K Rangachari *Op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

²⁸ O K Johny, Wayanad Rekhakal (Mal), *Op. cit.*, p. 232.

²⁹ K Panoor, *Op. cit.*, p 92.

³⁰ Interview with Rejeesh, Mundanedappu colony, 48 years old, at colony, on 13-03-2023.

³¹ PK Devan, *Paniyarum folk lorum* in Chilla Magazine, July, 2006, p.12.

will be lifted after 7 days and they give names of their gods to each stone like Devi, amman, Mariyamman, Bhadrakali, Kuliyan, Malakkari, Manbiyathi and so on and will place them under the tree or Daivappura.³² In the Hunting gatherer stage, they were found to have subsisted on hunting wild animals and were excelled in using bows and arrows. On the birth of a male child, the Kurichyas send arrow to announce it and on the birth of a female child, they make sound of an arrow and bow. A bow and arrow will be kept stuck on the burial of a Kurichya. Meat is a staple part of their diet³³. In order to save themselves from the wildlife attacks, they stayed in clusters, probably kin groups too. They had a natural economy. They collected tubers and vegetables from nature itself. The Kurichyas in gathering stage were afraid of nature. They have shown respect to certain trees and animals. They worshipped certain trees such as banyan tree (*Ficus religiosa*), Champakam (*Plumeria Rubra*), Thanni (*Terminalia bellirica*), Kanjiram (*Strychnos nuxvomica*), and all trees of *Ficus* varieties. They also have certain reverence to Banasura peaks, where the demon Bana lived and made Lord Siva his gate keeper.³⁴

Usually the concept of religion among the tribes is animistic in nature. In 19th century, their place of worship was a heap of stones under the big trees in the forest.³⁵ Such stone mud figurine worship can be seen in the Athikkolly Tharavadu 7 Km away from Vellanmunda, Nelliyeri Tharavadu in Mananthavady and Edathana tharavadu too³⁶. The ignorance and fear among them about the birth, death and natural phenomenon like lightning, Thunder, Rain etc created among them a reverence towards nature. Here, we see that they thought themselves to be part of the community of being in a surrounding. Their religious beliefs and practices generally allow the species of their habitat live without much harm from their part.

³² *Gothrangalilude* (Mal), Souvanier published by Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Wayanad, 2006, p. 77.

³³ M R Pankajakshan, *Wayanattile Adivasikalude Pattukal* (compiled work), Kerala Sahitya Academy, Thrissur, 1989, p 14.

³⁴ Chacko Kannattumodi, *Kurichyarude Lokam*, Kerala bhasha institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 1994, p 57.

³⁵ Dr Vayaleri Kumaran, *Kurichiyarude Jeevithavum Samskaravum*, Pusthakabhavan, Payyannur, 2010, p.37

³⁶ Field visit done by the researcher on 28/01/23.

Unexplainable phenomena of nature were also venerated probably from ignorance about them, in addition to fear. An examination of the contemporary life cycle rituals and practices would also show that they had not developed systematic rituals and practices during the hunting gathering period probably because they lived on bare subsistence so that they never thought about rituals that require surplus of some kind. An examination of the religious beliefs and practices would reveal the concept of god prevailed among the people over time.

Kurichya religion displays the characteristics of folk religion. They worship gods who are conceptualized as Patrons of children, Protectors of cattle, Guards of water and Healer of diseases; and they believed that failures to propitiate them would attract the latter's wrath and might be punished through various setbacks in the life³⁷.

They are placing their gods under the 'milky' trees such as Pala, Jack fruit tree, chembakam etc as they are venerating the 'fertility'. As they were nature worshippers, changes in the nature may scare them. The immediate reason for the Kurichya revolt of 1812 was the widespread flowering of bamboos in the Wayanadan forests. They thought that the mass flowering of bamboos would bring disaster to them. They feared that bamboo flowering may bring poverty and hardships and the widespread flowering of bamboos in 1812 may be due to the cursed presence of the British,³⁸ it sprouted a rebellious spirit against the British in 1812 which is known as the Kurichya revolt. Captian James Welsh, who came in Wayanad to suppress the Kurichya rebellion also mentioned about the flowering bamboos like this"; first time I saw all the bamboos in blossom, a very uncommon sight, for they are said to flower once only in every thirty years; at my next visit, the whole were dead, as it were spontaneously, and the country consequently much improved in its appearance"³⁹ He also indicates that the flowering of bamboos are

³⁷ HS Bhatti, *Folk Religion Change and Continuity*, New Delhi, 2000, p.41.

³⁸ VK Santhoshkumar, *Swathanthrya Samarathile Gothra Parvam*, Neermathalam books, Wayanad, 2022, p.37.

³⁹ Colonel James Welsh, "Military Remniscences extracted from", *A journal of Nearly Forty years Active Service in the East Indies*, Smith Elder and Company, London, 1830, p.12.

disastrous for the country through this statement.

Mode of worship in this phase was very simple. Once or twice oblations in the form of rice or cereals may be given to the deity. Animal sacrifice was done in this type of Kavus. In the Malakkari temple near Mananthavady, there had been goat sacrifice in the early days.⁴⁰ In the Edamana Kurikkilal Bhagavathy Temple, which was a Kurichya kavu, still there is *Kozhivettu* on all days. Bhadrakali Temple at Cheriamkolly near Mananthavady which was run by both by the Paniyas and Kurichyas conduct 'kozhivettu' every Friday, Tuesday, and Sunday⁴¹ All this shows that there is an animistic belief among them.

Malakkari is the chief god of Kurichias who uses bow and arrow as his weapon and is believed to have been born from the third eye of Lord Siva⁴². Malakkari literally means 'Kari' of the hills. 'Kari' is a personal name in old Tamil Malayalam. First appearance of Malakkari is seen under a Mahogany tree of Nellikkudi clan⁴³. They are proud of having their earlier association with Malakkari. It is believed that bloody sacrifice of animals to various gods were stopped by Malakkari⁴⁴. Historically, this reform in ritual may be due to the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. 'Malakkarithira' is performed to please the god Malakkari. The literary part of Malakkarithira is '*Kumbhapattu*'. This song represents the place consciousness of different geographical features like seas, mountains, etc. Myths about Malakkari says that Malakkari drowned all evil creatures on earth in the sea. They are still trying to reach land. But Malakkari who lives in the Kavus is resisting it. According to their belief, the earth is an island surrounded by oceans on four sides.

“Keyakkan Kadalalle Kannunolu
Padinjaru Thirinju Nokkonnolu

⁴⁰ Interview with Balan othayoth. Thonoichal, 53 years at Malakkari temple, on 4/08/2019

⁴¹ Interview with Radha, 39 years old, Kurichya community member from Edamana Tharavadu, on 12/11/22 at her residence Thonichal Mananthavady.

⁴² M R Pankajakshan, *Op. cit.*, p.19.

⁴³ A. Aiyappan, K Mahadevan, *Ecology, Economy, Matriliney and Fertility of Kurichias*, Delhi, 2008, p. 85.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

Padinjaran Kadalalle Kanunnu Kekith
Aadunnu Thirinju Nokkalloolu
Thekkan Kadalalle Nokkunnollu
Badakkan Kadalattam Chennitt olu
Aadunnu Thirinju nokkunnolu”⁴⁵

It means that, you can see Eastern, Western, Northern, Southern seas by turning to those directions respectively. So, it is evident that, they are familiar with these seas and waves and their intensity. They are also mentioning four mountains as *Naalu parvatham Kanunolu*⁴⁶. They are consider the four mountains as the abode of gods. They were conscious about the existence of Keezhlokam or underworld. They also mention the modern Technology like gun and shooting in their *Kumbhapattu*. Interpolation may be the reason behind this. They believe that Malakkari destroyed all demons and created 101 paddy fields, 101 Kavus, etc and divided men into 18 castes. To ward off evils, Malakkari established “*Kallum Kaliyattavum*” or Toddy and rituals⁴⁷. But it is a mystery that Malakkari is not the chief god of all Kurichias. 14 Kurichia tharavadus of 57 accepted ‘*Pulliyaran*’ as their deity⁴⁸. For ceremonial purposes, Kurichias uses toddy. It is a chief item to propitiate Malakkari in thira. Before the British stopped toddy tapping in Wayanad, the Kurichias used to tap palms for toddy. According to a legend, Lord Malakkari invited the folk deity, Muthappan to teach the technique of extracting toddy to Kurichias⁴⁹.

Ancestor worship is the global form of religious expression prevalent among different tribes in Kerala. In this belief dead ancestor serves as a controlling power over the living people. All ethnic people believe in the immortality of human soul. Kurichiyas have also great reverence to their ancestral spirits and they believe that all goodnes and failures, in their life are due to the intervention of ancestral spirits.

⁴⁵ M R Pankajakshan *Op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* pp.5-22.

⁴⁷ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.* ,p. 183.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ A. Aiyappan, K Mahadev , *Op. cit.*, p.81.

A strong tradition of ancestor worship exists among the Kurichyas, if a virtuous male died he believed to be born as 'nekal' and if a virtuous female die, she will be reborn as 'pena'.⁵⁰ The 'nekal' concept is always benevolent to the Kurichiyas.'Nekals are also known as 'muni. In tribal religion, ancestral worship is a universal form of religious reflections. Its principles are not difficult to understand, for they plainly keep up the social relations of the living world. The dead ancestors gradually transform into a deity and simply goes on protecting his family and receive suit and service from him as of old. The dead chief still watches his own tribe, still holds the authority by helping friends and harming enemies, still rewards the right and sharply punishes the wrong⁵¹. There is no word corresponding to 'Atma' or soul. They believe that the spirit of the dead goes to four mother's world such as Akathuttamma, Ariyil Bhagavathi, Chenchidichi Amma, and Karimpil Bhagavathi.⁵²

If there is a problem in a Kurichya tharavadu, 'Nekal' will reveal his intervention through Komaram. 'Pena' will look after the welfare of the women folk.⁵³They believe that 'Nekal' is always watching them so any violation of caste, food taboos, and morality cannot be hid by Kurichiyas.It is due to the these spirits that they are strictly following the untouchability, food taboos,and honesty and moral laws.

Muthappan worship among the Kurichiyas is also another version of ancestors worship.

Muthappan is the famous god of Thiyyas, whose temple is situating at Parassinikadavu in Kannur district where toddy has been given as a 'prasadam'. Toddy tapping is the hereditary occupation of Thiyyas. Muthappan has a special place in the Kurichia pantheon. The Kurichias have great reverence to this deity. They have five important Muthappans in their Kurichia pantheon, such as Thadathunda Muthappan, Thumbamala Muthappan, Thuvvakkari Muthappan,

⁵⁰ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan , *Op. cit.*, p.34.

⁵¹ EB Taylor, *Primitive Culture II*, Dover publication, London, 2016, p.113.

⁵² Manjula Poyil, *Op. cit.*, p .298.

⁵³ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 176.

Puralimala Muthappan and Paloy Muthappan.⁵⁴

Kurichyas ascribe the occasional failure of the crops, the diseases of their children, cattle, other ills to the consequent anger of their tribal gods⁵⁵. Kurichias insist to be clean always, according to them diseases will come to them, when they become impure ,Even though they have many small and big deities their chief god is most important, Along with the chief god, they are worshipping minor deities like wind,fire and serpents ⁵⁶.

Kuliyans of various kinds seen to be worshipped by the tribes in Wayanad. It seems that the deity of kuliyans may be evolved in the pastoral mode of resource use, when the people had given more importance to their cattle wealth. “Kuliyans” is considered as a virtuous god to protect cows and paddy. Three types of kuliyans are there among the Kurichyas such as Nadappu kuliyans, Vishnu kuliyans, and Kunju kuliyans ⁵⁷. They also worship *Kuttichathan* as a benevolent deity apart from the evil deity of common consciousness. There are three important Kuttichathans such as, Thee Kuttichathan, Polakkuttichathan, Vishnu Kuttichathan. Thee Kuttichathan and Vishnu Kuttichathan heal the diseases of the cows⁵⁸. Thee kuttichathan prevents fire spread. *Athiralan* was another young god who is a calm peaceful fellow who looks after their cattle and cultivation.

Kurichyas worshipped several gods protecting their crops during settled cultivation period. Most of these gods have concrete figures too. Their chief deities during this period were Athiralan who has no figure but his presence can be felt in the form of wind. Athiralan is believed to be preventing the epidemics and protecting both cattle and cultivation. Disease to paddy is prevented by Polakkuttichathan.⁵⁹ ‘Kuliyans’ is another god who is the guardian of both the cattle

⁵⁴ Dr. Kumaran Vayaleri, *Op. cit.*, p.36.

⁵⁵ A Ayyappan, Secretary of Aboriginal Tribes Enquiry Committee, *Report on the Socio-economic conditions of Tribes of Madras*, Government press, 1948, p. 94.

⁵⁶ D Chacko Kannattumodi,*Op. cit.*, p .46.

⁵⁷ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p.199.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

stock and cultivation. Another important deity who is guarding paddy is 'Purankalan'. Purankalans were the *karyasthans* of God 'Pulliyaran'. Once during a clash between Pulliyaran and Malakkari imprisoned Karyasthans ' of Pulliyaran. Malakkari imprisoned all 69 'purankalans of Pulliyaran in total. Then Pulliyaran did not have Karyasthans. Then Malakkari appointed Pulliyaran as his karyasthans. Now Purankalans are designated as the guarding gods of Kavus, paddy fields etc. In order to make fences around paddy fields cane is needed, since Purankalan have the duty to protect, he has to build outside walls with the cane. So the 'thara' or platform of 'Purankalan' always have the cane .⁶⁰ The Komarams or oracles of 'Purankalan' will roll on the canes and will get wounded on their body, blood coming out may be treated as oblation to Karimbily bhagavathy.⁶¹

Oral tradition of the temple says that there was a struggle between Malakkari and Pulliyaran over the argument who is more powerful, in order to settle the dispute Malakkari send arrows upon pork . Then Pulliyaran demanded Malakkari to bring the pork in to Thonichal *Pappu*" Malakkari threw the pork by lifting it in finger. Then Malakkari made the dead pork in to 108 pieces with his finger on the request of Pulliyaran. Thus Pulliyaran understood that Malakkari is more powerful and Pulliyaran allowed Malakkari to be there in Thonichal. At the same time there were presence of Bhadra kali who had been propitiated by the goat, cock sacrifices , challenged Malakkari's arrival at Thonichal. Then Malakkari decided to reduce the power of Bhadrakali who are pleased with sacrifices or Madhyamam mode of worship. Malakkari told Bhadrakali to shift her abode from there in Thonichal, then Kali demanded for killing of thousand people for satisfying her. Then he arranged the present '*Kumbham vettu* ' which is a bamboo stick consist of toddy. After being satisfied with this and reducing her power, Bhadrakali had been send out from the *thara* and Malakkari became dominant in the Thonichal temple , Bhadrakali had been thrown out of the boundary of the temple and placed in the hill top.⁶²

⁶⁰ Interview with Achappan ,Palliyara, at Palliyara Mittam, Kaniyambetta on 30/11/2019.

⁶¹ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 201.

⁶² Interview with KK Annan , vice president of the temple, on 14/02/2024 at the temple.

Each tharavadu have their own family deity. If it is male deity, they construct ‘Mandapam’, and if it is Bhagavathi or goddess, ‘Palliyara’ will be constructed. Other deities such as Vettakkalan, Puramkalan, Athiralan, Karimbily ans so on have *Thidangazhi* and *Thara*. There is no roofing for Malakkari. Their Kavu consists of Thidangazhi, Thara, evergreen trees, etc ⁶³. The hardworking deceased members in Tharavadu, who had led Tharavadu into prosperity became God called ‘Nekal’. If it is a male member, he is known as ‘Muni’ or ‘Nekal’ and if it is a female she is known as ‘Pena’. They are treated as a sages, mediators between man and God. Kurichyas depend on ‘Nekal’ to solve their day-to-day issues.

Mullukurumas worship ‘Kuliyam’ as the protector of cattle and cultivation. *Arooda Kuliyam* is the one showing the Path to way farers. *Vishnu Maya Kuliyam* looks after all matters including crop protection and protection of cattle⁶⁴. These kuliyams stay under a *pala* tree at *Pathirippalam* near Meenangadi. They never construct temples for ‘kuliyams’. Kuliyams always stay in the ‘thara’. Kuliyam who protect cattles is known as ‘*kali Kuliyam*’ and protector of paddy is known as ‘*Kalakkuliyam*’.⁶⁵ After every harvest, they will propitiate *kuliyam* by providing liquor. One of their powerful kuliyams is installed in Manikavu Shiva temple near Koleri which is a famous temple belonging to Mulla Kuruma community. On *Thulapathu* day They give more care for their cattle like cutting their horn and crushing their fistle etc in the morning itself.

Paniyas consult their Gods occasionally to know the original reasons behind different illnesses, to change their present jenmis (*pappan*) and to know whether their new employer will be a good master or not. They suspect that the illness and other disasters are caused due to the anger of spirits because of not giving the timely offerings.⁶⁶ They propitiate gods by placing rice, beaten rice, coconut, betal leaves and one and a quarter rupee on the thara. Thudi and cini will be played in the back

⁶³ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p 158.

⁶⁴ Interview with Dineshan 56 years old, Mundaneduppu colony, near Meenangadi on 28/9/23 at his residence.

⁶⁵ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Gothra thalam*, Wayanad, 2006, p.72.

⁶⁶ A. Aiyappan, *The Paniyas An Exslave tribe of South India*, Calcutta, 1992, p.91.

ground along with the songs. It is performed as a ritual dance, the dancer smear turmeric, charcoal and rice flour all over his body and face.⁶⁷ When the god entered in to the body of the dancer , he will break the coconut and will say his revelations by looking at the pieces of broken coconut.⁶⁸

Agricultural surplus led them to establish temples and related rituals during this period. Annual temple festivals and rituals like '*Uchal*', '*Kolu Kodukkal*', *thira*, *theyyam*, etc are seemed to have started during the settled cultivation period. Theyyam and thira are usually conducted in the end of '*Kumbham*' or in the first week of '*Meenam*'. Important thiras and theyyams of that period are, *Edamana Kurikkilal Bhagavathi thirayattam*, *Poorinji Bhagavathi thirayattam*, *Thonichal Malakkari theyyam*, etc.

They have developed several 'theyyams' to readdress their grievances. '*Anjilatheyam*,' '*Malakkari theyyam*,' '*Chethirapalan theyyam*,' '*Aaliya theyyam*,' '*Mappila theyyam*,' etc are the example for this. 'Theyyam' is performed along with the instruments like *Cini*, *thudi*, *Kuzhal*, etc. Theyyam will wear an anklet full of bells (*Theyyam Kettinja mani*)⁶⁹. During the settled cultivation stage, Paniyas acquired knowledge about the cultivation of different plants and domestication of animals. Human beings also nature as being subject to human control⁷⁰. It is believed that the sorcerer has the ability to change the route of natural forces like rivers, wind, etc. It makes man more optimistic as he can face any disaster.

Paniyas have deep faith in shamanism. Through shamanism they are see their god directly and can release their distresses. Some of the important shamans of the Paniyas are vellattu, Thira, theyyam, pudayattu and so on . The details of their shamans are coming in the last part of this chapter.

⁶⁷ SandhyaRashmi, *Op. cit.*, p.55.

⁶⁸ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.78.

⁶⁹ P Somasekharan Nair, *Paniyar*, National Book stall, Kottayam, 1976, P. 97.

⁷⁰ Madhav Gadgil, Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, P. 31.

Paniyar remember their ancestors through the rite of “Nekalattam”. If they fail to conduct *Nekalattam*, ‘Pena’ or dead person’s spirit will enter the body of a family member and will ask the reason for not conducting “Nekalattam’. Chemmi of the colony will do ‘Nekalattam’. It is usually advice to the whole family about their debts, threats to the family etc.⁷¹

The overall picture of the god’s beliefs and related practices offer us an ensemble of pre modern/industrial religions among the tribal people in Waynad. The primitive hunting gathering stage allows them to remain in a limited geo-ecological zone. They require the bare minimum of resources to live in their habitat. Their mobility too is limited to their specific zone. In such a state they are deeply familiar with the environment around them and understand themselves to be part of the living habitat. They thought that they are just part of the environment such as plants and animals. In such an air, they began to respect, venerate or fear some phenomena around them either due to the value they offered them or those that created any kind of difficulties in their life.

Pastoral people will come into contact with alien people and ideologies. They were carriers of information about the resources in distant regions and technologies elaborated by other societies.⁷² Their social organization was based on kin relations. The ritual life of nomads or pastoral people were quite meagre, they have no Pantheon of gods like the peasant society. Ritual importance may be placed on livestock.⁷³ Kappi Mooppan shares his experience as a herding boy on his younger days. He used to go as cattle herder along with two three friends. When they reach the forest, one herder will be entrusted with all the cattle, while the others go for collecting tubers such as *noorokizhang*, *narakkizhang*, *Venni kizhang* etc. They also capture birds in traps and they cook and eat them there itself⁷⁴.

⁷¹ K Panoor, *Op. cit.*, p.94.

⁷² Madhav Gadgil, Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p.28.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.29.

⁷⁴ Jose Pazhookkaran, *Op. cit.*, p.52.

In the settled cultivation mode societies have established substantial control over natural forces; nevertheless they are still very subject to nature's caprices in the form of droughts, floods, frost and plagues of locusts. Hence agricultural societies continue in part, perceive man one among a community of beings⁷⁵ In the peasant mode custom and tradition Provide the overarching frame work within which human-nature interaction, and customary and time honoured networks govern relationships of reciprocity within peasant society eg; relation with peasant society and nomadic pastorals⁷⁶. Such relations are defined purely by custom. Different festivals among Mullukurumas and Kurichyas are best example for this, where they are cooperating with other castes like ooralikurumar, Paniyas, munnoottavar and so on.

Life cycle rituals are a rich source to understand the religious world of the people. Rituals which are practices that shape themselves in constant interaction with the social values and mores. Among the tribes especially, rituals play a significant role. More often these rituals communicate to us the thought world of its practitioners. In this sense an analysis of contemporary rituals allows us to delineate the presence of multiple layers of belief and ideologies the lineages of which could be sought in historical time. A description of life cycle rituals prevalent among the various tribes and communities poses a significant place in the present concern.

Rituals

In order to propitiate the kuliyan, Kurichyas offer *Kalasavum Thirayum and, Uchavellattam*. Kalasam is done by pasting charcoal, rice, turmeric etc. A broken coconut will be thrown in the 'Thadangazhy and the female piece lay opened, it is evident that *Kuliyan* is satisfied. Kurichyar never treats 'Kuliyan' as a malignant god like common villagers but as a benevolent god who protects their cattle and cultivation. If Kuliyan is satisfied with all these oblations, there will be no insects or chaff to paddy or raggi.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Madhav Gadgil, Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p.37.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.38.

⁷⁷ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 200.

They developed an anthropomorphic relation with fostering animals especially the cattle stock. The “*Chambalamoottu*” is a fine example of their affection for them. On that day, they provide green grass to the cattle instead of hay and also will let them feed green paddy from the field and they will give oil massage to the cattle and bathe them. A feast for laborer’s in the paddy field ⁷⁸. They show great respect to the dead cattle. If a cattle died Kurichiyas would never take its skin, even though they used to peel out the skin of hunted animals. They bury the dead cattle in the north -south direction without giving its flesh to anybody to eat. If the cattle dies in the forest, it will be laid there to be eaten by vultures.⁷⁹ The kavus had emerged in the pastoral stage. In the pastoral stage, they thought that they were different from nature. They began to conserve and protect their holy waterbody, even if it is streams or rivers and their holy trees. Such places gradually turn into kavus or serene areas for veneration. A kavu is generally an unpretentious structure, mainly of wood with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables⁸⁰. Idols may be polished or raw stone such as *Aal* (*Ficus Religiosa*), *Pala*(*Alstonia*), *Scholaris* or *Kanjiram*(*strychnos*). Their concept is that(*sankalpam*) the deity resides or regularly resorts to and uses the grove ⁸¹. Their are several folk songs which reflects their pastoralist mode.

Oblations

Chief item favourite for Kuttichathan is toddy and hunted meat. For the Athiralan they used to give new rice , banana and jaggery. Athiralan , being young god never prefers toddy.As they thought themselves separate from the nature , they began to do ‘Thira and Theyyam. They also began to perform certain ritualistic cum artistic performances such as *Mankali pattu*,*Pulikkali pattu*,*Narippattu*, *Maramayappattu*, *Theppattu*,*Mayippattu* etc.⁸²Some rich Tharavadus will conduct

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁸⁰ C A Innes ICS, *Op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁸¹ JR Freeman, "Gods, Groves and the Culture of Nature in Kerala", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 33, No.2, (May 1999), p. 262.

⁸² Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p .37.

Thirayattam and, Theyyattam annually. Edamane Kurikkilal Bhagavathy thira, Thonichal Bhagavathy thira, Vilanilam Thria and Kakkottara Thira are examples. Each God has his own costumes and ornaments. *Malakkari*, *Athiralan*, *Vettakkalan*, *Karimbily* and *Pulliyaran* gods will manifest through Thira. Roles of the Gods were played by people from *Munnoottan* or from *Malayar* communities. The place of such kettiyattams is known as 'Kazhakams'.⁸³ This Thirayattam serves as ceremonial rituals as well as social rituals due to the participation of people from the locality.

Death Rituals

Burial customs are continued the same as in the Gathering mode with slight variations such as widespread use of cow dung for smearing and to purify.

Hunting ritual

On *Thulapathu* day Kurichyas begin their hunting activity. They believe that if a kurichya man does not go for hunting on this day, he is not a male. On this day morning they will propitiate the hunting god and the hill god by offering broken coconut, toddy and flattened rice.⁸⁴ They are excellent archers and highly skilled in hunting too which is evident from their name itself mentioned in the previous chapter. They go on hunting along with skilled hunting dogs.⁸⁵ They will make detailed preparations for ceremonial hunting in the month of *Thulam*. Permission of mediator god will be sought priorly. Three days prior to the date the men observe abstinence from sexual intercourse.⁸⁶ Weapons will be purified by sprinkling tender coconut water. Ripe bananas will be offered to Hunter god 'Vettakalan'⁸⁷

This ceremonial hunting on Thulam pathu is actually the initiation of yearly hunting. For Kurichiyas it is not only a sport but also ensures the source of meat for their families. Each Kurichiya family has dried meat stock in ready for consumption

⁸³ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, pp. 202 - 203.

⁸⁴ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *This Fissured Land an Ecological history of India*, New Delhi, 1992.p.37.

⁸⁵ Balasabha, kudumbasree Mission, *Charithramurangunna Wayanad*, VOL1, p.143.

⁸⁶ A Aiyappan, K Mahadevan, *Op. cit.*, pp.79-80..

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* p.80.

on all occasions . They all kill all animals whose sex cannot be identified with horns. They will not hunt the pregnant animals if it is known to them ⁸⁸.

Death rites

If a death occurs in the Tharavadu, it will be immediately informed to 'Nattu pooppa', he will send messages to others. The dead body will be laid in north south direction . Burning Incense , broken coconut, and a seer of rice and a spouted jar or 'kindi' will be kept at the feet of the dead. Oil will be applied on the body . Water for bathing will be fetched by son or son in law. Dead person's knife, bow and arrow will be kept on the head side of the dead. Burial pit is known as 'pathram' a side pit also will be dug known as 'allap'. This allap will be in the left side for women and in the right side for men.⁸⁹ If the dead person is a male a bow and arrow will be kept in the pit and if it is a woman a sickle will be kept in the burial pit.⁹⁰ So it is evident that they believed in Life after death.

Kurichians are seen in the northern Wayanad in Mananthavady taluk and Kalpetta Municipality. Northern Wayanad consist of small hills and valleys and water is in abundant supply with a confluence of tributaries of river Kabani. The residence of Kurichias are seen in groups close to the paddy fields and they practiced 'punam cultivation on the hills'⁹¹This community have divided themselves in to certain groups such as Jati kurichian or Kurichian of Wayanad, *Kunnam Kurichian, Pathiri Kurichian and Anchilla Kurichian*⁹². Pathiri Kurichian is the christian section of Kurichias of Wayanad. The introduction of Christianity among a section of the Kurichias is traced back to the year 1908, when Fr Jefrino of French Mission society commenced work in Wayanad⁹³ Stringent measures of conservative tradition in Kurichia community and excommunication for violation of this were

⁸⁸ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair , *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

⁹⁰ Balasabha , Kudumbasree Mission, *Op. cit.*, p.181.

⁹¹ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair , *Op. cit.*, p.2.

⁹² KS Singh, *The Scheduled Tribes*, Oxford University press, Delhi. Bombay, 1994, p.657.

⁹³ *Ibid.* p.661.

proved instrumental to their conversion to Christianity. The excommunicated ones were never joined back to the Jati Kurichias. The excommunicated Kurichias settled down in Thirunelli regions and formed themselves into a new group known as Anjilla Kurichiar. When Fr Jefrino started missionary activities many Anjilla Kurichias took resort at Pallikunnu under him.

Untouchability was another feature of Kurichya religion. Unlike the other tribes in Wayanad they were very orthodox in the matter of untouchability. Food taboos were also strictly enforced among them. They were not permitted to receive food from any caste except from the brahmins. They have to dip 40 times if they touch a Paniya or uralikkuruma. They tie down iron implements in the four corners of the houses to evade pollution⁹⁴ Menstruated women were also a matter of pollution for them, so Kurichya women used to keep a sickle with her to avoid pollution. They never included the Adiyas and Paniyas in their work force on the paddy fields because they themselves could provide enough labor as they lived in a joint family. On violation of food taboos, Punishment would be very severe. For social offence men and women are often excommunicated. Such excommunicated people became converts to christianity⁹⁵ They refused to eat the food cooked by anyone other than Kurichyan and even during their long wandering, they refrain from eating till they returned home.⁹⁶ Majority do not allow their children to attend schools. The Harijan welfare school at Parambukavu (Kottayam Taluk) and Vengappali (Vythiri Taluk) are only two having reasonable patronage because all the students and cooks there are Kurichchians, In these institutions girls were conspicuously absent. A few girls at Harijan welfare school at Vengappally belonged to outcasted family⁹⁷ Kurichyas neglected the education of women. Arrival of other caste people in the premises of their courtyard, temple, houses was always unbearable to them.

⁹⁴ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p.27.

⁹⁵ A Aiyappan, *Op. cit.*, p.94.

⁹⁶ A AD Louiz, *Tribes of Kerala*, New Delhi, 1962, p.111.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Treading on dried trees, stamping the rice water, crossing the passes, talking with other caste men are other important reasons for excommunication.⁹⁸ Women were the chief prey of excommunication. Superior position in caste hierarchy as well as the high position as the soldiers of Pazhassi Raja and self sufficiency created the sense of untouchability among them⁹⁹

Thalikettu Kalyanam

Thalikettu Kalyanam was another important rite done to girl children before their first menstruation. It was a ceremony of tying silver or gold '*thali*' to girl. It was a peculiar custom conducted at the Wayanadan Kurichya Tharavadus, which existed in premodern Kerala society¹⁰⁰. This *kalyanam* will be conducted once in seven or eight years for the girls in between the age of five to eleven years. Total number of the children will be odd numbers such as 5,7,9,11,etc. Most appropriate day for this *kalyanam* is regarded as Tuesday or Friday.¹⁰¹

'Panthal' or venue for the function may be made of milky trees such as 'Pala' or jack fruit tree etc, On the day of the function, girls and elder women will go for take bath in running water and wear yellow cloths. Then they will pray to *Karimbili Bhagavathy* who is the guardian of women folk among the kurichyas. Girls will be made to sit before '*Nira Para*'. In front of them rice and paddy will be spread on plantain leaves. All these preparations will give a divine effect to the occasion. Girls have to take a packet from water filled pot in front of them. These packets will contain gold, silver, pepper, rice, paddy etc. Getting gold silver will bring prosperity while getting rice or pepper will not bring that much prosperity. This ritual is known as '*nirakudam pottikkal*'¹⁰² The pot has been filled with water from keni and tender coconut. Moonman leads the '*thalikettu kalyanam*'. A song will be sung to accompany the tying of '*Thali*' which is intended to raise the morality of

⁹⁸ Dr Kumaran Vayaleri, *Op. cit.*, p.30.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.31.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.49.

¹⁰¹ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p.105.

¹⁰² Interview with Theyi othayoth, 64 years at her residence in Thonichal on 16/08/23.

girls. Special rites or 'vazhipadus' will be performed to avoid the misfortune of those girls who obtained rice or pepper.¹⁰³ A delicious feast will be served after this.

The 'Thalikettu' kalyanam is actually intended as a fixation of actual marriage because some times marriage also will take place along with 'Thalikettu Kalyanam'. For each girl, the bride groom will be her maternal cousin or equal to that so the context of 'will be to announce the future couples. It was like pseudo-marriage. The Matriarchal rule is strictly observed while selecting a bride¹⁰⁴ 'Thalikettu Kalyanam' will last for six days, on the sixth day there will be a delicious feast and hunting too which incur huge amounts. So the 'Thalikettu Kalyanam' is also known among them as 'kulam mudikkal Kalyanam'.¹⁰⁵

Thirandu Kalyanam

Thirandu kalyanam or (puberty rites) are a common celebration in all primitive communities. It is celebrated by all ethnic tribes in Kerala as all of them worship the fertility cult. Girls who attained puberty felt shy and went hiding, this incident is known as the 'Kadu Kayattam', elder ladies of the tharavadu will find her and bring her to 'theendarippura'. (house of menstruation). She will inform 'karanavar' of the tharavadu and Karanavar will inform *Nattupooppan* and tharavadu *Moonnaman*. Thirandu Kalyanam can be withheld till they acquire enough money for that. Theendari Kalyanam will be done in maternal house of the girl in cooperation with other members in Tharavadu, paternal tharavadu, and Eripura mittams or allied houses. *Karanavers* of both the paternal Maternal tharavadus will decide the date of 'Thirandu Kalyanam'. They believe that The god will appear to the mooppan and reveal the date of Thirandu kalyanam. On the day of 'Thirandu Kalyanam' they will try to propitiate 'Karimbily Bhagavathy' by fishing and if they got enough fish they think that Bhagavathy is satisfied.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p.108.

¹⁰⁴ A A D Louiz, *Op. cit.*, p.113.

¹⁰⁵ Dr Kumaran Vayalari, *Op. cit.*, p.49.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Kumbha 74 years old, at her residence at Alakkal Mittam, Padinjara thara on 5/05/23.

They believe that the puberty attained girl will be attracted by evils and ghost, so they will keep a sickle in the hands of the girl ¹⁰⁷. The menstrual girl should not appear before the men on these days; she will stay in a separate house known as the ‘*theendarippura*’. Almost all tribes follow this practice as they fear her chastity, and fertility may be lost if she appears in front of males before her *Thirandu kalyanam*. Other dominant tribes like Paniyas, Kurumas also keep the matured girl in seclusion before *Thiandu kalyanam*. On the eve of *Thirandu kalyanam*, close relatives of the menstrual girl including her father, brothers, uncles, and neighbors will go on hunting. If they could easily hunt down the prey hunting, it is believed that Karimbily bhagavathy became propitiated by the date of ‘Thirandu Kalyanam’. They were afraid that the wrath of Karimbily Bhagavathy would bring several catastrophe such as sterility, or death during pregnancy ¹⁰⁸. On the day of thirandu kalyanam, thirandu girl will go for bathing in running water and dip in the water for seven times. On her return back to Tharavadu she will be purified by pouring tender coconut water. She will be made to sit before the gods and rice and flower would be thrown on her seven times by the elder women of the Tharavadu.¹⁰⁹ Certain traditional ornaments, made of silver are brought from the girls tharavadu or her mother’s house.. Menstrual gir’ls maternal aunt will bathe her after applying oil. An iron knife will be placed in front the girl while bathing and after bathing the girl will be wound in red silk and will be seated before the nilavilakku. Aunts and mother will throw rice and flower upon her when mother throws rice and flower she will say ; “*ezhu pettu nee chattane pettu*”. The Kurichya community believes that a disabled child alone will be there with the mother. ¹¹⁰ Usually Kurichya women wear ornaments after their thirandukalyanam but now they wears gold as well as imitation ornaments before the thirandu kalyanam. Their marriage will also be fixed on the occasion of thirandu kalyanam ¹¹¹. Thirandu girls

¹⁰⁷ D Chacko Kannattumodi, *Op. cit.*, p.28.

¹⁰⁸ A Aiyappan, KMahadevan, *Ecology, Op. cit.*, p.72.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Lakshmi, 56 years, at Poorinji Tharavadu on 18/05/23.

¹¹⁰ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, pp.116-117.

¹¹¹ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.32.

will also be fed with '*chakkara choru*' or rice made of coconut , and jaggery .¹¹² After attaining puberty the girl child as well as the boy child have to live in their mother's house¹¹³.

The feast served in the Thirandu Kalyanam is very delicious including the hunted meat and fish from the river. The feast will be served first for women as it is a celebration of women hood, at that time betel leaves and arecanut will be served for the guests. After this rite, the girl will stay in her maternal home and they have the sole right to decide the future of the girl. paternal family has no right over this matter.

Marriage

Kurichya marriages are less expensive and non pompuous than their other customs. Kurichyas give preference to marry matriarchal cross cousins. A brief survey shows that nearly 55 percent of all marriages take place between matrilarchal cross cousins and the rest on a patriarchal cross cousin basis or among non relatives.¹¹⁴ A kurichiya girl who attained puberty would no longer stay unmarried as the puberty function is the beginning of arrangements for marriage. If Karanavar of bridegroom mittam came to know about a suitable girl he will inform the girl's Tharavadu Karanavar the date of their visit for bringing the girl to groom's house as their nephews wife. He will go accompanied by his wife, Muthachi, Moonnan and his wife, They will get warm welcome at the brides mittam. For the bride they will bring *Veshiti* and Towel. after a delicious feast the girl will dress up in the newly brought dress. Then she will seek the blessings of Karanavar, Ammayi and *Muthachi* and also pray in front of 'muni'. With this she is leaving to her husbands mittam or house. There she will pray in front of Muni's room and stay along with a Muthachi, widow or single old woman for a week . In the meantime Karanavar of the groom's mittam will officially inform the groom about a girl they brought for

¹¹² Interview with Yamuna, Athikkolly Tharavadu on 7/04/22

¹¹³ D Chacko Kannattumodi, *Op. cit.*, p.9.

¹¹⁴ A. Aiyappan, K.Mahadevan, *Op. cit.*, p.67.

him. The girl and boy had never seen earlier except on some social occasions.¹¹⁵ 5th day or before 8th day of her arrival the girl will be permitted to stay along with her husband in a separate room. Marriage will be in the brides tharavadu, After marriage the couple will not be allowed to have first night till they get permission¹¹⁶. The bride will return to her own Tharavadu on the 8th day after marriage along with her husband and this ceremony is known as *Virunnu Kanjikkukkal Pokal*. Permission given for the unification of groom and bride is known as the ceremony of *cherppikkal*.¹¹⁷ Three types of Marriages existed among the Kurichiyas; they are 'Mariyadi' . 'Iriyadi', 'Muttuvani'. 'Mariyadi' type of marriages was the marriage fixed by the elders involving the Mittam Karanavar; the marriage between aged bride groom and bride or the second marriage etc are come under the category of 'Iriyadi. 'Muttuvani' or 'Kekuvani' type of marriage is done with the help of friends not involving Nattu pooppam or Karanavars. In the matter of Muttuvani types of marriage no '*kanappanam*' or 'purusha dhanam will be given.¹¹⁸ No dowry or major expenses are involved in the normal Kurichya Marriages.¹¹⁹

Kurichias enjoy aristocratic status. They are timid and avoid purchasing and selling in openmarket. Instead of buying their necessities in the bazars, they prefer to get them from the visiting pedlers.

Kurichias have natural aversion to work as coolies and do not do so when they became quite helpless.¹²⁰

In the settled cultivation stage paddy cultivation expanded widely, so their celebrations included the oblations to gods in the form of new harvest. There are several festivals among the Kurichiyas pertaining to the Paddy fields and paddy in this stage Puthari, makam kulippikkal are examples.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Balakrishnan, 64 years , in Parammoola in her residence on 6/9/22.

¹¹⁶ Chacko Kannattumodi, *Op. cit.*, p.

¹¹⁷ Dr N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p.126.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Interview with Prabha, Athikkolly Tharavadu at Athikkolly on 29/04/23.

¹²⁰ A.Aiyappan, *Report on the Socio-economic conditions of Tribes of Madras, Op., cit.*, p.94.

Vithidal

It was a ritual related to sowing of new seeds on the day after Vishu . Karanavar of the mittam will take a few paddy seeds and will sow in the eastern part of the paddy fields. This ritual is made to be done by a senior laborer but since Kurichyas doing the cultivational chores by themselves, this ritual may be performed by some senior members of the family in the presence of lighted 'nilavilakku', jaggery, sandal sticks, kindi or spouted jar etc. This ritual is for earth pooja to get more crops in the coming cultivation.¹²¹

Makam Kulippikkal

This festival will be celebrated with coming of grains (kathir) ;So this ritual is also known as "Kathir Kulippikkal" too. Younger child of the family will do this ritual; He will reach the paddy field along with the Karanavar and will springle, holy water on the paddy, with some pooja materials. By sprinkling Holy water on some paddy plants it is regarded that the whole paddy will be bathed.¹²²

Makam is another agricultural festival. They consider paddy field and paddy as serene and god's gift. It is celebrated as the birthday of rice in the star of Makam in the month of Kanni¹²³ On this day, they will begin their second term agricultural practices (Punja), after their oblation to 'Athiralan', the god of cultivation.

Thulapathu and Puthariyootal

The Kurichias in Wayanad are celebrating Thulapathu or Puthari on the same day. The puthari festival is celebrated in the month of Thulam. On this day, they will collect ripe paddy from the paddy field and keep it in 'Daivapura'. A ritual hunting also will be there and they prepare a feast with the hunted meat. On Puthari day

¹²¹ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 201.

¹²² Interview with Divya Athikkolly, 44 years old. At Athikkolly Tharavadu, Vellamundaon 29/01/23.

¹²³ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p. 36.

fresh paddy will be sent to nearby houses. Fresh rice payasam or 'chakkarachoru' also will be prepared.¹²⁴

Festivals of Kurichias

Puthariyunnal is their ritual feasting, after the first harvest. Ritual feast is seen all over the world culture¹²⁵, Rice is regarded as goddess according to indian culture .Kurichias believe that crops are the gifts of god; they are observing "puthari" to propitiate the god. They are eating the body of cereal goddesses while observing "puthari." Kurichias, by the end of nineteenth century, considered rice as 'bhagavathi' and regarded husking of paddy as a divine ritual. So, they are singing the following '*nellukuthupattu*':

Chivamme chivamme ariye
Chennallu ariye bekam
Belukkenam kanji nerathe bekkam
Athond ariye becongalle
Ariye, chomala Ariyalle
Bekam chomala Ariyalle
Kanji kalathe bekkanam
Ellarikkum kodukkanam
Chivamme chivamme ariye
Ariye kamariye bekam
Nerathe bechu belambanam¹²⁶

Here in this song, they are representing rice as god's gift and want to give a portion of cereal to god and insisted on eating after propitiating god. For pleasing their chief god 'Malakkari,' the hunting god, they are singing 'kumbhapattu' and arrange theyyams of Malaya community. After hunting, they will bring prey into

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ C R Kerala varma, *Mantravadavum Mathavum*, Kerala Sahithya Accademy, Thrissur, 2008, pp .188-190.

¹²⁶ Sung by Kumbha 76 years , Nelliyeri Tharavadu, Mananthavady on 18/04/19 at their residence.

pappu or place the where the animal is shared and will cut ‘*Akamchayum, Puramchayum*’¹²⁷(meat from abdomen and flush of back area) will fry in fire and offer to ‘Malakkari’

Kathiru Kayattal

This ritual is also done by almost all agricultural communities in Wayanad, it is also in month of ‘Thulam Pathu’. This ritual is also done by the younger child of the family. Fresh paddy will be collected by that boy and will be brought and kept in the ‘*Kalam*’ smeared with cow dung and will do pooja for that paddy or Kathir. Then this paddy will be hung in front of the houses and granaries.¹²⁸

Onam

Onam is another important celebration of Kurichias. They did not know the concept of ‘Mahabali’ and ‘vamana’, but they are celebrating onam in relation with cultivation or as a common celebration. They know that the onam falls with ten days celebrations but they did not know the Mahabali-Vamana-Vishnu concept involved in the myth of Onam. But the *Maramayapattu*, which narrates the origin of Malakkari have some references about ‘Mavothi’ or Mahabali and the request for 3 feet land, consecutive with the myth of Mahabali, Vamana’s demand for 3 feet land for him.¹²⁹ That may have happened by interpolations

“Keeyayilam vavunno, Mavothiyodu
Moonnadi Mannu tharanam Enikkkippo
Athuthanne Kettondu Mavothiyalle
Anneram paranjondo Mavothi Kekki
Moonnadi Ningal Alannoli”
Ennude moothavilu Vecholingalu

¹²⁷ Dr. Kumaran Vayaleri, *Op. cit.*, p.44.

¹²⁸ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op .cit.*, p. 222.

¹²⁹ M R Pankajakshan, *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

Mavothi moothavilu Bechallo Kalu
Chavuttithathiyudannallo Malakkari thaimam”¹³⁰

This song shows that they have some knowledge about the myth of Mahabali and Vamana. They are not making flower arrangements like other Hindus for the onam celebrations. On the Atham day they prepare feast with hunted meat, dry river fish and pumpkin. Kurichias calls ‘Uthradam’ or ‘Onnam onam’ as ‘*Uthronam*.¹³¹’ On the onam day, they used to wear white clothes brought by Tharavattu Karanavar. Special feast will be prepared with *payasam*, *pappadam*, *pazham* 5th day after the onam is known as ‘Pothiyonam’ or onam for Bhagavathi which is celebrated with vegetarian feast. Lamp will be lightened for all gods in ‘thadangazhis’. Special oblation for ‘bhagavathy such as tender coconut and plantain will be given.

Uchal

Is celebrated by all agrarian based tribal communities in wayanad . It is celebrated on ‘Makaram’³⁰ or Kumbham 1. It is the culmination of harvest and on that day thorns of bamboo or *kotto mullu* will keep in the granary and threshing field or kalam. This *mullu vekkai* ritual shows the interval for cultivation. It is believed that goddess of prosperity or ‘Cheevochiyamma’ visits there.¹³²

Ritual art forms

Ritual art forms like Thirayattam flourished among the Kurichiyas during this period. All these art forms are a strategy to overcome uncertainties and hardships in life. Important art forms among them are Andukalasangam’s doing for totem deity, ‘Uchakalasangam’ for ‘NadathundaMuthappan’ and ‘Thuvvakkari kalasangam’ for Thuvvakkari Muthappan.¹³³

¹³⁰ MR Pankajakshan, *Ibid.*, pp.59-60.

¹³¹ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 153.

¹³² Sarvasiksha Abhiyan , *Op. cit.*, pp.36-37.

¹³³ Dr N Kumaran Vayaleri, *Op. cit.*, p.42.

Nekalattam

'Nekalattam' is done for spirits of the dead to reveal their opinions regarding the problems in the Tharavadu such as continuous illness, accidental deaths, crop failure and the remedies. Spirit of the dead will infest the body of 'Theyyadi' or 'Panicker' and reveal his will.¹³⁴

Malakkaritheyyam

It is a prominent Theyyam conducted by Kurichiyas in the Malakkari Kavus performed by *Malayar* or *Munnuttavar*. Here spirit of Malakkari is Transferring from a Kurichya Komaram to Theyyam. *Kumbhamavettal* is done during this Theyyam, 'Kumbham' is the large bamboos which contains Toddy' as oblations for Malakkari. The head part of Bamboo will be cut and filled with fresh Toddy and will be presented to Malakkari at the time of Thira.¹³⁵ All these ritual art forms have developed in the settled cultivation period as there was surplus production to give remuneration to the performers. When the society became more complex and production and exchanges developed, it became a necessity to see the problems and remedies for these problems .

Annual Oblation Rituals to Gods

Annual oblations used to be given to Gods in the months of Dhanu - Makaram. Such rituals are known as 'Kolu' Kodukkal. This 'Kolu' is actually received by Gods such as Malakkari, Purankalan, Kuttychathan, Gulikan, Athiralan so on. There are different types of 'Kolu', such as *Akathuttu kolu*, Given to Nekals of Tharavadu. Other important kolus are Pettachikkolu, Pantheerikkolu, Nattukolu, Panthikkolu etc¹³⁶. Date of the 'Kolu' kodukkal may be decided by the Tharavadu Karanavar, and Moonan. On the 'Kolu' day Purification of all gods are done by sprinkling tender coconut water. In front of 'nilavilakku' upon the plantain leaves

¹³⁴ Dr. N Kumaran Vayaleri, *Op. cit.*, p.45.

¹³⁵ Interview with Balan, 54 years, Othayoth, at the Thonichal Malakkari temple on 29/10/2019.

¹³⁶ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, pp.201-202.

plantain, raw rice, Sandal stick, flowers will be offered to each god. This Ritual is known as Veettukolu. 'Nattu Kolu' is given for Pulliyaran or Malakkari where ever they are prominent¹³⁷

Karkkidaka 14 or Death Ritual

This Ritual is celebrated to commemorate the dead and to give a feast to the dead. They prepare all the favourite dishes of the dead ancestors on this day. Food items include hunted meat, river fish, vegetables etc. They will prepare 14 curries on this day and keep a portion of that on plantain leaf for their ancestors. Kurichiyas never performed the annual 'bali', for the ancestors like caste Hindus, their ancestor bali is done on Karkkadam 14 alone.¹³⁸

Another belief exist among them is that in the Month of Karkkadakam all of their god is leave Wayanad and will return by the end of Karkkadakam. So at the end of Karkkadakam they preparing a delicious dish for them.¹³⁹

Moral code of conduct

In the complex society of settled cultivation, Kurichiyas have to follow some strict code of conduct to upkeep their morality. Children in the Kurichiya mittam will follow imitational qualities of elder brother, Udayakkaran or chief of the family. Elder girls will not be touched by any of the elder male members of the family such as uncles and brothers. They never allow to have an illegal sexual relation. Only wife need to serve food and water to the husband in the Kurichiya joint family. There are certain special ways to denote the illegal sexual relations among them such as "Melkkalam" and "kizhkkalam".¹⁴⁰ Melkkalam is the sexual relation of Kurichiya woman with a high caste man and keezhkkalam means sexual relation with low caste man. If such allegations arouse, kurichiyas will excommunicate them by observing death taboo. "Chachipenakkottu",

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Interview with Radha, 39 years, Nelliyeri Tharavadu, Mananthavady, on 30/12/22

¹³⁹ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 156.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

Eriyadipenakkootu, Mariyadi penakkottu, etc are also observed by them in order to excommunicate the victims of illegal sexual relations.¹⁴¹ The Sexual offences are regarded as severe blow upon the prosperity of the Tharavadu ; So every female members of Kurichiya Tharavadu s will confess their wrong deeds for the sake of the welfare of the Tharavadu. They are aware of the fact that if a woman does sexual offence it will bring madness, illness, crop failure,etc, so she is saving the whole Tharavadu by confessing her offence.¹⁴²

Kurichiya Pantheon and Worship

Kurichias have their worship places as heaps of stones in the forest. Their chief god is Malakkari, whom the myth characterizes as the creator of Kurichia culture ¹⁴³. He is a very kind and merciful god, who subdued many evil forces and stopped bloody sacrifices. There are several myths regarding fight between Malakkari and Kali. Once there was severe conflict between Malakkari and Kali over the issue of their strength. Both these gods have many devotees. Malakkari for getting more followers, provided toddy to the Kurichias. Many Kurichias became intoxicated and sided with Malakkari. Only a few devotees came on the side of Kali. Having failed in the encounter, Kali became the slave of Malakkari. ‘*Kumbhapattum, Kolum*’ is the special ritual for Malakkari. Kurichias will fill toddy in the bamboos after cutting its edge, which is known as ‘Kumbham vettu’. This may be done after taking several days of fasting.

Pulliyaran is another important god who has rivalry over Malakkari. 14 Kurichya tharavadus in Northern Wayanad are the staunch followers of Pulliyaran sect. Following are those 14 tharavadus:

1. Kakkily
2. Kannolan

¹⁴¹ Interview with Leela, 46 years Athikkolly Tharavadu , Vellamunda, at her residence on 24/08/22.

¹⁴² Dr. N Viswanathan Nair , *Op. cit.*, p.147.

¹⁴³ A Aiyappan, K Mahadevan, *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

3. Thalakkara
4. Chirakkara
5. Kalliyodan
6. Chennalay
7. Chammeri
8. Thalappuzha Chammeri
9. Kuttiyodan
10. Parakkadan
11. Mundini-Kakkili
12. Kakkili- Kakkili
13. Plakkavu Kakkily
14. Perur Kakkily

Based on dominating areas, the Kurichya tharavadus were divided into two alliances such as Malakkari alliances and Pulliyaran alliances. Malakkari alliances consisted of 43 tharavadus and Pulliyaran alliances consisted of 14 tharavadus. In Valliyoorkkavu temple festival, it is mandatory for Kalliyottu Kurichya family to fetch toddy filled bamboos (Kumbham)¹⁴⁴. Athiralan is a vegetaian god who protects cattle wealth and paddy fields and prevents epidemics.

Mullu Kurumar

Mullukurumbers differ in general appearance, dress, customs, etc from Kurichias. But unlike Kurichias, they follow ‘makkathayam’ law of succession¹⁴⁵. They are divided into four ‘kulams’ such as, ‘vengadakulam’, ‘kadipakulam’, ‘villipakulam’, ‘vadakkankulam’¹⁴⁶. The mother of this four Kulams being ‘Thwaruvattamma’. The owl”Follower of ‘Vellakaliyappan’ , who is the husband of Thwaruvattamma, became worshipped as”Pottan Theyyam”. Mullukurumas are not permitted to marry within the kulams. Eventhough,they are following patrilineal

¹⁴⁴ Dr. N Viswanathan Nair, *Op. cit.*, pp. 192-193.

¹⁴⁵ O K Johny, *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op. cit.*, p.74.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Devaki, Former District Panchayat Member, Wayanad, on 11-11-2021.

form of succession, children will be known after their mother's kulam. They have a group of traditional laws, which are acting as a code of conduct among them and known as "Eivvu". Every Kuruma should conduct according to the *Eivvu*. Birth. Life cycle rituals like thirandu Kalyanam, marriage, delivery, death, hunting, cultivation, Festivals etc should go according to the *eivv*. Violation of *Eivvu* may lead to excommunication¹⁴⁷. In the Earlier days they used to stay in clusters or in colony and the possession of land will be in the name of one leader, But now as they are at the top of social ladder, many of them staying away from the colony. Their colony will have one *Daivappura* with one room in which they perform all their rites in life. Wherever a mullukuruma lives he must come here for performing all his life cycle rites.

Birth rites-Babily

This rite is related to the third day of the delivery. New born baby will be taken by Kutikkarathi (any lady of husbands colony) after bath. on this day pure water from the Daivakeni may be fetched by them and sprayed over the new born baby. Then the baby will be taken to Daivappura or valiyapura where paddy and rice filled paras and nila vilakku are kept. In the daivappura, porunnothi (wife of porunnon) will spray water over the child's mother too. If the child is a girl the mother should go after kutikkarathi from daivappura. As this ceremony demands plenty of rice and paddy this ceremony may have started in the settled cultivation mode of resource use. As the Mullukurumas are following patriarchal mode of succession, it is a saying among them as "Boy child will have *Chemmakooru* and the girl will have *Illakooru*".¹⁴⁸

Menstrual Rites (Thirandukalyanam)

A Kuruma girl will be get married after puberty. During seven days of menstruation, she will not be allowed to touch the earth. On the seventh day, after a detailed bath she will be seated in a special room and relatives will bring sweets for

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Narayanan Sankaran 42 years, assistant professor ITRS, Chethalayam, on 17/05/23. .

¹⁴⁸ ET Raju, *Op. cit.*, p.30

her. During these days, she should not come in front of male members . In the afternoon of the seventh day, with her oil applied bath, thirandukuli ceremony will be over.

Marriage

In search of girl, groom's father will go carrying betal leaves and areacanut. Cane and silver stick are essential luxury. They will see the horoscope. Distrubution of betal leaves and areacanut are the symbol of their prestige. They will go in search of bride in the month of 'kanni.' If the proposal is accepatable for them, parents of bride will inform it to everyone. After engagement, both bride and groom must wear a piece of peacock feather in their ear. It will be removed after marriage. In the earlier days, *thali* was tied by the uncles ¹⁴⁹. Now it will be tied by the groom himself There are three important days in relation with marriage such as Bandhuva,aalukoodal, and marriage uncle will tie On the day of marriage, the groom and party including several women will go to the bride's house. The bride's uncle will receive them with 'Nilavilakku'. Then the groom will enter the bride's room with close relatives and will pay five rupees and eight 'annas' as bride priceThis amount is known as kanapanam;this will be put in the *bhandaram of daivappura* and used for divine purposes only. With this money they are fostering the strong belief in god.There is no compulsory dowry involved in kuruma marriages,and women will not get paternal property after marriage ,but many of kuruma women are claiming their fathers property with the legal support. An elder lady will helps the bride to dress up and will take her beside the groom on the mat. After feast the bride will go to the groom's residence. There will be dance and songs in the night. The guests will leave the next night. On the fifth or the seventh day, bride and groom will go to the bride's house with hundred 'dosais'. After seventh day of stay at the bride's house, they will return to groom's house with ninety-seven 'dosais'. This is known as 'pittuvirunnu' ¹⁵⁰.The dosais brought from each house will be kept inside Daivappura for the propitiation of ancestors . Through

¹⁴⁹ An interview with Bhaskaran Vaidyar, Aavayil, 81 yrs, at his residence on 22-08-2019.

¹⁵⁰ Interview with Krishnan Moothimoola, Assistant professor, NMSM Govt college, Kalpetta, on 22-10-2020.

this ceremony they are trying to foster their blood relations. Like Nair's and Kurichias, Mullukurumbas have 'thalikettukalyanam'. The person who ties thali is the girl's maternal uncle ¹⁵¹.

Death rites

The Mullu Kurumas usually bury the dead. After bathing the body, they will cover the body with 'Olli' (kora cloth). Elders in the community may be burned. In the case of burning, rites for the dead may be performed on the third day. They will bury bow, arrow, knife, and bundle of betel leaves along with a male dead body and a coin of quarter rupee may also put in the mouth of the dead ;¹⁵² If a lady dies, they will bury sickle along with the body. Death taboo is for two days. Death rites will be performed by a close relative. Death rites will end up by providing a morsel of rice to the dead ¹⁵³.The relatives of the dead will not allowed to apply oil in the hair or cut the hair and shave their faces too. On the day of '*pula*' they have to bathe twice such as '*cheenikka kuli*' and '*enna kuli*' In '*Enna kuli*' the enna will be poured by 'Kolakkarathi'(sister of the deceased,) After this two '*kulis*' a feast will be served in which all people of the kundu takes part. The last phase of this ritual include '*Vilichirakkal*' ceremony in which the close relatives of the dead may be called out by their uncle.aunt or elder sister will try to fetch them from their kudi. There will be a bow and arrow in the hands of the dead person's son and a pot in the hands of daughter in law. they will get ready to go along with them , Then porunnon will say "*thari murinju alaku ozhukippokunne Ningalkku venamenkil pidichu veppin*" which means that please hold them back , then Komaram will hold the right hand of son and again give that family a place in the '*kudi*'. On the third day they have the rite Known as '*koottathil koottuka*' ,When they are joining their departed soul with dead karanavers soul. Women will perform fishing or "*meen koral*" on that day they thinking that, they are fishing the soul of their fore father" *adimukhan*". The first

¹⁵¹ A Ayyappan, Secretary of Aboriginal Tribes Enquiry Committee, *Report on the Socio-economic conditions of Tribes of Madras*, *Op. cit.*, p.95.

¹⁵² Jose Pazhookkaran., *Op. cit.*, p.38.

¹⁵³ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parampariyavum*, (Tr.), K.K.N Kurup, Sulthan Bathery, 2006, p.83.

fish is considered as the soul. In the evening a feast will be served. Special leaves will be spread in the Daivappura after serving food on that Porunnon will request karanaver to join the departed soul with them.¹⁵⁴

They will observe 'aadi' fourteen (karkkadaka fourteen) to perform yearly rites to dead. On this day they propitiate their ancestors with special dishes. Chicken, dosai, arrack will be served to please their ancestors. It is interesting now to see that Aadi 14 is regarded as the return of Sreerama from the forest after fourteen years of 'vanavasa'¹⁵⁵. They are not usually observed "aandubali" or "vavubali" which will be performed by hindus yearly. But, in this case again, they started to perform 'vavubali'¹⁵⁶. This shows the entry of new traits into thir system of worship.

They are reluctant to eat the meat of cows and buffaloes. It is evident that, their kin relationship with animals, who nourish their cultivation and provides of milk and milk products. The Mullukurumas settlements have certain kavus where they are protecting certain species of trees and animals. Their hunting – gathering mode of life is evident in the following song:

“Kumbamathengotto Pathamtheethi
Ambil Varum numbo Chovvaycha
Moodariyo Koppottunnu
Kalyana Panthalo edukkavenam
Panthala paniye edukkavenam
Kunnu kalakkanam Mirukam Kollanam
Kappu Kalakkanam Meen Pidikkanam”¹⁵⁷

They have only a prudent use of resources. The center of venerations are always within a secret grove. Like Kurumas, Kurichyas were also keen in conserving water and prudent in use of water. Their water conserving includes using

¹⁵⁴ ET Raju, *Op. cit.*, pp.70-71.

¹⁵⁵ An interview with Bhaskaran Vaidyar, Aavayil, 81 yrs, at his residence on 22-08-2019.

¹⁵⁶ Interview with Devaki, Former District Panchayat Member, Wayanad, on 11-11-2021.

¹⁵⁷ M R Pankajakshan, *Op. cit.*, p 100.

hollow palm or hollow stump of jackfruit tree. It is known as 'Keni'. It can be seen in the Kurichya settlement area. Kenis had been there in Nelliyeri tharavadu and Edamana tharavadu and had been drained 10 years ago¹⁵⁸. Paul Shepard opines that tribal people seem to live at peace with this world, who feel themselves to be guests rather than masters¹⁵⁹.

Uchal

Uchal is an important festival of Mullukurumas, it falls on 30th of the Malayalam month *Makaram* or on the 1 of *Kumbham*. After harvest every members of family will come together for celebrations. On that day karanavers or elders of the family will count the money of bhandaram in daivappura, and in the presence of every one it will kept there again at this time. People in the kudis will again donate coins, and ornaments also. on that occasion 'Porunnon will say the words such as "Vithorma. Veedorma, kuannorma, Kunju kutty orma',¹⁶⁰ So it is clear that they are reminding their family life and mode of resource use too on special occasions like 'Uchal'. They believe that uchal is an auspicious day for the cultivation of vegetables such as pulses, white guard, etc. When surplus production came with the settled cultivation, Uchal like celebrations arose for the distribution of products to their fellow beings who are living depending upon them. It is a social festival too as they include other sects such as Kattunaikkans and uralikurumas etc.

On the eve of Uchal Porunnon", the head of kudis will sanction his permission to conduct uchal to Paniyas, Kattunaikkas and uralikurumas. For better conduction of Uchal there should be 'Koyilam' or small temple or 'Kalakam' or Playground. urali kurumas are required for performance where there is 'Mudiyani Puli' Theyyam ; Paniyas are required for performing '*Kalimala Kandan villy theyyam*'. The head of uralikuruma is known as 'Mothali' it is his responsibility to bring two bows. Young Muthali has to bring one knife also and place it in front of 'Koyilam.' Naikka Mothali have also to perform like that respectively. Then

¹⁵⁸ Interview with Lakshmi, a member of Nelliyeri family on 14-08-2021, at her residence.

¹⁵⁹ Paul Shepard, *Nature and Madness*, Sierra Club publications, 1982, p 6.

¹⁶⁰ ET Raju, *Op. cit.*, pp.55- 56.

‘Porunnon’ will check the ornaments and coins put in the(*Pela*) bhandaram of Daivapura. Some times the money in ‘*Pela* ‘ may be used for conducting festivals. In the afternoon food will be served in the ‘*Daivappura*’ and after food, they will go to Koyilam or Kalakam. When the Moopan burns the lamp it is the inauguration of uchal ceremony . They will place their *pattu ,chilambu.,aramani*.Sword in front of Koyilam. It will be Mainly used by the Oracles or “Komarams’.Oracles played an important role among different tribal communities in Wayand., Uchal will last for two days, with the Vattakkali by Kattu naikkas, and Vattakkali of uralikurumas using Thappu , kuzhal. Vattakkali of Paniyas use ‘Thudi’ and ‘Cheeni’ in different circles. They never prefer to perform together. These people will be paid with paddy on their departure collected by their hosts Mullukurumas¹⁶¹

Thulapathu

Tenth day of the month of ‘Thulam’ is a special day for all Mullakurumas. On this day Moopan will send unmarried boys to bring fresh paddy from the fields.According to that they will bring the Fresh harvest from paddy,sama,ragi etcand leaves of mango trees and ficus Bengalinsis(al) and will place them in ‘Daivappura’. Porunnon will break the coconut and bathe the fresh paddy(kathir) and distribute the fresh paddy to nearby houses. This fresh paddy will be hung in Daivappura and granary too. A delicious feast will be served with the fresh paddy which is known as”*Puthan Koottuka*”.¹⁶²

Velapitt

“Velapitt” is a great harvest festival among the Mullukrumas. It is conducted on the eve of the week of crop harvesting. They will include their dependents such as Uralis, Naikkas,and Paniyas in this festival . It is obligatory for uralis to bring the bamboo baskets and winnowing basket on this occasion and Paniyas should bring plantain leaves. All these people will get equal participation in this harvest

¹⁶¹ Interview with Subhadra Kandamala 42 years old, at Kandamala Temple on 24/11/2019.

¹⁶² Interview with Mukundan, Pakkam,68 years old, at his residence Pakkam on 14/10/2022.

festival.¹⁶³ This festival will be celebrated in the "Koyilams" or in "Kalams". Programmes will start with the ceremony of 'daivam Kanal' and appam and feast will be prepared there and will be distributed among all people. Appam will be distributed on the basis of certain rights like 'Sthanohari' 'Aalohar', 'Ariyohari', 'Pidiyohari', 'Bandhu ohari'.¹⁶⁴

Uchal in Pakkam

MulluKurumas in Wayanad were divided under three topographical zones as 'karanadu,' 'pakkanadu' and 'parakkumeethal'. Each of them has their own festivals at their place. The Mullu Kurumas in Pakkanadu are celebrating 'Uchal' on makaram 30th or kumbam 1st after harvest. Even though 'uchal' is common to all Kuruma tharavads, it has become a festival at Pakkam where Kurumas from other zones used to gather. In 'pakkam thirumukham' colony, uchal will last for 4 days. Mullukurumas treat themselves superior than their counterpart, Uralikurumas. Even then, many Uralikurumas arrive at 'Thirumukham' colony for performing certain rites. An integral part of Uchal is 'chalikettu'. They will build artificial bund across the Kabani River and catch fishes through different means such as, caging, capturing, hooking. Big fishes will be offered to the god. Virgin hair of Kuruma girls will be also cut down at 'chali' ¹⁶⁵. On the second day, they will go for hunting which is an essential part of their ritual. Along with this, small girls will decorate their 'daivappura' and boys will clean up their weapons by using the water taken from their 'keni' or natural well. On the day of 'Chali,' they will dry up the 'keni' and use the fresh water for cleaning up their weapons first. The elders will prepare 'prasadam' by mixing cow milk and jaggari. Milk of the day will be provided for this purpose. Another important attraction of this day is hunting. It is a best example of their social conscience. In the earlier days, hunting was a mass movement

¹⁶³ Interview with Indira 56 years, Appad colony, at her shop on 26/05/2019, Pulpally.

¹⁶⁴ ET Raju, *Op. cit.*, pp 54-55. (Distribution of Appam based on relations rank and intensity).

¹⁶⁵ Interview with Vasu, a senior community member of Pakkam Thirumukham colony on 18-4-2021.

consisting of around two hundred people along with their hunting dogs ¹⁶⁶. Hunting will end up in the evening. Hunted meat will be shared among the members of hunting party. Leg parts of the animal will be prepared in the 'daivapura' and divide among all. The third day of Uchal is highest celebration. On this day, Uralikuruma leaders will arrive here for certain ritualistic dances. It is quite wonderful that eventhough Mullukurumas, treat Uralikurumas as their inferior, the venue of Uchal provides a situation of social harmony. Uralikurumas will receive paddy as their wages which is known as 'bellikoor' ¹⁶⁷. The Uralikurumas have certain rights when they come for uchal. The previlaged Urali families like 'mettikolli' and 'manikkot' will come there for the performances. When the Uralis arrive, Kurumas will meet the god as 'komaram.' Kuruma chieftains will unleash their grievances before God. God will suggest solutions to them. These people have three important gods, such as, 'pakkatheyyam,' 'poothaditheyyam' and 'karuman' ¹⁶⁸

This settled cultivation mode lasted upto1960 when the migrants came in a flow from Travancore areas. Till then this tribal people practiced paddy cultivation and subsistence farming on garden lands such as Karuthan paddy, gingelly,sama, ragi,ash guard, pumpkin and pulses.¹⁶⁹ Along with the arrival of migrants lemon grass oil, and Tapioca cultivation became wide spread. So this Settled cultivation mode lasted up to the second half of the 20 th century.

PANIYAS

Delivery Rites

After delivery, they observe taboo for seven days ¹⁷⁰. For twenty-eight days, they won't visit temples or kaavus. On twenty eighth day, the baby will be bathed and will be laid in the winnowing basket and spread rice, ghee, coconut pieces,

¹⁶⁶ Interview with Subhadra Kandamala, a community member, on 18-7-2021.

¹⁶⁷ Sebastian Josheph, *Manorama Daily*, "Varuthikalkkitayil Vattatha Aavesham", February 23 Thursday, p.3 1995.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ *Vikasana Rekha* , Poothadi Grama Panchayath,1996, p.7.

¹⁷⁰ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair , *Op. cit.*, p.91

camphor, etc. Midwife will be provided with oil, soap, betal leaves and money. On the day of the rice feeding, one black thread will be tied around the waist of the baby. It will not remove till death. Usually, delivery happens in the houses. Midwife is known as 'Mannathi'. She will bathe the kid and the mother on the fifteenth day of delivery. This is known as 'Pettukuli', on that day Mannathi will receive 'mundu', oil, coconut, money, etc.

Paniyas are animistic retaining their traditional practices. Their religion has not undergone many changes. Worship, offerings, divination, oracle, magic, and sorcery have an important place in their day-to-day life. Dances and songs accompany their rituals ¹⁷¹.

Kathukuthu Ceremony

Another ritualistic ceremony of a baby is ear boring. It is done at the age of three. The ceremony will last for one day and night. Chemmi (chief priest), Koima(successor), Kayatha(helper of chemmi), Miradan, are the leading figures of the ceremony ¹⁷². The expenses of this ceremony would be met by both father's and mother's family. A thorn is used to pierce the ear; for each and every function of Paniyas they will use paddy. In the ear boring ceremony also, some paddy will be placed in the courtyard and the child will be seated on it by the maternal uncle. Some 'aval' (beaten rice) will be there in front of the paddy. Uncle will feed the ear boring child with aval. All parts of the child will be covered by 'mundu'. Four sharpened thorns will be kept in wicks and four elders including maternal and paternal uncle will take the thorns and bring it to ear lobes of the child, but they will not pierce the ears. Later two people will pierce the ear lobes. The 'aval' is being eaten for reducing the pain. After the ceremony every participant will be served with a feast. The people who did not bring gifts to the child have to bring something for the preparation of feast. But nowadays, this ceremony has vanished ¹⁷³. Ear piercing

¹⁷¹ Sandhya Rashmi, *Op. cit.*, p.39.

¹⁷² Sarva Siksha Abhiyan *Op. cit.*, p.75.

¹⁷³ Interview with Sunanda, a member of Paniya community on 30-08-2021 at her residence Cheekkallur.

was not merely for girls but for boys too. Now the Paniyas are piercing their ear lobes from jewelleries

Marriage

Paniya Marriages are exogamous in nature, they never allow to marry within the same ‘kulams’.¹⁷⁴ There are three types of marriages among the Paniyas such as marriage by capture, marriage by service, marriage by elopement. But nowadays marriage by purchase is prevalent among the Paniyas. Usually, marriage is after the puberty of the girl.

The duty of searching for girl is entrusted to his uncle, who is known as ‘munnein’. At first, he will sit in the verandah of the girl’s ‘pirai’. After obtaining consent for marriage, the groom’s father’s sister, her friends, munnein will go for ‘adayalamkettal’ or some type of engagement. On this occasion, half ‘ana’ or one rupee will be tied to her waist cover or ‘aratti’. On ‘*adayalamkettal*’ day, the groom will bring three sirs of rice, coconut oil, chilly, salt, four ‘*panams*’, to the bride’s house. The groom have to pay maintenance to the bride after ‘*adayalamkettal*’. Their marriage is in the summer season at bride’s house. On the day of the marriage, groom’s party has to fetch one ‘para’ paddy, ornaments, ten rupees, etc. When the grooms party arrives, ‘Munnein’ of bride’s family will receive them on hearing the drum. Groom’s aunt will help the bride to dress up. In the earlier times there was a practice of bathing groom by Mooppan but now it is not there. There were several deviations in the marriage ceremony. According to one version, on the day of marriage the bride and groom will stand on two sacks of paddy and bride will throw a sack to the groom. He has to capture it without falling down. Falling down of paddy sack is regarded as a bad omen. According to another version, the marriage takes place when the clothes of the two, the bride and groom tied together by Chemmi.

¹⁷⁴ Sarva siksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.67.

There was no ‘*thalikettu*’ in the earlier times. But now there is ‘*thalikettu*’ among the Paniyas in the temples ¹⁷⁵. During marriage, a vessel containing water is kept beside them. Relatives will pour the water over the head of the bride and groom ¹⁷⁶.

Every year it is mandatory for Paniyas to pay money or paddy to the bride’s parents. If any violation takes place, the parents of the bride have the right to revoke the marriage. Women were actually an asset among the tribes. She has prominent place in their society. Females are never a burden for the Paniya parents. Divorce is possible among the Paniyas. If the wife dies, husband have to pay three rupees as penalty to the parents. Paniyas can marry widow of elder brother (levirate). But it is strictly forbidden to marry sisters of wife (sororate) ¹⁷⁷.

Paniya Mooppan will perform astrological observances when a Paniya falls ill. After bath, he will sit near the patient and place twenty two bronze anklets in a winnowing sieve and will go on shaking it. If the anklets stop to move, the patient will come through ¹⁷⁸. It is believed that the anklets produced sound as a result of devil’s action.

The Paniyas were said to have been recruited as bonded labourers by advancing loans for celebrating the Valliyoorkkavu festival. Paniyas are pledge before Valliyoorkkavu bhagavathy for the guarantee of the advanced amount. Until they clear off the debt, the debtor as well as the whole family have to work for the landlord.

The tribal people’s main source of livelihood is based on the forest. Their mode of thinking about the forest as universe, their social and cultural practices and work culture in Wayanad transforms their universe into a living space, emerges from

¹⁷⁵ Interview with Vasudevan Cheekkallur, writer from Paniya community on 4-9-2021 at his residence, Cheekkallur.

¹⁷⁶ Interview with Sarojini, Paniya, on 4-8-2020, at her residence, Mangakkandi colony.

¹⁷⁷ P. Somasekharan Nair, *Paniyar*, National book stall, Kottayam, p.82.

¹⁷⁸ Sandhya Rashmi, *Op. cit.*, pp. 46- 47.

egalitarian values and practices ¹⁷⁹. They consider the sky as father and earth as mother. They are excellent agricultural laborers and skillful in controlling the herd stock and doing agricultural chores.

They are actually afraid of Jenmis and they fear to stand even in front of Jenmis and are reluctant to wear new clothes. Jenmis confer certain rights upon leaders such as *Kuttan, Mooppan*, etc ¹⁸⁰.

Paniyas are animistic in belief as they worship nature, stones and trees. Hinduism has transformed their deities to Siva, Vishnu, Kali, etc. They have a series of gods such as, Karinkali, Malakkari, Kuliyan, Kuttichathan, so on ¹⁸¹.

Since the historic period itself, the paniyas have been agricultural slaves. But their life was confined around hunting in the gathering mode(See Chapter 2 P. for this song).’ Still, they are using different methods to catch fish such as big, flat bamboo mats or by poisoning water with herbs, bark, and fruit, which were beaten into a pulp ¹⁸² and thrown into water to sedate the fish for a while. Since the known-historic period of Kerala, the Paniyas have been slaves ¹⁸³. Paniyas claim that, they are the natives of Wayanad and that the Gowdas and Nair lords who had migrated to tribal areas enslaved them ¹⁸⁴. The establishment of feudal administration by the Rajas of Kottayam was the “culmination of the process of colonization of Wayanad plateau by people of plains”¹⁸⁵.

The stage of pastoralism and settled cultivation have gone hand in hand in Malabar. Practically the whole rice cultivation in Wayanad was carried out by Paniyas attached to ‘Edoms’ (Nair houses or places) or ‘Devaswom’ (Temple

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.16.

¹⁸⁰ Gopalan Nair C, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum*, *Op. cit.*, p.91.

¹⁸¹ P Somasekharan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p.32.

¹⁸² Edgar Thurston, Rangachari, *Op. cit.*, P. 61.

¹⁸³ Sandhya Reshmi, *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹⁸⁴ P R G Mathur, *Tribal Situation in Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1977. p. 96.

¹⁸⁵ Sandhya Reshmi, *Op. cit.* p.

property) of great Nair lords ¹⁸⁶.. They never possessed a mail address of their own. One of their burial song reflect their long lasting slavery, which is sited in the previous chapter .

In the settled cultivation Paniyas had remained as agricultural slaves of the jenmis and received 'Valli' or paddy as their remuneration. Since all the Paniyas in a particular area may be under a jenmi. They have to do all agricultural chores like irrigational control, ploughing, manuring, planting the seedlings, guarding the crops at nights with high degree of cooperation from the members of the village community. So in the peasant mode custom and tradition provide the overarching frame work within which human- nature interactions are carried out. While religion continues to permeate social life. In the realm of resource use it is supplemented to a significant degree by custom.¹⁸⁷

Paniyas and Valliyoorkkavu

Usually, they sold their labor to the Janmis through '*Kundalppani*' by raising advances for celebrating Valliyoorkkavu festival. It was a common practice in Wayanad, among the Paniya and Adiya community to raise the advance from the Janmis for celebrating Valliyoorkkavu festival. The most significant feature of this contract is that these tribal people pledge their labor and their family against a loan until the debt is paid back.¹⁸⁸ This practice not only existed in Valliyoorkkavu temple premises alone, but also in the other Kavus as attested by the '*Mulamkaranam*' obtained from Madaparambu Chetty family, near Pulpally, which says about the transfer of a Paniya family along with a transaction of land in 1940. It was a peculiar slave system of Wayanad. The oath they take before the deity to serve his master until the debt is paid off, forced him to stick on under that Janmi. They were always fearful about their promises before God. So, '*Valliyoorama*' became their chief deity during the pastoral, settled agricultural period. Nairs,

¹⁸⁶ Edgar Thurston, Rangachari, *Op .cit.*, P 60.

¹⁸⁷ Madhv Gadgil, Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p.38.

¹⁸⁸ P K Bhowmick(Ed.), 'Man and Life', *A Journal of Institute of Social Research and Applied Anthropology*, Vol 23, Nos 182, 1997, p. 38.

Kurichiyas, and also the Paniyas claim that the goddess of Valliyoorkkavu have been discovered by them. Paniya legend says thus:

“Long ago, two Paniyas, husband and wife the former of anchillam sib, the latter of Puttaran sib, were digging up tubers to eat. There were lots of creepers hanging down from the koli tree there. Suddenly the woman heard a rustling sound as though some one was throwing sand in to the wild growth of creepers. Then she looked up and she saw a human figure among the creepers. She asked her husband to have a look at it. As soon as he looked at it, the figure vanished but he went in to a trance. He rushed to the house of his master, a brahmin, entered the house and demanded divine honours. The Brahmin agreed to build a temple near the koli tree and also to do puja while the Paniya was to fetch fire wood, plantain leaves and clear the place of bushes. There was a natural icon near the koli tree which was installed for worship in the Temple.”¹⁸⁹

Agricultural Rites

So several rites and rituals were exercised by them in the settled cultivation mode in relation with the paddy cultivation. Even though they had no cultivation of their own, they had to perform certain customary rights related with the seed sowing and reaping the paddy. ‘*Vithidal*’ or seed sowing is done by a Paniya chieftain under a Janmi, which is the beginning of agricultural activities. ‘*Thottuparikkal*’ – it is customary to collect the paddy seedlings by the Paniya chieftain. ‘*Thottukoyyal*’- The ripened paddy will be first cut by a Paniya chieftain and a bundle of it will be offered before ‘Kuliyam,’ the fertility god along with coconut, betel leaves, etc and he requests kuliyam’s help and blessings to guard the crop till the end of the harvest. ‘Kalikkuliyam,’ another god of cattle was also propitiated during this period. One field of paddy will be given to each Paniya family after harvest. They will cook fresh pounded rice only after offering to their god.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ A. Aiyappan, *The Paniyas An exslave tribe of South India*, p.88.

¹⁹⁰ Sarvasisksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p. 71.

Tina Concept :Every Paniya hut used to keep a small platform inside, which is washed by clay and pasted with cow dung. This platform is known as ‘thinai.’, Such a concept may have developed among them in this stage of settled cultivation, when they could procure surplus from their labor.

It is regarded as the seat of ancestral spirits evoke in every domestic ceremonies . They place lamps in the tina offerings of paddy, rice and sometimes coins. even when the family migrate from one place to another , they take the wick and cereals to the new place. The concept may developed in the settled cultivation stage as they have remuneration in the form of paddy.¹⁹¹

Seeing gods or Daivam Kanal

Thira

They are conducting Thira annually or once in three years since the thira involves heavy economic burden.. This ritual lasts for two days in which chemmi and others will wear the costumes of the Malakkari,Bhagavthi, Gulikan,Mariyamma so on. Each god will appear before them and give them blessings. Oblations given to the god at the time of Thira is Cock, Toddy,*pattu*, etc.¹⁹²

Theyyam

Theyyams are the dubbing figures of the gods such as Kuliyan, bhadrakali, Thampurati and so on. If those who play the role of Theyyam drink the blood of cock offered to them, it is considered that the god is propitiated. Along with cock they were also offered with coconut,cash,plantain and beaten rice.¹⁹³ Those who are performing as theyyams have to look after certain taboos such as abstinence from

¹⁹¹ Interview with Ammini, Mangakkandi colony, 51 years, on 25/12/2019, at her residence in the colony.

¹⁹² Interview with Kalyani 74, chundakkolly colony on 4/06/22, Pulpally.

¹⁹³ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan , *Op. cit.*, p.103.

sexual relations three days prior to séance and avoid the contiguity with menstruating women.¹⁹⁴ Theyyam will predict the future things to happen.

Vellatt

Vellatt is performed for Kutty chathan, So arrack and cock is given for the Chathan. Kuttychathan theyyam will bite the neck of cock and drink its blood along with arrack.¹⁹⁵

Gurusi

It is conducted once in a year to satisfy Mariyamma. Gurusi is celebrated in the night by making hot water in a big vessel. They mix turmeric powder and calcium carbonate and that water will be poured on every body with a bunch of arecanut flower. They are conducting Gurusi in order to evade the diseases, and to bring in prosperity. They also will conduct 'Kanalattam', which is walking over the fire on the day of Gurusi.¹⁹⁶ There will be dance, vattakkali, Thudi, Kuzhal etc on this day

Dance is an essential part of Paniya rituals. They are using instrumental music and dances to please their deities. They are dancing not only in their religious meets but also at the festivals conducted by their masters. Meleri koottal is one of their important ritual dances in which they are giving offerings to 'kuli'.¹⁹⁷

Pudayattu

Pudayattu is done to ward off (pey) or evil from the pregnant women. Some items such as branches of Pala, kaithakkombu rice, coconut, cock, and seven nails will be placed near by and sing songs along with Thudi such as

¹⁹⁴ A Aiyappan, *The Paniyas An Exslave Tribe of South India*, *Op. cit.*, p.103.

¹⁹⁵ Interview with Channa, 66 Kalanadikkolly colony, on 27/12/2022. at Anganvady, Kalluvayal,

¹⁹⁶ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.78.

¹⁹⁷ Sandhya Reshmi, *Op. cit.*, p. 55.

Vava poode vaava poode
Kottathenga vechula
Koyinem thilem Vechula
Vaava Poode vaavapoode¹⁹⁸

The ghost affected girl will run fiercely catching pala, and kaitha will stand under a milky tree. Others will run after her beating thudi and will nail the ghost there to the tree. No body will go under that tree for several days.¹⁹⁹

Uzhinju Kalayal

If a Paniya falls ill, they will throw out coins after rounding them over the sick, if any body takes such coins, he may get affected by the same disease. So no Paniyas will take the coins lying down due to this fear.²⁰⁰

Death Rites: All rites and rituals of Paniyas are very elaborative and expensive. Death rites are also very costly. They usually bury the dead body and call the dead body as 'chaavu'²⁰¹. The dead body will be washed in hot water and covered with a new 'mundu'. They strongly believe that a new 'mundu' is supposed to be worn by a dead. They used to wear new 'mundu' after applying mud on it. On both ends of the body, they keep lamps, sandal sticks, rice, coconut, etc. Coconut water will be poured into the mouth of the deceased by close relatives. It is strictly observed by them. No close relatives of the dead will go out of the house on that day. A person will sit beside the corpse and chant mantras. He will be paid with money. In early days, payment was very meagre, nowadays it has raised up to RS/1000²⁰². Relatives will bring money and clothes which will be kept in a bundle beside the dead body. The beginning of grave digging will be done ceremonially by Chemmi,

¹⁹⁸ Sarva siksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.79.

¹⁹⁹ Interview with Vasudevan Cheekkalloor 67 years old, on 4/4/19 at his residence at Cheekkalloor.

²⁰⁰ Interview with Sujatha Anganwadi teacher, 56, on 16/07/23 at her residence Bathery.

²⁰¹ P Somasekharan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p91.

²⁰² Interview with Vasudevan Cheekkalloor, writer from Paniya community on 4-9-2021 at his residence, Cheekkalloor.

which will be finished by the nephews of the dead. The soil of the north will kept in the south and vice versa, the soil of the east will keep in the west and vice versa during the grave digging process. A ‘manchal’ will be made out of bamboo to carry the dead ²⁰³. They will call it ‘*Thandum kurukkum*’. The dead bodies of the Paniyas are usually buried after taking a trench four or five feet deep in the north south direction. At the bottom of the trench mud will be scooped out in the western side throughout the length of the grave to make a receptacle to receive the body which is placed in a mat with its head pointing to south. A little rice will also be kept in side the grave for the use of the dead spirit. It shows that they believe in life after death.

After the dead body deposited into the pit, a close relative will cut the black thread around the dead’s waist. After digging graveyard, the diggers should come near the dead body and strike the tools together. This ceremony is known as ‘*kathi kaikotu madakkal*’. If the grave digging was easy, they believe that the person has very few sins ²⁰⁴. Before placing the body in the pit, they will swing the ‘manchal’ carrying the dead body over the pit three times. Women and children are not allowed at the burial site. After the burial, the ‘manchal’ will be cut down and put around the grave ²⁰⁵. Cooked rice, earthen pot, betal leaves, tobacco are used to keep within the burial as they believe in life after death. Then they pour ‘*kara mullu*’ in the graveyard in order to ward off evils. Rice is spread on the grave after covering it with mud. ‘*Cikklam yard*’ is placed to ward off Bhadrakali from taking away the dead. Mooppan will break the pot containing the mixture of powdered charcoal and cow dung around the graveyard ²⁰⁶. After the burial, the burial team of burial will dip in the river and will get fums of burned hay before entering into the ‘pirai’ or house. The money given by relatives in connection with death will be entrusted to Mooppan. They pay homages to the dead on seventh day fourteenth day and after one year. Fourteenth day homage is known as ‘*Valiyapula*’. Chemmi will stay in the

²⁰³ Interview with Peter Ozhankal, Tribal Activist on 15-1-2020 at his residence, Ambatharu.

²⁰⁴ Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.75.

²⁰⁵ Interview with Peter Ozhankal, Tribal Activist on 18-2-2020 at his residence, Ambatharu.

²⁰⁶ Sandhya Rashmi, *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

house of the dead for fourteen days. On all these fourteen days, food will be served for the dead. For performing death rites, Chemmi and ‘Attali’ will receive fees. In ‘Kakkapula’ day, or on the seventh day, rice gruel will be placed at a distance of 50 to 100 yards away from the graveyard. Mooppan claps his hands and the crows will arrive and be fed with the food. This is an imitation of the ‘balikarma’ of the caste Hindus. ‘Attali’ is the actual performer of death rites. On the seventh day, ‘Attali’ will bring the soul through certain rites. He will ring the bronze bells in a winnowing basket with a song to absorb the soul. It is quite wonderful that ‘Attali’ has to sing the prayers whole night continuously, he cannot go from there till the next afternoon. Funeral ceremony falls on the seventh day or fourteenth day, but if circumstances do not permit, the ceremony can be postponed for six months, during when they were under a state of pollution²⁰⁷. After this, coconut and fried rice are placed on seven leaves and Mooppan recites some hymns and brings the soul to the *pirai*. The dead’s soul is known as ‘Nakal’²⁰⁸. Nakal will be kept inside ‘pirai’, it should be guarded by a lady, preferably relatives of the dead. She is known as ‘*kulikkarathi*’. ‘Kulikkarathi’ and ‘Nakal’ will be alone there. She will prepare food for herself and ‘Nakal’. On the third day, Nakal will be brought to the ‘Panthal’ in the courtyard, and they sing ‘penapattu’. When the song is over, Nakal will be taken and kept inside the ‘thinai’. Thinai is the sacred place within Paniya’s house. Then ‘*Kulikkarathi*’, now she is termed to *Melikkarathi*, Chemmi and Attali will come outside. They will go around the ‘Panthal’ in the following order such as Chemmi, Attali, and Melikkarathi three times. Then Attali will place the gruel in the panthal and recite like this,

“Innale chatha neenka
 Innale manja neenka
 Naaleyum nalpathunalum
 Enne kootti nadathitharanam”²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Malabar series; Wayanad people and its tradition*, Higgin Botham & Company, Madras, 1911, p.103.

²⁰⁸ Interview with Vasudevan Cheekkallur, writer from Paniya community on 4-9-2021 at his residence, Cheekkallur.

²⁰⁹ P Somasekharan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p.96.

It means that “hey, you died yesterday and you disappeared yesterday, please protect us for the coming days”. This song shows that they consider the dead as a god or protector, so they are treating the dead with high reverence. Then there will be feast served to everybody. They consider ‘jeevan’ or life as ‘cheeman’, size of *cheeman* is around that of a mustard, after life *cheeman* will turn into a ghost or (pretham).²¹⁰ If there is any scarcity for money, they will conduct ‘kakkapulai’ in the month of *makaram*, when there is no poverty for them. P.Valsala, in her famous work “Nellu”, which was written in the background of Wayanad, mentions about the celebration of ‘kakkapulai’ by the Paniyas in the month of *makaram*. The Paniyas have no belief in hell or heaven. They consider that after death they will go to ‘Keeyulokam’ or the lower world. Hence, they think that both sinners and good doers will go to the same ‘Keeyulokam’ after death and Paniyas will work under the same Janmis²¹¹. The bondage in this world will be retained in the other world. Paniyas call their deceased ancestor as ‘Penas’. They will sing ‘Penapattu’ to propitiate them. In the peasant society, they have the ability to store cereal grains. So, cereals especially rice plays a vital role in their rites and rituals. Rice plays an important role in their death rites. They keep cooked rice, earthen pot, betel leaves and tobacco in the grave²¹². They observe ‘Kakkapolai’ after seven days of the death. Rice gruel is placed at a distance of 50-100 yards from the grave and they will clap their hands to ward off evil spirits and to invite the death’s soul. This gruel is known as ‘Kakkakanji’²¹³. This ritual may be the imitation of “bali karma” of their thampurans or jenmis. But singing of *kakkappattu* and mourning after that is sole peculiarity of Paniyas death rites. Some lines of *Kakkappattu* are given here

Karana muthappan mare
Muthappa Daivame Thunachidanem
Ithinellavarum chernnidanam
Ellavarum njangal muttippadum

²¹⁰ PK Devan, *Op. cit.*, p.12.

²¹¹ P Somasekharan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 97.

²¹² Sandhya Reshmi, *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

²¹³ Edgar Thurston, *Ethnographic notes in Southern India*, New Delhi, 1906, p. 144.

Ithinu ellavarum ningal thunachidenam
Ithinu ellavarum ningal chernnidenam
Onnum Varathe Thunachidenam
Makkalkkum njangalkkum onnum
Varathe Kathu rakshikkenam
Vallooru Amma thunachidenam
Thudi mutti Chingini Kettippadum
Kottiyur Devan thunachidenam²¹⁴

In the Pastoral mode they were herders of cattle of the jenmis; they have do the okkal by controlling the cattle. so in order to protect the cattle they will do oblations for ‘Kalikkuliyan. While herding the cattle they came in to contact with other ideologies. Such contacts made them to borrow the gods and goddesses of their employers. In the eastern Wayanad under the influence of the Wayanadan chettiies the Paniyas accepted the Mariyamma and Kurichiya god Malakkari, whose shaman uses the typical Kurichiya idioms and slang terms .²¹⁵

Wayanadan Chetties

Wayanadan Chettis are believed to have arrived from ‘Kongu Dharapuram’ near Coimbatore.²¹⁶ This Kind of Chettis are seen in the Eastern Wayanad.²¹⁷ ‘Kongu nadu’ mentioned in their speech includes the areas of Erod ,Selam and Coimbatore. They are agriculturists by profession and follow ‘*Marumakkathayam* ‘ law of succession. A Aiyappanin his”Report on the Socio Economic Conditions of The Aborginal Tribes Of The Province of Madras” included the Wayanadan, Mandadan, Edanadan chettis in the list of Tribes.²¹⁸ There are several factors responsible for their arrival here in Wayanad. Spread of chola power and

²¹⁴ K Panoor, *Op. cit.*, pp.96-97.

²¹⁵ A Aiyappan, *The Paniyas An Exslave Tribe of South India, Op. cit.*, p.89.

²¹⁶ Interview with Appuchettiar, 100 years , Madayan Vayal , Chethalayam, on 14th March 2023 at his residence Madayan Vayal.

²¹⁷ A Aiyappan, *Report on the Socio Economic Conditions of The Aborginal Tribes of The Province of Madras, Op. cit.*, p.92.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*

continuous conflicts are some of the reasons for that. It is also said that they have been invited by the King of Kurumbranad, for the betterment of Temples as well as the cultivation.²¹⁹ Even though there is no solid evidence for their migration from Dharapuram, wayanadan chetti settlement had been found in the areas such as, ayyan kolly, Nenmeni, Noolppuzha, Mooppainadu etc, which is an extension of Tamilnadu. But they are still using some words such as *Akka*, *Annan*, *Atha*, etc which shows their relations with Tamil nadu²²⁰

Wayanadan Chettis are people of high hospitality and go hunting with hunting dogs.²²¹ "Narikuthu" or hunting the tiger was their important hunting sport which will be performed along with Mulukurumar and Pathiyar. This rite had both social as well as religious significance.²²²

Along with extensive cultivation, they were also proficient in commercial activities. They collected cardamom, pepper, etc from here and traded it at other places like Mysore. During the Pazhassi struggles, wayanadan chettis could procure many essential things for the Pazhassi from Mysore.²²³

Social Organization and Political Organization

There are five families recognized as heads of the community for all social purposes. Head of all Wayanadan chetties is Cheeral chetty; the responsibility to elect the head is vested with five prominent chetty families such as Amarambam, Chettikkodanna, Nambiarkunnu, Varikkeri, Kalathoor.²²⁴ There are five Prominent Chetti families among them to settle the local disputes and the issues pertaining to their community. It is said that this leader families were entrusted by the king himself as Cheeran chetty of Nenmeni, Thomattu Chetty of Mooppainadu, Kolappalli chetty of Munnadu, Chethaleth Chetty of Chenad, Peruvangottu

²¹⁹ Balasabha, Kudumbasree Mission, *Op. cit.*, P.46.

²²⁰ Interview with Vijaya 57 years, at Madayan vayal on 14/03/23 at Madayan Vayal.

²²¹ *Vikasana Rekha*, Nenmeni Grama Panchayath, 1996, pp. 17-31.

²²² Rao Bahadur C palan Nair, *Wayandu Janangalum Parambaryavum*, *Op. cit.*, p.124.

²²³ OK Johny *Wayanad Rekhakal*, *Op. cit.*, p .91.

²²⁴ *Vikasana Rekha*, Nenmeni Grama Panchayath, 1996, p.35.

Chetty of Kidanganadu.²²⁵ They were also known as Ivar Chettis.²²⁶ It is said that Wayanadan chettis were divided into 81 categories. Marriage within the categories is not allowed.²²⁷

Birth Rites

They will conduct "*Thottilil Kidathal*" after 16th day of child birth. Grand mother of the child will do this. Eventhough they are matrilineal they give more value to the son, They have a ritual known as '*kalam thodal*'.²²⁸ In order to find out whether the next kid is boy or girl. they put two packets containing salt and paddy in to water in a pot . They will cover the mouth of the pot and pick one packet after breaking the cover of the pot. If they get paddy , next baby is a boy, if salt next child is a girl.

Marriage

Two types of marriages namely *achara kalyanam* and *Vazhicha Kalyanam* are prevalent among Wayanadan chettis. In *Vazhicha kalyanam* the bride will be taken into husband's family and their children will get the right to their father's property. *kalyanam*. But in the *Acharam kalyanam*, women will remain as members of their own *Tharavadu*, and children inherit the property for their mother.²²⁹ In the earlier days they had a 'Sambhandham' type of marriage known as '*acharam kalyanam*', in this type of marriage wife cannot stay along with her husband at the husband's house.²³⁰ In the *acharam kalyanam*, different rites related to it may perform in the house; no 'panthal' or stage may be built for that. '*Nool Parisam vekkal*' is the next function of the marriage. On this occasion the groom's team will hand over the ornaments they brought for the bride such as *Tholanthi*, *Murichu kuthi*, *charad* etc.

²²⁵ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum, Op. cit.*, p. 52.

²²⁶ Interview with Appu chettiar, 100 years on 14/03/23.

²²⁷ Balasabha , Kudumbasree mission, *Op. cit.*, p.147.

²²⁸ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.45.

²²⁹ CV Joy, *Wayanattile Gothra Samudayangal jeevithavum Samskaravum*, Kottayam, 2017, p.274.

²³⁰ C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambaryavum, Op. cit.*, pp.50-52.

An elder male member or aunt of the bride will come along with the bride and will take it and go inside; it may be the first time that bride and groom will meet together.²³¹ Bride will not go with husband on the same day after marrieday. Married girl will go with her husband after the thalikettu. *Irakki kodukkal* is another function in which the bride will go with her husband. It will be coming on Thursday or Sunday. After the decision for irakki kodukkal bride and groom will be permitted to stay together in a room in the bride's house, it is known as "*koottiyadakkal*".²³² On the irakki,odukkal day wife will go along with their husband. In this type of marriages groom has to keep a dagger with him to perform the rites related to the marriage

Vazhicha Kalyanam

Vazhicha kalyanam is more official and elaborate in nature than the Achara Kalyanam. 'Panthal' for marriage will be built. The groom will not keep dagger like that of *Achara Kalyanam*; he also wears turban made of white dhoti. This type of marriage is regarded legal in which husband and wife are exchanging garlands and marriage is officiated by the Brahmin priests. The custom of "Nool parisham" "is not there in Vazhicha Kalyanam and the rate of *kanam* is also different, sixteen silver coin is paid as *kanam* in *vazhicha kalyanam*."²³³ Their marriages are exogamous in nature; they are not permitted to marry within the clan.

Mothali or tribal chief who is looking after the cultivation has certain rights on the marriage. When the groom leaves with his bride to his house mothali will provide him with two torches and two bundles of beaten rice and receives 'dakshina' in return.²³⁴

Elder members of the family or uncles of bride groom goes for seeing the girl, then the relatives of the girl will come to see the house of the bride groom.

²³¹ Interview with Indira 62 years at Pokkirimukku on 16/02/2023.

²³² CV Joy, *Wayanattile Gothra Samudayangal jeevithavum samskaravum*, Kottayam, *Op. cit.*, p.279.

²³³ Interview with Sathyan, Madayan vayal, 14/3 2022 at his residence Madayan vayal.

²³⁴ CV Joy, *Op. cit.*, p.280.

'Kanji kudi' is conducted in short by including both the parties alone and fix the date of 'anuvasam' or giving permission, it may be near to the marriage day. They have art forms such as "Kolkkali", 'Vattakkali' in the marriages. Ring exchanges are there too in the marriage day. Thalickettu will be before 12 noon²³⁵.

Death

Wayanadan chettis strongly believe in life after death. They will observe death taboo and balis too. Their death rites are similar to that of Hindus, *pulakuliyadiyanthiram* will be done on the 11th day of death after observing bali; till then bali will be observed by people in odd number.

They usually cremate the body, and will collect the ashes in a pot and pour milk in to that and will be kept under a milky tree such as jack fruit, and will drain it in the 'Papanasini' of Thirunelli. 'adiyanthiram' or death rite will be done in 16th day of the death. Death rites will be performed in the 'karkadaka vavu bali' day.²³⁶ 'Kolukodukkal' is performed by them on auspicious days, they will prepare meat, fish, liquor etc and give it to karanavers in order to propitiate the diseased souls like the ethnic tribes in Wayanad.

As they follow Marumakkathayam, sister and her children will be brought back to mother's house after the death of her husband. This ritual is known as 'irakki chodikkuka'. This will be done by brother and the relatives. If this is not done they consider it as against tradition. Sister and her children go to her home even without taking any of their things. This custom of *irakki chodikkal* shows the explicit form of Marumakkathayam.²³⁷

Menstruation

On the day of the Menstruation, they will make the girl to sit secluded for seven days, and inform their relatives and fix a day for celebration. On that day girl

²³⁵ Interview with Bhaskaran Madaparambu, on 12/07/22 at his residence Madaparambu.

²³⁶ Interview with Sukumari, 56 yers at her residence Eriyapli 2/09/23.

²³⁷ Interview with Appuchettiar 100 years, At Madayan vayal on 16/09/22, at Madayan vayal.

will wear new dresses and ornaments the relatives will bring gifts and sweets for her.

Delivery rites

‘**Pulikudi**’ is a peculiar custom existed among the Wayanadan Chettis in relation with delivery. It is performed in the 6th month of pregnancy. Parents and relatives will arrive and sweets will be prepared on this occasion. There is a ritual of predicting the gender of the kid by counting the sweets taken by the pregnant woman. Unlike other tribes they are sending the pregnant lady to their own home for delivery.²³⁸

Kathu kuthu

Kathu kuthal is performed by the elder member or maternal uncle of the child. It was done when the child attained 5 years of age. Thorns of kara or citrus fruit are used.

Gods

They are also worshipping the Mudiyan puli of Edakkal cave . F Faucett . who discovered the engravings at Edakkal cave mentions about their yearly pilgrimage to the cave like this;”Once a year the peak is the objective of the local chetty caste, many of whom live in the neighbourhood. They ascend the hill and scale the peak by a flight of dangerous step cut in the rock . On the top, where there are at present day but four posts and two cross pieces, they perform Puja to the goddess called by them Mudiampilli.”²³⁹ Each Tharavadu have their own tharas , Kavus, madams. They have a simple and a casual mode of worship. Poojas in this places were conducted by priests from their community only by observing fast and abstinence from fish, meat etc.Their means of livelihood during this period was exclusively based on cattle wealth .Each Tharavadus possessed of 100-200 cattles which included cows, buffaloes, goats etc. Inorder to protect their cattle wealth they

²³⁸ CV Joy Wayanatttille Gothra Samudayangal jeevithavum samskaravum Op. cit.,p.281.

²³⁹ F Faucett, ‘Notes on the Rock Carvings in The Edakkal Cave, Wynaad,’ in *Wayanad Rekhakal*, OK Johny Op. cit., P.231.

used to keep oblation for 'Aalakuliyān'. They also will keep lamp for *Alakuliyān* in the cow stable.²⁴⁰ They are also worshipping God Manmathan or *Bammathan*. Annual Vellat for *Bammathan* god may performed.

They worship 'Gulikan', Kuttychathan, Aaravilly Thampuran(Vishnu), Kalimala Thampuran, (Sivan) in the areas stretching from Muthanga through Ponkuzhi, Bathery and Pulpally. The Wayanadan Chettis have strong faith in the Sreerama , Seetha cult. According to their conviction, the story of Ramayana had evolved here. There are many places here that resembled with important context of Ramayana such as the birth place of Lava and Kusa, children of Rama, Valmiki's Asramam and so on.

Agricultural rites

Since the Chettis are agriculturists they have "Puthari." On that day fresh paddy sheaf will be collected from the fields and a puja is done at the temple and the sheaf will be hung in the houses.

Vrischika Samkramam

It is a gathering of Wayanadan as well as the *Mandadan Chettis* to commemorate their migrations here, and to settle the disputes within the community and also enjoy the community food on '30 Thulam' or on the eve of *Vrischikam* 1.²⁴¹

Ucharu

It is a harvest fest conducted on Makaram 30 at the end of the harvest. On this day feast, Paddy, vegetables, will be given to the laborers especially Paniyas, who helped them in agricultural chores. On this day Chettis will perform special poojas and keep thorns in the granary, *okkkal kalam* . They won't touch measuring

²⁴⁰ CV Joy, *Wayanattile Gothra Samudayangal, Jeevithavum , Samskaravum, Op, cit.*, p.291.

²⁴¹ Mundakkayam Gopi, *Kurumpurai*, Kalpetta , 2014, p.82.

equipment like, sir, Nazhi. Para etc and touch on the granary for the following three days.²⁴²

Art forms

Their traditional art forms include the Vattakali and Kolkkali, in which the theme may be from epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata. These art forms are performed in connection with occasions of marriage, thirandu Kalyanam etc. The theme of their literature is the story of Krishna, Rama Seetha and so on.

Mandadan Chettis

Another major category of Chetti community in Wayanad is Mandadan chettis, it is believed that they are migrated along with Wayanadan Chettis while C Gopalan Nair opines that they are migrants from Gudalloor.²⁴³ They are seen in the region of Pulpally and Chettappalam. Anyway, they are speaking Tamil in their houses. They have certain common features with the Wayanadan Chettis ;both of them will keep fore hair knot and eat together. Mandadans follow patrilineal mode of succession while the Wayanadan chettis follow matrilineal form of succession. Chief deity of Mandadan Chettis is 'Athiralan'. who possesses no Temples.

The three chettis seen in Wayanad such as Wayanadan Chettis, Edanadan Chettis, Mandadan Chettis are by their status and wealth, placed on top of the list. They are land lords and cultivators and have Brahmin priests to officiate, and have advanced civilization to the extent of Supplying two members to the Taluk board of Wayanad, One from Edanadan Chetti, and the other from Wayanadan Chetti.²⁴⁴

Edanadan chettis

Edanadan Chettis are responsible for the spread of aromatic rice varieties like Jeerakasala, Gandhaka sala and Kayama in the areas of Chekadi, Panavalli, Appapara, Aranappara, Madathinkara etc. Their main occupations are cultivation

²⁴² Interview with Yasodha, 64 yrs, at her residence Pulpally on 6/04/2023.

²⁴³ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair , *Wayanadu Janangalum Parambryavum*, *Op. cit.*, p,54.

²⁴⁴ C Gopalan Nair , *Malabar Series, Wayanad people and its Tradition*, *Op. cit.*, p.50.

and trade. The Chekadi region is known as “*Nellara of Wayanad*” or granary of Wayanad.²⁴⁵ Reasons behind their migration to here is not known exactly but it is believed that they might have come here for better cultivational, commercial prospectus.²⁴⁶ They speak ‘Kannada ‘ in their houses, so it is assumed that they are migrants from Karnataka Near edanad in Coorg. They have migrated here under the leadership of Nine prominent Chettis like Chekadi chetty, Pedaladi Chetti, Theypattam Chetti, Cheengadi Chetti, Edappadi Chetti, Ammani Chetti, Iradi Chetti, Pulimoottil Chetti, Edamala Chetti. Most dominant among them is Edamala Chetty.²⁴⁷ Fertile soil in the above said areas provided them with enough surplus. They belonged to both Vaishnava and Saiva sects, the former are wearing ‘ a Ayyankar’ symbol in the fore head and Saivates are wearing holy ash in the forehead. Both of them have Priests known as ‘*ayyankars*’ from Mysore. Preist plays arole of Magistrate in the socio- religious matters , when the caste Taboo is violated, he decides whether the victim may be excommunicated or not. Edanadan Chettis have no Temples of their own.²⁴⁸

Marriage Rites

There are several rituals related to their marriage; *Pennu Chodikkal* is one of such kind in which the Groom’s father, uncle etc come for this official function and in front of” nilavilakku” asks for the bride . Usually both the families might have come an agreement earlier .²⁴⁹ On the eve of marriage, there is a rite of bringing the bride to the grooms house known as *Koottikkondu varal*.

Wedding will be conducted at the groom’s house. On the wedding stage father of the groom will hand over 10 panams and wedding garlands to the ‘brides’ parents. It is a contradiction that when the price of garlands are 16 Panams, bride price is only 10 Panams only. Marriage rituals last for three days. After the death of

²⁴⁵ Interview with Ajayan, 56 years, on 12/10/23 .at his residence at Chekadi.

²⁴⁶ Mundakkayam Gopi, *Kurumpurai, Op. cit.*, p.85.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambryavum, Op. cit.*, p. 47.

²⁴⁹ Interview with Ajayan, 54 years, at his residence Chekadi on 16/07/22.

the husband, it is the duty of the husband's family to look after them. The widow has also the right to return to her paternal home after receiving 5 rupees and new dress from the husband's family. She can remarry too, but loses legal rights over the property of her husband. Edanadan chettis are following the Malabar custom of 'puda muri' on matrilineal line and marriage on patriarchal line too.²⁵⁰

Death Rites

Edanadan Chettis observe death Taboo from 5 to 11 days, which will end by the spraying of 'punyaha' or sacred water sanctified by the Brahmins. They either bury or cremate the body .

Mode of Inheritance

Unlike the Wayanadan Chettis , they follow "Makkathayam" or Patriarchal mode of succession. Their property will be given to their children only. Their dressing are also more similar to Kannadians. Unlike Wayanadan Chetti , women of Edanadans wear colorful *chelas* and male wear turbans.²⁵¹

Religious life

They have done cultivation in the fields of Thirunelli temple under Vemoth Nambiar. This aromatic paddy will be collected and presented it in the Thirunelli Temple on the Puthari day and a delicious feast will be served there . Even though they were a small clan, there are Saiva and Vaishnava sects among them . Marriage alliances between them are allowed but there are constraints to attend some religious functions with each other. Both of them worship in the Saiva Temple at Thrissileri and Vaishnava Temple at Thirunelli. Death rites of Vaishnava sect is not acceptable for the others. Their religious functions will be officiated by ayyankars Brahmins from Karnataka. The role of Ayyankar priest were infallible in their life as his words were ultimate in matters of excommunication and repentance²⁵²

²⁵⁰ Rao Bahadur C Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum Parambryavum, Op. cit.*, p49.

²⁵¹ CV Joy, *Wayanattile Gothra samudayangal, jeevithavum Samskaravum, Kottayam, Op. cit.*, p.301.

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p.302.

Mandan Chettis

Manadan Chettis are a small clan who live in the southern Wayanad and Gudalloor in Nilgiri district. They are only around a hundred families in Wayanad. Unlike the Wayanadan Chettis they also follow Makkathayam or Patrilineal mode of succession.

Thirandu kalyanam and Thalikettu Kalyanam are common among them. There is no prohibition for being got married even before puberty.²⁵³

Marriage

Their Marriage ceremonies last for 5 days .Parents of the groom will bring ornaments, dress etc for the bride.The groom and bride will exchange garlands and the groom will tie thali on the third day of the marriage. Divorce and remarriage are permissible among them. children of divorced women will live in their fathers house as their property inheritance are ensured there.Widows are allowed to remarry. In most cases widows will be remarried by husband's brothers as this community has only limited members.

Death rites

Usually they are cremate the dead bodies. Death taboo will be observed for fifteen days. They would bury children and those who are affected by epidemics. Mandadan Chettis follow the style of wayanadan Chettis and prefer to wear white clothes.

All these three varieties of Chettis have distinct characteritics in their mode of inheritance cutoms and rituals. But the similarity lies in the fact that all of them have done a lot for the expansion of paddy cultivation in Wayanad by utilizing the labour of agrestic slaves likePaniya, adiya communities.

This chapter examined the various aspects of the rites and rituals performed by different ethnic peoples in the Wayand in the 19 th century. It also tries to bring

²⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.303.

out the dynamics in the religious setup of MulluKuruma, Kurichya , Paniya and Chettis in the 19 th century in accordance with the socio economic changes. Next chapter will give more details regarding the the religion of 20 th century.

An examination of the rituals and practices of the tribes and other people reveals that they are an ensemble of practices that emerged in various stages of their social life. At the base of the religion of all tribes, we see a religion that is understood to have been belonged to the hunting gathering stages of life. A layer of this religion lays at the base of the contemporary religious practices. At a time while they were perceiving themselves as part and parcel of the environment they are living in, they just venerated those material objects and phenomena that protect or destroy the existing ecological surroundings. Fountains which are called Kenis were generally venerated by the triblas even in the twentieth century. The venerated kenis later become DaivaKeni to mean the fountain of god along with further social development. So are the cases of respecting jackfrut trees, Anjili trees etc. The shades of such trees later became the imaginary space of divine presence the objectification of which probably turned itself to be the future kavus and tharas, thadagazhis etc.

The traits of the pastoral mode of religion again are tellingly present across the tribes and others in the contemporary religion. It was while they were on the move during pastoral life that they first understood themselves to be different from nature and all others in nature could be used for their benefit. Pastoral people will also come in to contact with alien people and ideologies, who were the carriers of information about the resources in distant regions and technologies elaborated by other societies.²⁵⁴ Their social organization was based on kin relations. The ritual life of nomads or pastoral people were quite meagre, they had no Pantheon of gods like the peasant society. Ritual importance may be placed on livestock²⁵⁵ Kappi Mooppan shares his experience as herding boy in his younger days. He used to go to graze cattle with other friends. After the arrival in the forest, one herder will be

²⁵⁴ Madhav Gadgil, RamachandraGuha, *Op. cit.*, p.28.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.29.

entrusted with the whole cattles, one will go for collecting tubers such as noorokizhang, narakkizhang, Venni kizhang etc and they will capture birds in traps and if they get it they will cook it and eat from the forest itself²⁵⁶.

The worship of Kuliyan is prevalent in all sections of the wayand population. They never construct temples for 'kuliyan'. Kuliyan always stay in the 'thara'. In the pastoral mode, their main deity was "kuliyan," who protected their cultivation and cattle stock. Kuliyan who protect cattles is known as 'kali Kuliyan'. and protector of paddy is known as 'Kalakkuliyan'.²⁵⁷ After every harvest, they will propitiate kuliyan by providing liquor. One of their powerful kuliyan is installed in Manikavu Shiva temple near Koleri which is a famous temple belonging to Mullukuruma community. On Thulapathu day, they will give more care for their cattle like cutting of their horn and crushing their fissle etc will be done in the morning itself. Later we see Kuliyan in multiple attributes; Aaroodakuliyan and Vishnu maya Kuliyan etc. Arooda Kuliyan is showing the Path. Vishnu Maya Kuliyan looks after whole matters including crop protection and protection of cattle. They started cultivations, though very limited, such as punam. With the expansion of cultivation the belief system began to get newer forms.

With the expansion of the cultivation, the people must have to settle at a permanent location to protect their cultivations. This would create a natural pull from that location to settle themselves there. Naturally, they will seek more and more produce from a settled area through increasing production in a given area. This would also tend them to ward off conditions enemical for continuous and increased production. This is also dependent upon the availability of natural resources such as rain, sunlight, fertility of land which is not quite predictable. It was at this time that the people founded permanent points of worship in the form of thidangazhis, tharas and kavus. The production of variety of crops and rotation of crops happened during this period. They became more conscious about the seasons. In this period agricultural societies are in the process of encountering an expanding resource base-

²⁵⁶ Jose Pazhookkaran, *Op. cit.*, p.52.

²⁵⁷ Sarvasiksha Abhiyan, *Op. cit.*, p.72.

either through new technologies or, especially while colonizing lands earlier held by gatherers.²⁵⁸ During this mode of resource use man began to think of himself as separate from nature and has the power to exploit nature according to his wish. 'Oracles' or 'Komarams' began to appear in the rituals of Kurichiyas. Oracles are the mediators of god who will reveal the will of the god. The will of the god will be enquired by the Kurichiyas before the beginning of cultivation, harvest, important events like Thirandu Kalyanam, Marriages, calamities, disasters etc. With the progress of these settlements the places of worships would get more expansive spaces to house additional forms of worship that avail the surplus produced in cultivated land. The joint family system became prominent during this period as complicated cow herding, hunting and expanded agricultural chores necessitated a collective human labour. The matrilineal system or Marumakkathayam also strengthened during this period. D D Kosambi opines that early communities who had utilized plough for cultivation had to follow Matrilineal system of succession.²⁵⁹

This chapter dealt with social milieu in the religious belief of Wayanad in Pre industrial phase, thus entire focus was given to tribal life. Historically tribes lived in Wayanad through all the above stages of life though their chronology is not evident by the available sources. But by using the tech regressive method along with inputs from existing studies, we are now in a position to formulate an idea about the existence of various modes of resource use in the pre industrial times.

Our concern was limited to the tribes in this chapter on account of the fact that all other religions entered in Wayanad comparatively late who might not have undergone life in these modes of production. All other religions entered Wayanad through migrants from around Wayanad. Among them the Jains, chettis and some migrants from low lands of Malabar lived well in the settled cultivation mode before industrialization. The factors related to the religion of these communities are very well maintained by themselves prior to Industrial mode of life. The migrants

²⁵⁸ Madhav Gadgil, Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

²⁵⁹ DD Kosambi, *India Charithra Padanathinoru Mukhavura*, V Karthikeyan Nair (Tr.), Kozhikode, 2006, p.54.

brought their religious ideology along with them especially in the late phase of settled mode of production. Usual communications and interactions between the migrants and tribes made the tribes know about the new religious ideologies, rituals and traditions apart from their primitive practices. In addition to that migrants tried to reinstate their epical incidents in different areas in Wayanad. Thus in the later phase of settled mode of resource use, new elements of religion entered in to tribal religion, they began to accept tantric mode of worship which means that tribes had given up 'Madhyamam' mode of worship with 'Uthamam' mode of worship, practiced vegetarianism etc. Thus a pan Indian or pan Hindu belief system and rituals arrived in to a tribal belief system. Best example for this instance can be seen in the Bhadrakali and Malakkari conflicts. Malakkari said to have reduced the power of Bhadrakali and infused human qualities in her when Bhadrakali demanded a hundred human heads Malakkari arranged it with hundred *kumbham* filled with toddy. Bhadrakali was actually subdued by Malakkari and she became a mild Kurichyan goddess.²⁶⁰ Malakkari is said to have stopped bloody sacrifices among Kurichyas; replaced animal sacrifices by offerings of toddy or palm wine.²⁶¹ This myth may be incorporated late in to their oral tradition to legitimize the patriarchal mode of succession instead of Matriliney which had been prevalent among the Kurichyas in Wayanad. Promotion of toddy instead of bloody sacrifice or animal sacrifice shows the predominance of vegetarianism and *uthamam* mode of worship over *Madhyamam* mode or sacrificial mode of Worship. Patriarchy became strong among the Kurichyas after the arrival of migrants only and through certain welfare measures of govt such as independent houses, ration cards etc prompted them to be nuclear family and patriarchal too.

It was at this point that elaborate religious rituals and practices began to take shape as mentioned above in detail. The next chapter will discuss the developments in the realm of religion in Wayanad along with the spread of Industrial mode of life in the area.

²⁶⁰ A Aiyappan, K Mahadevan , *Op. cit.*, p.86.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.83.

CHAPTER 4

RELIGION IN WAYANAD INDUSTRIAL PHASE

An Industrial period in Wayanad would be embarrassing and we may pose many questions in this regard. The basic question would be whether Wayand was industrialized to any extent in nineteenth or twentieth centuries? This chapter considers the factors regarding the Industrial society and the related religious developments in Wayanad. It is impossible to postulate the development of industries and industry related population rising in the land of Wayanad to mean that it housed a number of industries and consequent dimensions of economy, society and culture. We all know that Industrialization developed in the west originating in England and was spreading it to the rest of Europe and the world. It was also the central propeller of capitalism in the world over. But it is important that the experience of capitalism in the non- European world took the shape of imperialism and colonialism. Thus, the difference of the nature of experience notwithstanding, the capitalism grew as a world system as a result of which almost all part of the world were incorporated in to the capitalist system. Thus the consideration of the industrial period of the Wayanad is based on the absorption of the Wayand region to the world capitalist system through the hands of colonialism. The cultural form of the Industrial and capitalist life world is modernity.

A discussion on Industrial period of Wayanad is really the facets of the incorporation of the area of Wayanad in to the global industrial economy and society. Strictly speaking, Wayanad began to feel the elements of modernity in its socio economic life by the time of Mysorean domination. Mysoreans had introduced new land and revenue settlements. It was so efficient that the British, though attempted to bring a new system of their own, could not but follow the Mysorean system¹. They had also established extensive road networks and started working

¹ K K N Kurup', 'The Kurichya Rebellion', in *Thaliyola*, Kerala archives, Vol11, part 1, 2010., pp.32-33.

with modern war technologies². It is well known that Tipu had live and constant contact with the French and had imbibed many values of the revolutionary France the ideas of which were introduced across this domain. But the actual appending of the region of Wayanad was taken place during the British colonial rule in Wayanad.

The wide spread use of Fossil fuel, hydroelectricity and nuclear power are identified to be the major form of power source of the Industrial technology³. These are beyond consideration on Wayand. But we can only say that Wayanad became a point of extensive road and transportation network based on the fossil fuel energy. But it witness the presence of the hydel projects of Banasura Sagar and Karappuzha. The former was an irrigation cum power generation project commissioned in the year 1979 C E and the latter is fully an irrigation project started in 1977 and completed only in 2004.

Nineteenth and twentieth century also found new additions to the Wayand population. There was visible settlements of Rawthers who accompanied Mysoreans, Nairs accompanied Pazhassiraja and British settled during the colonial period. Wayanad colonisation scheme is another example of new addition⁴. The statement of population of the area is shown in another chapter⁵. There is tremendous increase in the population of the area in the twentieth century. The sudden jump in population in 1951 is the reflection of the flow of people to Wayand during what is called the Travancore Migration since 1940s. The multiplying items of usage and consumption might be measured through a detailed study of the urbanization and development of markets in connection with it. We can assume that there was a corresponding increase in the consumption of materials. The entry of new people is understood to have been expanded the cultivating areas to respond to

² See chapter 2 pp.121-123.

³ Madhav Gadgil Ramachandra Guha, *The Use and Abuse of Nature This Fissured Land an ecological history of India*, Oxford university press, Delhi, p. 40.

⁴ The British needed lot of teakwood during World War II to build war ships. More than 100,000 acres of land in Wayanad was under the occupation of an establishment called British Royal Fund. The British Raj had distributed around 80,000 acres of it to soldiers who participated in the war.

⁵ See Chapter 2 (Table 2.10) p.137

the fresh needs of food and other necessary items. The research fieldwork shows that the traditional annual cropping system gave way to multiple cropping system after the coming of the migrants from outside. Traditionally they have *nancha* cultivation which was an annual one to which they now added *puncha*. Traditional mode of cultivation lasted up to around 1950s till the migration bloomed into fruit. Several innovations in agricultural field like two crops in the paddy, cultivation of cash crops started only after the arrival of migrants. “We learned the cultivation of ‘punja’, rubber, pepper, from *Chettans* (migrant Christian farmers). Their arrival is a blessing for us.”⁶ Their mode of fuel use has been changed from the pastoral as well as gathering mode to the combined use of human muscle, animal power, as well as wood fuel, and hydroelectric power. Along with that, this period marked the use of metals, plastics, silicon chips and synthetic pesticides⁷ and manure. This period is marked with improvement in technology too. Lorries were widely used in Wayanad at that time to carry timber as well as different forest produces from here to Industrial centres⁸. But there is a trend of decrease in the paddy cultivation from 1970s which denote an increase in the garden land cultivation, may be responding to the new global demands of commercial agriculture. Along with this people began to use chemical fertilisers in large amounts in both paddy cultivation and commercial cultivation. A place which had abundance of natural manures is found to have been using chemical fertilisers extensively by the end of the century⁹. They also made use of chemical pesticides in great volumes in their cultivations¹⁰. This was the result of the development of multi-cropping in the area.

This was part of increasing scale of resource catchment. By the twentieth century at least the local needs as well as the colonial needs together led to the

⁶ Pokkan Mooppan, Idamala, in *Souvenir of Pulpally Immigration & The Dedication of Newly Built Church 1950-1988*, p.127.

⁷ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *This Fissured Land An Ecological History of India*, Delhi, 1996, p. 40.

⁸ Interview with Janaki Amma, Niravathu, 87 years old, at her residence, at Shed, Pulpally, on August 17, 2022.

⁹ See Chapter 2, p. 143.

¹⁰ See chapter 2, p.150.

expansion of the space of exploitation in Wayanad. Along with multi-cropping, the space of mono-cropping also expanded. There was a widespread expansion of the cultivation of coffee, tea, cinchona, eucalyptus, teak and rubber etc. throughout the twentieth century. Both European and local planters took part in this expansion. We have already mentioned the extent of expansion¹¹. All these plantations were part of the increase in the scale of resource catchment of the industrial world. To put it differently, the industrial and consumerist needs of the Industrial society of the world deepened its resource exploitation through the expansion of plantations. This was furthered by the adoption of the commercial farming as their culture by the natives. Now it can be assumed that there was a tremendous increase in the consumption of resources in the area due to increase in the local and global demand.

Such developments had also brought about changes in the nature of resource usage. The introduction of the new notions about land lays at the base of all these developments. Tribes never thought the forest to be a property of them. They just availed it to collect and produce the basic needs of life. All efforts they put in was on a kinship basis. Others including all migrants also viewed their usufruct of land as a right rather than considering land as an exclusive property. The colonial policies on the land was based on proprietary ownership of the land considering the land as the *dominium* of the possessor. This was a totally exclusionary authority over the land in its whole bearings. Vast areas of lands and forest, on which the gatherers and pastoralists enjoyed their customary rights were taken over by the forest laws and migrants during this period. Ideologies were totally changed also. Industrial mode totally rejected the “gatherer mode of man as a part of community of beings, or even the agriculturist view of man as a steward of nature. Instead, it is emphatically asserted that man is separate from nature, with every right to exploit natural resources to further his own wellbeing. Nature is now desacralized. What has come to be venerated instead is the market place. The market is supposed to rationally allocate the use of resources so efficiently that all individuals are as well of as they

¹¹ See chapter 1, pp. 68-72.

could possibly be.”¹² As the colonial power concentrated on the exaction of maximum revenue, the land under cultivation was their immediate concern and they finalized revenue settlements hinging around ryotwari system. The whole of Wayanad came under Nair Jenmis who were the satellites of the Pazhassi raja. The Kurumas and Kurichias had to pay taxes to their Nair chieftains then. When the British came, the Jenmis remained in the same positions. During the British period, collection of land revenue in Wayanad was arbitrary and it was fixed by revenue collectors ¹³. Agricultural lands were categorized into dry and wet lands. Thomas Warden introduced a new revenue settlement for wet lands, it proposed the deduction of three ‘pothis’ for each ‘pothi’ of seed sown to meet the expenses of cultivation and the rest was divided between the government, Janmi, and the cultivator equally ¹⁴. The compulsory taxation created a crisis for the Kurumas and Kurichias.

The forests further were declared as state property the use and exploitation of which was barred for the natives including tribes of the region. Wildlife protection Act 1972 had also a special bearing on this situation. It specifies that “No person shall hunt any wild animal specified in schedule I, II, III, and IV except as provided under section II. It also specifies that no persons shall willfully pick, uproot, damage, destroy, acquire or collect any specified plant from any forest land and any area specified by notification by the central government ¹⁵. Hunting was a ritual as well as food gathering method of all tribes in Wayanad. The tribes in Wayanad has ensured their protein supply through hunted meat and fish caught from the streams. The Wildlife Protection Act of 1972 completely prohibited their entry into the forest,

¹² Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *This Fissured Land An Ecological History of India*, Delhi, 1996, p 45.

¹³ Dr. Joy Varkey, "impact of colonialism in tribal communities in Wayanad" in *Inner spaces*, Dr Priya Pillicode (Ed.) Vol I, Issue I, June 2016, Bilingual Half *Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, p 40.

¹⁴ J. Rejikumar (Ed.), Kerala State Archives, *Greame's report on the Revenue Administration of Malabar*, 1822, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010, p. 289.

¹⁵ <https://tribalnic.in/FRA/wildlifeact>, Government of India, Accessed on 12/07/2024, p 14.

it stopped their ritual hunting too. Along with that, many of these ethnic tribes especially Kurichias who were best medicinal practitioners lost all their means to collect herbs from the forest.

Kerala private Forests (vesting and assignment) Act 1971 too had an effect of alienation of forest people. It provides for vesting in the government of private forests in the state and for the assignment thereof to agriculturists and agricultural laborers for cultivation¹⁶. This act enabled the state to sell the forest land for cultivation which led to the inaccessibility of forest to the tribes. By document, 19,000 acres of land was in the hands of Pulpally Devaswom. As per the government order, hundred acres or more land can be sold or leased out with the permission of District collector. Without taking prior consent from District collector, Devaswom leased out the land to migrant peasants. Many ethnic tribes had been enjoying traditional rights of hunting and gathering there. When Devaswom leased out this land, High court intervened in that and nullified the lease. Then, Devaswom supported the migrants to cultivate the land which was a provision in the Private Forest Act 1971. Tribal people remained in the fragmented piece of land. They lost their traditional rights of hunting, wood and fodder collection, etc. They never possessed title deeds and documents over these land in the modern concept¹⁷.

This weakened the communal life and kinship structure of life, and created distresses for tribal life. As far as tribes are concerned, their little world was disrupted, right in the land was limited, and in many cases, lost with the result that a new pool of free laborers who could move to the world outside for earning their livelihood. By the middle of the twentieth century, we see the struggle of kurichiyas to keep kinship intact so that they can keep on living on agriculture. By the end of the century their matrilineal kinship households and clan began to be weakened and currently they have started living in separate nuclear families. Abolition of Joint Family System Act of 1975 could have a crucial impact over this system.

¹⁶ www.niyamasabha.org. Accessed on 12/07/2024,

¹⁷ P K Prakash, *Anyadheenappedunna Bhoomi*, Kozhikode, 2002, p. 30.

Marumakkathayam or matrilineal system of inheritance was prevalent among the Nair and ambalavasi communities in Kerala. It was also practised among the Kurichya community in Wayanad too. Under this system, property will be inherited through maternal uncle to nephews and nieces. Head of the family who is known as Karanavar will control the entire asset of the family. Only one male member of the family is allowed to enjoy the property of the family and headship too. *Tharavad* became the nucleus of joint family system in Malabar. The customary law of inheritance was codified by the Madras Marumakkathayam Act of 1932. This system of Inheritance was abolished by Joint Family system Abolition Act of 1975, by the Kerala State Legislature ¹⁸.

By this time, the Kurumar became most mobile and they earned a commendable advancement in acquiring government jobs and other means of livelihood from outside. Paniyas who had been used by the migrant population as free labour by the migrants in pre modern period have now become almost equal to agrestic slaves of the region working for all segments of the society in Wayanad including migrants, landlords and other tribes. The end of the bonded labour is a significant development in this connection. It is also evident that the other tribes too turned themselves to be free labourers. H R Morgan, The Deputy Forest Conservator had noted that, “The Forest department by 1860 delivered 2,00,000 cubic feet of timber to the barracks at a cost of only 1 rupee/ Cubic feet after all charges had been paid”. The labour he employed for this job was recruited from the Kurumbas ¹⁹. Kurumbas or Kurumas were employed as axemen. They fell and square timber with great accuracy. They also excelled as cartmen, road labourers ²⁰. Karimban, an elder community member told that, he had gone for coup labour for cutting trees along with British ²¹. H R Morgan again says that “Kurumbas were paid for a log in the

¹⁸ <https://en.m.wikipedia.org>, accessed on 12/7/24.

¹⁹ Kavita Philip, *Civilizing the Nature, Race, Resources and Modernity in Colonial South India*, Orient Longman, 2003, p. 62.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Interview with Karimban, 90 years old, community member, on January 14,2023, at Poojakoottangal, Sulthan Bathery.

early days, they used to fell a tree that would measure 12 cubic feet²². Later the payment was given for cubic feet. They were reluctant to cut big trees in the gathering mode as, large trees were regarded as ‘Swami tree’ or God tree. But when the remuneration increased, this difficulty was overcome. Forest reserving actually introduced certain impediments on the use of forest by Kurumas. They were not allowed grazing, so their cattle stock declined. The area of reserved forest was extended by more than 500 square miles to over 17,000 square miles. The number of Forest offences reported during the year rose, the increase being particularly marked in case of unauthorized felling and illicit grazing²³. Their income from cattle rearing dwindled. So they began to go for coolie labour. ‘Kappimooppan’, the Pakkam king of Kurumas remembers that many Kurumas had gone for plantation labour at Mananthavady. He himself had gone to forest work for demarcation through ‘Jenda.’ Mullu Kuruma women used to unhusk rice and sell it in Mananthavady, this job was known as “koolan kuthal.” After selling the husked rice they will fetch groceries from Mananthavady²⁴.

Bonded Labor System (Abolition) Act of 1976 defines bonded labor system of forced labor under which a debtor enters in to an agreement with the creditor that, he would render service to him either by himself or through any member of his family for stipulated or unstipulated period of time, either without wages or for nominal wages²⁵. Bonded labor system existed in Wayanad for a long time. Paniyas and Adiyas were subdued by the jennis under bonded labour system. Thus the labour was set free.

Breakage of Joint Family is quite evident in kurichiya life world. Kurichias had Joint families consisting of members from three generations. It was organized under the leadership of Pooppan(Karanavar) and was based on the matrilineal form

²² Kavita Philip, *Op.cit.*,

²³ *Madras Administrative Report*, 1901-02, p XIV.

²⁴ Jose Pazhookaran, *Kappi Mooppante Kadanubhavangal*, Kannur, 2011, p 81.

²⁵ The bonded labour system (Abolition) act, 1976 And the prohibition of employment as manual scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, National Human Rights commission, Delhi, 2021, p. 2.

of succession. The Kurichiya Joint Family provided them social security. There is no destitute, nor beggars among the Kurichias. But Joint families have certain disadvantages too, like lack of desire for hardwork, initiative and ambition. Almost all Kurichya family became nuclear after 1990s by forfeiting all its merits due to some reasons. Breakage of Edathana joint family was due to the allure of individual free houses offered to them by the local tribal developmental agency. When they were partitioned, fifty nuclear families came into being. Now it is raised to seventy five ²⁶. By 1990s, almost all Kurichya Joint families had been broken down into nuclear families. Whole of their joint properties had been shared among them. Thus, collective farming among the Kurichias has turned into individual cultivation by twentieth century. Even though they partitioned whole joint property, a limited land was kept under joint ownership which will be utilized for marriages of Kurichya girls, festivals, running of *Tharavattu* temples, etc. This land and its income is still used for common social and ritual functions ²⁷. Another important change that occurred after the decline of matriliney was the practice of keeping the children along with their parents. Responsibility of bringing up children in their maternal home and engaging them in the hunting, and cultivational activities, which had been practiced in the Nineteenth and early twentieth centuries completely stopped. After 1985, parents began to show more responsibility and interest in the education and marriage of their own children under their control. Literacy rate among the Kurichias improved much after 1990(78.51) ²⁸.

This was further reflected in other facets of life. The notion of untouchability has considerably reduced among the Kurichias in twentieth century due to rapid contact with other people and urban people. In the Nineteenth century, approachability of Paniyas was totally denied by Kurichias in fear of pollution. But in twentieth century, they began to employ Paniyas to do work on their paddy

²⁶ A Aiyappan, *Ecology, Economy, Matriliney and Fertility of Kurichyas*, Calcutta, 2008, pp. 137-138.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁸ Viswanadhan Nair, *Kurichiar oru Naravamshasasthra padanam*, Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 2002, p 208.

fields. They began to visit public places regularly and began to send their children to school in contrary to the Nineteenth century pollution fear ²⁹.

In the Nineteenth century, for Kurichias, marriage was not a special, expensive function. It was only an event where men and women are beginning to live together. The wedded couple will see each other only after many days of their marriage. It may be after several months, on the occasion of *payakodukkal* or on the first night. But in the Twentieth century, boys insist to see their girls before marriage, even though they still prefer to marry matrilineal or patrilineal cross cousins. If the boy does not like the girl fixed by the Karanavar, that alliance will be dropped. In the twentieth century marriages, “*Kettukalyanam*” and engagement function are very common. The old practice of *payakodukkal* has completely vanished ³⁰. Simple ceremony of marriage has been replaced by elaborate marriage functions on Nair lines like exchange of garlands and wedding rings. Total cost of marriages has also been increased considerably comparing to their traditional type of marriages. This type of marriages will take place after customary visit to temples in their mother’s tharavadu.

Kurichyas in the past had high fertility rate in nineteenth century due to many reasons. Herding of numerous cattle stock in the forest, labor intensive paddy cultivation, lack of direct responsibility of parents to look after their children under matrilineal system, etc were the reasons contributed for the high fertility among them. Every Kurichya family would have an average of eight children in the nineteenth century. Early marriages of Kurichya women immediately after puberty was also a reason for this.

Anyway, by the twentieth century property partitioning, nuclear families, and patrilineal system of inheritance contributed much for small family norms and

²⁹ Interview with Cheruvayal Raman, Traditional Farmer at his residence Kammana on 14 March 2022.

³⁰ Interview with Annan A R, farmer, 68 years old, at his residence, at Arambattakkunnu, on 22 January 2019.

rearing up of children became the sheer responsibility of parents ³¹. Emergence of nuclear families as well as the patriarchal mode of inheritance among Kurichyas were the significant changes occurred in the industrial mode. Before 1970s, total land of Kurichya mittam is vested with the ownership of a Karanavar or 'Pooppan'. So, 1965-70 levy or tax to the government was collected without considering the joint family system among Kurichyas. Every Kurichya mittam consisted of about 100-200 members. Later they escaped from the levy collection by sending complaints to the government. It was only a temporary arrangement. In order to escape from levy for goods, they decided to partition their paddies among the members of the tharavad. Nuclear family certificate became essential for them to have ration card, housing loan, etc. It led to the break up of the joint family set up. The youngsters in the family too have shown deep disinterest to the joint family system and Marumakkathayam.

In the nineteenth century, Kurichyas were never willing to eat the flesh of domestic animals and working animals. Eating of domestic animals was treated by them as equal to eating human flesh. But now, they have started to eat meat from the hotels and eat domesticated animals too. Hunting has become less remunerative for them due to large scale clearance of jungle by migrants. Wild Life Protection Act of 1972 totally prohibited the poaching of jungle animals. Ritual hunting also came to an end with this government regulation. It was essential for them to hunt on their caste ceremonies such as *thirandukalyanam*, marriage and *thulapathu*.

Here we see the tribals who had been leading a life that has very little functional connection to that of the migrant life world now had to respond to the new situations where the proportion of migrants increased disproportionately and their life world has been traversed by a new political economy and culture. The kurichiya rebellion to a great extent was a response to these developments. The culture thus thrived is called modern. The culture of modernity always disregarded the local and preferred grand idioms to the little traditions. Here the distinctive life

³¹ Interview with Leela Athikolly, at her residence, Athikolly, Vellamunda on 11 August, 2023.

followed by the tribals began to be eroded in different ways; they lost their rights in the land and resources, their traditional kinship structures lost relevance and their culture began to be dealt with as a degraded one and consequently their religion. Culturally the notion of homogenization was gaining momentum at this time. This has been creating a profound impact in the realm of religion in the region as was elsewhere in the country. All religions under this vintage began to be changed in accordance with the new perceptions of a homogenized cultural world.

With the expansion of roads, extension of road networks and the growth of modern transportation systems, the people who generally remained immobile began to be highly mobile as a result of which people and ideas flowed in and out especially in the case of tribes. From now onwards we see the erosion of syncretic traits of the religions in the area. For example the traditions of the Kallyanathupalli which maintained highly syncretic religious culture began to fade away in the twentieth century.³² Further the idea of a unified Hindu religion began to be emerged in this circumstances due to various reasons³³. Along with that an intensive drive for a proselytizing Christianity too emerged out of these conditions. Various agencies came up to play the historical role of this process. Christian Missionaries had been sincerely working to increase the number of converts in Wayanad as elsewhere in the country. The cultural criticism paused by the missionaries had been creating repercussions at the level of the natives which are articulated in the anti-missionary narratives and activities of the 'reformers'. These reformers always postulated the possibility of homogenized religions unleashing energies for unified and homogenized religious platforms³⁴. Through the colonial knowledge formations platforms such as legal development processes, ethnographical ventures and census

³² See chapter 5, pp. 327-332.

³³ Muraleedharan, Dr T. Muhemmadali, *Social Life in South Malabar (1921-1947) Relief, Reform and Nationalism*, PHD Thesis submitted to Calicut University, 2004, pp.176-180. See also Susheel Sreevasthava "Situating The Gentoo In History, European Perceptions Of Indians In Early Phase Of Colonialism." In *Economic and Political Weekly*, February 1, 2001.

³⁴ Most of the social reformers of nineteenth and twentieth centuries including Ram Mohun Roy, Dayananda Saraswathi, Sree Narayana Guru etc. Imagined religions in this way.

administrations, colonialism had been constructing such homogenized categories discursively and non-discursively. The religious developments of twentieth century Wayand is to be read against this back ground. Let us look what happened in the realm of life cycle rituals of the tribes and what happened to the beliefs and practices.

Changes in Kurichya Religion

Birth rites

In the early days the delivery of the Kurichya women was in the husband's house itself. But now, the Kurichya women will go for delivery to their own houses in the seventh month. Delivery will take place in the hospitals ³⁵. On the twentieth day, they conduct *noolukettu* with a small feast. *Choorukodukkal* or first rice feeding will be done in famous temples in the 6th month.

Changes in Puberty rites

In the nineteenth century, puberty rites or *thirandukalyanam* of Kurichyas were highly elaborate and extensive. If a girl attains puberty, she must spend seven days in a separate space called *orakkode* in Kurichya mittam. She must keep aloof from others without seeing any male. She is permitted to come out of that only after *thirandukalyanam* even if it is after one year or one month. But now it has changed a lot. Girls will go out after seven days ³⁶. In nineteenth century, attaining puberty or first menstruation means maturity for getting married. But now eventhough the girl attain puberty, she will not marry immediately on account of her education and government regulations like pocso.

Punishment to sexual Delicts

Usually, Kurichya women are more likely to succumb to illegal sexual offences. Men of other caste who come into their garden land to collect coffee or

³⁵ Naina V, "Kurichyan Gothra Janathayude Achara Anushtanangalum Kalakalum", in *Gothra Thalam*, vol II, K S Promod (ed.), Kirthads, Kozhikode, 2018, p. 93.

³⁶ Interview with Kumbha, 56 years old, at Mambatty colony, Padinjarathara, on 16 January 2019.

pepper may touch them and they will confess this and will receive punishments. There are two types of illegal sexual relationships like tolerable and intolerable. The first between the members of affinal clans and second between agnates³⁷. Standard of sexual contact of Kurichias were very high. Even if they have any illicit relation, they could not conceal it more because it may come out when the person became sick. Through the divination by *Kodivekkal* which consisted of long arguments to find out the offences of the sick. If the sexual relationship is tolerable sin can be purified by paying the fine and spreading the holy water over the sinner. In the case of intolerable sexual relation, excommunication will take place. But in Twentieth century, excommunication is not there for sexual offences. Now out casting will be applied to those who have eloped or married to other caste³⁸.

Changes in Gods and venue of Worship

Venue of Kurichya worship has changed from traditional *kavus* and *tharas* to structural temples or temple like shelters. *Nilavilakku*, spouted jar etc of traditional Hindu temples began to appear before kavus regularly. Most of these places of worship began to perform *poojas* in accordance with Tantric Hindu rituals in place of the Madhyamam mode of sacrifices in the Nineteenth century. Many of their traditional gods have changed. 'Malakkari', their chief god has transformed in to 'Siva' and 'Pulachadichi muthachi', one of the insignificant female god of Kurichiyas has transformed in to Parvathy, the consort of Lord Siva in Hindu Mythology. "Vadakkathi Pothi", a Kurichiya goddess who looked after the welfare of women has shifted to 'Bhagavathy' in Hindu lines. All of their *pothis* or goddesses have transformed in to Bhagavathy or incarnation of Bhadrakali in Hindu Mythology. *Kuliyam* a tribal god, who looked after their cattle and crops was baptised as *Gulikan* in Hindu tradition.

³⁷ A Aiyappan, *Op. cit.*, p 93.

³⁸ Interview with K K Annan, 62 years old, at his residences, Thonichal on November 21, 2021.

Transformation among the Mullukurumas

Birth rites

Delivery at hospitals now a days contrary to the delivery in houses in Nineteenth century. Rice feeding (*choroonu*) of the child is done at famous temples like Guruvayoor.

Marriage

Venue of the marriages has been changed to temples from the traditional Daivapura. Groom will tie the *thali* in the place of uncle in Nineteenth century. Asking for dowry is not prevalent among them. But in twentieth century, parents are giving as much gold as they can afford. The female also has the right to inherit paternal property.

Marriage outside the caste is happening in plenty. Mullukuruma women are getting alliance with Nairs, Christians, and Thiyyas.

God

Thalachilwan is a subdeity seen only in the temples of Wayanad. *Thalachil* is the head of Mullukurumas who had much seniority. '*Thalachil*' is also known as *Kunnilmooppan*. From him may be the god '*Thalachilwan*' emerged. In Sulthan Bathery, there is a '*Thalachilwan*' temple which was a Jain temple in earlier days. In this temple Mullukurumas had done special poojas in the first decades of twentieth century.³⁹

Changes in Shamanism

Oracles who are the mediators to the god had been decreased in number in the modern age. Since the new generation among Mullukurumas lacking faith in Shamanism they wont wish to become oracles. Elders are of the opinion that eating of beef and alcoholism among the youngsters are the cause for non happening of

³⁹ Experienced by the researcher from the field work. This matter also revealed by Anil kumar, Santhi of Manikavu temple .

oracles among them. In Thirumukham Thavazhi they are lacking *komaram* before ten years then Komaram Veran died, now they are hiring Komaram from Kandamala thavazhi, by giving 100 RS, and a Mundu, too .⁴⁰

Menstruation rite

'*Thirandukalyanam*' remains as a custom nominally in twentieth century. It is done on the eve of marriage for name's sake. Seven days seclusion of menstrual girl is avoided due to the education and jobs⁴¹.

Keni

Keni played an important role in the life of Mullukurumas. Their Kenis were known as *Deivakenis*. The water of the Kenis was used for their religious rites in *Deivapura*. This water is drawn for all life cycle rituals of a Mullukuruma such as birth, death, Marriage etc. On all occasions like bringing new born baby to *Daivapura*, death ceremony and at marriage water of Keni will serve as sacred. In the life of Mullukurumas Keni is a god for them. In the industrial age many of the *Deivakenis* had been filled, when local self govts provided borewells for them, significance of Keni is lost .⁴² Only few of them are remaining in Wayanad such as Thachampathu Keni, Mundanadappu Keni, Pakkom Keni, etc. Water of the Keni was considered Sacralized by the Mullukurumas. They used to drain up the existing water in the Keni before they perform any religious rituals. They used to clean up their weapons, bows and arrows on the *Puthari* day using the water from the Keni.⁴³

⁴⁰ Sebastian Joseph, "Varuthikalkidayil Vattatha Aavesham", *Manorama Daily*, 1995, February 23, Thursday, p.3.

⁴¹ Prasanna, Assistant Professor, 42 years old, at NMSM Government College, Kalpetta, on October 2, 2022.

⁴² Interview with Ajayan Madoor, Civil police officer and poet, 46 years old at Meenangadi on 2 February, 2022.

⁴³ Interview with Vijayan, 42 years old, Thachanpathu colony, on 8 April, 2022.

Social Organization

Mullukurumas had a strong social organization and office bearers such as *porunnon*, *porathonn*, 'Kunnil Mooppan' or Thalachil, etc. Their social life was quite peaceful and orderly under this system in Nineteenth century. Birth, marriages, death, agricultural activities, festivals, etc had been well organized under their leadership. But in twentieth century with the establishment of civil bodies such as police station, courts, the significance of these social organizations has been reduced considerably. They began to approach courts and police station to settle their disputes.⁴⁴ Many of Mullukuruma *kudis* have been desolated as the young generation wishes to settle in independent plots bought by them. Kandamala colony is a fine example of this.⁴⁵ Govt. employees from the community wishes to live in independent houses away from *kudis*. This tendency among the youngsters to move away from the *kudis*, where they have a community living shows that individualism became more prominent among them in Industrial phase .

1. Ritual Hunting

Mullukurumas are essentially hunters and descendants of Veda tribe. So, hunting is an integral part of their religious ceremonies. It also ensured their food and protein supply. With the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972, their ritual hunting on the day of 'Puthari' or thulampathu and 'bandhuva hunting' on the eve of marriages had been stopped. They were also strictly forbade from catching fishes from the streams. Thus, 'chalikettu' in connection with 'uchal' at Pakkom had ended.

Scarcity of forest products especially bamboo have a negative impact on their economic and religious life. Bamboo provided them with food, shelter, and shelter for their cattle stock. They produced several agricultural equipment and hunting weapons out of bamboo. Regulations on their entry into the forest prevented them from making bows, arrows and *mottambu* which are an integral part of Kuruma's religious life.

⁴⁴ Interview with Mukundan, 64 years old, at Pakkom, on 17 June, 2022.

⁴⁵ From the field work of the researcher on 17 March 2022.

2. Burial rites

Apart from their traditional burial practices they began to use coffins to carry their dead bodies. In nineteenth century, they observed adi 14(Karkidakam 14) as the day for remembering their ancestors. Death rites are performed on that day. But in Twentieth century, they also began to observe 'karkidaka vavu bali' for the dead by imitating the Hindus.

Their life altered a lot against the 'ivvu'. Many of the affluent members in the community began to buy plots and built palacious houses outside their traditional 'Kudis' which is against the private property law in 'ivvu'. These people are conducting 'Ganapathi homam' in traditional Hindu lines and conducting marriages in the same way which are against their traditional outlook.

Great changes occurred in the mythology and Temple structures. Large scale peasantization of Mullukuruma community forced them to accept the religious ideology of the dominant class in the society. Majority of their songs including the 'vattakkali pattu' and 'Kolakkali pattu' consist of stories from Ramayana and Mahabharatha.

Karivaramukhava Ganapathi varika
Sabhanaduvil chila Kolkkali kaanman
Kanyavilichonan aakiya Krishnan
Ambujalochana sariramurappan
Kalivilayaduka njagalil anujam
Kolkaliyum Duniyum Kuzhal viliyum
Kolidarayi vachana kaithozhunne njan
Theyy Thilla Tharikida Thillatheyy⁴⁶

It shows that literature and style in their Kolkkali pattu is highly Hinduised and its style is refined Malayalam, which is quite strange for ethnic tribes. Their Vattakkali and Kolkkali pattu are having the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharatha.

⁴⁶ M G Ajayan(Ed.), *Gothrathalam*, Wayanad Paristhithika Adivasi Tourism Sahakarana Samithi, WETCOS, Sulthan Bathery, p.155.

When we ask about it, they do not have any idea how these stories became their songs' literature. Some people believe that these stories and stylish Malayalam may have spread among the tribal people through *Ezhuthassanmar*, who came to the Kuruma colonies to teach them the basic mathematics and alphabets and shared the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharatha.

The migrant Chetty community in Wayanad were the janmis who had expanded paddy cultivation here. They are believed to have arrived from Dharapuram in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu ⁴⁷. They came to be known as Wayanadan Chettis as they settled down in different areas of Wayanad. The Edanadan Chettis came from Edanad in Coorg and Manadadan Chettis migrated from Gudallur in Nilgiris. ⁴⁸ They enjoyed high social status along with Upper caste in Wayanad. Nairs and Upper caste Hindus did not show any untouchability towards them. Chettis used to invite Brahmin Namboothiris for their rituals ⁴⁹. Wayanadan Chettis were the strong propagators of the myth that Wayanad served the geographical background for Ramayana stories. In their myth, we can see many Ramayana sites between Ponkuzhi to Bathery(NH 766 Kozhikode – Kollagal road). They are pointing out that 'Panchavadi' in Ramayana is identical with Wayanad. Lava and Kusha married the daughters of Eriyappilly Chetty ⁵⁰. As the Wayanadan Chettis migrated from Vaishnavate strong holds on such as Thamizhakam, they are aware of the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharatha. They were a literate community too. Recitation of Ramayana was a common practice in the chetty houses in the month of *Karkadakam* and they also used to keep the pamphlet Ramayana in their home. ⁵¹ Their agricultural laborers such as Paniyas and Kurumas came to know about the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharatha through the contact with their lords or Janmis. Marx

⁴⁷ A Aiyappan, *Report on the socio- economic condition of aboriginal tribes of province of Madras*, 1948, p. 92.

⁴⁸ Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad People and It's Tradition*, Higgin Botham & Company, Madras, pp. 52,54.

⁴⁹ Dr. Aseez Tharuvana, *Wayanadan Ramayanam*, Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikode, 2011, p. 138.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁵¹ Interview with Appuchettiar on 14 March 2023, at his residence.

opines that mode of production and relations of production determines the social relations as well as the religious traits. The upper class is not only richer and powerful, but also dominant in ideas and values. Dominant ideas of society are the ideas of dominant groups of society, because that group controls not only the economy but also the educational system, whatever forms of media that exist and the institution of society including the religion ⁵².

Wayanadan Chettis are mainly settled in Kidanganadu, Nenmeni, Mooppainadu, Noolppuzha, and Pulpally. Edanadan Chettis are living in Poothadi, Pulpally, and Veliyambam. All these places are the strong hold of Kuruma and Paniya communities too. It is curious to notice that in these areas there are many place names relating to Ramayana such as Aalinkulam, Rampally, Seethamont, Sasimala (Sisumala), Ponkuzhi, Asramakkolly, Chedattinkavu, etc. So, we can make it sure that the Vaishnava influence already existed here had been enforced by the arrival of Wayanad Chettis through this way ⁵³. Poothadi, 30 km away from Pulpally is a strong hold of Mullu Kuruma community.. Poothadi is believed to be the place of origin of these community, where their guardian god, Poothadi Daivom is residing. They believe that Poothadi is ruled by Poothadi Daivom. Later, Poothadi came under the rule of Panoli Kettilamma and Kannavathu Nambiar. They were Uralers of Poothadi temple and Irulam Seethadevi temple. There were Kathakali sangams who used to come and perform in the Poothadi edom or in the house of Poothadi Kettilamma in the last decade of 18th century ⁵⁴. Such instances of temple art also created a notion of 'Hinduisation' among the tribal community. Establishment of British rule hastened the process of cultural contact with outside world because of increased communication. Increased cultural contact between the tribal societies and the outside world was largely in the form of peasantization. When any tribal society meets neighbouring Hindu peasantry, they not only learn the art of cultivation, but also adopt popular and local Hindu beliefs and practices in this

⁵² Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, Methuen & CO., Ltd, Great Britain 1965, p 22.

⁵³ Dr. Aseez Tharuvana, *Wayanadan Ramayanam*, Mathrubhumi Books, 2011, p 138.

⁵⁴ Jayarajan Nambiar, Janmi of Poothadi edom, Unpublished work.

process of peasantisation ⁵⁵. There are numerous tribal versions of Ramakadha or story of Ramayana in the country due to this process. Hinduisation is a smooth transition compatible to local tribal cultures ⁵⁶. Tribes can continue their tribal religious traits and can merge their god in Hindu identity simultaneously. Mullukurumas were the tribal community in Wayanad who became surrendered to Hinduisation. In one of their rituals, ‘Narikuthu’, by which they are capturing and killing tiger using nets, Narikuthu pattu is sung. In this song, Kiratha siva and Lord Arjuna are fighting each other. When Arjuna’s arrow hit Kiratha siva, God ‘Thalachilwan’ was born. Mullukuruma local deities such as Karkkandan, Karimalon, Thalachilwan became identified as sons of siva ⁵⁷. The following song shows the birth of ‘Thalachilwan’:

“Parthan thanasthramellam pushpamayi
 Pokeyennu sapichu Karthiayaniyathuneram
 Asthretheyayi chamanjathuneram
 Adichar villukondu sirassingal
 Thanamattaneram, anjasam thannilninum
 Janicha deivom thane sthuthikkunnen” ⁵⁸

To legitimize their Hinduisation process, the Kuruma communities keep certain *puravritam* (oral narrative). This community still keeps bows and arrows in all their rituals. They believe that their bows and arrows are the gift of Lord Arjuna, after his encounter with Lord Siva. In another oral narrative that crow is presented as an evil bird who pecked the breast apple of Sita, when she was sleeping in Rama’s lap. So, Sreerama cursed it. Hence, Mulla Kurumas, the followers of Rama, hate the bird.

⁵⁵ Nadeem Hasnain, *Tribal India*, Delhi 1992, p 324.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Dr. Aseez Tharuvana, *Gothrapadanangal*, Chintha publishers, Thiruvananthapuram, 2022, p 81.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

Kuruva island is approximately 32 km away from Pulpally. Many people of Mullu Kuruma community are living there. They still follow the traditional rites of the community in the Kuruva river, as it is a sacred river for them. Kuruva river is a tributary of river Kabani, which has 18 branches at Kuruva. About this diversification, the Kuruma community still keeps a myth of Krishna – Banasura war to release Anirudha, the son of Krishna. Anirudha was hostaged by Banasura and Siva came to release him. During the war, Lord Siva felt thirsty and he knelt down to drink water from Kuruva. After drinking, he shook his beard. Then the water drops that fell from the beard of Lord Siva transformed into 18 branches of river at Kuruva. So, they still venerate the water in Kuruva and kneel down to drink water from it ⁵⁹.

Another oral narrative about their subjugation to upper class is depicted in their story of deception by Kumbala, Kurumbranad and Kottayam kings. Wayanad was actually ruled by Veda kings at their capital, Veliyambam, in Poothadi. Once a Kumbala prince came for pilgrimage at Thirunnelli temple and, Veda princess fell in love with him. Then the Vedas garrisoned him and compelled him to marry the princess. Kumbala prince agreed to conduct marriage as per Kshatriya customs. According to that, Veda king should be armless and the wedding stage should be spread with gooseberry and *thannikka*. The Kumbala king who planned to kill the Veda race treacherously, sought the help of Kottayam Kurumbranad kings. When the drum sounded for marriage, joint forces of Kumbala and Kottayam kings attacked Vedas or Kurumbas. Many of the Mullukurumas were captured as prisoners. A few Kurumas fled to the jungle and later came to be known as ‘Kattunaikkar’ or Bettukurumas. Another group became artisans known as ‘Ooralikuruma ⁶⁰.’

Some places and animals are also used for legitimization of being Hindu. Jadayattakavu is only 4 km away from Pulpally. It is the place believed to be the

⁵⁹ Dr. S Prasanth Krishnan, *Ozhichunirthapettavar; Wayanattile Kurumarude Jeevithavum Samskaravum* (Mal), Kerala Institute of Languages, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013, pp. 226-228.

⁶⁰ Interview with Karimban, 93 years old, a Kuruma community member at Poojakoottungal at Bathery, on 14 January 2023.

place of disappearance of Seethadevi to underworld. Rama could not capture her except for a handful of hair. Those hair spread on that region as a peculiar grass known as *Manipullu*. Their Kavu came to be known as *Jadayattakavu*. This area came to be known as ‘Manivayal.’ Many Kuruma settlements are seen still there ⁶¹.

The presence of *Ezhuthassan* in the colonies, who taught Malayalam letters and basic arithmetic began to impart the contents of Ramayana in pamphlets and recite it. This story telling method is used to educate the ethnic people about the puranic heroes such as Rama and Krishna and their heroic deeds. So, they are re-creating these epical events in their surroundings. Thus, many Ramayana related places were born here such as Ponkuzhi, Rampalli, Alinkulam, Asramakolly, etc.

Namamchollal and storytelling, which are traditional practices in Hindu households, also popularized the stories of Ramayana, particularly in the month of Karkidakam(July – August) ⁶². *Namamchollal* is usually done after lighting the holy lamp in the twilight, which can be listened by the audience of the Paniyalar community in their resting time after agricultural chores. Kathakali troops who used to visit the *edoms* of Nair and Nambiar jenmis actually imparted the epic stories among the local people from seventeenth centuries itself.⁶³ *Namamchollal* survives as a common household practice even today in non – Brahmanical households also⁶⁴. Mahabharatha story telling used to evoke interest, excitement, and knowledge even among the tribal people who used to hear those narratives in temple premises and big Janmi houses.

The political modernity among the Mulla Kurumas can be traced from the story of joint attack of Kumbala, Kurumbranad, and Kottayam kings. Veda princess got married to Nandillath Nambiar and was entrusted him with the rule of Velikumbam (Veliyamabam). The Kumbala king divided the whole Veda kingdom

⁶¹ Dr. S Prasanth Krishnan, *Op. cit.*, p. 226.

⁶² Prof K N Ganesh, *Reflection on Pre-Modern Kerala* , Cosmo Books, Thrissur, 2018, p. 271.

⁶³ Interview with Jayarajan Nambiar, Adhikari ,Poothadi Edam on 12 August ,2024, at his residence.

⁶⁴ Prof K N Ganesh, *Reflection on Pre-Modern Kerala* , *Op. cit.*, p 272.

between Kottayam and Kurumbranad kings. Thus, North – Western Wayanad came under Kottayam king and South – Eastern Wayanad (parakkumeethal) came under Kurumbranad kings. Later, Kurumbranad kings transferred all his land to Kottayam king ⁶⁵. Eradi, who had given call for attack against Vedas, was entrusted with the Muttill areas. Later this region came under ‘pakkasworoopam’ ⁶⁶.

The geographical division of ‘parakkumeethal’ and ‘parakkukeezhe’ might have happened during industrial mode of resource use. During this period, the whole Wayanad was organized under 10 nadus such as Moothornadu comprising Periya, Thavinjal, Edavaka ruled by Aaruvarambathu Jenmakkar. Elloornadu comprising Vemom and Thirunnelli was ruled by Edachana Nair.

There was great improvement in transportation during the industrial mode. Bulky goods such as timber or rocks can be transported easily. It also improved the mobility of people and flow of resources ⁶⁷. In the Industrial mode, their ideology has totally changed. They altered from agricultural stage as man as the steward of nature ⁶⁸ to a stage in which they conceived man as different from nature and he has the sole right to exploit its natural resources for his own welfare. H R Morgan, The Deputy Forest Conservator had noted that, commercial crops began to be cultivated by the ethnic tribes in the industrial mode. Coffee, tea, pepper, and oranges were the chief commercial crops. There has been a large flow of people from Travancore in search of living from cultivation. With this, second wave of migration, the population in Wayanad has almost doubled.

The commercialization of crops and the expansion of wet land cultivation became a reality after the Travancore migration. The landed tribes such as Kurumas and Kurichiyas learned the commercial crop cultivation from the migrants ⁶⁹. It

⁶⁵ Interview with Karimban, 93 years old, a Kuruma community member at Poojakoottungal at Bathery, on 14 January 2023.

⁶⁶ Rao Bahadur Gopalan Nair, *Wayanad Janangalum parambaryavum* (Mal), K K N Kurup(Tr.), Sulthan Bathery, pp. 22-23.

⁶⁷ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

⁶⁹ Annakutty P M, *Karshaka Jeevithathinte Kanappurangal* (Mal), Calicut, 2020, p. 50.

increased their financial stability and their interaction with the migrants led them to renovate their temples. Their animistic non-figure gods became identical with vigorous Hindu gods. Mullukuruma community became highly educated and got employed in government sector. Their educational status and improvement in transport and communication increased their mobility. So, they started to visit Hindu pilgrim centers outside Wayanad, such as, Sabarimala and Palani ⁷⁰. Their Vattakkali, Kolkkali songs have thematized with Ramayana and Mahabharatha stories. Mantras were accepted in highly refined Malayalam. Their songs are praising Hindu gods and goddesses. They recite ‘Darika Mantram’ in pure Malayalam words in order to achieve victory over the enemies. It is as follows:

“Ohm Brahman Vishnu Maheswara
 Ohm Brahma Darikan Vishnu Darikan
 Maheswara Darikan
 Njan Lankapurathe Poonkavil
 Vasikkapettirikkum Mahadarikan
 Njan valamkayyil Pachappendhiya
 Kaaliye Japichirikkum”⁷¹

Kuruma kavus in which gods like Kuliyan, Bhootalankalyar, Bennattan Kalyar, Kandanpul and so on began to be merged with Hindu gods like Vishnu, Brahma, and Shiva respectively. All the Kuruma gods were transformed as ‘Bhoothaganams’ of Shiva. Certain oral narratives were also used to make these myths authentic. Gradually the Kuruma Kavus were transformed into Shiva temples. So, Brahmin Namboothiris became inevitable to do poojas there, and the poojas are on ‘Uthamam’ or vegetarian vedic style. New dieties can be installed in the kavus according to ‘Devapreshnom’, ‘Swarnapreshnom’, etc.

Manikavu, which is 12 kilometers away from Meenangadi was a kavu of Kuruma community. Their animistic belief was practiced there for a long time. But

⁷⁰ Interview with Kalyani, a Tribal promoter, 57 years old, Mulla Kuruma community member, at her residence 29 July 21.

⁷¹ Aseez Tharuvana, *Gothra Padanangal* (Mal), *Op. cit.*, p 82.

in the industrial mode, the kavu had been transformed to Mahadeva Shiva temple on vedic lines. There are several myths regarding the origin of the temple. The property around the Manikavu temple actually belonged to Ayanippura Mullukuruma tharavadu. They used to herd their cows in the nearby grassland. One cow was regularly noticed to come late to the stable. Then the Paniya cowboy observed it and found that the cow was milking itself on a stone. So, everybody began to worship that stone as Shivalinga⁷². In the meantime, the cowboy died and that place became 'Gulikanthara'. Still now, there is a practice of offering oblation to Gulikan. There are 17 Adivasi settlements or Urus consisting of Mullukuruma, Oorali Kuruma, Paniya, Kunduvadiyas and Rayaroth Chettis⁷³. Adivasis especially Kurumas of Ayanippura tharavadu had great role in conducting rituals of the temple. It is believed that Thalachilwan who was born out of the hair of Lord Shiva and Poothady Deivom, and Aryavilly who had been considered as the incarnation of Goddess Durga are in the position of sub deities there. During the period of feudal Janmis, this temple was under Koothali Nair. Later, the right to keep gold, silver, and *kshethrabhandaram* was vested upon the Adivasis. Later the temple was undertaken and renovated by the Kuppathodu Nairs⁷⁴. The total supervision of the temple is rested upon 4 Kuruma tharavadus nearby such as Ayanippura, Vellamkolly, Valiyakodi, Chakkola. The right to keep sword, peedam, and lord's dress are vested with Ayanippura family.

Poothadi temple is also a Hinduised one. The place Poothadi is regarded as the center of Kuruma community. But when that area came under Janmis or Poothady adhikaris, Mullukurumas came under the Janmis, they became tenants and they were compelled to give one leg part and liver of the hunted animals to the Janmis. Till 1960, they had to stay as guards in the Poothadi Kotta and have to escort Panolikettillamma to Irulam Seethadevi temple at the front and back of the procession. The myth of Poothadi Paradevatha temple says that, it consists of two

⁷² Manjula MP, 'Manikavu kalpravahathinte Mazhavil Sobha'(Mal) In *Inner Spaces*, Vol I, Issue I, June 2016, Bilingual Half Multidisciplinary Research Journal, Editor, , p 145.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 146- 147.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p 147.

gods, Shiva (Abhimanaprabhu) and Vishnu (Aiswaryaprabhu). It is said that lord Vishnu came to quench the pride of *Kirathasunu*, the son of Parvathy and Shiva. After the long quarrel. Shiva and Vishnu became friends and began to sit on the same peedam. Their ‘Aarudam’ or ascending area is ‘*Nayattumadam*’⁷⁵. This place name itself shows its connection with hunting, which was a common ritual practice among the Mullu Kurumas. Poothadi Kettilamma used to worship at the temple of ‘Nayattumadam.. The above said myth shows that there might be an assimilation of Kuruma deity into Hindu rituals.

Among the tribal people, their local deities were replaced gradually with heroes in Ramayana and Mahabharatha through renovated, renewed myths. Their Thampurattyamma, Kalimala Thampuran, and Athiralan transformed into Seethadevi, Lava and Kusa respectively. This transformation was in such a curious way that Lava and Kusha, the sons of Rama and Seetha became “Murikkanmar. (Muni kumaranmar) So, the famous temple at Pulpally is named as ‘Seethadevi Murikkanmar Devaswom.’ When they reached Purakkadi, they came to be known as “Poomala” and at Cheengeri, their name is “Raram Kaliyachan”. They came to be known as ‘Kalimmel Thambran’ at Manikavu. When they reached Irulam, they came to be known as ‘Ilavally’. When Kalimmel Thambran reached Thirumunda, they became “Thalachil”⁷⁶. Without having a religious missionary, gradually their animistic gods acquired their identification with vedic gods. Mullukuruma gods such as ‘Vellakaliyappan’ changed to ‘Aadimukhan,’ Manikalan Kaliyar to (Brahma), Bhoothalan Kaliyar to (Vishnu), and Bennettan Kaliyar to (Shiva)⁷⁷. This ethnic tribes were convinced by a story that they were successors of ‘vanavasis’ who had done great help to Seetha and Rama during their forest dwelling⁷⁸. Some ‘puravritham,’ which is a developed story, tells that Vedas or Kuruma community are

⁷⁵ Jayarajan Nambiar, 66 years old, Present Poothadi Adhikari, at his residence Poothadi Edom on 12 September, 2022.

⁷⁶ Aseez Tharuvana, *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁷⁷ Interview with Balan Poothady, 65 years old, on 14 January 2022, at his residence, Poothadi.

⁷⁸ Interview with Ramanunni, founder of PEEP, 70 years old, on 17 December, 2022 at his office Kalpetta.

the followers of Sreerama and the ‘vattakkali’ of the Mullu Kurumas was developed and played by Pandavas in Mahabharatha. Such legitimizations are for increasing the number and strength of Hindus and for misappropriating the property of tribes.

Literature of Vattakkali, Kolkkali Pattukal

Vattakkali and Kolkkali are the chief entertainments of Mullukurumas on the occasion of Marriage, Thirandu Kalyanam, uchal etc. While we are going through its literature it can be seen that Its content does not match with their life in any dimension. The songs of Vattakkali and Kolkkalippattukal are made of pure printed Malayalam language and its stories are about Lord Krishna and Arjuna while their own unique songs do not possess any element of Ramayana or Mahabharatha. This interpolation may have happened in the 20 th century when the number of educated people increased in the community, merging with other people etc. Mr Ajayan, Madoor Mullukuruma Colony who is working as Police constable at Meenangadi police station, says that this type of literary addition may have happened due to the corrections made by ‘Ezhuthassanmar’ who used to come for teaching mullukurumas alphabets, Basic arithmetic and reading skill.

Ezhuthassanmar” were present in many localities and tribal houses in the beginning of 20 th century. They were brought by affluent Chetti families, local land lords etc and will be provided with boarding and lodging in their houses too. Remuneration was paid either in paddy or in cash. They may be have hailed from outside Wayanad most probably from Travancore. Ezhuthassan will teach students from the neighbourhood. Their place of teaching is known as” Aasan Kalari”. This ezhuthassan practiced "Vidhyarambham" by reciting “Hari shree Ganapathaye Namaha”⁷⁹ Such slogans and his narrations on Ramayana and Mahabharatha may have generated the knowledge among the tribes about the Epics. Kunjikuttan aasan had imparted education in kalaris at asramakkolly, Ambatharu, and Eriyappalli. His disciples included the Kalanadis, Chettis, Kurumas, Paniyas etc and he received Dakshina from them⁸⁰. Krishnan Asan who hailed from Koothattukulam belonged to

⁷⁹ Interview with Janaki Niravath, 88 years, at her residence Shed, on 2 June 2022.

⁸⁰ Interview with Syamala, 70 years, at her residence Ashramakolly, on 21 June 2023.

nair community conducted Kalari at Chettapalam, Cheppila etc, Their teaching included the narration of epics too.⁸¹

The Travancore migration mentioned in the first chapter is another event which accelerated the so called Hinduisation of Tribes in Wayanad. Syrian Christians, Ezhavas, Nairs, etc were the chief migrants of this category. The migrated Ezhavas and Nairs tried to transplant their beliefs in the soil of Wayanad. The propensity of tribes to imitate them in their beliefs was also another cause for Hinduisation among them. The migrants arrived with the technology of liquor making and technology of cultivating commercial crops. The Kurumas used to sing the following song which reflects their experience with the migrants:

“Thilachavellathil Madhuram Kaduppam
Athu Kuravilla
Ayyo ente Kaaladosham Sahodaranmare
Mukkalana aappuchaya athum Kuravilla
Ayyo ente Kaaladosham Sahodaranmare
Kannil kanda Kaalikale kothimuriyakki
Ayyo ente Kaaladosham Sahodaranmare
Manukal meyyum kunnukal okke Vettiveiyakki
Ayyo ente Kaaladosham Sahodaranmare
Kanda kanda kollikalokke vetti vila cheyyth
Ayyo ente Kaaladosham Sahodaranmare
Thiruvithamkooor chettan palajathiyum vannen
Thiruvithamkooor chettan vannu malanadu keru”⁸²

Through this song, a tribal chieftain laments on their lost paradise, ecology and freedom .

Magnanimous attitude and honesty of the tribes were exploited by the migrants. At first, they leased the land from the tribes such as Kurumas and

⁸¹ Interview with Jayan, Son of Krishnan Ezhuithassan, 58 years, at his residence Eriyappalli on 16 February, 2023.

⁸² Sung by Govindan, Kolampatta Colony at his residence Kompatta on 12 June 2024.

Kurichias, which they owned later by persecution and threatening and by alluring with alcohol. 'Kaappimoooppam,' the Kuruma king at Pakkam says that migrants bribed the tribes by giving alcohol and money and snatched their land⁸³.

In transformation of tribal society, Surjit Sinha had delineated the process of assimilation of tribes into caste-peasant ways of Indian civilization through the adoption of agricultural technology and linguistic and cultural norms of the peasant caste⁸⁴.

PANIYA

Religious practices of Paniyas had undergone great changes due to several reasons such as migration and related urbanization, changes in pattern of livelihood, merging of cultures, etc. The following are the important fields in which Paniya religion marked its transformation:

Birth Rites

Delivery of the Paniya women have transformed from their Kudi to hospitals. Now, they are practicing 'noolukettu', 'cheroonu', in sixth month and naming ceremony like that of caste Hindus around them. 'Cheroonu' will be conducted in the famous temples nearby⁸⁵. In naming ceremony, they are giving more sophisticated modern names to their children different from the names of objects which their jenmis have selected for their children in nineteenth century like Chundeli, Onathi, Kayama, Vella, as mentioned in Maveli Mandram a novel depicting tribal life in Wayanad.

Kaathukuthu Kalyanam

Kaathukuthu Kalyanam which had existed among Paniyas in the nineteenth century, has totally vanished. Now they are doing ear piercing in the jewelries or in the hospitals.

⁸³ Jose Pazhookkaran, *Kaappimoooppante Kadanubhavangal*, Kairali Books, Kannur. P. 74.

⁸⁴ National Institute of Rural Development course on Tribal Development. Place and date of Publication not found, P 69.

⁸⁵ Interview with Chandran, 56 years old, at his residence, Vazhavatta, on 15 August, 2023.

Marriage

In the traditional Paniya marriages, '*penn panam*' had to be paid by the groom on the occasion of marriage. Now, the '*penn panam*' is done for name sake. Practice of dowry has been started among them especially among the rich Paniyas⁸⁶. In the nineteenth century Paniya marriages happened at night in the summer season at bride's residence. Groom has to reach there in the evening. In the twentieth century, marriage ceremony will takes place in temple premises or auditoriums in one day during daytime. So, there is no need for the groom to stay in bride's residence for one night. Paniya marriages will happen in any month except in the month of Karkidakam. Affluent parents provide the bride with gold ornaments and expensive dresses. Instead of 'kallaimala', now they started to tie up the gold *thali*. Strict adherence to sib exogamy reduced to a great extent. Several elderly people do not know their 'illam' or 'kulam'⁸⁷. So, several incestuous marriages are happening today. Marriage by elopement prevails widely among them.

1. Agriculture related rituals

Due to the reduction of paddy fields, many agricultural related rituals had disappeared like 'vithidal', 'thottukoyyal', etc. The special position assigned by janmis to Paniya heads like *Kuttan* and *Mooppan* vanished. Due to the dwindling of paddy fields, as they lost job opportunities there, they began to go for other jobs and manual labours. In twentieth century, remuneration of the Paniyas, 'valli' is replaced with kooli⁸⁸.

2. Sorcery and Shamanism

'Kodiveppu' which was a sorcery method to find out the thief by Mooppan had disappeared. Other curious methods such as 'odividhya' had disappeared due to

⁸⁶ Interview with Vasudevan Cheekkalloor, 62 years old, at his residence, Cheekkalloor, on 09 April, 2021.

⁸⁷ A Aiyappan, *The Paniyas an ex-slave tribe of South India*, Calcutta, 1992, p. 84.

⁸⁸ Interview with Professor N Narayanan Nair, retired faculty of NSS college, Manjeri, member of dominant Kavara Nair tharavadu, Kavara, Padinjarathara, on 19 August, 2023, at his residence, Calicut.

lack of experts in this field. 'Komaram' or velichappadu used to reveal the will of their god occasionally in nineteenth century. Now, in twentyth century youngsters are not willing to become 'velichappadu' and 'attali'. Old generation says that, by eating beef and drinking alcohol, they lost their ability to receive communication from God ⁸⁹.

Myrths of karinthandan

Thamarassery churam has the largest volume of goods and services passed through it. A myth about a Paniya named 'Karinthandan' is involved in the construction of Thamarassery pass. A white man was designated to find a road connecting Calicut to Wayanad and he found a Paniya cattle herder named 'Karinthandan' who knew the secret roads leading to Thamarassery through the ghat area. He helped the White man to clear up the road which he had been looking for. Thus, the modern Thamarassery pass was constructed. In order to gain the credit of finding the road, 'Karinthandan' was treacherously murdered by the white man. The spirit of 'Karinthandan' began to take revenge for a long time in the ghat road by attacking the travelers and vehicles. At last, as a remedy for this one sorcerer chained the spirit of 'Karinthandan' on a huge '*Changalamaram*' or chain tree⁹⁰ at the beginning of the ghat road. Now this place has turned into a temple, where 'Karinthandan' is worshipped. The white man was also said to be killed by the ghost of 'Karinthandan'. Now recently processions known as *Karnthandan smrithi yathra*, *pushparchana*, etc have been performed by some political parties. One huge image of Karinthandan is erected there under their leadership. Main participants of Karinthandan smriti yathra are Paniyas.

Changes in venue of Worship

In the nineteenth century, venue of their worship was limited to pebbles under the trees. In the latter half of twentieth century, their venue of worship

⁸⁹ Interview with Sujatha, Anganawadi teacher, 56 years old, at her Anganawadi, Kuppadi, on 07 June, 2022.

⁹⁰ Professor P K Devan, *Gothravargakkarum Nadodikadhakalum* (Mal), Venus Book, Konni, 2011, pp. 17-18.

changed to raised platforms made of cement where step lamps (nilavilakku) were placed. In some places such as Mangakkandi colony in Eriyappalli near Pulpally and Chundakkunnu near Mananthavady, temples have been established in modern Hindu style.

Changes in Gods

Muttill is a Muslim majority area. The theory of accepting majority's belief may be the reason behind the '*Thangal*' worship. Their songs also reveal the veneration of *Sayip theyyam* or "whiteman's theyyam." Thus a new god has come to the pantheon of Paniyas. From this here say, come across the Governor of Mumbai, who is also the owner of Wayanad. Then the Paniya hymnist found it easier to include powerful God of Mumbai in his Pantheon⁹¹, with the temple entry proclamation in 1935, all temples had been opened to the entry of Hindus irrespective of their caste. Normally, it attracted lower caste people like Paniyas into various Hindu temples and Pilgrim centers⁹². Nowadays, in the Industrial mode, educated and affluent Paniyas have adopted the astrology and horoscope during the time of birth, marriage, etc. on the lines of upper caste people. Guruvayoor Sri Krishna temple. Sabarimala etc., have become their most favorite destination for pilgrimages. Some of the people in Paniya community are now serving as '*Periya swamis*' or a guides to new devotees at Sabarimala. All other Hindu deities have been accepted by them in addition to their traditional gods. There are many Socio political organization like PEEP (People's action for Education and Economic Development of Tribal people) which teaches them that they were Vanavasis who served as guards of Rama on his search for Seetha.⁹³

Social organization

In the 19th century, all the decisions about marriage, death, and social disputes were settled by 'oorukkoottam' among Paniyas. But in twentieth century,

⁹¹ A Aiyappan, *The Paniyas, An Exslave Tribe of South India*, *Op.cit.*, pp. 97-98.

⁹² Interview with Chandran Vazhavatta, 65 years old, on 18 April 2023, at his residence.

⁹³ Interview with Ramanunni, Director of PEEP, Kalpetta on 2 March 22 at PEEP office Kalpetta.

with the formation of civil democratic governments, the educated Paniyas have shown aversion to 'Oorukkoottam'. The authority of 'chemmi', 'koima', etc have become totally insignificant. In the twentieth century, they began to depend on police, courts, etc to settle disputes among them ⁹⁴.

Burial Practices

The traditional burial practices of Paniyas have undergone certain changes in the twentieth century. Death rites are performed together in an year for all souls who had departed in that year. The death practices done by '*Attali*' had been reduced as they demand huge amount of remuneration which is unaffordable for the cooli Paniyas. In the Twentieth century the fees of '*Attali*' had been raised ranging from 5000-10000 rupees ⁹⁵. Days of mourning had been considerably reduced in twentieth century due to high expenses and the youngsters have to go out for job and education. Long lasting death rites and its huge expenses usually dragged the Paniya community into dire poverty. In nineteenth century, they could have enough resources from the forest for the funeral rites like bamboo, fruits, roots, etc. Along with that, the services rendered by 'Chemmi' and 'Attali' were on a nominal fee. At that time, there were numerous 'Komarams' and 'Attalis' for doing death ceremony. But in twentieth century, number of 'Athalis' and 'Komarams' reduced and their remunerations went very high ⁹⁶.

There are reports about the ethnic tribes who got indebted to the bank in lieu of burial expenses ⁹⁷. In order to reduce the expenses, Paniyas began to observe 'Kakkapula' once a year for all those died in that year ⁹⁸.

⁹⁴ Interview with Sujatha, Anganawadi teacher, 56 years old, at her Anganawadi, Kuppadu, on 16 May 2023.

⁹⁵ Interview with Vasudevan Cheekkalloor, 62 years old, at his residence, Cheekkalloor, on 09 April 2021.

⁹⁶ Interview with Sunanda, 32 years old, at her colony, Cheekkalloor, on 12 May 2022.

⁹⁷ Manjula Poyil, "Marananthara Chadungukalum Sambathika Pinnokkavasthayum", in *Nanka Ippi Malaina Makka*, Vasudevan Cheekkalloor, (Ed.), PEEP, Kalpetta, March 2011, p. 91.

Abolition of Bonded labour system

By the enactment of Abolition of Bonded Labour system in 1976, Paniyas were saved from centuries lasting agricultural slavery. Now they are subsisting on agricultural labour or manual labour⁹⁹. There is seasonal migration among them to the ginger fields in Karnataka from 1990s. Paniyas are the largest tribal community among Scheduled Tribes in Wayanad, but they are the poorest compared to other scheduled tribes in Wayanad. About 74.41 % Paniya population is settled in Wayanad district followed by Kannur (13.55 %), Malappuram (8.10%), Kozhikode (3.071%)¹⁰⁰.

World View of Adivasis

In the twentieth century, land became a commodity which could be sold and bought with legal documents. The tribal people in Wayanad did not possess documents for their lands and the tribes were marginalized and agricultural slaves like Paniyas and Adiyas remained as mere wage laborers under the Janmis. Large scale migration from Travancore had tumbled down the demographic pattern of Wayanad. Adivasis were cheated and forced out of their traditional rights through other means of production¹⁰¹. Adivasi land questions remains as live hot issue even today. The settlers who came with dried fish and dried tapioca became land owners by throwing out the Adivasi population from their habitats and followed a sort of untouchability towards them. In migrated people's view, Adivasis were, "primitive, unclean, stupid and irresponsible"¹⁰². They are primitive as their agenda was to preserve the nature, not to kill it. They are unclean, as they are using natural gifts to clean themselves. They were considered stupid as they could not speak polished Travancore Malayalam and make money through cash crop cultivation. They were

⁹⁸ Interview with Chandran Vazhavatta, 56 years old, at his residence, Vazhavatta, on 14 July 2023.

⁹⁹ *Scheduled Tribes Development Dept, Scheduled Tribes of Kerala: Report on the socio-economic status*, Government of Kerala, 2013, p. 24.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ T G Jacob, *Wayanad; Mysery in an Emerald Bowl*, Mumbai, 2006, p. 28.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

irresponsible as they mind their own business and never come for livelihood offered by others. They are lazy means they never hurt their mother earth. World view of Adivasis were totally antithetical to the migrants who try to devour everything. World view of Adivasis were based on honesty, worship of earth, and all that it offers as divine and supernatural, more over they were not greedy. They treated themselves as 'children of nature' counterposed with greedy, rootless, and vicious settlers.¹⁰³

Religious transformation of Wayanadan chettis

In the long run of time great changes occurred in the religious customs of Wayanadan Chetty community. Majority of them got education and employment and they merged with new trends of urbanization and its cultural trends. Major changes among them are the following.

Matriliny faded away

The most notable change occurred among them is in their mode of inheritance. They gave up the matrilineal form of succession in distributing property. Now *Marumakkthayam* is not there among them. Many of them were unwilling to transfer their land to sister's children; opposition from the side of youngsters are another reason for the stoppage of *Marumakkthayam*. Girl children have equal right with males in father's property.¹⁰⁴ Disintegration of *marumakkthayam* is reflected on Marriage customs too.

Thirandu Kalyanam which was an occasion of great celebrations have vanished for good. Seclusion of menstrual girls for seven days are also stopped due to the employment and education of women in the family. *Thalikettu Kalyanam* of the nineteenth century is only a here say for the Wayanadan Chettis now.

Change in Marriages

'Achara' Kalyanam or *Sambham* type of marriage have disappeared. Their

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Vijaya 58 years, on 9 May, 2019, at her residence, Madayan Vayal.

earlier custom of 'Kanji Kudi' or fixing of, marriage has been replaced by engagement in modern sense including ring exchange between bride and groom. *Kanji kudi* has been replaced by other food items such as Biryani fried rice etc.¹⁰⁵ Simple n Wayanadan chetty marriages of the nineteenth century have changed in to complex, elaborate and luxurious function of modern marriages. Even though, demanding dowry is not prevalent, brides will be given gold ornaments at the occasion of Marriage. Instead of girl child being given in marriage immediately after puberty, girls will marry only after education or on completion of eighteen years .Marriages in the twentieth century are officiated by the Hindu Namboodiris.

Delivery rites

'Pulikudi' ceremony of nineteenth century which was observed in the sixth month of pregnancy has totally disappeared. Now the relatives of wife will fetch her to native house for delivery.¹⁰⁶

Nineteenth century delivery was at the house of wife's *tharavadu* . Now the delivery have been shifted to hospitals. Midwifery system has completely disappeared. On *Thottilil Kidathal* day the new born baby will get many gifts including gold ornaments .Twenty eighth day observation is another change happened in the delivery rites.

Emergence of Chetty Ramayana

Wayanadan Chettis who are living in the areas of Pulpally, and in the regions of Eastern Wayanad had a certain type of oral Ramayana which is more similar to that of original and had some local interpolations . Chief peculiarity of this is that the venue of Ramayana is established in this surroundings .Several places in Wayanad especially its hills mountains, caves etc serve as a special place for epical events to be staged. The location of Banasura hill plays an important role in

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Sobha , 48 years Eriyappalli chetty family at Eriyappalli on 10 February 2024, at Eriyappalli.

¹⁰⁶ Interview with Radha of Cheppila Tharavadu, 58 years, at her residence Kalanadikkolly on 3 May, 2023.

shaping the mythical back ground of Wayanad as the head quarters of Demon Bana. Other hills such as Muneeswaran koil mala and Brahmagiri a also serves the back ground for mythical events. The present Seetha Devi Temple played an important role in boosting up the anti colonial struggle under Pazhassi Raja. Pazhassi Raja's chief of army, Edachena Kunkan have made a call to Kuruma. Kurichiya, army to unite and in the name of *Murikkanmar* or *munikumaranmar* to fight against the British. According to this call around 3000 tribals came forward to join in the fight¹⁰⁷ So it is evident that this temple had been there in the eighteenth century itself and the Rama and Seetha cult had been vibrant here. But the development of Divine place mythology may have evolved in the nineteenth century, when many literate communities such as ezhuthassan, other educated Hindus who had more knowledge about the Ramayana and Mahabharatha arrived here .

There are certain geographic features which help the people to weave the fabric of mythical places which are numerous in Wayanad. Here are a few of them. At Manikkunnumala, there is a huge stone is placed in a manner that, it may fall imminently to this valley. ue to this people in this region is believes that it is a *kavanakkallu* used by Lakshmana, brother of Lord Rama.¹⁰⁸

Absence of leeches in Pulpally. There is not even a single blood sucking leech found in Pulpally due to the curse of Seethadevi when they bit her children Lava and Kusha during their stay at Pulpally.¹⁰⁹ Another faith exists among the people of Pulpally, including the Christians is that they wont face any scarcity or Poverty due to the blessings of Seeta devi as the soil of Pulpally belonged to her.¹¹⁰The abundance of flower seen in this region is due to the blessings of Seetha devi.

¹⁰⁷ Dr KKN Kurup, *Pazhassi Samara Rekhakal*, Kozhikode , 2018, p.104.

¹⁰⁸ Aseez Tharuvana, *Wayanadan Ramayanam*, Mathrubhumi Books, Calicut, 2010.

¹⁰⁹ Interview with Kuppathodu Rajasekharan, trustee on 1 January 2022, at Pulpally Seethadevi Temple.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Kesavan Karukayil, 79 years old at his residence Shed, on 15 April 2019.

Wayanadan Chetty Ramayanam

Wayanadan Chetty Ramayana says that, many important incidents of Ramayana happened in the locale of Wayanad, Such as Seetha had been stolen by Ravana and took to Sri Lanka; Rama and his team came in search of her through the places of Thirunelli, Pongini temple in Panamaram, and then proceeded to Mannarkkadu by crossing Nilambur forest and then moved to Pazhani, Madhura, and then to Rameswaram. During their search Rama stuck several arrows on the way to show their route to their fellow people; such places where Rama kept the arrow came to be called Ambukuthi.¹¹¹ There are three Ambu kuthis in Wayanad connected with various myths. Another myth says that the delivery of Seetha had happened in the Ashramam of Valmiki at asramakkolly.

A natural lake is found at Ponkuzhi in Muthanga, A myth says that the lake has been formed by accumulating the tears of Seetha who bereaved her abdication by Rama.

Lakshmana, the brother of Rama left seetha in a place Called Irulam 7 KM away from Pulpally. That place name is originated by the darkness that came in the place Seetha arrived. From there she proceeded to a place called 'Ashramakkolly, where the ashramam of sage Valmiki was situated. There she gave birth to her baby Lava. The hut where she delivered is still existing there in Ashramakkolly. One *Mandaram* plant is stands near the hut which bears two flowers reminding the two kids of Seetha.

There are several place names connected with the story of Ramayana in Wayanad, which remind us of incidents in Ramayana; Eriyappalli is one of such place. According to Wayanadan chetti Ramayanam, Seetha and her children came to a poor chetty house and asked for milk. As those people could not afford milk, they replied that, they had no milk here, then Seetha and children ordered the Chetti to build a cow shed there. The very next day the old chetty was surprised to see buffalos and cows there in the shed. When Seetha and her children arrived there

¹¹¹ Aseez Tharuvana, *Wayanadan Ramayanam*, Kozhikode 2011, p. 46.

again the Chetty gave them a warm welcome and built a temple beside his house. Due to the enormous number of Milking cows and she buffaloes this house came to be called as "*Erumappalli*" which means house of She buffaloes., later it was converted to" Eriyappalli'. Still that place and house are existing there.¹¹² Wayanadan chettis also believe that Lava and Kusa, sons of Seetha wedded the daughters of Eriyappalli Chetty. Kusan married Chandika Devi and Lavan married Sunitha Devi, younger sister of Chandika devi.¹¹³Chethalayam is another place where Wayanadan chettis are habituating thickly, they also have a Seethadevi temple there. Early name of this region is "Seethalayam".¹¹⁴

Jadayatta Kav

Jadayatta kavu is situated 1.5 KM away from Pulpally Seetha Devi temple, There is a hollow place like cave opening there .Wayanadan Chettis and Mullukurumas, believe it is the place where Seetha devi went down the earth . At that time Rama held on to her hair and it got plucked in his hands . So this place is known as *jadayatta kavu*.

Ram palli

Rampalli is another place near Muthanga where Lord Sree Rama believed to have taken rest. All these myths were reinforced in the twentyth century and all people believe it be true.

Wayanadan Chettis are not considered inferior among Hindu community ; they are treated equal with that of uppercaste Hindus like Nairs . They call Hindu Brahmin priest to officiate their religious ceremonies. Their milk and ghee are accepted the temples for '*abhishekam*', thus they are treated as a part of Hindu community. They are well aware about the stories of Valmiki Ramayana and Adhydhthma Ramyana of Ezhuthachan. Before the advent of Wayanadan Chetty

¹¹² Interview with Gopi Kolor, 65yrs , at his relatives house at Eriyappalli, on 12 May 2023.

¹¹³ Dr Aseez Tharuvana, *Wayanadan Ramayanam*, *Op. cit.*,p.55.

¹¹⁴ Interview with Karunakaran, Madayan Vayal, Chethalayam at his residence on 29 January, 2022.

community, Vaishnava faith existed here which is attested by the existence of Vaishnavate architecture in Vishnu gudi and Janardhana gudi and the Thirunelli Temple. This Vaishnava faith was reinforced by the Wayanadan Chettis here.¹¹⁵ Present venues of Chetti Ramayana are Ponkuzhi, Pulpally, Bathery etc that were the strong hold of Jainism in the 14 th century. The architecture style of Ponkuzhi Sreerama temple and Kidanganadu basthi are same in Vijayanagara architecture style. When the Vaishnavism began to dominate the Jainism, the jain belief centers became the Vaishnava centers of worship¹¹⁶.

Wayanadan Chettis are mainly concentrated in the Kidanganad, Nenmeni, Bathery, Pulpally, Noolppuzha regions where all these sacred places of Wayanadan Ramayanam are situated. So it is evident that Wayanadan Chettis are re-creating the divine localities of Ramayana in their premises which is supported by its favorable geography. They also try to link their identity with these places too. They are finding the similarity with the 'land of EiverChettis'(Five prominent Chettis) with that of 'Panchavadi'in Ramayana¹¹⁷.

Edanadan Chettis

As they were people migrated from Coorg areas, they spoke Kannada in their houses but now Kannada has disappeared from them. They were agriculturists by profession, but in the twentieth century educated ones began to go outside for other jobs. Many of their religious rites and rituals have disappeared and 'have been Hinduised'.

Religious Changes

Even though Edanadan Chettis are a small tribe, there are both Vaishnavaites and Saivates among them.¹¹⁸ Divisions among them are very harsh within the

¹¹⁵ Dr Aseez Tharuvana, *Wayanadan Ramayanam, Op. cit.*, p.138.

¹¹⁶ Dr Aseez Tharuvana, *Ibid.*, pp.128 -129.

¹¹⁷ Kannivattam Kesavan Chetty, late, told on 12 September 2017, at Wayanadan Chetty Service society office, Bathery.

¹¹⁸ A Aiyappan, Report on, Socio economic Conditions of aboriginal Tribes of the Province of Madras, Madras, 1948, p,92.

families too¹¹⁹ They used to worship the souls of those who committed suicide but nowadays they have abandoned this practice.¹²⁰ Their Chief god Matheswaran had transformed in to Siva, and Basaveswara had changed to bull god of Siva.

Changes in Marriage customs

The nineteenth century the marriage Customs of Edanadan Chettis have been changed. In 19th century marriage function was at the houses of groom but in twentieth century marriage venue changed to the brides house. The custom of ‘asking for bride’ had been completely ended. The custom of “bringing the bride to Grooms house” (pennu kondu varuka) for marriage on the eve of marriage has also vanished. They were pure vegetarians on the feast of marriage but now it is replaced by non vegetarian food. Their three days marriage had been reduced to one day marriage. Like Wayanadan Chettis their marriages were celebrated with *Kolkkali* which is absent in 20th century.

Intervention of Market

Intervention of the market in to the temple is an important feature of industrial age. Market began to deeply intervene in the worship centers. Valliyoorkkavu Temple premises are famous for market places around it. In nineteenth century and the early decades of twentieth century, Peoples used to buy salt and cloths from here¹²¹. Now these markets are well established. Major oblations like coconut oil, ghee, agarbathi etc are brought from Mananthavady market by the devotees. Bulk supply order for coconut oil and ghee is given to the lowest bidders who participate in the auction. In the 2024 auction, the tender has gone to merchants from Karnataka for the supply of ghee to the temple. Temple premises are given in auction to one person every year.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Ajayan, 58 yrs , Member of the community, at his residence at Chekadi on 12 June 2023.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹²¹ Interview with Karingari Balakrishnan Nair, 86 years old, at his residence Mananthavady, on October 4 2023.

Thirunelli Temple is famous for performing death rites . Another name of Thirunelli is *Dakshina Kasi* due to this unique feature. Thousands of Pilgrims visit here every day and many of them will give oblations like *nila vilakk* to the temple. Authorities will give notifications in leading news papers and auction these oblations. In 2023 the highest bid was given by a Kannada business man.¹²² Tender for other items such as coconut oil and ghee will also be ordered in bulk from different business firms after auction. Many Tourist homes and restaurants , hotels and shops were is established recently to facilitate increased devotees here.

In the rural temples like Pakkam kotta the researcher could observe market intervention intensively. They are receiving oil, ghee, bronze *Nilavilakku* etc from the devotees as offerings which are bought by them from the nearest towns Pulpally and even from bronze shops in Palayam Market Calicut. *Thazhikkakudam* or the traditional domes over the temple is also bought from Palayam market Calicut.¹²³ Malakkari Temple at Thonichal usually receives *Patt* Coconut, ghee etc as offerings from devotees which they buy from near by Mananthavady Town. Temple authorities also buy these items from *Mamuni* pooja store Mananthavady.¹²⁴ On the occasion of *Thira* at the Thonichal Temple, numerous street hawkers will bring *Pori* (Puffed rice), Halwa etc from Tamil nadu. Measuring vessels like *Nazhi, seer , Para, kolakam* etc are brought by Kannada people. In the Settled mode of cultivation people made oblation from their agricultural products like Paddy, rice, coconut etc., but in the Industrial mode their offerings for satisfying gods are from the open Market. Offerings and Poojas are done for the Individual wellness rather than for the wellness of a community.

In short Industrial mode of resource use witnessed modernization in human life in Wayanad which is entangled with individualism.

¹²² Interview with Santhosh clerk in Temple office, Thrunelli Temple on 3 July 2024, at Thirunelli Temple.

¹²³ Interview with Subrahmanian , 62 years, Temple Committee member, on 17 June 2024, at the Pakkam Kotta Temple.

¹²⁴ Interview with Bakrishnan Nair , 71 yrs, President of Thonichal Malakkari Temple on 16 February 2024, at the Temple.

Religious conversions among Tribes in Wayanad

Converted Kurichyas or Pathiri Kurichyas

One of the curious things happened with the Kurichyas in Wayanad was a large-scale religious conversion into Christianity by the end of nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The French missionaries started to concentrate on indigenous tribal societies. Their peculiar mission work was focused among the Kurichya tribes in Wayanad. MEP's mission work was concentrated mainly in Mananthavady and North Wayanad region, where Kurichya tribes were thickly populated. By 1898, Father Henry Adigard MEP(1875-1901), then parish priest of Mananthavady started accepting ex communicated Kurichya tribal people to Christian faith ¹²⁵. He had donated land to converted Kurichya families in Pathivayal and Chirakkara areas near Mananthavady. By 1900, the number of Christian Kurichyas in and around Mananthavady was 50 and their number increased to 140 by 1910 ¹²⁶.

Reasons for the Conversion of Kurichyas

1. Matrilineal system and strict social control

Kurichyas follow strict customary laws among them. Matrilineal family is the tap root of Kurichya family organization. Every child born to a Kurichya *Mittam* is a member of their mother's *mittam*. They will be known in the name of their mother's clan and inherit mother's property ,since they have Joint family system. A Kurichya *mittam* or tharavad may consist of three to four generations under their head Pooppan. A strict social control and sexual relation control mechanism existed in this family set up. Their marriages are exogamous to maintain the purity of marriage and sexual relations. Entire 58 Kurichya tharavads in Wayanad were divided into 'panthi' and 'bandu' tharavads among which the marriage alliances

¹²⁵ Joshy Mathew, "Catholic Mission and Social Change: A study of Paris Foreign Mission society (MEP)in Malabar' in *Indian Church History Review*, Vol. 55, No.1, January 2021, p 46.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

were carried out. Members of 'bandu' tharavads could not marry each other. All marriages against these rules were regarded as incestuous and liable to punish with ex communication. Sexual offences involved from forbidden relations are also incestuous and liable for out casting. Normally Kurichya women will be succumbed to outcasting on simple reasons like, talking to other caste men, bus conductors, etc. Education was also strictly forbidden among them due to the fear of pollution. They will never enter their houses without taking bath after visiting public places. Kurichyas consider themselves as '*Malanamboodiris*' and also stick on to the touch pollution. In the case of minor pollution, they were fined and purificatory ceremonies will be carried out by pouring coconut water or drinking it which was consecrated by *mantras* of *Pooppa*n. Life in Kurichya mittam was similar to that of slavery. Internal conflicts were also there between the members. Poverty or insufficient food was common among the women folk. Jealousy was also there between the members ¹²⁷.

2. Factors of conversion

Poverty, ex communication, family problems, personal disputes and economic exploitation by money lenders were reasons for accepting Christianity among the Kurichyas. When one member joins Christianity he will bring his spouse, children, and other members too ¹²⁸. Ex communicated Kurichyas considered joining Christianity as the best way to escape from the control of caste system. Those Kurichyas who wanted to leave the community would take food or water from other communities.

¹²⁷ Interview with Radha, 40 years old, on 9 November, 2023, at her residence, Edachana Tharavadu.

¹²⁸ Father Armand Shang Mari Jauferineau, *Diary Kurippukal*, (Diary Notes), Diocese of Calicut, 1976, p 9. The Missionary activities of Fr. Jauferineau and the details of converted Kurichyas were written by him in the form of diary notes, entitled "My Kurichyans in French. This French work was translated into English by Fr. Antony Machahado and Fr. Letra. Its Malayalam Translation was published in the name of "Dairy Kurippukal" by Mary Zacharya in 1976.

Father Jauferineau

He understood that due to unreasonable rate of interest extracted, Kurichyas lost their lands to Muslim merchants. Through two usurious methods such as 'vilamuri', 'alacheett', lenders of money will loot the wealth of Kurichyas. *Vilamuri* is the system of fixing the total produce of the farmer before harvest. While advancing loan to the farmer, the price thus fixed was normally very low compared to the price of the produce in open market. In 'alacheett' system a farmer used to mortgage his entire cattle to the money lender before taking loan. In both of these systems, farmers would lose their wealth.

Father Jauferineau built a small shed for worship at Kaniyambetta for Kurichya Christians. In this attempt, Jauferineau was assisted by four Kurichya families like Ayanjidamkunnu, Kunjaman alias Pilacherry Joseph, Pulikkal Pathrose Pooppachan, Palapatta Njanaprakasham Pooppachan, Eralathumkolly Yakooob Pooppachan¹²⁹. Later, Ayinjadim kunnu, area came to be known as 'Paalukunnu'. A special Church was constructed for converted Kurichyans or Pathiri Kurichyans at Paathivayal near Mananthavady¹³⁰. Besides Father Jauferineau purchased 90 acres of land and distributed it among the newly converted Christians till they found permanent means of livelihood¹³¹. This newly converted Kurichiyas came to be called as 'Pathiri Kurichyas,' means Kurichiyas converted by the Christian priests. As per the baptism registers in the Pallikkunnu church around 650 tribals were converted to Christianity between 1908-1923¹³² 573 tribal people were baptised by the founder of the church, Fr Jauferineau.¹³³

¹²⁹ Pooppachan is the surname originated from their title poopan which means the heads of the mittam or Tharavadu, the information given by Pilacherry Pathros, Perettakkunnu on 7 January, 2019.

¹³⁰ Vikasana Rekha, Mananthavady Grama Panchayath, 1996, p 16.

¹³¹ Dr Joshy Mathew, 'Catholic Mission, and Social Change: A study of Paris Foreign Mission society (MEP) in Malabar', *Op. cit.*, p 49.

¹³² Register of Baptism 1908-1945 (Kaniyambetta Church of Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 1945) pp. 2-121.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-54.

After 1950, there is not much conversion among Kurichyas as they got more privileges, freedom, and civil rights due to the enactment of certain laws passed by the Independent governments.

Circumstances of Ex Communication

Exorbitant rate of interest collected by Muslim traders from Kurichyas forced them to sell their properties and cattle stock to pay off the debt. Borrowing of money from Muslim money lenders at huge interest rate dragged them into heavy debt trap and poverty. Constant quarrel in their houses were also another reason for joining the church. The prime reason for the Kurichyas to join Christianity was to save themselves from cruel Janmis who were Nairs, Jain Gowdas, etc. Janmis never allowed to graze their cattle the lands under them ¹³⁴. Poverty and starvation were another important reason of Kurichyas for conversion into Christianity.

Pallikkunnu church is known as the 'Lourd of the East'. In order to accommodate the newly converted people including Kurichyas, Jain, Gawdas, Chettis and Thattans into the fold of Christianity they have adopted oblations, '*saynapradikshnam*', *rice feeding*, '*adimavekkal*' dragging the waste plantain after food (*ilavalikkal*), '*bhajanam irikkal*' etc unlike other Christian churches. They have also adopted 'ammankudam', elephants, drummers, etc to attract many outsiders to the church ¹³⁵. Baptism register of Pallikkunnu church shows that large scale conversion of other caste people Thiyyas, Chettis, Thattans, Kammalas, Jains, Gowdas, etc were also there during that period. The main reason behind it is that all of them regarded Pallikkunnu church as a source of security and place of solace. ¹³⁶

Even after the conversion, Kurichyas considered consumption of beef as taboo. But they began to eat wild bison ¹³⁷. In the early days of conversion, Christian

¹³⁴ Father Armand Shang Jauferineau, *Op. cit.*, p 73.

¹³⁵ Leaflet published by Pallikkunnu Church, Mananthavady, date of publication not known, p. 08.

33 Interview with John Master, Church Secretary, Our Lady of Lourdh Church, Pallikkunnu, on 18 August 2022 at the church.

¹³⁷ Father Armand Shang Jauferineau, *Op.cit.*, p. 40.

Kurichiyas continued to profess their heathen faith for a long time in relation with Puberty, Marriage ,death and hunting and used to propitiate their gods too . By the second and third generation they came under the fold of Christian faith completely.¹³⁸

Fr jauferino had done several Social activities such as establishment of a lower primary school and a dispensary. The Lower Primary school had been started in 1922, and later it was handed over to Bethani sect of nuns in 1949. ¹³⁹. Converted Kurichiyas began to send their Children to the newly started Schools, it helped them to attain great social and educational progress in the society. Orthodox Kurichiyas were not willing to send their children to School for fear of Pollution. At the outset half of the children attended the school were from the Converted Christians. Other Tribes such as Kurumas, Paniyas Chettis were willing to send their children to School under the encouragement of Missionaries. Drop out of tribal Children from the School was checked by supplying food, Dress and study materials¹⁴⁰

Religious conversion of Paniya Community

There is a widespread trend among the Paniya community to convert into Christian sects in the last decades of twentieth century. They preferred to join the Pentecost sect rather than others. Large scale missionary activities of this sect is concentrated around the colonies of Scheduled tribes such as Wayanadan Pulayas, Paniyas, and Adiyas. In the last decades of twentieth century, the number of conversion had increased enormously. There are several reasons behind this conversion. Liquor consumption and subsequent quarrels and fights are very high among the tribes in Wayanad . The alcohol abuse is considerably reduced among the converted Paniyas. Hence those who aspire for a peaceful family life are willing to be the part of the Christian fold. Another reason behind their conversion is the social status gained by them as being Christians. Several material benefits especially

¹³⁸ Interview with Fr , Alosius, priest Pallikkunnu Our lady of Lourd, on 9 July 2022 at the office of the Church.

¹³⁹ John Master, Valeyil house, Vellachi moola, *History of Our lady of Lourd*, unpublished.

¹⁴⁰ Dr Joshy Mathew, *Catholic Mission and Social Change: A study of Paris Foreign Mission society (MEP)in Malabar*, in *Indian Church History Review*, *Op. cit.*, p. 51.

financial support provided by these missionaries is another driving force behind the conversion. Dressing up well and cleanliness are also factors that attract them. Above all, even if they became Christians, they will not lose their privileges as Scheduled Tribe. C K Janu observes that the material benefits obtained by them due to conversion such as motor vehicles are attracting the youngsters in to the new faith. She is alarmed at the enormous number of Paniya converts in Wayanad district. This conversion process is not limited to that of Paniyas alone. Several Adiya colonies in Thirunnelly region such as Kottayoor colony and Varinilam colony had fully changed their belief into Christianity ¹⁴¹. The promises and the motivation given by the Christian missionary such as an eternal heaven is waiting for them after conversion also inspired them to accept the new faith. Organisations like PEEP are trying to bring back converted Tribes especially Paniyas in to Hindu faith. They are of the opinion that Evangelization Missions, as a part of the global conspiracy are trying to scatter away the Hindu thoughts of Paniyas and converting them in to Christianity on a large scale.¹⁴² It is curious to see that there are Pentecost churches in colonies like Kakkathod colony in Kalloor and Kolavally colony in Pulpally. The following table shows the alarming rate of converts among Paniyas in Wayanad district:

Table 4.1 : list of Paniya colonies who converted to Christianity.

| Sl. no. | Colony | Families | Members | Church |
|---------|-------------------------|----------|---------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Chendakkuny, Meenangadi | 14 | 65 | India Evangelical Lutheran church |
| 2 | Kakkathod, Kalloor | 12 | 56 | |
| 3 | Mammadampali, Bathery | 25 | 116 | |
| 4 | Kottamarathu, Pulpally | 36 | 166 | IPCC, Kurichipatta |
| 5 | Veettimoola, Pulpally | 02 | 07 | IPCC, Kurichipatta |

¹⁴¹ Interview with C K Janu, Tribal Activist, Leader of Gothramahasabha, on 29 December 2023, at Kalpetta.

¹⁴² S Ramanunni, *Ariku jeevithathinte Kanakazhchakal*, Kalloor, Kochi, 2017, p. 60.

| Sl. no. | Colony | Families | Members | Church |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|
| 6 | Kolavally, Pulpally | 38 | 145 | IPCC, Kurichipatta |
| 7 | Kalluvayal, Bathery | 03 | 16 | |
| 8 | Thelampatta, Bathery | 09 | 40 | IPC Bathery |
| 9 | Irulam Varkunnam Colony | 06 | 29 | IPC Meenanagadi |
| 10 | Vandikkadavu Colony Pulpally | 12 | 52 | IPC Meenanagadi |
| 11 | Karatt Colony | 9 | 39 | IPC Meenangadi |
| 12 | Thirunelli Appapara | 18 | 83 | |
| 13 | Chettimattam Colony Noolppuzha | 14 | 58 | IPC Meenanagadi |
| 14 | Mangad Colony | 7 | 29 | IPC Meenangadi |

Source: obtained from C K Janu (Tribal Activist), Chami N (Secretary of Vanavasi Vikasa Kendra), Sujatha (Anganawadi teacher), Father Baby (priest in India Evangelical Lutheran Church, Chendakkuny), KM Varghese alias Thankachan Rattakund (President of United Christian Front Wayanad), CK Janu Tribal Activist and politician, MK Chami, *Rakshadhikari* of Vanavasi Vikasa Kendra, Wayanad, Field visit done by the researcher).

Father Baby, the priest at India Evangelical Lutheran Church says that the Paniya families in Chendakkuny colony were indulged in high alcoholism and quarrels with each other. After joining the church, their standard of life improved and alcoholism reduced among them. Cleanliness and social manners improved among them. They are coming well dressed for the Sunday service ¹⁴³. They have the Church Branch at Mundakutty also, where the scheduled tribes who came to the faith are Wayanadan Pulayas. Mrs Gracy, one of the convert believer in this church

¹⁴³ Interview with Father Baby, priest in India Evangelical Lutheran Church, Chendakkuny, on 27 September, 2023.

opined that, they are absolutely happy in their conversion because of attaining present social status as well as an upgraded living standard ¹⁴⁴.

When the volume of conversion had increased among the scheduled tribes in Wayanad, many Hindu Organizations had begun to intervene. PEEP(People's Action for Education and Economic Development of Tribal People) which has its office at Kalpetta is one of such organization who are actively concentrated on the Paniya colonies to check further conversion and keep them stay with Hindu religion. PEEP is organizing Karinthandan Smriti Yatra every year to inculcate feeling of unity among the Paniya community.¹⁴⁵ They are organizing classes on rites and rituals of Hinduism among Paniyas and make them aware about the '*Hindu Dharma*'. In short, Paniya community is facing a dilemma in choosing their faith, either Hinduism or Christianity. Rapid urbanization and decline in the extent of Paddy cultivation has directly affected the community.

They converse with other communities in pure Malayalam. It has spoiled their rich linguistic heritage and their traditional songs ¹⁴⁶. The youngsters among the Paniyas are hesitate to talk in their own language among themselves as they consider it as disgraceful ¹⁴⁷.

OK johni in his work '*Wayanadu Rekhakal*' says about 'Konnambatta Kattu Naikka colony in which around 30 Kattunaikkers were converted to Christianity, When author asked him about the material progress of converts, he said that Christian missionaries provided them with milk powder and Wheat and promised to give paddy and when they were again brought back to Hinduism, they got them 5

¹⁴⁴ Interview with Gracy, 58 years old, a Paniya convert, , on 27 September, 2023, at India Evangelical Lutheran Church, Chendakkuny, Meenangadi.

¹⁴⁵ S Ramanunni, *Op. cit.*, p. 57.

¹⁴⁶ Interview with Vellan, 70 years old, Mundanadappu colony, 24 January 2022, at his residence.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Ammini, 45 years old, on 30 September 2019, Mangakandi colony, Eriyappally.

RS and new dress for onam. Poojas are being performed in the colony.¹⁴⁸ Paniya Community is on the path of extinction either through conversions or through excessive alcoholism, ill health, suicides etc.

¹⁴⁸ OK Johni, Wayanad Rekhakal, Kozhikode ,2010, p. 204

CHAPTER 5

TRANSFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS SPACES - CASE STUDIES

In the previous chapters we have found how the social and ecological changes influenced and formed the religious life of the people in Wayanad in different stages of social life. To make it clear it's good to have an idea of how the structure, rituals and practices of different communities got transformed through time. A thorough study might take a long span and exceed the time considerations of the present work. This chapter therefore would like to consider a few of the places of worships in Wayanad with a view to delineating the social processes of transformation of religious life of the people of Wayanad. It is already made clear that it is during the change from the one mode of life to another form that forms of religious beliefs, practices and institutions got new dimensions. An examination of the evolutionary details of the places of divinities and changes in the worship allow us to juxtapose such changes with transforming social pulls and pushes of the times.

The challenge of such a study is the unavailability of the written records or images pertaining to the early and medieval period. Some anthropological and ethnological reports and folklores like Northern Ballads give us the basic references about some of these shrines. Further details I could collect from the visit to these places and observing the present status of the Temple. Major areas I analyzed in these Temples are their structures, practices, rituals, and authorities of rituals and religion. Some photos of Temples and Temple rituals , festivals and notices throw light into the vital past of these Temples. Field works offer us inspiring information about the contemporary religious practices of various communities. An overview of these practices openly informs us about the presence of a lot of religious beliefs and practices which are absent in systems of the people around Wayanad. From these 'Surviving traits' as Romila Thaper opined, we can very well get hold of the nature of the previous beliefs and practices. The selection of these places of worship is on

the basis of the considerations of the geography, people and differences in the mode of worship. As such it represents all the regions of Wayanadu, various tribes including Kurichiyar, Mullakurumar and Paniyar; non-tribal points of worship with elaborate structures, and varying modes of worship. Attempts are also made to understand the Muslim and Christian centres of worship, though they are comparatively late migrants to Wayanad.

MUNDANEDUPPU KAVU

“Mundanadappu” near Meenangadi is a centre of worship of both Mullukuruma community and Paniyas . This place of veneration is situated in a low lying slope of a hilly forest region in wilderness. This is 2 kilometers away from Pathirippalam which lies near Meanangadi in the Kozhikode -Kollegal National Highway 765. There is a Mundaneduppu paniya hamlet and a Mullukuruma hamlet adjacent to this kavu. We have no positive evidence to ascertain when this kavu came into being. It is probable that the kavu emerged originally from a hunting gathering community, the religion of whom centered on the veneration of natural beings which may be part of conserving themselves. Currently, the Kavus consist of a Keni, two age old trees; one wild mango (*Mangifera Indica*) tree and an anjili(*artocarpus hirsutus*), and thara, a square platform with 8 feet sides and 1 feet high, all in an area of 5 cents. The keni there is owned by the Mullu kurumas of Mundanadappu hamlet. Paniyas are the traditional owners of the "thara". The paniyas and Mullukurumas of the adjacent hamlets normally come in groups to the keni to collect water. They do it with utmost divine reverence. People who visit there used to throw coins as oblation into the keni.

Kozhivettu is a special form of worship that takes place annually at this kavu. Along with the people from these two hamlets, people from some hamlets in south Wayanad also participated in this. *Kozhi* means cock. *Vettu* means cutting. *Kozhivettu* thus is the sacrifice of cocks. They sacrificed it to propitiate Mundaneduppu Baghavati or *Kolliyil Amma*, a female deity they worshipped. The oblation was officiated by the Paniyas in the *Thara* and they will receive nominal

dakshina of Rs.1.5¹ for each cock cutting.

This ritual of cock cutting will be held on *Kumbham* 12 (kolla varsham) or in the last week of February every year . When a male chick is born in a family they will dedicate it for : *Kolliyil Amma* or Bhagavathy in Mundaneduppu. Such cocks, if not sacrificed, they believed, would grow furious to chase everyone coming across. I observed more than 800 cocks were cut there on this day in the year 2024. Sacrificing cocks were brought by people from different communities to materialize many of their desires and ambitions. Two months before cutting the cock, *manjaluzhinjidal*² will be done for the offered cock. When the cock had been brought there, they make the cock to drink water from the sacred *keni* and offer money in to the *Keni*. In the morning of cutting day sacred *keni* will be dried up by the Mullukurumas and make it clean, Cock cutting will be in the afternoon only after filling the *keni* again with fresh water. Before cutting the cock, the Paniya chieftains will arrive with a lit ritual lamp (*nila vilakku*), flowers and red silk (*pattu*) will offered in the *thara*. Then they will move to the old trees of anjili and wild mango to venerate them with so as to buy their permission for the sacrifice. Devotees of various castes except Paniyas and Mullukurumas also bring Cock for sacrifice. Currently sacrifices are offered in expectation of jobs, better marriage alliances, and infertility issues. This indicates that this sacrifice is done for propitiating *Kolliyil Amma* for material gains and general prosperity. Some also pour rice over the *Thara*. This rice as well as the *Dakshina* for cock cutting and cocks head will be taken by Paniya chieftain and community members whereas the body part of sacrifice cocks were taken away by the devotees. Money put in the *Keni* will be taken by the committee of Mullukurumas, this is the economical aspect of cock cutting ritual at Mundaneduppu.

¹ Interview with Rajeesh Mundanedupp, aged 45, on 25th February 2024,

² *Manjaluzhinjidal* is a ritual using turmeric powder (manjal) to declare a cock to be an offering to Kolliyilamma.

Photo: 1 KENI and THARA

This Thara in Mundanaduppu is under the ownership of Paniyas cock cutting will be conducted by them on Kumbham 2 or in the last week of February



Courtesy Suja K.S., The researcher

Photo: 2 Preparations for Kozhivettu



Courtesy Suja K.S., The researcher

Photo: 3 Cock drinking the sacred Water of the Keni



Courtesy Suja K.S., The researcher

KANDAMALA MAHASIVA TEMPLE

I visited Kandamala many times in three years consecutively to observe the structure, forms of worship and rituals and practices involved in worship in the Kandamala Mahasiva Temple. This temple took its name from the place name. Kandamala is a place situated near Veliyambam, a place lies west of Veliyambam at Pulpally in South Wayanad. 2 kilometers away from Veliyambam junction in Pulpally Nadavayal road, this temple lies in a plot of 26 cents on the bank of a paddyfield in the midst of Kandamala Mullukuruma hamlet. The temple consists of an enclosed structure without a compound wall, having the main gate facing to the east. The devotees call it as chuttambalam.

Crossing a small yard in front of the structure, we would enter the main gate. The main gate leading to the main deity which is installed in the central room called sreekovil. The main deity is of the lord Siva. On either side of the facade, spaces are set apart for incidental preparations of puja and rituals. On the right side corner back room of the main deity, the sub deity of ganapathi is installed and on the left side corner the sub deity of Bhagavati. Other sub deities such as Nagam, guligan, kuttichathan etc. are installed outside the built structure. Daily puja is missing in this temple. Weekly puja is the current order. However, Vilakkuveppu (lamp lighting) is observed every day. People from outside the hamlet including those from upper castes are coming to this temple for worship and oblations.

Further enquiries revealed quite a lot about the state of worship and rituals here. The present structure of the temple came to be set in 2009. Before that the structure, worship and rituals were different. A photo from a family collection gives us the structure of this place of worship in the year 2004 (see photo).

Photo: 4 Madam of Kandamala



Courtesy: Yamuna Kandamala

The photo shows three simple structures called *madam*. Madams are small huts seemingly squares in form and having sides of 2 metres. The name they originally used to denote this hut-like structure is *Madam*. In the earlier days, 2 huts or madams were there as a place of worship. The huts were roofed with hay or lemon grass. Situated under huge jackfruit trees, Madams were adorned with warly paintings using rice powder. This place of worship did not have any other structural set up. It was important place of Mullukuruma community. They worshipped *Pakkam daivam*, *Poothadi daivam* and Devi in *sankalpam* or in imagination. And *Keni* called *Thampachi keni* have also been there to fetch water to the madams.³ Many swords out of iron and a wooden *peedam* had been there in the madams. That place had been covered with greenery of jack fruit and Wayanadan chembakam etc. This temple is situating within Kanda mala Mullukuruma colony in 18 cents, as the common property of the colony. The property of the temple is within hands of Mullukurumas themselves. Paddy fields are there in front of the temple. Pepper plantations are around the temple. In 2009, old huts have been demolished and built one main temple and temple of two sub deities in the model of structural temple. The present Temple has Siva as the chief deity and sub deities of Ganapathi. and

³ Interview with Arumukhan , 54 years old , temple official, at the temple on 10 March 2023.

bhagavathi are there. All these deities are within the temple compound. But the deity of have been established outside the compound wall. In olden days the festival of the temple is decided and done by the people of the colony along with taking the consent of the Ooralikkuruma leader called *muthali*. Temple festival at that time was 5 and 6 of *kumbham* (a malayalam month). On that day many Ooral Kurumers arrive at the temple. Usually, they come along with their families. They will seek the permission of the Mullukkuruma Mooppan for conducting the festival of the temple. For conducting the festival, the presence of Ooral Kurumas had been essential. they will fetch their traditional musical instruments such as drums, cheenis and saxaphone. Along with the music of drummers they perform their traditional dance called *kalattam*⁴. As an encouragement for the dances, they will be provided with arrack“, delicious food, betel leaves etc. They will stay in the temple premises on that day. The remuneration of their performances is paid as paddy put in the para. On *daiva sthanam* there was no poojas on lines of the present day except for the lighting of lamps. When Ooral kuruma Mooppan plays the flute *komaram* of Mullukkkuruma will rush there and asks the followers about their grievances and *komaram* suggest remedies for overcoming the problems. Also, *komaram* suggested to bring oblation to the god such as paddy, coconut, after materialisng their wishes. On those days there is a practice of offering silk for goddesses or *thamburatti amma* or Devi.

⁴ Interview with Madhavan, Caretaker, Kandamala Temple on 24 November 2019

Photo :5 Swords in the Madam in Sankalpam



Courtesy: Suja K.S. Researcher

Photo: 6 Swords of Bhagavathy and Pakka theyyam



Courtesy: Suja K.S. Researcher

Prashnam veppu and change of events

It is reported that there had been a series of disastrous happenings in the colony and intermittent unnatural deaths etc. scared the colony people. During those days it was a practice among colony people to visit Chakkulath kavu temple in Changanassery. One lady from here informed the chief priest there about the misfortunes in the colony. Then *Thirumeni* informed them about the existence of lord siva there in kandamala as he had got a revelation through a dream. Also, he suggested for a consultation with Tharanalloor Padmanabhan Unni Namboothiri of Payyannur. As per the invitation of colony people Padnabhan Namboothiri arrived and he made a *swarnaprashnam* in 2005. Through the *swarnaprashnam* he told the colony people that the existing rituals and practices are in *madhyamam*, as they providing arrack for the ooralis on festival, which is against the wishes lord siva again Namboothiri advised them to practice rituals in tanthriic or vedic style as it is *uthamam*. Namboothiri recommended for the construction of a Siva temple there and establish temple of Bhagavathi and Ganapathy as sub deities, also recommended them to avoid arrack or liquor there meat also should not be cut there. The deity of snake god can be seen outside the compound wall of temple. Again, it was the suggestion of Padmanabhan Namboothiri that poojas in the renewed temple should be done by a Brahmin⁵. So the Mullukurumas of Kandamala decided to demolish their earlier place of worship or Madams and construct a new temple. Present temple has Siva as their main deity Bhagavathi and Ganapathi are there as sub deities. Immediately after the completion of new temple and installation of deity wooden *peedam* of early *madam* had burned up and the swords were kept away from the Temple as per the suggestion of Padmanabhan Unni Namboothirippadu of Payyannur. Now the temple festival is conducting on February 26, 27 with Visheshal poojas under the leadership of Payyannur Padmanabhan Namboothiri with a group of brahmins. *Keni's* totally abandoned as their *madams* and *sankalpa* worship had gone.⁶

⁵ Interview with Padma at Kandamala Temple on 24 November 2019.

⁶ Interview with Madhavan Kandamala 65 years old, helper of the temple on 10 March 2023 at the temple.

Changes in Ritual mediation and economy

Communal harmony and unity existed between Oorali kurumar and Mullukurumas had been strengthened by the festival in the early days but with the renovation of the early *madams* to the temple this harmony had shattered up and the coming of uralis here had been denied. In the early festivals there was a redistribution of surplus production among the Ooralis by Mullukurumas as remuneration for their ritual dance and rites performed in the *daivathara*. After the construction of the temple, *Pooja* is conducting there in every Sunday by a Namboothiri Brahmin and he will receive 1000 Rs for per day *pooja* which will be sponsored any of the family in the Kandamala colony. Another means of economic receipts are through different *poojas* like *jaladhara*, *pushpanjalis*, *payasm kazhikkal*, marriage, *ezhuthiniruth* etc. Many people from outside Mullukuruma community are visiting there. *kanikka* or *Vazhipadu* is another item of economic source for the temple. *Melshanthi* will receive *Dakshina* for each functions like marriage, *Ezhuthiniruthu* etc.

Changes in Iconography

In the early stage they have a raised mud platform for worship where they kept their swords over a *peedam* and they have been worshipping *Poothadi devan* and Devi in *Sankalpam* or in concept. But with the *Swarnaprashnam* conducted there in 2005, they decided to demolish their age old believes in *madams* and given up the swords kept there and burned up the *peedam* also after the construction of the temple. New idols were installed in the temples like Bronze idols of lord Siva and stone idols of Bhagavathy and Ganapathi ,small idols of serpant were also kept outside of the main temple. Photos of each temple and deity is given below.

Photo "7 Siva temple Kanda Mala



Courtesy: Sudheer T.N.

8. Bhagavathy temple at Kandamala



Courtesy: Sudheer T.N.

Photo : 9 Serpent and Kuliya in Kandamala



Courtesy: Suja K.S. Researcher

Some remaining area is there for completion. The left space is for the construction of Thidappalli, *Namaskara mandapam* and *kodimaram*. During the period of 'hut temple' Mullukurumas alone worshipped there with their Mooppan, no other castes had ever visited there to worship. After the renovation of the temple all the communities including Brahmins and Nairs used to visit the temple and participating in the rituals and *poojas*. A Namboothiri youth had been doing the routine *poojas* when I visited the temple. After renovation of the temple, there is annual *parayeduppu* or collection of harvest from the Pulpally Seetha Lava Kusa temple.

Now there is weekly *poojas* there in the temple on Sundays. And lamp lightning is there daily in the temple. Every year the temple is visiting by Payyannur Namboothiri in order to diagnose the progress of the temple. Since the temple is situating within the Mullukkuruma colony, many of the families became

vegetarians, Mr Madhavan, the care taker of the temple also became a pure vegetarian.

Photo 10: Ganapathy in Kandamala



Courtesy Sudheer T.N.

Photo 11: Present Kandamala Temple



Courtesy Sudheer T.N.

Pakkam Kotta Temple

Travelling 12 Kilometers towards north from Pulpally town, we can reach cheriyamala in the midst of Kurichiyat forest range. Cheriya mala is a small Mullukuruma hamlet have 42 household in it. On its side, there is a steep hill which they call Kotta. At the top of the hill, there are five small and simple structures which are called temple. This is actually situated around 120 feet height from the ground level. One, situated in deep forest, its devotees confines to the nearby hamlet. This is found to be in a habitat where both men and animals share the same. It is reported that wild animals including wild elephants often visit the *Kotta* area and destroy the small structures. It is informed that it was in 2019 that installations of deities Vishnu, Siva, Bhadrakali, Ganapathi and Brahma *rakshassu* etc. were installed in the structures constructed above the traditional *madams* which were traditionally there. I had personally visited the palace in 2018 and had found three small hut like *madams* built with crude sun baked mud bricks and low quality false asbestos sheets. The *madams* were tile roofed before that. (See Photo) As per this they named their *kotta* as Pakkam Kotta Durga Bhagavathy Maheshwara Vishnu *kshethram*. Separate five temples were constructed for this . The temple of Siva is much bigger comparing to that of others, most curious thing I could watch there was in one temple in the left side they are worshipping *Thalachilwan* and Put it in bold letters as Siva in the same place, in the right side of the same temple they are worshipping *Pakkam Daivam* and put in Bold letters as Mahavishnu, Generally no outsiders come to this temple. Though viewed as a temple, it lacks the many of the common features of a temple now. *Poojas* in the temple were held twice in a month by a Nambutiri priest. Considering the steep upway to the temple, this could only have been be accessed by able bodied men who could manage to trek up the top of the Kotta.

Interviews with the inhabitants of the hamlet give the state of the “older times”. From earlier period itself it had been here as *pappillol* or place for sharing of hunted meat and as the place of distribution of resources began to be seen as divine place. But around in 18 th century, at this place of veneration rose to three huts where, Bhadrakali, Pakkkatheyyam and Thalachilwan were worshipped.

Photo 12: *Madam* at Pakkamkotta



Courtesy Sali Thankappan, Bathery

It means that they have replaced or merged their gods such as *Thalachilwan* and *Pakkam Daivam* as lord Siva and Vishnu respectively. Apart from the five temples they have one *sthanam* for *Brahma Rakshassu* and serpent within the temple compound. Again they have conducted one *Thamboola Prashnam* by Remesha Panikker Ulliyeri to confirm their position of temples as correct in 2022. Durga Bhadrakali in this temple is more irritated by the killing of Mahishasura and Lord Siva tries to pacify her in this temple.⁷

⁷ Interview with Sekharan at the Temple, 52 yrs old , Kazhakam of the temple, on 15 February 2024.

Photo 13: New Pakkom kotta Temple after 2019



Courtesy Arun K.S.

THONICHAL MALAKKARI SIVA TEMPLE

Malakkari Temple is most popular among the Kurichiyas of Wayanad which is situating 3 kilometers away from Mananthavadi , this temple lies to the east of the city on the side of Mananthavay- Kozhikode Road in the Mananthavadi taluk of Wayanad district. Lying in a total sprawling area of more than two acres of the land, the Malakkari temple possesses an area of 88 cent in which the temple structure is enclosed by a strong compound wall. A temple facing towards the east, there are so many sub deities outside the temple wall. There are many *tharas* or raised platforms around the temple which is quite unusual to a Hindu temple. Small *thara* near the border of the temple is dedicated to lord Muthappan's dog.

The diseased spirit of Kurichyas are known as *Nekal*. *Nekal* possess a significant place in Kurichya religion. There are numerous *Nekal tharas* can be seen in the Thonichal Malakkari temple premises, which is quite uncommon to a Hindu

temple. First *thara* is dedicated to Othayamangalam Dairu, one of the deceased spirit of kurichias. Another *nekal* in the Thonichal temple is Othayamangalam koppi he is also known as *kottil muni*. Another important *nekals* in thonichal temple are Othayamangalam Darappan and Padukani Kunkan etc . They are believed to be controlling the matters in the festival or *thira*. Kottil muni controls the matters in othayoth tharavadu. *Darappan nekal* control matters of food. *Nalu* (auspicious days). *Kolu* and *thira utsavangal* were looked after by Othayamangalam Dairu. *Malakkari thira* is believed to be conducting by *Padukaani Kunkan nekal* and Othayamangalm Dairu *nekal*. The *thara* of Othyamangalam Dairu is situating on the right side of Malakkari temple. He died due to treacherous killing of the Mooppil Nair. Daru had been an eminent *kalari abhyasi* and could handle 18 weapons. Mooppil Nair was afraid of him. Mooppil nair was highly ambitious to amass the enormous wealth of kurichias karinkali temple. Mooppil Nair wanted to add that property with karingari Nair property. A civil case had been there in the Thalassery civil court over this property. Later this karinkali land had been transferred as karingari land. Moopil Nair with the help of Dairu's wife killed dairu at Irumbu palam. Later the spirit of Dairu had taken vengeance and killed members of karingari family. Then the Mooppil Nair made compensation. *Thara* seen at *kalakam* is use of for keeping weapons. *Kalakam chethal* means the cleaning of temple premises on the eve of the thira. This was found as a privilege of Kurichiyars.

Another *thara* on the other side of the road is known as *Puramkalan thidangazhi*. *Puramkalans* are *karyasthans* of god Malakkari who had 70 *puramkalans* in total. It says that this seventy purankalans had been captured by Malakkari from god pulliyaran. Pulliyaran challenged Malakkari to kill a pork at Kattikulam from Thonichal. Even though Malakkari became successful in felling the pork, the arrow could not found out. The place of arrow fall came to be known as Ambukuthi. Malakkari throw out the pork, that place where the pork fell down came to be known as „Pannichal“. Again Puliiyaran insisted cut pork without knife. Malakkri became successful by cutting the pork with the finger. After this victory malakkari demanded a part of meat for him. When Purankalans of puliiyaran came with meat malakkari captured each of them.

Malakkari is the highest god of Kurichyas. They believe that it was Malakkari who established 101 paddy fields, 101 *kavus*, and had begun *Kalagam*, *kallum kaliyattavum*⁸. Malakkari *thira thottam* song says that, Malakkari once came to the present "Thonichal" area and he expressed his wish to stay there between two hills. As he felt to sit there, that place came to be called as "Thonichal" and later this place came to be known as "Thonichal".

Myth of this place says that there was one demon named "Banasura" lived in Banasura hill, who attained boon from Lord Brahma for immortality. He also demanded Lord Siva as his gatekeeper. Banasura became so proud and indulged in several misdeeds. Later, Vishnu in his incarnation as Krishna arrived to kill Banasura. Another version of this story among Kurichyas says about the arrival of Malakkari or Siva as a saint in disguise and killed Banasura.

Malakkari is the important deity of Kurichia community in Wayanad. The present Malakkari Siva temple at Thonichal is said to have existed 5100 years back and have been destroyed by some natural calamities and later it was renovated by Thacholi Othenan, the hero of Northern ballads, as a token of his victory against Wayanadan Kelu, a local chieftain. He borrowed 10000 gold coins from VadaKara Ambu Chetty and promised to pay it back as sandal and cardamom but later he refused to pay off the debt. Then Ambu Chetty complained this with Thacholi Othenan. Then Othenan proceeded to Wayanad. On his way he saw Kurichiyas are presenting their oblation to Malakkari god by burning birds they captured, he came across the *komaram* of Kurichias and *komaram* revealed that you are going to fail in the battle but with the blessings of Malakkari deva, Othenan became victorious. As a token of gratitude Othenan gifted one dagger to the temple and money for the maintenance of the temple. The same dagger, is still claimed to be kept in the *bhandarapetty* of God Malakkari. at Othayoth Tharavadu.

The Kurichias believe that Malakkari as Lord Siva appeared in disguised form

⁸ Samskriti, Thonichal Sree Malakkari Devan Aitheehyavum Ormakurippukalum, Temple Committee, (Rp), 2017, p 7

as a hunter. Malakkari and karinkali or mother goddess are the chief deities of kurichias. old generation of the locality says that present Thonichal Temple was the worshipping place of kurichias with one banyan tree and several holy stones there. But now we can see a banyan tree covered with temple-like structures

BEGINNING OF THE FESTIVAL

Malakkari thira in Thonochal temple is falls in the 1,2 ,3 of *Kumbham* or in the month of mid February. It is actually conducted by the coordination of four Nair Tharavadus such as Cherukunnummal karingari, Kunnamangalam, Manjan, changadath, Pattoli Karingari etc along with 12 Kurichya tharavadus such as Othayamangalam, Padukani, Cherunkal, Kundara Moola, Eranakkolly, Perinjola, Koduvayil, Ilayidathu, Chayimmal, Nittara, Moothedathu, Poolakkal etc. Other tribes like Paniyar, Malayan, Munnoottan, and other communities like Carpenters. Bronze smith and gold smith also will cooperate with the festival.

The festival begins with, *kazhakam chethal* on *Makaram* 4 in the midst of Febraury. *Kazhakam chethal* means cleaning of the temple premises. It is right of kuriachias for *Kazhakam chethal*. Fasting is mandatory for the *komarams* till the end of the thira festival so this period for them is known as *kulichunikkal*. For the procession kumbham will be prepared by cutting the bamboos. On the first day entire temple premises will be aroused by fireworks it is known as *kazhakam unarthal* . With the cosent of Othayoth karanavar flag of the temple will be hoist. Then they arrange a traditional gold smith to cleanse the ornaments of God, these ornaments are known as *thiruvaabharanam*. In the earlier days the *bhandarappetty* of God had been kept in Karingari Nair *tharavadu* but now it is keeping with the Othayoth kurichia family. This *bhandarappetty* contains dagger gifted by Thacholi Othenan. But on the occasion of *thira*, Karingari Mooppil Nair have to hand over this *bhandarappetty* to kurichias for the beginning of *thira* festival.⁹

⁹ Interview with Ponnu, aged 73, Mooppil Nair who belongs to Karingari Family on 16 November 2019 at his residence

The *komaranga* will take suitable ornaments of each hill god and after bath seeks permission from the *karanavar* of Othayoth family Then they come for filling the *kumbham*. For filling *kumbhams* they used palmyra toddy or tender coconut water. They used to fill the *kumbham* with *kumbhapattu*, a special song .They are keeping all these *kumbhams* little away from Bhadra kali *daivasthanam*. *kumbham* will be filled only with obtaining permission from *nekal* or diseased spirit. They lit 101 lamps and performs 'gurusi' to propitiate God karinkali . Since karinkali does not likes noises of drumming, the drummers will start to perform from the boarder of Othayth family. Filled *kumbhams* will be carried by the young kurichias along with the procession they will carry peedam and sword of bhagavathi. Young kurichias who are carrying *kumbhams* will dance according to the rhythm of the *kumbhampattu*. The theme of the *pattu* is hero worship. They are worshipping the heroes such as amma (cheepothi) *Kumbha* – she is said to have been reared a bull which had been eminent in bull fighting. Another hero is Theyi, who became prominent in archery and physical training. Other important heroes are Wayanadan kelu and Thacholi othenan. When *komarams* invoke the gods into them, they will have extra ordinary physical power. The language of the god will be known by elder kurichias alone.¹⁰ When *nekal* enters in to the body of the *Komarams*, they will abuse the Karingari Nair due to his treacherous activity towards the Kurichiya chieftain and mis appropriation of their property.

On second day there are 8 *thiras* and two *vellattams*. Such as,

- Thira of Pulachadichi muthachi
- Pulliyaran thira
- Pulliyarathan, the nephew of pulliyaran
- Sree Malakkari thira-It is according to traditional thottam pattu. This is the most famous thira of thonichal temple.
- Vettakalan thira –This god is coming from Karinkali temple.
- Kaliyaran thira also coming from Karinkali temple.
- Athiralan thira, He is the son of Malakkari devan.

¹⁰ Samskrithi, *Op.cit.*, p.14.

- Muthappan thira also known as, Narithira, His chief diet is toddy and palm era toddy. Several changes had occurred to this temple in due course of time. Those changes had happened by means of ‘*Prasnam veppu*’

Table 5.1: Prashnam Veppu in the Malakkari Temple and Changes

| | 1976 | 1997 (May) | 2019(May) | 2023 |
|----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Thonichal Malakkari Temple | Panamaram Krishnan kutty Panicker | Nelloor Ramakrishna Panicker, Malappuram | Kannur Kannadi- parambu Chandrasahasa Panicker | Kannur Kannadi- parambu Chandrasahasa Panicker |

Source: K.K. Annan, C.S. Balakrishnan office bearers of the temple and minutes of the temple

There was dispute between Cherukunnummel Karingari Nairs and Kurichyas over the issue of property sharing and about the property of the Malakkari temple in 1966, it came to be settled with court verdict from Tellicherry court and the temple property came in the hands of younger successors of the Cherukunnummal Karingari family. By 1964, then owner of the temple informed Othayoth Kurichiyas that the Nairs could not conduct the festival of the temple any more so Kurichyas of Othayoth *tharavadu* may conduct it. Kurichiyas also denied due to lack of resources. As a result of this decision every body related with thira became disappointed and one *Janakeeya committee* was formed under the leadership of Sreenivasa Pye, who hailed from Vaikkom as High school teacher in Mananthavady Govt High school and OK Aiyappan Master etc. Their leadership had given a new energy to *Janakeeya committee*. In 1978 Temple got registered under "Kerala Society Act 1860"..A Swapna theatres also had been constituted for promoting temple arts and other arts brought under Temple committee registered in 1978.¹¹

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.26.

In 1976, the temple entrusted with a committee under the leadership NS Pye master. Who suggested that, Malakkari temple can be renovated on Hindu lines and the problem of naming raised for that. In this situation, a *prashnamveppu* conducted under Krishnankutty Panicker, Panamaram. In this *prashnamveppu*, it became evident that it was a big Siva temple having centuries of antiquity. Lord Siva along with his better half Sree Parvathi is there, so it is highly suitable to surround the temple and also recommended to establish separate places for Ganapathi, Ayyappan Kshetra palan and Durga who had been here in early days. *Nivedyams* especially in white colour made of Milk is favourite for the god. Early owner of this Temple was a Brahmin .Now the evil spirit of a pregnant lady, and a Tribal ghost etc are present in the temple premises who are fading the glory of divine grace. Krishnan kutty Panicker suggested for the construction of Sreekovil around the banyan tree platform, banyan tree should not be cut down. Installation of Durga may be done. All these installation should be in tantric lines. He also recommended for the construction of separate *thara* for Brahma *Rakshassu* and *Kshetrapalan* and also conduct *Ganapathi homam*, *Navakam*, *Panja gavyam* etc. As idols of Siva and Parvathy established, they should be worshipped by *Padmam*.¹² Panicker also suggested the name of the temple as Thonichal Sree Malakkari *Sivakshetram*. In the *prashnam veppu* of Nelloor Ramakrishna Panicker, it is found out that Pulachadichi 'Muthachi' as Parvathy and Malakkari as Siva in *Ardhanareeswara* concept is existing there and suggested *Poojas* for both of them. In 2019, Kannur Kannadiparambu Chandrasah Panicker suggested for more *poojas*, *annaprasham* (rice feeding), *Vidhyarambham*, *Vechunivedyam*, etc., and also for partially covered roofing for Malakkari, as God demands both rain and sunshine. In 2023, Chandrasah Panicker also recommended for new *Sreekovil*, *Nadappandal*, *Thidappally*, etc. Now the new temple constructed with *sreekovil* and *nadapandal*. Plan of this construction is and its measurements are given below.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.30

Photo 14: Thonichal Malakkari Siva temple as per the Prashnam veppu of 1976



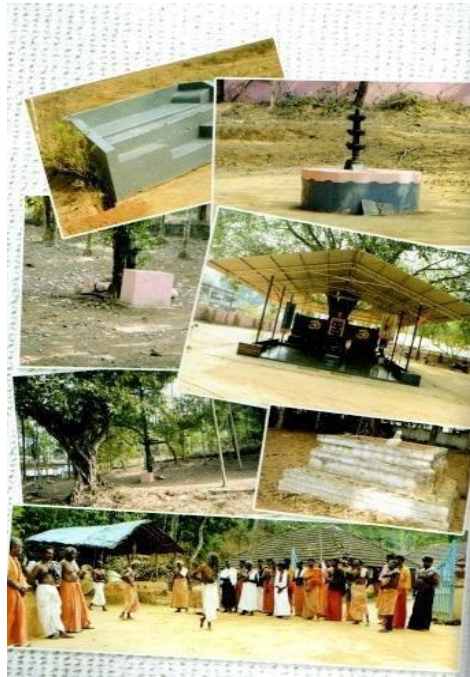
Courtesy : Saravan Nambuthiri

Photo 15: Thonichal Malakkari temple 1997 Prashnam veppu



Courtesy : Saravanan Nambuthiri

Photo 16: Komarams and *Nekals* in Malakari Temple



Courtesy : Temple Committee Thonichal

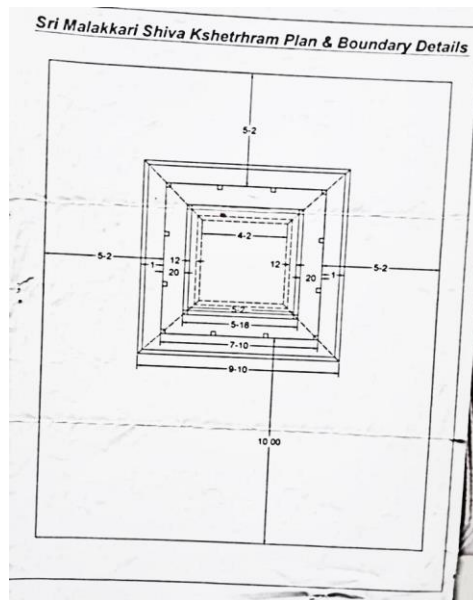
Photo 17: Present Malakari temple at Thonichal



Courtesy : K.K. Annan Thonichal

Oral tradition regarding the temple reveals the fact that it was a place where goat sacrifice had been there to propitiate the god Malakkari in the beginning of 20th century.¹³ The owners of the temple is vested with Cherukunnummal Karingari Nairs, but the deity of Malakkari is solely represent the Kurichya community it is the contradiction confined with this temple. In 1965, when *Janakeeya* committee took up the temple administration, there had been a basement and banyan tree within a forest and place for *nekals* were given and the *poojas* were done occassionally by kurichyas themselves in *madhyamam* mode by presenting liquor and meat as oblations. After the arrival of the *Janakeeya* committed *poojas* were transformed into *Uthamam* mode in vedic lines.¹⁴

Photo 18: Plan of new Malakari Temple



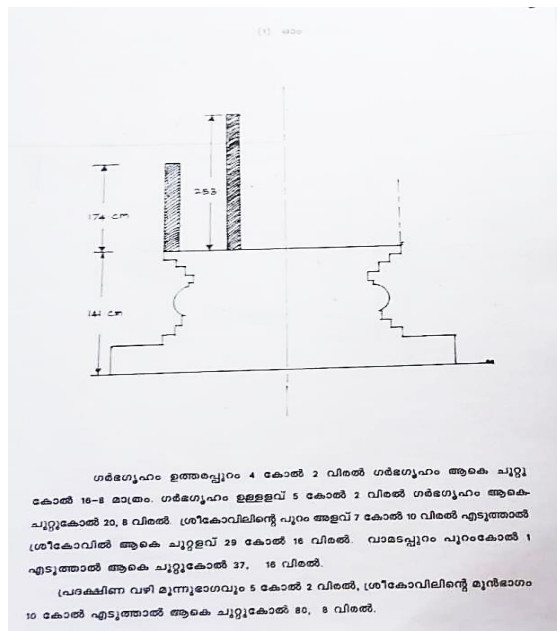
Courtesy : Balakrishnan Nair, President of temple committee

¹³ Interview with Balan othayoth 63 yrs , at his residence at Thonichal, on 2 February 2020

¹⁴ Interview with Saravanan namboothiri, Malakkari temple Santhi, 56 yrs old on 18 July 23.

True measurements its Garbha graham and sreekovil and Nadapanthal were the following

Photo 19: Plan of Garbha Graham and Sreekovil



Courtesy : Balakrishnan Nair, President of temple committee

Chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi Temple

Chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi Temple originally belonged to a person of Paniya community named Nampi. This temple is situating two kilometres away from Mananthavady town. It is now known as Chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi Bhadrakali Temple. Its beginning was with the placing of a divine stone under a tree by Nampi when he felt that this stone has some means of divination. He was a cook in a government hostel. Once when he was herding his cattle in hill tops of Chundakkunnu, he came to see the same stone in multiple points in each nook and corner of the hill. He brought that stone and kept it in a platform in his courtyard with the help of Kayamma, another member of his community. After this installation, there were intermittent diseases for their children and they approached an astrologer to know the reason. Astrologer informed him that that stone have the divinity of god Mahalakshmi and it have to be established in a sacred place. The

present diseases for his family is due to the wrath of „Devi“ or Mahalakshmi due to the impurities that affected her in the house premises. Then, Mr Nampi established Devi on a raised platform under a tree where the present temple is situating. In 20-02-2005, through the *Thampoola presnam* conducted by Krishnankutty Panikkar, they confirmed the presence of Mahalakshmi there¹⁵. Then the temple erected in honour of Mahalakshmi. Sub deities were also established such as Gulikan, Nagam, etc in the outside portion of the temple. In this initial stage, Poojas were conducted twice a week, Tuesday and Friday and first day of every month in Kollavarsham.¹⁶

Through another *presnamveppu*, in 11 November 2007, founded the presence of Bhadrakali also there. It also revealed that the blessings of Bhadrakali are increasing day by day. Then again, another Sreekovil is built there for Bhadrakali and now it is known as Chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi Bhadrakali temple. Now, daily *poojas* are conducting there. The administration of the temple is done by a trust comprised of family members of Nampi and four Namboodiri brahmins in it. The temple came under the trust in 2004.¹⁷ Now, the temple had been grown into a temple complex with the willing cooperation of the neighbouring people and devotees. Many new constructions had been undertaken such as *Thidappally*, *Nadappanthal*, *Manikkinar*, etc. Its festival is conducting in the month of February at the time of which festival celebration committee will be constituted including the local people. The income for the temple is generated from the different *vazhipadus* such as *Thulabharam*, *Pushpanjali*, etc done by the devotees who visit there.

Ritual changes

When they have worship under the tree oblations were given as beaten rice *malar*, *Pazham*, toddy, *gurusu* etc, all these oblations were occasional also. when

¹⁵ Booklet published by Sree Annapurnessery hall construction committee, Chundakkunnu Sree Mahalakshmi Devi Temple, Mananthavady, 2006, p 01

¹⁶ Interview with Gopinadhan, 54 years old, Managing trustee of Chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi Bhadrakali Temple, at Chundakkunnu, on 18-04-2019.

¹⁷ Interview with Gopinadhan, 54 years old, Managing trustee of Chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi Bhadrakali Temple, at Chundakkunnu, on 26-12-2019.

they realized the presence of Mahalakshmi, the consort of Vishnu, oblations became vegetarian like *koottu payasam*, *kadum payasam*, *nivedya choru*, *paal payasam*, *ney payasam* etc no liquor is offered for the god. When they have worship under the tree, separate places also arranged there for *nagam* , *Gulikan* etc near by, but with erection of the new temple position of *Nagam* and *Gulikan* became under a tree out side of temple wall. Rituals in the Chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi temple is turned to become in the tantric lines of Hinduism. Daily poojas are done by a Nambuthiri Brahmin. Other offerings such as *Pushpanjali*, *vechu nivedyam*, *Prabhatha*, *Pradosha Pooja* is done regularly. One *Navagraha mandapam* and serpent worship are there also within the temple compound. Regular poojas are also there. Thula bharam is another offerings done by the devotees there. Objects offered for *thulabharam* are jaggery, plantain, rice etc. Daily Poojas were done by Damodaran Namboothirippad who will receive the salary of 24000 Rs by trust board as well as *Dakshina* for Marriages, *choorunu*, *Thulabharam* etc. Before the temple construction annual oblations were offered by Mooppan in the colony which included the offering of toddy or liquor as it was a part of worship in *madhyamam* concept". Thus after renovation of the temple ritual mediation, oblation, mode of veneration and ritual economy also changed completely. On the day of the festival *Kalasam* for Mahalakshmi and Bhadrakali and gursi for Bhadrakali will be done. On festival day or installation day Kumaran Namboothirippadu Niravilppuzha along with four or five Namboothiris to assist him in the *visheshal pooja*, will arrive and receive the remuneration of 4000 to 5000.

Changes in structure and Iconography

Notable changes occurred in the structure of the temple after renovation are the following

Photo 20: Early Worship under tree in Chundakkunnu before 2005 first prashnam veppu.



Courtesy : Temple committee

Photo 21: Puramkavu or Gods in outer areas in Chundakunnu Mahalakshmi Temple



Courtesy : Suja K.S. Researcher

Photo 22: Maha lakshmi Temple in 2005



Courtesy : Suja K.S. Researcher

Ritual economy and mediation

Namboothiri brahmins became the ritual mediators on daily wages basis .. and temple also generates income from *Thula bharam*, *choroonu* , marriage, poojas and *nivedyams* etc. Namboothiri who is doing pooja at the temple may receive *dakshina* also . Festival in the temple will be officiated by Kumaran Namboothiri Niravilppuzha who had installed the deity, will arrive there with few brahmins and will receive *Dakshina* for their special poojas at festival days. Materials got from *thulabharam* will be sold outside market is also a source of income. Most important offering there is Mahalakshmi pooja, which is ranging from Rs.125 to 1500.

Iconography

In the worship under the tree they worshipped heap of stones only, when temple is grown, Mahalakshmi idol is collected from Niravilppuzha, idol of Bhadrakali which is of 2 ft height is made out of *Krishnasila* and it is brought from Shornur. Sarparaja and *Navagrahas* also made of *Krishnasila*, were brought from Thenkaashi.

Photo 23: Bhadra kali Temple in 2011



Courtesy : Suja K.S. Researcher

Photo 24: Navagriha Mandapam in 2011



Courtesy : Suja K.S. Researcher

Photo 25: Serpant god 2011



Courtesy : Suja K.S. Researcher

Uma Maheswara Temple Puthoorvayal Kalpetta

This Temple is situating 4 KM away from Kalpetta had been exposed in 1960 before world. It was a stone temple It was a rectangle stone temple with double Garbha graham and a Mukha mandapam and had 16 feet high *kodimaram* . Now it is renovated in Hindu lines in the name Uma -Maheswara temple. Major part of the old temple is now dilapidated *sreekovil* and *Mandapam* are the remaining areas of old Jain temple. From the existing remnants it can be understood that it is a Jain Temple having the same architecture style of Puthengadi and Puchavayal Jain Temples. Sculptures of Gaja Lakshmi, fish, serpant, Picture filled pillars and granite plinth etc resembles the jain architecture style.¹⁸ There is a sculpture near to *sreekovil* showing figures carrying trident and a drum(*udukku*) is quite different from the Vaishnava architecture in Puchavayal and Puthangadi Temple . So it is obvious that

¹⁸ Told by Rajan swami alias Bhanidharan, 76 years , who is aThulu brahmin whose ancestors arrived in Kalpetta in 1904 brought by then land lord of Kalpetta Krishna Gowder to perform pooja in Hindu temples at Manukunnu Mala and Durga Temple at Kottappadi. Meeting with him was on 30/06/24 at the Temple Uma Maheswara Temple.

Jain Saivates may be the owners as well as devotees of the temple. They might have installed 'Rishabha Deva Theerthankara' in the Temple¹⁹. Rishabha Deva Theerthankara was the twenty eighth incarnation of lord Parama Siva. Later Kantha Mangalath Kottayil Nair, landlord of the area, who is an ardent devotee of Siva re built it as Siva or Maheswara temple.²⁰ It was said that Tipu made ravage into the temple and destroyed it during this period. Temple and property came under the ownership of Maniyankodu Krishna Gowder in the beginning of nineteenth century. In my visit I could see a huge monolithic Nandi figurine, Monolithic flag stand or *Dhwaja Sthambham* and pillars with some sculptors like fish and serpent, Ganapathi, Durga and Jwala Malini Yakshin etc. When it was revealed before the open world it was a dilapidated old stone temple which could not be renovated. At that time it had been under the ownership of MJ Vijaya Padman and Krishna Mohanan (Late) and they had donated 82 cents of land to Temple Committee.²¹ Later it was decided to renovate the temple under this committee on Hindu style and named it as Uma Maheswara Temple.²²

¹⁹ Mundakkayam Gopi, Ariya ppedatha Wayanad, Kalpetta, p.p186, 187.

²⁰ Interview with Damodaran Nair, 83 years , a local resident at his residence Kottavayal on 12/07/24.

²¹ Temple Committee, Pongini Sree Paradevatha Bhadrakali Temple, Visheshal Pathappu, 2006, p. 112

²² Interview with Bhanidharan alias Rajan Swami on 30 /06/24 at the Uma Maheshwara Temple .

Photo 26: Umamaheswari Temple



Courtesy : Anil Kumar P.K. Irulam

Photo 27: Nandi at Umamaheswari Temple



Courtesy : Shajish kumar, P. Kalpetta

Photo 28. Jwalamalini and others at Umamaheswari Temple



Courtesy : Shajish kumar, P. Kalpetta

Photo 29: Peedom at Umamaheswari Temple



Courtesy : Shajish kumar, P. Kalpetta

Kalyanath Palli (Mosque)

Kalyanath Palli is believed to be the earliest Muslim mosque in Wayanad. It is situating 4 KM away from Manantoddy in Kallodi – Manantoddy route . Antiquity of the mosque is shrouded in mystery. When the old mosque renovated,²³ it was seen that the building year of mosque was dated as 1626 upon a teak wood used for construction. There are several myths related to the origine of this mosque. myth regarding the origine of Kalyanathu palli says that, one day a Kurichian noticed one Muslim saint sitting beside the river accompanied by two tigers on his side, Kurichian informed the matter to Alancherry Mooppil Nambiar, even after a long search they could not find out that saint later they found out him in the hill top. By understanding the divinity of the saint, Mooppil Nambiar requested him to cure a bed ridden lady named Kalyani at his house. Miraculously, by drinking a glass of milk given by saint that patient had got saved from the diseases. As a token of gratitude Moopil Nambiar bestowed him with a land for the construction of a mosque. Another myth regarding the founding of Kalyanath palli says that, on the day of this land donation there was a marriage in the family of Nambiar, thus this mosque came to be called as *kalyanathu pally*²⁴ The mosque was constructed in the meeting place of *ozhakkodi, Edavaka, and Edachena deshams*.²⁵ So it was assumed that Shahul Murthala, the founder of Kalyanathu palli and the sheik in Periya were the“ pioneer Muslims in the land of Wayanad.²⁶ There is a maqbara or burial place within the mosque which is considered to be that of Shahul Murthala, who is believed to be arrived from Yemen in Arabia.²⁷ From the period of construction itself Kalyanath palli was looked after by Kakkapathu from Nadapauram. Matrilineal form of succession may the reason behind that as Kakkapathu may be a

²³ Interview with Noushad Mannar, Mosque committee Member, Kalyanathum palli, on 18/06/2024, at the mosque

²⁴ Mundakkayam Gopi, *Ariyappedatha Wayanad*, Sahya publications, 2002, p.197.

²⁵ *I Valiyullahi sheik Shahul Murthala(kha,si), Jeevacharithram*, Hidayathul islam sabha, Kalyanathu pallikkal, 2006, p. 9.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.8.

²⁷ Bava K. Palukunnu, *Wayanadan gramangal*, Kerala bhasha institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 2023, p. 213.

converted woman. Later she transferred the charge of protection of mosque with Erakkodan Tharuvayi. Tharuvayi and his Karumbath family was the care takers of the mosque till 1953. Karumbath family was believed to be converters from Koyiloth family , a branch of royal family of Kadathanad.²⁸ After 1953 the mosque had been taken over by a committee.²⁹

Photo 30: Kallyanathu palli in 1911



Courtesy : Rao Behadur P Gopalan Nair

Kalyanathu palli renovated in present form in 1997. Unlike the normal mosques it is facing east. Maqbara of Shahul Murthala is kept as holy in the west side of the mosque. Now many non-Muslims used to visit here every day in the maqbara of the Shahul Murthala and making offerings such as silk, agarbathis, coconut oil , pepper , rice and cash etc. All these offerings are done for save

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid*

themselves from ailments³⁰. In 1950 in the wake of migrations people used to bring the idols of human beings, hand , leg head etc as a thanks giving for curing the diseases in respective body parts . Since idol worship is not permissible in Islam , bringing of idols is banned after the renovation of the mosque.

Photo 31: Kalyanathu Palli New



Courtesy : Noushad , Mahallu Committee Member of Kalyanathu palli

Old Church Vythiri

ST Joseph church Vyrthiri is situating on the hill top beside of NH 766 Kozhikode-Kollagal road. It is believed that this church was established by 1845 by French priests of Foreign mission society of Paris under Mysore diocese³¹. In

³⁰ Interview with Noushad Mannar , 53 years old, member of Committee of mosque Kalyanath palli at the mosque on 18/06/2024

³¹ Martin Kidangookkaran, "Visuddha Ouseph pithavinte Devalaya Chrithra Vazhiye", In *ST Joseph church Sathothama platinum jubilee smaranika*, Vythiri, August 2023, p. 39

earlier times priests from Mysore arrived here through horse to offer services once in a month.³² It was only a coconut leaf roofed shed in the early times which was rebuilt by Bishop Faisantiyar in 1860.³³ Calicut diocese formed in 1923 June 23 .Till then ST Joseph church was under diocese of Mysore. Latin service was offered in the church till 1967 which was replaced by Malayam later.³⁴ Devotees from distant places like, Kaniyambetta, Puzhamudi, Thariyodu used to arrive here on foot to attend the prayer in earlier days. FR.Edward Baretta SJ was the first Vicar of the church from 1923- 1925. First school of the church was established at Chunda under his guidance in 1924 . Now it is known as RC high school Chunda.³⁵ His successor Sebastian Nerona had shown special interest to bring some families from outside Wayanad like Pallippattu, Parookkaran, arakkal , Kannattu parambil, etc from Ankamali, Thrissur, Chalakkudi and Koratty.³⁶ Present Church started its rebuilding in 1967 Dec 10. Foundation stone was laid by Aldho Mariya Pathroni.³⁷ Groto of ST Mary and ST Joseph are erected there. In addition to Vythiri ST joseph church they have started one meditation center at Chundayil in the name of ST Jude. under Fr. Disilva it became a separate edavaka.³⁸

³² Mundakkayam Gopi, Ariyappedatha Wayanad, Kalpetta p.200.

³³ Martin Kidangoorkaran, *Op.cit.* p. 39.

³⁴ Interview with Martin Kidangoorkaran, on 18/07/24 at his residence, Vythiri.

³⁵ Interview with Martin KJ, Parish council secretary at the Vythiri church on 12/06/23.

³⁶ Martin Kidangoorkaran, *Op.cit.*, pp. 40-41.

³⁷ *Ibid.* p. 41

³⁸ Interview with Binu, Head Master of Catechism School, Vythiri on 12/06/23.

Photo 32: ST Joseph Church at Vythiri old



Courtesy : Martin K.J

Another curious thing about virgin Mary in the Vythiri ST Joseph church is that Yadava community had been there for a long time who lived upon cattle rearing. They are also known as *erumakkar* locally, who is highly faithful about virgine Mary as they think that virgine Mary is identical with the Hindu Goddess Mariyamma. Mariyamma is the goddess who are checking the disease of small pox among the yadavas and other Hindus . A major Mariyamman temple is situating at Sulthan Bathery. This cult is more popular in Tamil nadu. Yadavas, who had been a significant community in Vythiri region, made great offerings to Virgin Mary such as pepper, rice, Salt, plantain, cocks cash etc. Another rites offered by this church are *adima vekkai*, *Ezhuthiniruth* etc. Now a days the offerings limited to cash, candle, holy dresses for altar etc. Now many of the Yadavas shifted from this place. They used to offer salt at the front of Holy figure of Virgin Mary when the festival procession is going.

Photo 33: ST Joseph Church at vythiri New



Courtesy : Martin Kidangookkaran

The places of worship are an important point of the articulations of the faith, beliefs and practices followed by the worshippers. As such the dimensions of religion could be read from the structures ritual and practices connected to each places of worship. It is difficult to get the status of places of worship of the previous periods. Still we have some documents available to understand the state of things in the past. The depiction of the structures, worships and practices of the selected ones in this chapter which are currently available is subjected to a keen and critical observation to delineate different layers of belief persisted through time keeping in view of our conceptual considerations. There are five temples, one kavu ,one mosque and one church are under consideration in this chapter. If we look into present practices and structures of these centres of worship we can identify how history of changes in the social forms are preserves in it. The first thing that we come across is Four temples and one kavu, the practices of the hunting gathering religion are still preserved. The religion of hunting gathering society, as already

mentioned, involves the veneration of objects in the habitat where they lived. „Keni“ of fresh water springs, is found to be the most venerated one then along with Jack fruit trees, Mango trees, Anjili tree and trees with white sap are also venerated. In Mundaneduppu kavu, it is still visible in the ritual involved there. In Kandamala, we see the veneration of Thampachi Keni, Snake worship, swords in a peedhom (which was later taken away) and the veneration of Jack tree and trees with white sap. At Pakkom temple, we see venerated stones, trees and a keni. It was said that this was originally a point of distribution of hunted animals among the members of the clan. So this is called a *Papp* . This space is popularly known as Pakkom Kotta which indicates it as a centre of some secular activities too. The Malakkari Temple which is now a Siva Temple was reported to be a *Papp* in the past. The name seems to denotes that an originally hunter deity is assimilated to the patneon of the Siva later. Here too, we have the vestiges of the veneration of trees, stones and snakes are retained even in the current structures, rituals and practices. In Chundakunnu temple too, we see the points of veneration of trees and stones in comparatively lesser significance in the scheme of structures and worship. It is interesting that see thatUma Maheswara Temple which was originally a Jain place of worship fails to bear any kind of veneration of natural object as is evident in the case of other temples.

Another striking feature while considering all these places of worships, they all still bear elements of the religion of the settled cultivation mode of life. As we have already seen, it is at this stage, that man understood himself to be different from nature and nature is an entity which could be used for himself. Now he settled at on place permanently where, in addition to gathering, he produced what he needed making use of natural bounties around. He started producing surplus, exchanging it, storing it and negotiating with others on the basis of his possessions. It was at this time, the permanent spots of worship began to be emerged; the practice of material offerings began to be part of religion and consequently gradually offices of services there began to be formed. The most interesting thing is that all places of worships under considerations keep the elements of these features currently. The facts came out at interviews at the time of field work also give some ideas about the immediate

past. On the basis of these, we see that at all these points of worship, offerings of rice is most prevalent including the mosque and the church. In the case of Mundaneduppu Kavu, Offerings of rice, the structure of a *thara* and an annual cock sacrifice is still continuing. The Current Kandamala Temple was previously a *madam*, a small hut under a Jack fruit tree venerated previously at a stage of hunting- gathering. With a permanent structure they might have practiced ritual offerings of valuable materials such as rice and other things.

The Pakkom temple too was a *madom* prior to it becoming temple. Really it was a set of Madams. Then they had founded permanent deities in the form of Poothadi Daivam and Pakka Daivam. Offering of rice is said to have been common there. We have already seen that in a previous stage, it was a point of distribution of hunted animals. The current Malakkari Temple again is said to have been a *madam* where beaten rice, plantain and silk were offered. Malakkari was originally a hunter deity who was worshipped along with *kuliyam*. The sacrifices of goats and cocks were prevalent there during this period, it is said. Chundakkunnu Temple too was amadam where a female deity was worshipped. The offerings and rituals have parallel to other temples mentioned before.

Uma Meheswari Temple was originally a jaina centre. It is generally accepted that the Jina religion came here in the medieval times. Thus they came here and settled more as cultivators than as traders on account of the large scale availability of *vayals* and probably lesser opportunities for trade. There is a small community of *tharakans* who are said to be jina traders in Wayanad. By the end of the premodern period, they seemed to have been rich farmers having possession of large area of land. So they were most prosperous settled farmers in the area. A lot of remains of structures, idols and jina –related panels and motifs have been found in the vicinity of the present temple at the time of field work. The presence of such volume of remains indicate a vibrant jina place of worship existed in the period of settled cultivation mode of life here. Without the turnout of large amount of materials and money coming as offerings, this would not have been possible.

Kalyanathupalli is the first mosque in Wayanad. Having founded in 17th

century, it is first mark of the settlement of Muslims in Wayanad. Its history of Edachena Nair and others providing land and other facilities for the foundation of mosque remains a conspicuous evidence for the then existing syncretic traditions and culture. The folklore regarding the same also significant here. The structure of old mosque buttress the same again. Two other features are the trustee of the mosque was a lady. It also resonate the matrilineal authority kept up by Muslims then. The tomb of the saint was then and is still a popular centre of healing attracted by all across the religions and regions. It is quite evident that the Kalyanathupalli represents the settled cultivation mode of life. The presence of the tomb of a saint and offerings of rice, silk and pepper from all sections denotes the belief and practices of an agricultural community.

Though established in 1847, the Christian community of Vythiri was predominantly showing the features of settled communities mode of religion. Founded by the missionaries from Mysore, the believers offered vegetables, plantains, rice, pepper, spices and salt. An important feature of that is the syncretic relationship that the worshippers of Mariyamman who are called Yadavas with the church and Christianity. They are understood to have been following the path of both Mariyamman and Mary. Yadavas remained themselves in their traditional beliefs though they participated many services in the church.

All these places of worship cutting across religion witnessed tremendous change at the levels of structures believes and practices. As we have already seen, Wayanad was exposed to multiple ideas and articles that came through the new channels opened up by the global industrial society. Money began to play a dominant role in the economy including religious economy. The play of money seems to have ensured grand constructions in the public, domestic and the religious realm. With the rising income people in general sought to express their elevated positions through building more durable and attractive buildings to which they are identified with. Those who could bear a good house built impressive homes. Those in whom the communal kinship tradition was stronger often bend upon to build communal ones; the place of worship being their first attraction. Thus ,there is a

general tendency of people of all faiths to express their status elevation through structural expansion. It is interesting to note that the only center of worship under our consideration which does not have undergone expansion is Mundanaduppu *kavu*. It still follows the *kavu* traditions of beliefs, worship and practices. An apparent reason for this is the presence of traditional *kudi* mode of life and absence of economic advancement. Mullukuruma *kudi* adjacent to this *kavu* and Paniyas residing in the adjoining areas who were the communal trustees of the *kavu* still earned their livelihood partly through hunting gathering and partly through cultivation.

All those who worshipped in other centers under our consideration are understood to have benefitted the incorporation of the area to the emerging industrial global society by way of selling their labour to plantations and commercial cultivation, participating in incidental trade open up by the new mode of life, serving in government jobs and availing the channels of transport and communication. This offered them economic power, social status, mobility and cultural acquaintance with others. A consequent disintegration of kinship related mode of life related with *kudis* and *mittams* set at least some of the individuals free from their traditional bonds.

As a result, they were all exposed to the channels of communication set by national and global developments. On the one, they got familiarised with the ideas offered by modernity, the cultural facet of industrial society. It gave them a liberalized idea of religion which was more or less defined by the structures of western Christian religious frame work. On the other they were also influenced by Pan Indian ideas of a unified Hinduism which had already been disseminated crudely even before the influence of the industrial society . The influence of both began to be conspicuous in the second half of twentieth century only. An examination based on our materials shows more or less abrupt development of new religious sensibilities which are represent through the changes we see in the centers of worship under our consideration.

By the middle of the Twentieth century, all places of worship except Mundanaduppu got more extensive and modern structures. At Kandamala the small *madam* is replaced by a bigger temple. At Pakkam kotta , thatched and elevated

madams were rebuilt as more elaborate concrete structures. So is the case of Malakkari temple. Uma Maheswari temple is really a new structure built as Siva temple on a ruined Jain center of worship. Vythiri church also was rebuilt in to an elegant structure in 1968. Kalyanathu palli also got a new and elegant Indo-Persian structure in the latter half of twentieth century.

During the industrial phase, all the points of worship under consideration began to be managed by public committees instead of the previously prevalent system. Among them, the temples under the trusteeship of tribals undergoes an increase in the number of deities. In addition to kuliyan, serpant, kutchyathan a new additions of Lord Siva, Ganapathy and Bhagavathy could be seen installed in the newly built temple at Kandamala. Here Lord Siva and Ganapathy seems to be new addition where as Bhagavathy is an assimilated deity of thampachi/ Thampuratty. Now we see traditional deities as outside deities. At Pakkam Kotta the traditional deities such as Pakkam daivam and Poothdi daivam were assimilated as Siva and Vishnu to house in the new structures. Durga Bhadrakali, Murukan and Ganapati were also installed in other rebuilt structures. Here also we see the traditional tribal gods set to the margins. The same pattern is evident in Malakkari temple. Here the traditional hunting deity Malakkri and his female counter part Pulachadichi Muthachi were assimilated into the pantheons of Siva and Parvathy respectively. Here too we see many traditional gods in marginal spaces of the temple structures. *Nekals*, who represent ancestor worship, Serpents , Kuliyan etc are examples for the same. The same pattern is visible at Chundakkunnu temple. It is extremely important to see that the Jaina objects of worship were totally changed to Saiva cult at Umamaheswari temple.

There was a corresponding change in the rituals involved in these places. The simple and less expensive forms of rituals gave way to complex and expensive ones in the case of temples on account of their transformation to new deities and structures in the industrial modern phase. This was due to increased frequency of rituals which required the maintenance of specialized permanent service personals. There is a correspondence between the wherewithal at the disposal of the trustees and the frequency of the pujas. At Malakkari Temple and Chundakunnu Temple,

there is *nityapuja* (daily worship) now. At Kandamala there is *Azhchapuja* (weekly worship) and at Pakkom Kotta Temple we see quarterly puja. With Kavus and Madams becoming temples, thus, a new sections of mediators in worship got inducted into the worship systems in the form of Brahmins and Antarala castes. Though some form of traditional rituals were allowed, on specific times and places, their roles in the worship began to be seen as inferior ones.

Along with these trends all religions showed a tendency to skip away from syncretic practices and to strengthen the idea of a homogenized authoritative religion. Hindu temples showed a progressive move towards a homogenous religion which harboured a tendency to consume local and little traditions to promote a strong monolithic Hinduism. The Ramayana which is a pan Indian epic got a Wayandan rendering by interpolating the geography of Wayand for the events involved with a view to appealing the tribes in general. The most important agents who spread this renderings are *ezhuthassans* who came in large number by the middle of the nineteenth century³⁹. *Ezhuthassan* were teachers reached Wayanad from outside to teach the children of area. Wayanadan Ramayanam is thus a narrative strategy to promote the incorporation of the local and little traditions to a grand Pan Indian tradition. The newly introduced pantheons of the Industrial period here too could corroborate this new move. This told on the existing syncretic life in many ways. We see certain clans and lineages ousted in the new scheme of worship. For example, Ooralikkurumar were ousted from the spaces of worship in Kandamala. Their behaviour began to be seen as against the new rules of worship where non vegetarianism became unacceptable. At the same time many others from outside the Kurumars lineage could take part in the rituals and festivals there. This shows the exclusion of divergence to create a homogenous culture. The same trends are visible at Malakkari Temple and Chundakkunnu Temple. Such a trend is also visible at Kallyanathupalli. A progressive exclusion of non-Muslims from functional spaces along with the renovation of the mosque destroying one with beautiful

³⁹ Interview with Ajayan Madoor colony, 48 years, dated 6 January 20202, with Symala Ashramakkolly aged 73 dated 21 June 2023, Thankamma 72 years dated 28 July 2023. temple under a temple committee

traditional structure with a new Indo Persian style of mosque constructed on its place discloses the weakening the syncretism and strengthening a homogenous way of understanding Islam. No more women come as trustees of the mosque there after.

Another general change that took place at this phase was that all these places of worship began to be governed by public committees in which persons and devotees from all hues could be its members. Among the centers in our considerations only one remained under the traditional trusteeship of kudi, i.e., Mundaneduppu kavu. Kanadamala shrine and Pakkom madams which were under the trusteeship of Kurumar kudis began to be managed by temple committees in the Second half of twentieth century. Malakkari was originally run by Othaymagalath, Padukani Kurichiya *mittams*. This too began to be run by a public committee in the said period. So is Chundakkunnu Temple. Uma Maheswari Temple which was a jaina shrine under the trusteeship of Santhi Prasad Jain before it became a Siva. We see the same change in the case of Kalyanathupalli. The trustee ship of it was changed from *mutawalli* families of Kakka Pathu and Tharuvai to a public committee of Muslims in the second half of twentieth Century.

OTHER TRENDS

A need to consider general trends across south India is essentially felt here. Common religious trends in Industrial age was not exclusive for Wayanad region it had its implication throughout South India⁴⁰. Though Wayanad is geographically a continuation of Deccan plateau and demographically tribal dominated, the trends emerged in other parts of Kerala also arrived here through migrant from outside. One movement of such kind is Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam. This Movement had its inception in Travancore to fight against the caste based injustices and social evils and was essentially anti-brahmanic. This movement arrived in Wayanad along with migrant Ezhavas from Travancore. A significant number of Ezhavas migrated to Wayanad in 1940s.

⁴⁰ There are several socio religious reform movements in South India like SNDP, NSS, Prathyaksha Raksha Daiva Sabha in Kerala, EV Ramaswamy Naicker or Periyar in Tamil and his Self Respect Movement, Lingayath Movement in Karnataka et.al in the wake of twentieth century.

Their main occupation was toddy tapping and also pursued the vocation of physicians and astrologer. Ezhava community , being lower caste had faced strong caste oppression from the Brahmins . They were denied the right for education and mobility too. Their leader Sree Narayana Guru, done a lot for the upliftment of the community and he took battle against brahmin hegemony to the masses through his consecration of Sivalinga at Aruvippuram in 1888 ,⁴¹ by which he taught the Ezhavas in Kerala, that no Brahmin mediatory is needed to pray God.

Prior chapters mentioned about the arrival of Ezhavas along with Christians into Wayanad during the second half of Nineteenth century. Development of transportation arteries and consequent mobility prepared the ground for the migration. It was at a time when a general trend of religious modernization is visible all over Kerala and south India. SNDP yogam had started its activities in Wayanad with the formation of first *sakha yogam* at Kenichira which was registered with 1221 number in 1954. Later many sakhas started in Wayanad at places like Kallupadi, Moolankavu etc. When the number of *Sakha yogam* increased, first SNDP union came in to vogue at Bathery in 1962. First union consists of more than twenty *sakha Yogams*⁴².

In Wayanad it was not necessary for them to have fights against caste or brahmin ideologies except in few places. Since the Ezhavas in Wayanad became rich, inspite of the Ezhava priests in their temples at Pulpally, Kallupadi, Koleri, they are accepting the ritual services of Brahmin priests too in “*Ganapathi homam*, Astronomy etc. Thus it is apparent that SNDP has absorbed themselves in to Brahmin tradition in their ritual, language and culture too. Thus, even though the SNDP movement was expected to fight against upper Caste domination and ritualistic mediation of Brahmins , they seemed to have failed to rein in the thrust of the Brahmanical power to influence the religious practices and beliefs. The SNDP movement further fell in to the clutches of Brahmin ideologies. Despite this short

⁴¹ P Chandra Mohan, Growth of Social Reform Movements in Kerala in PJ Cheriyan(ed.), Perspectives on Kerala History, State Gazetteer, Volume 11, Part 11, Kerala Council for Historical Research , Thiruvananthapuram, 2024, p.66.

⁴² Interview with Chellappan , 94 yrs, first union member, at his residence at Angadisseri on 16/06/2024.

comings SNDP yogam initiated Schools, Colleges etc for the upliftment of the people.

This does not mean that they totally stayed away from any attempts to reform the religious traditions. One instant is that the establishment of Koleri Sreenarayana Shanmukha Temple. In 1960 a group of Ezhava devotees went in procession to pray at Siva Temple Poothadi. When they reached there, Poothadi Nambiars, the authorities of the temple did not permit the Ezhavas to enter in to the temple . As a retaliation, Sreenarayana Shanmukha Temple was built by devotees in one day at Koleri.⁴³

An examination of changes in the multiple facets related to the centres of worship thus reveal a lot of knowledge about the pathways of transformation of religious faiths, beliefs, rituals and practices. Such a change , as we have been clarifying was predominantly the impact of the emergence of a new society based on a new set of values and morality grew out of the man`s understanding of themselves and their surroundings from positions of individualism and maximum exploitation of natural resources.

⁴³ Interview with Sudheendran Paliyath, 72 yrs, at his residence at Angadisseri. Wayanad on 10 /05/2024.

CONCLUSION

The present study is an attempt to understand the relationship between social life and religion in Wayanad, a district in Kerala bounded by hills and vales of Western Ghats. Wayanad is a land of scenic beauty and is known for her fabulous wealth having a distinctive socio eco zone. It is also a land of commendable number of tribal population. In the early and medieval period, major share of its population constitute the tribals. Due to this reason this land came to be called as "Africa in Kerala"¹. This land is also known for its numerous migrants who arrived here in due course of time for have a better living utilizing abundance of natural resources. While examining the available ethnographic and anthropological studies like *Caste and Tribes of Southern India*, *Wayanad people and it's tradition* by C Gopalan Nair etc, shows that almost all inhabitants in Wayanad are migrants. From the available sources it is difficult to ascertain who were the tribes arrived earlier here. We generally considered the tribes of the area as the primitive inhabitants though folklores at certain levels include some semblance of migration of Kurichiyar. Existing oral tradition and folk songs among Paniyas points out the fact that it was Jains and Chettis were responsible for Expansion of Paddy cultivation in Wayanad. Besides Chettis and Jains many other peoples also arrived here like Muslims, Christians . All these migrants arrived in to a tribal setting which ensured cheap and enough labour supply and fertile soil , natural resources etc.

The study of the social connections of the religion is a challenging theme to work with on account of intricacies of the relations that exists between multiple facets of human life. Already we have many models of dealing with the social life and culture. The present study drew from ideas put forth by many scholars and thinkers, such as Ludwing Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Bronislaw Malinowski etc. Apart from them, the study has made use of the formulation of the ecological historians such as Ramachandra Guha and Madhav¹

¹ K Panoor, Keralathile Africa, Kottayam, 1963, pp. 1-83

Gadgil. The study reveals that there has been a more visible changes in the socio-eco-cultural life world in the twentieth century in Wayanad. Traces of food gathering and hunting can be seen in the life cycle rituals of Kurichiyas such as birth , marriage and death. Kurichiyas believes that Kurichiyas and Mullukurumas used to keep bows and arrows along with the dead bodies .Many of the folk songs of Paniyas reflect their gathering mode of resource use such as the following song

Vanchemma Vanchemma akkare
Thottillee meempudippam
Enthu nalla Meenu aa
Putte Puttathinja Paralau
Vanchemma Vanchemma akkare
Thottilee Mee Pudippa Chade, Chade , Chade, Chade
Eduthomma eduthomma Chade, Chade,
Chjade, chade,chade
Aa Parakkundili Kathakundalee Pillu kundali meenu
Vaanchemma Vaanchemma²
The first poem

Translation

Come sister(lady) come
Let's go fishing
To the ditches yonder
Fishes,Fresh and big
Come sister come
Let's go fishing
To the ditches yonder
Catch catch catch

² Sung by Bineesh 23 yrs, Pilakkavu colony on 21 July 2024 at his residence.

In the rock crevices, among Kaitha plants

In the grass pits

What big fishes

Come, sister come

Pasotral stage of Wayanad can be recollected from the oral traditions and the existing evidence as *Pottan kodukkal*, *Vidukali*, *Chumalida* etc. Since they used their cattle wealth mainly in agricultural chores and for replenishing their paddy fields it can be assumed that there had not been an independent pastoral mode of resource use existed here it was a mode of a agro – pastoralism existed here . During this mode of resource use Paniyas remained as herders of cattle , ploughers and riders of bullock cart. Mullukurumas, as they owned agricultural land they had numerous cattle too. It is to be noted that they had developed certain mortgages and economic practices based on cattle during this period like *Chumalida*, *Pottan kodukkal*, *Aalacheetu* etc. Cattle counted as chief form of their wealth during those days. In such a society some gods such as *Kuliyar* for providing protection for cattle and paddy. *Athiralan* was another god popular among the Chettis and Kurichyas, who was in charge of protection of Paddy and cattle wealth.

It was in the mature stage of settled cultivation many worship centers like Thirunelli and Valliyoorkkavu , Kalyanathu Palli of Muslims had emerged to show off the glory of people in power. Under this period also Paniya community remained in the position of agricultural slaves who lived beside the paddy fields. Bonded labour system in the name of '*kundal pani*' or '*nilpu pani*' had been in vogue to bind them with agricultural chores. A type of community living started among Paniya, Kuruma, and Kurichyas. They were forced to live together to ward off wild animals and to protect their Paddy fields. Mullukurumas developed their '*Kudi*' and *Kunnu* settlement, which fosters a kinship during this period. Kurichyas began to live in joint families which consisted of around 200 members. Their settlement area was concentrated in the banks of Paddy field or '*vayaloram*'. Certain agricultural rites like '*Thula pathu*, and *Puthari* developed during this period of settled cultivation "*Koolam kuthal*" or husking of paddy became an earning way for the Mullukurumas during this period. Settled cultivation made people to think nature as being subject to human control.

Notable changes occurred among the Kurichya families during this period. They organized themselves in to *Kulams* in order to avoid sexual abuses while they are living together in a joint family. They organised themselves in to fifty seven *Kulams* which include the category of *Bandhu kulam* and *Pandhi Kulam* to upkeep the marriage exogamy. All Kurichyas are belong to their mothers *kulam*. Mothers *mittam* or *tharavadu* provided asylum for divorced wives, orphans and destitutes. Thus matriliney became stronger among them during the period of settled cultivation. The sense of private property and nuclear family became stronger among them only after 1970 ees with the arrival of Travancore migrants and introduction of various development programs of Government like independent houses and family planning.

Settled cultivation made Paniyas and Adiyas as bonded laborers under a contract with different Nair jenmis and chettis to mortagage their labour for one year for a megre amount of money to celebrate Valliyoorkkavu festival. Bonded labour among Paniyas were known as *Nilpu pani* or *kundal pani Mulam Karanam* obtained from Madaparambu Chetty family shows that jenmis have sole right to transfer the owner ship of a Paniya family along with transfer of land(see appendix).

Industrial mode of resource use heralded from the period of Tipu's invasion. Industrial age brought remarkable changes in social and economic sphere of Wayanad. Such changes reflected in the religious arenas also consequently. Modernity and homogeneity seen to be arrived as the cultural part of Industrialization. Wayanad was the part of Madras presidency from 1800 onwards , So it was easier for them transform its land scape and cultivation in accordance with colonial capitalism. Monocrop plantations such as Coffee, tea Rubber and Cynchona etc started by them to satisfy their commercial interest. Several Forest laws were passed to make forest as their own property. They also introduced land tax through the tax resettlement of 1928. Tribes people were forced to pay tax for their land and were alienated from their customary rights over forest.

Roads and transportation facilities had been considerably improved considerably under the British rule. Calicut- Mysore road which was established by Tipu was metalled. Many such roads, bridges etc. were also constructed by the British to reach in the remote estates. Thus the rural tribal population came in to

contact with the urban world. With the establishment of British laws and consequent rules by independent Government of India alienated them from the traditional self-rule. Tribal people began to entrust on common civil and criminal laws and police to settle their disputes rather than their traditional *kudi* or *oorukoottam*.³ Story of *Maveli Mantam*, the novel written by K.J. Baby depict the life of agricultural slaves like paniyas and adiyas in Wayanad. Novel begins with the leasing of a slave *Kaippadan* to a new master Subhyaraya Pattar by his feudal lord Ambu Nair. It brings the re-empowering of old feudal system within the imperial economy of East India Company's exploitive agenda. There is a court scene in the story where escaped Kaippadan, an Adiya slave, brought before the court. Above all the importance of tribal chieftains like *Chemmi*³ of Paniyas, *Pooppaan* of Kurichiyas, *Porunnon* of Mullukurumas had considerably reduced. Young generation is not willing to accept them as their head under the influence of new civic consciousness. Role of Tribal chieftains are limited with life cycle rituals alone⁴. Nineteen tea factories were also established by them in different parts of Wayanad. Thus Plantation capitalism initiated in Wayanad . Factory system induced a time consciousness among the people in Wayanad. Modernity was came as the part of Industrial mode of resource use. Large scale religious conversion of Kurichiyas and Paniyas had been happened during this period. Due to strict caste rules, untouchability and poverty Many Kurichias became willing to embrace Christianity. Thus Many of them converted in Pallikkunnu Region. Conversion of Paniya community is still going on in these days for” upward social mobility”⁵ and material benefits too.

The study corroborate to the concept of mode of resource use and its implications in the ideology especially religion. Tribes people constituted the major

³ Story of *Maveli Mantam*, the novel written by K.J. Baby depict the life of agricultural slaves like paniyas and adiyas in Wayanad. Novel begins with the leasing of a slave *Kaippadan* to a new master Subhyaraya Pattar by his feudal lord Ambu Nair. It brings the re-empowering of old feudal system within the imperial economy of East India Company's exploitive agenda. There is a court scene in the story where escaped Kaippadan, an Adiya slave, brought before the court.

⁴ Interview with Madhavan, Appad., 64 years on 25 February 2024, at his residence Appad.

share of population in the pre-modern Period with a few migrant communities. In the pre modern period, they lived in what could be called agro pastoralist mode of resource use and culture. In the early period, hunting gathering constituted the determining factor of life and relations. The nature of settlement of the people at different times based on the mode of resource use. We see a change of settlements from *malayoram* (literally "by the side of forest") of the early period to *vayaloram* ("by the side of fields") during mature settled mode of life and further move to *Vazhiyoram* (by the side of road) during the industrial phase of life. In the Gathering mode of resource use was limited to hunting and gathering . Centre of veneration was cairn of stones or trees and water bodies like“ Keni. Ritual s and oblations were limited . Ritual mediation was done by the community members. During this period people viewed nature as their kins. In the Pastoral mode of resource use their cattle stock marked the measure of wealth.⁵

Rituals were performed for their cattle stock like "Chambalamoottu". Meagre oblations were given in the form of cereals like rice, ragi and sacrifice of animals. Agriculture and pastoralism had gone hand in hand during this period. *Kuliyar*, *Athiralan* etc. arrived as gods to protect cattle wealth. Many economic transactions were done on the basis of cattle wealth like *aalacheetu*, *chumalida* are examples of this types of contracts and mortgages. It was in the pastoral mode of resource use human beings began to think themselves as separate from nature. Little platforms or *tharas* began to construct for their gods during this period. Sacrifices and oblations are donated on this platform.

Settled mode of resource use made huge changes in the human life, religion as well as in their relation with nature. Expansion of Paddy cultivation was the chief economic character of Wayanad. Jains and Chettis arrived during this period extending from eleventh century. Chettis and Jains introduced many innovations in Paddy production, water conservation etc. Notion of private property began to appear among them. During this period collective human labor needed for paddy cultivation which led to the enslavement of two landless communities like Paniyas

⁵ Romila Thaper, *Interpreting Early India*, New Delhi 1992, p.72.

and adiyas. Many of the oral tradition of Paniyas reveals this factor. Many stories of such kind and songs were included in the previous chapters. The following song shows their helplessness as slaves of jenmis.

Kabani Nadikkarayil
kuliranji marathanalil
coolie tharan bulichavane Thampurane
Innu nanka adimakalallo
Nanka anjum injum adimakalallo
Wayanattile malamukalil
Maram kochum thanuppine
Athijeevicha Makka Nanke
Oru Kayilu Kanjikkum
Oru thundu pukakkum
Pani cheytha adimakalallo.⁶

Translation

Near the banks of Kabani River
Under the shades of Kuliranji tree
Oh Landlord!
Who called to give us wages,
Today We are your slaves
We were your slaves yesterday (then)and today (now)
The survivors,we are
From the hills of Wayanad
Overpowering shivering cold,
For a spoon of porridge
For a scrap of tobacco
We toiled as slaves

Bonded labour or“ kundalpani” was this system of enslavement to ensure enough labor force for paddy cultivation. In the peasant mode *custom* and *tradition*

⁶ Sung by Bineesh , 23 yrs old, at his residence at Pilakkavu on 11 July 2024.

provided a frame work in which human nature interactions were carried out.⁷ Thus institutions like *Kudi* , Kunnu, tharavadu, Joint family evolved. Customery relationship developed between various communittees like ooralikurumar, Paniyar, and Mullukurumas during Uchal. Kurichyas developed customery relations with Malayar, munnotans who are performing thiras for them. During this period in order to protect their crops people began to settle down in the *Vayalorams* or on the banks of paddy fields. During this period human beings thought nature as being subject to human control and man have sole right to exploit nature.⁸

The political economy of the medieval period was defined by the wetland paddy production and men involved in it were the authors of the mature settled cultivation mode of resource use. Medieval land based institutions have presence in Wayanad. Still the tribes more or less followed hunting and gathering during this phase too. Some of the tribes were turned agrestic slaves even by this time. This was the period in which many migrants came and settled in the area.

Opportunities for production and trade invited many new people with various religious background such as Muslims, Christians etc here. In this period sacred platforms of veneration got transformed. Oblation became their surplus products like rice, ragi, cock, goat etc. Mediation of rituals gradually began to transform from community members to brahmins. Agricultural rituals like Uchal , Puthari , became complicated because in the Uchal of Mullukurumas they have to give paddy as remuneration for ooralikurumas. Till this mode of resource use oblations were in raw form such as beaten rice, fruits, plantains ,flowers , paddy etc . But now in the settled cultivation mode oblations began to be made in cooked form such as Nivedhyam, padachoru etc. *Uthamam* mode of worship was reinforced instead of *Madhyamam* mode of worship. But still there was *Madhyamam* mode or sacrificial mode of worship existed in their household and in some traditional kavus too.

In the Industrial phase, the area was incorporated into the global industrial modern world and there developed a market driven agriculture with more input of

⁷ Madhav Gadgil, Ramachandra Guha , This Fissured Land an Ecological History of India, New Delhi, 1993 p.38.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 31-37.

labour and moving towards non-paddy cultivations. This period witnessed deeper use of ecological resources. This period also promoted the growth of money economy. This broke the kinship based local affinities of the tribes and as a result they were to follow a social arrangement based on the division of labour. In the Industrial mode of resource use human life had made drastic changes. Transportation and communication facilities improved well . People began to use extracted energy and harnessed energy instead of animal power and wood fuel. There was large flow of resources with the improvement of transport. India became a colony of the British with lure of its abundance of resources. Colonialism introduced industrialization, Modernity is its cultural aspect. In this stage of resource use human perception on nature” as a part of community of beings of gathering mode and the agriculturist view of man as steward of nature had been shifted in such a manner that man is totally separate from nature, with every right to exploit natural resources to further his well being.”⁹ Largest flow of migrants happened probably in this period in to Wayanad. They were belonged to different religions and patriarchal mode of succession. In addition to that forest which was the common property of the community had been made the property of the state through governmental actions and legislations. Acts such as abolition of Marumakkathayam, Wild life Protection Act lead to the end of ceremonial hunting and collection of forest produce. Thus the tribes began to seek other jobs outside their customary premises. In order to escape from Levy collection Joint families of Kurichyas were partitioned , Matriliney end up and replaced with patriarchy. Since they could not alone manage their temple it came under the committees which become a catalyst force for changing the dieties. Thus by AD 2000 almost all tribal kavus had been transferred to perpetual Hindu temples. Substantiative changes also happened to Christian churches and mosques also which is discussed in last chapter.

These mores and values generated a new idiom of beliefs and practices to all faith forms irrespective of the religion. Modernity taught to be homogenous in all departments of life which produced a thrust to imagine a monolithic frame for religions Falling in line with the same the constructions of a category of the Hindu

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

and related cultural moves in the country produced another thrust to have a monolithic native religion. Brahminic pantheons dominated the newly forming Hindu religion. The process of assimilation of local deities into Brahminic pantheon is called Sanskritization. The breaking down of the traditional affinities concurrently produced individuated selves among the tribes. This became so powerful in the second half of nineteenth century. The Socio economic changes made consequent changes in the faith system which can be easily visible in the selected shrines of Wayanad. As Suvira Jaiswal claims the process of absorption, assimilation, and exclusion are vividly visible in the different worship centers, while we are watching idols, rituals, festivals. There are many examples of absorption can be seen as examples Pulliyaran, the guardian god of Kurichya community absorbed into Hindu pantheon as Ganapathy. As Ganapathy is the child of Lord Siva and Parvathy, he is also known in the name "pillaiyar". In the Uma Maheswara Temple at Puthoorvayal, from the story telling stone remnants it can be easily make out that a Jain deity existed there known as Rishabha natha theerthankara, but now it absorbed into Lord Siva. In Pallikkunnu Lourd Matha Church, even though it have a Christian faith their devotees include second and third generation of converted Kurichias. So in order to absorb them into the Christian faith elephant is carrying Holy figure of Lourd *Matha* during church procession and there are many Hindu customs like *ilavalikkal*, *Sayana Pradikshanam*, etc are there to absorb the converted ones into the Christian fold.(see appendix).Assimilation can be vividly seen in religious texture of Wayanad. In the state of assimilation tribal deities of lower categories will assimilated by the dominant faith system. Some times their rituals may be assimilated to adjust them within the higher fold. Assimilation is being done to bring the tribes into Hindu fold. Pakkam kotta temple at Cheriya mala, Mullukuruma peculiar god Pakkam daivam assimilated into Sivan. Thalachilwan in the same temple is assimilated into Mahavishnu. Pulachadichi Muthachi, who is purely a Kurichya goddess in the Malakkari Siva temple had elevated to the post of consort of Siva or Parvathy. 'Thalachilwan' is originated from a Mullukuruma belief but now it is installed as sub deity of every temples exclusively in Wayanad to assimilate them into Hindu Pantheon. Absorption may done with converting or including the rites and practices of another religion. For example there are some

christian churches like Mar Baselios Syrian Christian Church in Cheeyambam, four KM away from Pulpally are practicing *ezhuthiniruth*, *adima vekkal*, *annadanam* on Hindu lines to absorb other believers in to their fold.

While absorption and assimilation are widely happens there are cases of exclusion too. A live example is seen in Kanda mala Mahasiva Temple. They excluded their earlier worship of swords and *Peedam* away from their visibility . The matter of exclusion are visible in chundakkunnu Mahalakshmi Temple under the ownership of_Paniya community. Kuliyan ,Malakkari which is the chief god of Kurichyas and Kula daivam of the Paniyas are kept away from the Main_deities such as Bhadra kali and Mahalakshmi, and placed out side the compound wall. Before the establishment of Mahalakshmi Temple Kuliyan and Kuladaivam are seen within the compound even though they are in a *sankalpam* or imagination as stones. When the deities of major faith dominate , the existing ethnic faith may shift their deities apart or as sub deities . All these process were reached in the zenith during the period of Industrial mode of resource use. Such absorption and such type of assimilation can be visible from the the rituals and practices of some mosques and Christian churches too. For example Kalyanathu palli even though it is a Muslim mosque, they are trying to keep the close touch with people from other religions It consist of a maqbara(burial) of Shahul Murthala is situating in western side of the church. It was believed that this mosque was constructed on 1612 and has the antiquity of 600 years.¹⁰ Still the mosque serves as the source relief for the people from other communities such as Hindus, who are suffering from different ailments. Devotees used to bring coconut , agarbathis, pattu, peper , rice etc as offerings.

A special feature of Hindu Temple in Wayanad is noticed for its unique dieties which may be a purposive action of inclusion. Important unique sub deities are the following, Kolampatta Sree Paradevatha Temple is situating 2 KM away from Kakkavayal junction in the midst of Mullukuruma settlement s like Moothimoola. It has distinction of having two deities in a same *sreekovil* such as Kariyathan in the right side of the *Sreekovil* and *Poomala* in the left side of the Sree

¹⁰ Interview with Noushad, Member of Kalyanathu palli Mahallu Committee on 14/06./23 at the mosque.

kovil. There is a subdiety which could be seen in that Temple alone called as *kettukaran*¹¹.

During his visit to Edaakal cave Faucett had opined that there existed a Tiger cult which is supported by the inscription at Edakkal as “Palpulithananthakari (Pass in the First Chapter Land, People and resources) testifies this. Still there exist several temples dedicated to *Kandan puli* or tiger cult. Majority of Kandan puli Temples were belonged to Chetty community. Padiyeri Kandan Puli Temple , Thazhathur near Cheeral is situating Cheeral- Thazhathur road, five hundred meters away from Cheeral town. Chief deities in the temple are *Kandan puli*, *Poothadi daivam* etc. This temple is under Committee.¹² Another Kandan puli Temple is situating at Pazhoor near Cheeral. Kandan puli had transformed in to Lord Siva within a short span of eight years.

They worshiped a *wooden peedam* earlier, by a priest from Chetti community. Now entire set up had been shifted to Hindu fold .Temple has reconstructed according to traditional temple architecture and idol of lord Siva is installed.¹³ *Thalachilwan* is another important deity seen in all the temples in Wayanad alone . He is attributed with some qualities of Siva . This diety may be originated from the Thalachil chieftain of Mullukurumas as mentioned in the previous chapters. Thalachilwan may be included in to the Hindu Pantheon in Wayanad as a part of inclusiveness of ethnic people in to Hinduism. All these unique deities and cults requires an intensive study further to dig out their origine and existence.

Another noticeable thing about the Kavuvu temples were the upcoming of public committes as the governing body. In the Industrial mode of resource use urbanization had reduced the caste stigmas. Homogeneity and uniformity are the character traits of industrial mode. Kin labour was the strength of settled mode of resource use. The surplus produced out of it lead to the creation of some Temples

¹¹ Field work of Researcher on 12 June 2024.

¹² Temple Committee, Pongini Bhadra kali Paradevatha Kshethram Vishelshal Pathippu, 2006, p.57.

¹³ Field work of the researcher on 18 July 24.

like Valliyoorkkavu and Thirunelli. Likewise Mullukuruma, Kurichiya *Tharavadus* in Wayanad had also patronized some temples of their own. But when the joint families had broken, the kin labour has been lost by 1970's, It lead to the emergence of individualism in which people became more conscious about their civil rights. In twentieth century with growth of trade, transport and communication induced among the people about their individual freedom and civic sense. Thus nuclear family feelings, passion for acquiring private property, freedom and civic senses emerged. Free, Democratic, secular, administrative apparatus also emerged in twentieth century. This Governments issued legal sanction such as temple entry of all Hindus, abandonment of Marumakkathayam etc forced the ethnic tribes to adopt single family norms and their property being shared among themselves. With minimal resources family temples could not be maintained by the family members alone then it began to be entrusted with public Committees. There are many instances of Committee's rule over the Kavus of Tribes or a peculiar sect. Malakkari Temple at Thonichal is a kurichiya temple is presently administered by public Committee. Uma- Maheswara Temple at Puthoorvayal near Kalpetta is also under Public committee which was a jain temple in the early period of inception. Kurikkilal Sree Bhagavathy temple Valaad in Thavinjal Panchayath is actually belonged to Kurichiya community but now its governed by the committee of eleven members. It has deities such as *Nekal*, Bhadrakali, Ganapathy, and Vanadurga etc.¹⁴ In the words of Romila Thaper "traders and artisanal groups emerged as patrons of temple building activities and trend to conform Brahmanical model was reinforced by this comprehension of Hinduism".¹⁵ This fact can be clearly visible in Malakkari temple in Thonichal and Uma maheswara temple at Puthoorvayal Kalpetta.

In short it can be said that mode of resource theory have direct application with ethnic religion in Wayanad. Vestiges of the gathering mode of resource use can be seen in the Mundanaduppu kavu, Athikkolly Kurichya Tharavadu and nelliyeri Kurichya tharavdu, Kenis at Mundanduppu, Chundakkolly Mahalakshmi temple etc (see appendix). During this stage human being have attributed sacred qualities to

¹⁴ Interview with Chappan Valad, Edamana Tharavadu on 3/04/24 at the Valad temple

¹⁵ Romila Thaper, *Op. cit.*, p.72.

individual trees, ponds streams etc and treated human beings and kept a kin relationship with all other nature beings . In the gathering mode of resource use they have perceived their gods as heap of stone , Keni or Trees. But in the pastoral mode of resource use which was intertwined with agriculture, and animal husbandry , since use animal muscle power, they began to think themselves separate from nature and importance is given to their cattle stock and ritual importance is given for them . Kuliyan, Aalakuliyam, Athiralan were special gods deputed for the protection of paddy along with cattle wealth. Rites like *kuliyanu kodukkal*, *Chambalamoottu*, (pass in previous chapters) are confined with cattle feast started in this mode of resource use. In the settled mode of resource use man began to view themselves as separate from nature and right to exploit resources as he wishes.¹⁶ Feudal mode production was also introduced simultaneously in Wayanad in this mode of resource use labour inductive production based on the slave labour of adiyas and Paniyas had taken place here. Majority of agricultural land was under Jain, Chetti and Nair Jenmis. they have given emphasis for extensive paddy cultivation at first. In the later years of settled cultivation different varieties of crops such as lemon grass , rubber, tea, coffee, plantain, yam, arecanut, coconut, tobacco, orange began to cultivate by them for the maximization of the immediate profit.¹⁷ Colonization of lands earlier held by gatherers with the use of advanced technologies in prospect of expanding resource was another feature of this mode of resource use.¹⁸ It had been executed by migrants to this land in due course of time. Settled cultivation period marked the establishment of structural Temples in the place old *Kavus* and personification of gods in the form of deities. Surplus production and consequent commercial practices spurred the character traits of urbanization in Wayanad during this period. Agricultural related festivals like *Puthari*, *Thulapathu*, *Uchal*. *Thira* etc. developed among agrarian community here. In the industrial mode of resource marked with tremendous changes in the society with introduction of transportation, communication facilities. Wide spread use of pesticides marked a great change in the field of cultivation. Intensified use of resources affected the environment and

¹⁶ Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha, *Op. cit.*, p.37

¹⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁸ *Ibid*

depletion of fertility of soil. In this mode of resource use man began to perceive himself separate from nature with sheer right to exploit natural resources. Nature become not a sacred one man exploited it as much to satiate his greed for profit. Thus monocrop plantations and Estates were established by destroying the forests. Excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides reduced the fertility and productivity of soil. Excessive intervention of market into the worship centers had taken place during this period. Industrialisation brought modernisation and homogeneity in the life of human beings. Introduction of new civil laws brought patriarchal form of succession, breakage of joint families and *marumakkathayam* consequently. Sense of private property and nuclear families emerged among the tribal people. Paniyas, who lived upon paddy cultivation had went for other coolie labor with the decline of paddy cultivation. Simultaneous changes occurred in the religious life of ethnic tribes in wayand. Due to the contact with the outer world, their deities such as Malakkari, Pakkam daivam, Poothadi Daivam, vadakkathi bhagavathy etc. assimilated with Siva, Vishnu and Bhag vathy of Hindu Pantheon. Rituals which were non vegetarian (Madhyamam) transformed to Vegetarian (Uthamam). Priest hood have been shifted from the hands of tribal chiefs to brahmin Namboothiris, Numerous number of Paniyas and Kurichiyas are converted to Christianity in sake of upward social mobility. Many places in Wayanad especially south Wayanad regions had alleged to have background of incidents of Ramayana too. Aasramakkolly, Ponkuzhi, Ram palli, aalinkulam, etc are examples of alleged venues of Ramayana in Wayanad. There are several origin stories and rich oral tradition among the ethnic tribes of Wayanad which seems to have entered late. Mythical heroes like Rama , Krishna and Lord Siva plays the key role in the Mythical sphere of the tribal people in Wayanad. The present study has not been able to bring out who were the agencies brought such an assimilative of tradition to Wayanad. Any way these new deities were created and linked genealogically to the established ones through such processes.¹⁹

¹⁹ Romila Thaper, *Op. cit.*, p.69.

Two prominent issues that this study could not address is the questions of chronology and caste. It felt very difficult to sketch a time frame for the changes in the society in the present study. Due to desperate absence of the written and other documents pertaining to the life of early inhabitants created unsurmountable barriers in placing the facts in a logical sequence of homogenous time. The consequent acceptance of regressive method necessitated a reading back from the present which helped to identify layers of the stages of social life among the inhabitation. It was almost impossible with the available sources to identify times at which one layer of facts emerged and disappeared or dissolved. A convincing chronology for changes could be a question for future inquiries. Another prominent quest lay unaddressed in this is that of the caste system. The study being that of a predominantly tribal population, it was possible to see a horizontal lines of untouchability and unapproachability. But how far it was conceived vertically is unclear from the available sources. We see the Paniyas were growingly enslaved during the mature settled cultivation phase and Industrial phase of change. The caste consciousness might have been diffused due to the migration of the people from outside and the spread of the land based agricultural economy. A study of the vicissitude of the caste in Wayanad may probably be one that contribute to the functioning of the caste system in our country. Let us hope that future researches will take up such questions.

Glossary

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <i>aalacheettu</i> | a contract for mortgaging the cattle. |
| <i>aathara</i> | base of all erupuras. |
| <i>acharakalyanam</i> | a type of marriage among wayanadan chettis. |
| <i>acharam kettal</i> | tying a chain on brides neck by grooms mother or sister |
| <i>amsam</i> | administrative unit(an order above <i>desam</i> (Mal) |
| <i>anjilla kurichyar</i> | five kurichya families who were excommunicated because of their misdemeanour. |
| <i>aratti</i> | red color cloth tied around the waist of paniya woman |
| <i>attali</i> | religious functionary of dead |
| <i>attiperu</i> | sole right |
| <i>aval</i> | beaten rice |
| <i>babily</i> | a ritual by which a baby is baptized as a member of mullukuruma community. |
| <i>bellikoor</i> | remuneration for ooralikurumas . |
| <i>bennattan kalyar</i> | a god of mullukurumas now it is god sivan. |
| <i>bhoothalan kalyar</i> | a god if mullukurumas now it is god Vishnu. |
| <i>chachipenakoottu,</i> | eriyadi penakoottu, mariyadi penakoottu process of excommunication among kurichyas. |
| <i>chalikettu</i> | construction of temporary bunds across kuruva river. |
| <i>Chambalamootu</i> | day of giving feast and special care for the cattle. |

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| <i>chemmi</i> | mooppan or chief of a settlement |
| <i>chettane</i> | paniyeru paniyas of a Christian farmer. |
| <i>chettiyana</i> | paniyeru paniyas of chettis. |
| <i>chumalida</i> | borrowing cattle for agricultural chores. |
| <i>cikkalam</i> | thorn placed over graveyard |
| <i>daivappura</i> | house constructed for gods in mullukuruma <i>kudis</i> . |
| <i>daivathara</i> | platform built for god. |
| <i>daivathara</i> | plat form of god |
| <i>deshavazhi</i> | village, head , local authority. |
| <i>eivvu</i> | traditional law of mullukuruma community. |
| <i>erupura</i> | independent house hold when pandal acquiring status of household with their own shrines. |
| <i>gerbhagriham</i> | sreekovil where deity is placed |
| <i>gold cuttaram</i> | knife made of gold. |
| <i>Thudi cheeni</i> | musical instruments of tribes. |
| <i>ippi,ippi</i> | alarmed sound of paniyas. |
| <i>ippimala uthappan, ippimala</i> | |
| <i>uthamma</i> | forefathers of paniyas |
| <i>irakkikodukkal</i> | a function related with the marriage of chettis |
| <i>iriyadi</i> | intolerable sex relations with agnates. |
| <i>ithorma, veedorma, kunju kutty orma</i> | remembrance of cultivation, family, and children. |
| <i>ivar chettis</i> | five prominent chetty families |
| <i>Janmam</i> | birth , hereditary ownership(Skt) |
| <i>kaka pattu</i> | crow song related to death ritual |

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| <i>kakkapula</i> | death rite of paniyas. |
| <i>kallumala</i> | chain of stone used as thali by paniyas |
| <i>kanam</i> | purchase of janmam ,mortagage, credit(mal). |
| <i>kanam</i> | bride price paid by mullukuruma groom. |
| <i>kanam ketty</i> | brother in law of groom. |
| <i>kanapanam</i> | bride price. |
| <i>kandan puli</i> | A deity. |
| <i>karanavar</i> (male) | head of the family(Mal) |
| <i>karanavati</i> (female) | head of the family(Mal) |
| <i>karimaruth</i> | a species of tree. |
| <i>karuthan</i> | black color paddy with thorn usually sown in hillslopes and garden land . |
| <i>karyasthan</i> - | manager |
| <i>kathir kulippikkal</i> | bathing the paddy. |
| <i>kavu</i> | shrine(Mal) |
| <i>kodivekkal</i> | an act of divination. |
| <i>kolakam</i> | is a measurement of paddy. |
| <i>kolakaran</i> | uncle. |
| <i>kolakkarathi</i> | sister of mother. |
| <i>kolkkar</i> | native soldiers of British |
| <i>kolukodukkal</i> | special feast prepared for oblation. |
| <i>Komaram</i> | oracle |
| <i>koolam kuthal</i> | husking of paddy for wages. |
| <i>koottu</i> | kurichya term for sorcery. |

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| <i>kottomullu</i> | a special variety of thorn. |
| <i>Kovilakam</i> | branch of royal family (Mal) |
| <i>kudi</i> | mullukuruma settlement . |
| <i>kuduma</i> | front knot of hair. |
| <i>Kuladaivam</i> | protective deity(Mal) |
| <i>kulam/</i> | clan all persons descended from same ancestor belonged to one kulam or clan. Kulams are maintained for exogamous marriages. |
| <i>kulithara</i> | platform of kooli |
| <i>kuliyattu</i> | delivery ritual |
| <i>kumbham pattu</i> | song of of kurichyas. |
| <i>Kumbham vettu</i> | A kurichya ritual in which cutting of bamboo filled with toddy . |
| <i>Kundalppani</i> | another name for bonded labour. |
| <i>kundalppani</i> | another name of bonded labour. |
| <i>kunnam kurichyar</i> | kurichyar in Cannanore district. |
| <i>kunnumooppa</i> | chieftain of more than two kudis. |
| <i>kuttykanam</i> | stump fee |
| <i>levy</i> | compulsory collection of paddy by govt during the period of food shortage |
| <i>makaram , kumbham, meenam, thulam</i> | months in kollavarsham or in malyalam month. |
| <i>makkathayam</i> | inheritance by so(Mal) |
| <i>Makkathayam</i> | A system of inheritance in which the children inherit the property of father |

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| <i>Malakkari</i> | Chief god of kurichyas |
| <i>Malakkari chief</i> | diety of kurichyas. |
| <i>manchal</i> | stretcher made of bamboo to carry the dead body. |
| <i>Manusham</i> | Amount paid to a jenmi by the tenant at the time of land purchase. |
| <i>Maramaya pattu</i> | song of kurichyas. |
| <i>marumakkathayam</i> | inheritance by sisters son(Mal) |
| <i>marupattam</i> | simple lease |
| <i>maryadi</i> | tolerable sex relation with members of affinal clans. |
| <i>meen kora</i> | an equipment for catching fishmade of bamboo. |
| <i>meleri koottal</i> | ritual dance to please god kooli |
| <i>mettikutty</i> | a stump for tying cattle in okkal . |
| <i>miratti</i> | old woman among paniyas |
| <i>moonnaman</i> | third man or middle man. |
| <i>mooppan /porunnon</i> | chieftain of mullukuruma community in a <i>kudi</i> . |
| <i>mukhamandapam</i> | front portion of jain temple. |
| <i>mulam Karanam</i> | a document prepared in bamboo. |
| <i>mullu vekkai</i> | a ceremony of placing of thorn in granary and threshing ground to show intervals in cultivational activities. |
| <i>mulluvekkai</i> | closing of agricultural activitees on Makaraam . |
| <i>muni</i> | nekal or soul god. |
| <i>munikkalan kalyar</i> | a god of mullukurumas now it is <i>brahma</i> . |

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| <i>munnein</i> | boys brother in law who takes initiative for marriage |
| <i>muriyattu</i> | delvery ritual |
| <i>muthachi</i> | elder woman among kurichyas. |
| <i>muthali</i> | headman of ooralikurumas. |
| <i>Nadu</i> | A political division similar to current district. |
| <i>nadu</i> | district(Mal) |
| <i>Naduvazhi</i> | A local chieftain , head of <i>Nadu</i> . |
| <i>naduvazhi</i> | head of nadu |
| <i>nalpethennayirathavar</i> | a trade guild. |
| <i>nandi</i> | bullock figurine. |
| <i>Nanja</i> | wet land paddy cultivation. |
| <i>narippattu</i> | a song of kurichyas. |
| <i>nekal</i> or <i>nizhal</i> | means shadow . nekal is worshipped as the spirit of the dead. |
| <i>nekalchoru</i> | first food for nursing mother. |
| <i>nikalattam</i> | shadow dace of the dead |
| <i>Nippu panam</i> | Advance payment made to a labourer for one year contract work. |
| <i>nippupanam</i> | loans advanced by jenmis to the paniyas for celebrating valliyoorkkavu festival.paniyas become slaves of jenms after receiving nippu panam |
| <i>nira para</i> | filled para. |
| <i>nool parisham vekkal</i> | Engagement |

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|----------------------------------|---|
| <i>okkal</i> | crushing the paddy to separate it from stack by using cattle |
| <i>panayam</i> | Mortagage. |
| <i>pandal</i> | means shed here new house hold bult for recently shifted family . |
| <i>pappu</i> | a place for portioning the hunted meat |
| <i>Pathiri kurichyar</i> | converted kurichyas in to Christianity. |
| <i>patta</i> | land land on lease. |
| <i>pattam</i> | lease. |
| <i>pdathi</i> | temporary cowshed in paddy fields after harvest. |
| <i>penapattu</i> | ghost song |
| <i>pira</i> | huts of paniyas. |
| <i>Pittan</i> | senior most member of kurichya household also known as karanavar. |
| <i>pooppan</i> | elder male member of the family. |
| <i>pooppan</i> | head of kurichya family. |
| <i>poovilly, ilavilly</i> | gods of kunduvadiyas. |
| <i>porathon/ keelatha kunnan</i> | chieftain having second position. |
| <i>pothi</i> | a measurement of paddy,(one pothi is equal to 50 seers of paddy in south Wayanad, 60 seers of paddy in north Wayanad). |
| <i>pottan kodukkal</i> | lending the cow for fostering . |
| <i>prasadam</i> | sacralized food given from the temple. |
| <i>pula</i> | death taboo. |
| <i>pulliyaran</i> | diety of kurichyas. |

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| <i>punam</i> | cultivation slash and burn cultivation |
| <i>punja</i> | second crop of paddy. |
| <i>purrah</i> | a measurement |
| <i>putayattu</i> | delivery ritual to ward off evil |
| <i>puthari</i> | festival of newly harvested rice. |
| <i>seer</i> | a measurement. |
| <i>shaman</i> | spirit medium. |
| <i>Sthanohari, ariyohari, pidiyohari,</i> | |
| <i>bandhuohar</i> | share given on basis of position, rice, and relation. |
| <i>sukanasi</i> | is an external ornamented feature over the entrance to the garbhagriha. |
| <i>swayambhoo</i> | self originated . |
| <i>thalachappa</i> | merchandise carried on head. |
| <i>Thalachil</i> | a mullukuruma chief. |
| <i>thalachil</i> | a chieftain to look after a cluster of kudis. |
| <i>thalikettu kalyanam</i> | child marriage among kurichyas. |
| <i>tharakan</i> | Jain merchants, Christian merchants also known as tharakan |
| <i>tharaku</i> | order of naduvazhi. |
| <i>thatta</i> | wooden piece tied around the neck of cattle. |
| <i>theendarippura</i> | A place for the stay of menstruated women. |
| <i>theyyane</i> | paniyeru paniyas of ezhavas. |
| <i>thevar</i> | god. |
| <i>Thirandu kalyanam</i> | puberty marriage. |
| <i>Thiruvamruth</i> | delicious dish for God |

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| <i>Thulapathu</i> 10 th of <i>thulam</i> | a month in kolla varsham(falls between September to October) auspicious day for ceremonial hunting. |
| <i>thwaruvattamma</i> | ancestor of Mullukurumas. |
| <i>uchal</i> | annual agricultural fest of tribes in Wayanad . |
| <i>udayakkaran</i> | head of kurichya tharavadu. |
| <i>udayakkari</i> | wife of udayakkaran. |
| <i>urappura</i> | mortar house where rice is husked. Menstruating women seclude themselves in urappura. |
| <i>urukoottam</i> | a committee of elders among paniyas to settle disputes. |
| <i>urundu vannavar</i> | those who come in rolling. |
| <i>vada vilakku</i> | lamp |
| <i>valli</i> | paddy given as remuneration for labour |
| <i>vamana</i> | is a disguised form of lord Mahavishnu. |
| <i>vattathoppikkar</i> | British soldiers. |
| <i>vayaloram</i> | on the side of paddy. |
| <i>vazhcha kalyanam</i> | a type of marriage among wayanadan chettis. |
| <i>vazhiyoram</i> | on the side of the way. |
| <i>veerakurumburayar</i> | king of kurumbranad |
| <i>vellakaliyappan</i> | forefather of mullukurumas(adi mukhan). |
| <i>vetakkalan</i> | hunting god. |
| <i>vettupattam</i> | Remuneration for cutting trees |
| <i>vidukali</i> | leave the cattle to graze in harvested paddy fields. |
| <i>vilippa kulam, kadipakulam,</i> | |

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| <i>venkada kulam, vadakku kulam</i> - | clans of Mullukurumas. |
| <i>vizhintavari</i> | death tax extracted by paniya moopan for approving and validating function like death |
| <i>wardan pattam</i> | A kind of taxation introduced by principal collector, Thomas warden on the basis of productivity of paddy in each amsam. |

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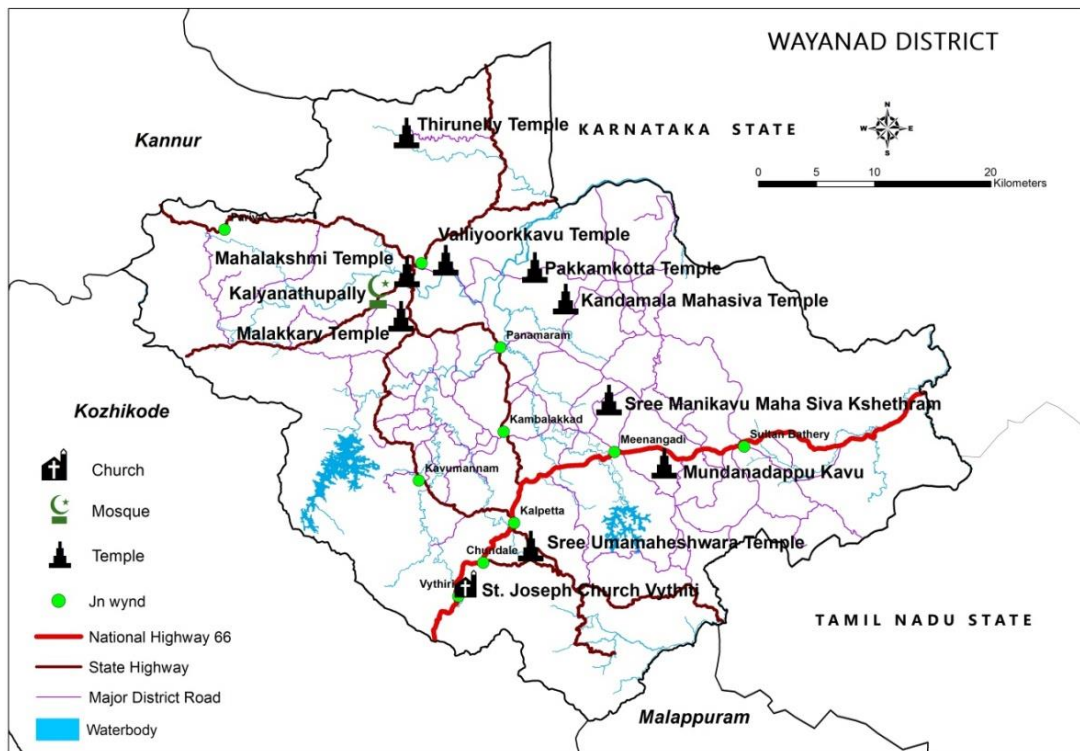
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Appendix I

Major Religious centres in Wayanad



Appendix II

Table II A: Agricultural Stock in 1920-21

| | Working Cattle | | Breeding cattle | | | | |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | Buffaloes | He Buffaloes | Cows | Bulls and Heifers under four years | She Buffaloes | Young Buffaloes | Sheep and Goats |
| Wayanad Taluk | 14 298 | 12208 | 17787 | 14522 | 10501 | 6289 | 1504 |
| Malabar District | 254360 | 137529 | 306872 | 276049 | 33892 | 21176 | 159312 |

Table No. II B: Agricultural Stock in 1920-21.

| | Horses and Ponies | Mules and Donkeys | Carts | Ploughs (Iron and Wooden) | Boats | Indigo Vats | Sugar Mills | Oil mills | Looms |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------|
| Wayanad Taluk | 54 | 5 | 467 | 10991 | --- | ---- | --- | | |
| Malabar District | 1099 | 52 | 13720 | 189738 | 7123 | ----- | 6 | 4937 | 10596 |

Source; A Statistical Atlas of the Madras Presidency, Statistical Atlas Malabar, Government Press, Madras , 1924, pp-16-17.

Table II C: Population and their Occupation

| | Population in 1921 | | | Loss or gain of population percent between | | | | | 1871 & 1921 |
|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Per square Mild Total area | Per 1000 acres | | 1871 & 1881 | 1881 & 1891 | 1891 & 1901 | 1901 & 1911 | 1911 & 1921 | |
| | | Arable | Cultivated | | | | | | |
| Wayanad Taluk | 103 | 219 | 1189 | -30 | -12.9 | -2.1 | 9.8 | 2.7 | -306 |
| Malabar District | 535 | 1281 | 2446 | 4.6 | 12.1 | 5.6 | 7.8 | 2.8 | 377 |

Source: A Statistical Atlas of Madras presidency, Statistical Atlas: Malabar Revised of Fasil 1330, Government press Madras p.9. Regional Archives Kozhikode

Table II D: Existing Kurichya Families and Tharavads in Wayanad

| Bandhu Tharavads | | Panthi Tharavads | |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| Family | Tharavad | Family | Tharavad |
| 1.Karimbili | Kodangela | 1.Marady | Puthurumbil |
| 2.Mattalamkarimbili | Mattilayam | 2.Nelleri Marady | Nelleri |
| 3.Kallarakarimbili | Paramoola | 3.Karimbili | Nedumbilassery |
| 4.Aanny thalakkara | Aanny | 4.Nellu kudiyan | Kakkottara |
| 5.Karkkoda thalakkara | Kaarkkottil | 5.Vaaladan | Illathum Moola |
| 6.Koduma Thalakkara | Kodumayil | 6.Chennakan Vaaladan | Ottamalachil |
| 7.Poorinji Miliyadi | Poorinjil | 7.Edathana | Edathana |
| 8.Kunimal Miliyadi | Kuniyyimmal | 8.Cherakkara | Kolimoola |
| 9.Vellari Miliyadi | Vellari | 9.Kalliyodan | Kallyottu |
| 10.Athirum Kolan | Pancheri | 10.Puchery | Chayimmal |
| 11.Thottayi | Edalakkuny | 11.Kura | Kuramoola |
| 12.Konniyodan | Konniyottu | 12.Koodan | Valamadakkal |
| 13.Thetta | Vengalottu | 13.Kunnam Kolan | Therungal |

| Bandhu Tharavads | | Panthi Tharavads | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| Family | Tharavad | Family | Tharavad |
| 14.Padiyeri | Njaralottu | 14.Othayam Kolan | Othayoth |
| 15.Peralanji | Puthuvattil | 15.Edappidy | Edappidy |
| 16.Edamana | Edamana | 16.Paalodan | Paalottu |
| 17.Idunnee | (Idunnee) Kizhakkumpattu | 17.Kaavu Paalodan | Kaavil |
| 18.Chammeli | Thazhethalapuzha | 18.Chennalara Kuttiyodan | Chennalara |
| 19.Puthiyidam Chammeli | Puthiyidam | 19.Kuttyottu Kuttayodan | Kuttyottu |
| 20.Kakkili | Odadambil | 20.Keliyelan | Nittara |
| 21.Parakkadan | Vellottil | 21.Puthooru | Kommayattu |
| 22.Cheroolu | Menarathu | 22.Mangana Puthooru | Mangana |
| 23.Ericheri | Cherala | 23.Venniyora | Venniyora |
| 24.Ayiniyadan | Chennambady | 24.Cherumpalan | Kakkanchira |
| 25.Chalpa | Pallyadara | 25.Vemoth Pucheri | Vemoth |
| 26.Paadani | Kuzhikkam | 26.Kodiyeri | Pulakkal |
| 27.Paliyeri | Paleri | 27.Muthedan | Muthedathu |
| 28.Kukkodan | Pookkottil | | |
| 29.Perinchola | Perinchola | | |
| 30.Chelaporan | Eranakkolly | | |

Source: Kuduma magazine, puthakam 1, Lakkam 4, 2009 August

Appendix III

ആദിവാസികളുടെ പാട്ടുകൾ

1. പുറപ്പെട്ടു വേടർ നായാട്ടിനായി
ഒതുങ്ങി ചുറ്റിപ്പായും ചുരുട്ട വാലനും
കരളെത്തിന്നുന്ന ചോരചെക്കനും
പട നടുവിൽ ചാടും പാണ്ട മല്ലനും
മുക്കി മുരളുന്ന മുല്ലപ്പട്ടിയും
ഇത്ര നാളും നായിക്കൊളക്കെയും
തുമ്പയിൽ വേടർ കയറുമിട്ടതെ
കയറി പന്നിയും മലയമരുന്നതേ
കാട്ടുക വേടരും മനമുരുകുന്നു.
2. അരയന മീത്തലേക്കു
അങ്കളെയും പെങ്കളും
അരയന താകേക്കു
ആണം പെണ്ണും
3. വരിത്തമാ അച്ചിലാളു വേട്ടക്കു പോകുമി, വേട്ടക്കു പോകു
ഞണ്ടിനെ മോടണു മീനിനെ പിടിക്കുന്നു
എങ്കളെ മക്കളെ ജീവിതം കയ്യിന്നു
തമ്പിരിപ്പുള്ളെ തമ്പിരിപ്പുള്ളെ
എങ്കവാ പോഞ്ചെ
നെല്ലു കൊയ്ത്ത് നെല്ലു കൊയ്ത്ത് കയ്ത് നൊന്ത
എട്ടു പണം നാൻ കെട്ടി നഞ്ചുനൊന്ത.
4. അങ്ങനത്തെ പയ്യല്ലോ കോതാലിച്ചിപ്പയ്യ്
പയിക്കുന്നല്ലേ ഏറ പിടിക്ക സമയം
എങ്ങനെ കിട്ടുന്നു മുരിനെ ഇല്ലേ
എന്നാലെ പയിക്കു ബുദ്ധിയല്ല ദൈവേ
ഒന്നുണ്ട് കേക്കണോ കോതാലിച്ചിപ്പയ്യേ
നെനക്കു എണ പിടിക്കാൻ കട്ടനോ ഇല്ല
എന്നാലു കേക്കു കോതാലിച്ചിപ്പയ്യേ
നാലേടം നാലു കൊയിലം പോയി നോക്കട്ടപ്പാ

5. നീയിപ്പോ എങ്ങനെ പൊലത്തും എന്നെ
 പൂച്ചിറിയ പടമ്പോനെ പെറ്റമ്മോട്
 ആരാന്റെ കാലിയെ നോക്കീട്ടമ്മേ
 നിങ്ങളെ നാനു പൊലത്തും കേപ്പിൻ
 പിന്നെയും പറയുന്നു പെറ്റമ്മോട്
 നീയിപ്പോ എങ്ങനെ പൊലത്തും എന്നെ
 ആരാന്റെ തോട്ടം കിളച്ചിട്ടമ്മേ

6. മറിയാവുള്ളൊടു മാറ്റോർ പിണിഞ്ഞ
 നെടുന്തൂൺ കേൾവിയത്തുവർക്കൊരു തന്നെ

7. ഇപ്പിമല ചെട്ടീം
 തുപ്പിമല കവുണ്ടനും
 ബായോ ബായോ
 ഇപ്പിമലൈ കവുണ്ടൻ
 ബായോ ബായോ
 ഇപ്പിമല കോരപ്പള്ളി നാബാത്തി ലാ.വാ
 ഇത്തിരി പോഞ്ച കാഞ്ചു ചെട്ടിയാനും ബായോ ബായോ
 ഇന്നലെ കാല പുഞ്ചയും പൂമിം തോണ പെട്ടുകാല

8. ഉക്കമീ ചെട്ടിയാനേ ഉക്കമീ
 പുളളെ കിരഞ്ചാലും കിരയാട്ടെ
 ഉപ്പുന്റെ മുളാവിന്റെ
 തിനുവാന്റെ കടം തീരട്ടെ
 പന്തെരു പൊളിഞ്ചാലും പൊളിയട്ടെ

9. കെയക്കൻ കടലല്ലേ കാണുന്നോളു
 പടിഞ്ഞാറു തിരിഞ്ഞു നോക്കുന്നോളു
 പടിഞ്ഞാറൻ കടലല്ലേ കാണുന്നു കേൾക്കിത്
 ആട്സ് തിരിഞ്ഞ് നോക്കുന്നോളു
 തെക്കൻ കടലല്ലേ നോക്കുന്നുള്ളു
 ബടക്കൻ കടലാട്ടം ചെന്നിട്ടോളു
 ആട്സ് തിരിഞ്ഞ് നോക്കുന്നോളു

10. ചീവമ്മേ അരിയേ
 ചെന്നല്ലൂ അരിയെ ബേകം
 ബെളുക്കണം കഞ്ഞി നേരത്തെ ബെക്കാം

അതോണ്ട് അരിയെ ബെക്കോങ്ങല്ലേ
 അരിയെ ചോമാല അരിയല്ലേ
 ബേകം ചോമാല അരിയല്ലേ
 കഞ്ഞി കാലത്തെ വെക്കണം
 ഏല്ലാരിക്കും കൊടുക്കണം
 ചീവമ്മേ ചീവമ്മേ അരിയെ
 കാമരിയെ ബേകം
 നേരത്തെ ബെച്ച ബെളമ്പണം

11. വള്ളിയൂർക്കാവ് ഭഗവതിക്കു
 ജന്മമായിട്ടുള്ള പാടത്തിൽ
 മൂവായിരം വിത്ത് വിതക്കാനുണ്ട്
 മൂവായിരം വിത്തിൽ കിളിതെളിപ്പാൻ
 രണ്ടോലം നല്ലൊരു പൈതങ്ങളും
 നിത്യത്തൊഴിലു കിളി തെളിപ്പാൻ
 കുട്ടികൾ പാടത്ത് ഇറങ്ങും നേരം
 ചിപ്പമല മേലെ ചിന്നു മൂപ്പൻ
 തേനും കൊണ്ടങ്ങോട്ടടുത്തു ചെന്ന്
 കണ്ട് ഭയപ്പെട്ട് ഓടുന്നല്ലോ
 പിന്നാലെ ഓടുന്നു ചിന്നു മൂപ്പൻ
 അന്നേരം കുട്ടികൾ വൈരം വിളിച്ചു
 കൊട്ടിയൂർ പെരുമാൾ തുണച്ചിടേണം
 പാഞ്ഞോടി വള്ളൂരു കാവിലെത്തി
 കണ്ടു പിടിച്ചല്ലോ വള്ളൂരച്ഛൻ
 ചിന്നിനെ പിടിച്ച് കെട്ടുന്നല്ലോ
 ഉടനെ പറയുന്നു ചിന്നു അന്നേരം
 എന്നെ ഒന്നും ചെയ്യരുത് വള്ളൂരച്ഛാ
 ഇവിടെ അടിമയായ് നിൽക്കും ഞാൻ
 വള്ളിയൂർ അടിമയായ് നിന്നു ചിന്ന്
 കൊല്ലത്തിൽ വള്ളൂരൂ കൊണ്ടാടുന്നു
 തുടി മുട്ടി ചിങ്ങിണി കെട്ടിയാടും
 മലയതിൽ വാഴും ഭദ്രകാളി
 വാളും കൊണ്ട് ഞങ്ങൾ കൊണ്ടാടുന്നു

12. കീയില്ലം വാവുന്നോ മാവോതിയോട്
 മൂന്നടി മണ്ണ് തരണം എനിക്കിപ്പോ

അതു തന്നെ കേട്ടോണ്ട് മാവോതിയല്ലേ
 അന്നേരം പറഞ്ഞൊട്ടു മാവോതി കേക്കി
 മൂന്നടി നിങ്ങൾ അളന്നോളി
 എന്നുടെ മുത്താവില് വെച്ചോളിങ്ങ്
 മാവോതി മുത്താവില് വെച്ചല്ലോ
 കാല് ചവുട്ടിത്താത്തിയുന്നല്ലോ മലക്കാരി തൈവം

13. കമ്പത്തെങ്ങോട്ടോ പത്താം തീതി
 അമ്പിൻ വരമ്പോ ചൊവ്വായ്
 മുടറിയോ കോപ്പട്ടുന്ന
 കല്യാണ പന്തലോ എടുക്കവേണം
 പന്തലാ പന്തിയ് എടുക്ക വേണം
 കന്നു കലക്കണം മിരുകം കൊല്ലണം
 കാപ്പ കലക്കണം, മീൻ പിടിക്കണം
14. വാവ പൂടേ, വാവ പൂടേ
 കൊട്ടത്തേങ്ങ വെച്ചുള
 കൊയിനേം തിലേം വെച്ചുള
 വാവ പൂടേ വാവ പൂടെ
15. ഇന്നലെച്ചത്ത നീക
 ഇന്നലെ മാഞ്ഞ നീക
 നാളെയും നാൽപതുനാളും
 എന്നെ നടത്തികൂട്ടിത്തരണം
16. കാരണ മുത്തപ്പൻമാരേ
 മുത്തപ്പ ദൈവമേ തുണച്ചിടേണം
 ഇതിന് എല്ലാവരും നിങ്ങൾ ചേർന്നിടേണം
 ഇതിന് എല്ലാവരും നിങ്ങൾ ചേർന്നിടേണം
 ഒന്നും വരാതെ തുണച്ചിടേണം
 മക്കൾക്കും ഞങ്ങൾക്കും ഒന്നും വരാതെ കാത്തുരക്ഷിക്കേണം
 വള്ളിയൂർ അമ്മ തുണച്ചിടേണം
 തുടി മുട്ടി ചിങ്ങിണി കെട്ടിപ്പാടും
 കൊട്ടിയൂർ ദേവൻ തുണച്ചിടേണം
17. പാർത്ഥൻ താനസ്ത്രമെല്ലാം പുഷ്പമായി
 പോകെയെന്നു ശപിച്ചു കാർത്ത്യായനിയതു നേരം

അസ്തമയായി ചമഞ്ഞതുമേരും
അടിച്ചാർ വില്ലുകൊണ്ടു ശിരസ്സിങ്ങൾ
തനമറ്റനേരം അഞ്ജസം തന്നിൽ നിന്നും ജനിച്ച
ദൈവം താനേ സ്തുതിക്കുന്നേൻ

18. ഓം ബ്രഹ്മൻ വിഷ്ണു മഹേശ്വര
ഓം ബ്രഹ്മ ദാരികൻ വിഷ്ണു ദാരികൻ
മഹേശ്വർ ദാരികൻ
ഞാൻ ലങ്കാ പുരത്തെ പൂങ്കാവിൽ
വസിക്കപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കും മഹാദാരികൻ
ഞാൻ വലം കൈയിൽ പച്ചപ്പേന്തിയ
കാളിയെ ജപിച്ചിരിക്കും

19. കരിവരമുവവാ ഗണപതി വരിക
സഭ നടുവിൽ
ചില കോൽക്കളി കാൺമാൻ
കന്യ വിലോചനൻ ആകിയ കൃഷ്ണൻ
അംബുജലോചന സരിരമുരപ്പാൻ
കളിവിളയാടുക ഞങ്ങളിൽ അനജം
കോൽക്കളിയും ദൂനിയും കഴൽ വിളിയും
കോലടറയീ വചന കൈതൊഴുന്നേ ഞാൻ
തെയ്യ് തില്ല തരികിട തില്ല തെയ്യ്

20. വാഞ്ചേമ്മ വാഞ്ചേമ്മ അക്കരെ
തോട്ടിച്ച് മിനുടിപ്പാൻ
എന്തു നല്ല മീൻ ആ
പുട്ടെ പുട്ടത്തിഞ്ച പരലു
വാഞ്ചേമ്മാ വാഞ്ചേമ്മാ അക്കരെ
തോട്ടില് മിനുടിപ്പാൻ
ചാടെ, ചാടെ, ചാടെ, ചാടെ
എടുത്തോമ്മാ എടുത്തോമ്മാ
ചാടെ, ചാടെ
ആ പാറക്കണ്ടില്, കൈതക്കണ്ടില്
പില്ല് കണ്ടില് മീൻ
വാഞ്ചേമ്മാ വാഞ്ചേമ്മാ

21. കബനി നദിക്കരയിൽ
കളിരാഞ്ചി മരത്തണലിൽ
കൂലിതരാൻ ബുളിച്ചവനേ തമ്പുരാനേ
ഇന്നു നാങ്ക അടിമകളല്ലോ
നാങ്ക അഞ്ചും ഇഞ്ചും അടിമകളല്ലോ
വയനാട്ടിലെ മലമുകളിൽ
മരം കോച്ചും തണുപ്പിനെ
അതിജീവിച്ച മക്കനാകെ
ഒരു കയിലു കഞ്ഞിക്കും
ഒരു തുണ്ട് പുകക്കും
പണി ചെയ്ത അടിമകളല്ലോ

22. അയ്യോ എന്റെ കാലദോഷം സഹോദരൻമാരെ
മുക്കാലണ ആപ്പ് ചായ അതു കുറവിലൂ
അയ്യോ എന്റെ കാലദോഷം സഹോദരൻമാരേ
മാനകൾ മേയും കന്നുകൾ ഒക്കെ വെട്ടി വെളിയാക്കി
അയ്യോ എന്റെ കാലദോഷം സഹോദരൻമാരേ
തിരുവിതാംകൂർ ചേട്ടൻ പലജാതിയും വന്നേൻ
തിരുവിതാംകൂർ ചേട്ടൻ വന്നു മലനാട് കയറി.

Appendix-IVA



Mulamkaranam obtained from madaparambu pulpally showing the transfer of Paniyas along with land Courtesy Madaparambu Bhaskaran Pulpally

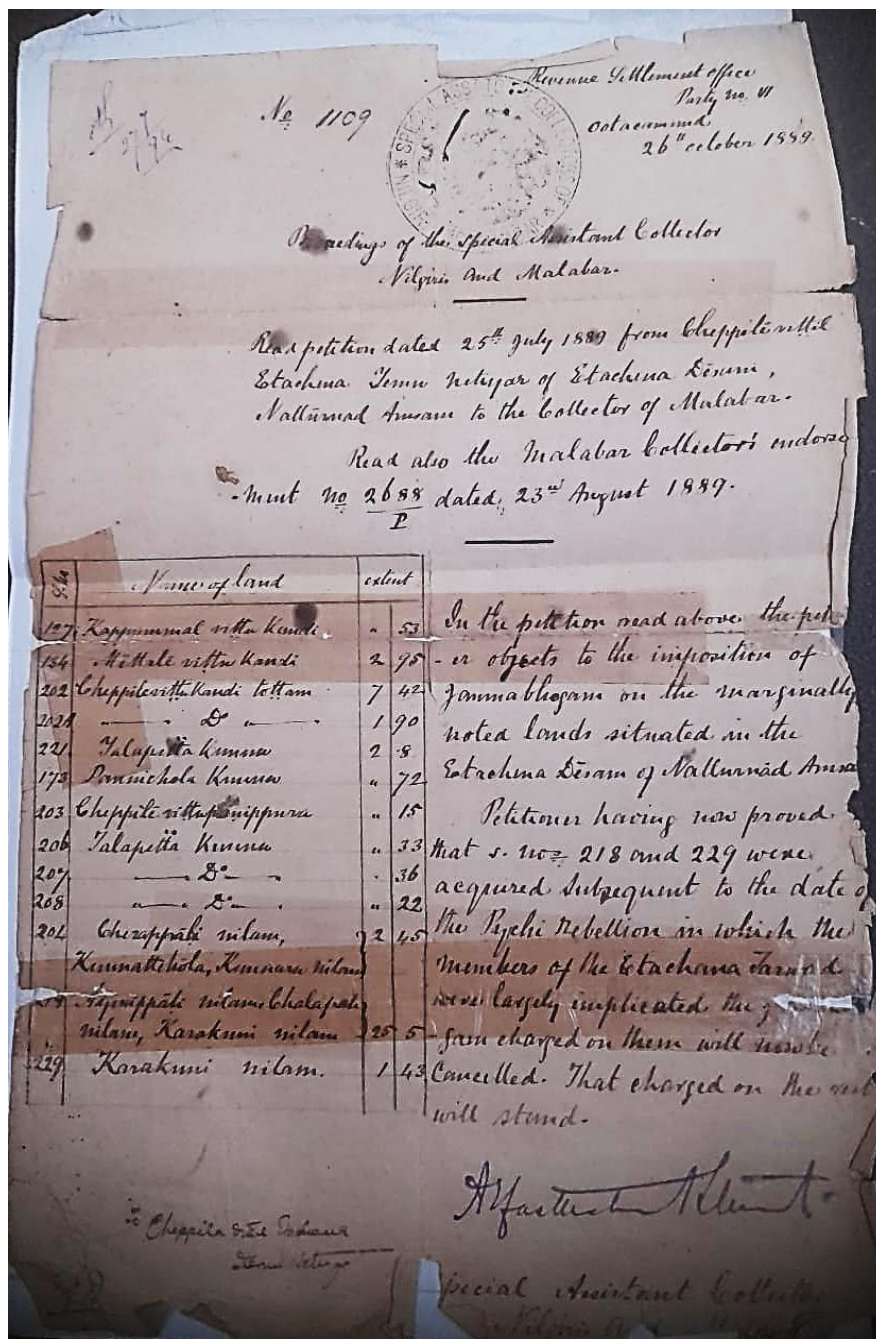
Appendix –IVB Pakkam keni



Courtesy : Shumish U

Appendix IV C

Escheat of Edacghena kunkans property



Courtesy : Malayankizhu Gopalakrishnan

Appendix IV D

Details of escheat of Edachena Kunkan's property

No. 1109. Revenue Settlement Office
 Party No. VI. Oolakkamund
 26th October 1889.

Proceedings of the
 Special Assistant Collector, Malgiris & Malabar.

Read petition dated 25th July 1889 from Cheppile-
 veetil Edachana Thema nethiyar of Edachana desom
 Nallamad desom, to the Collector of Malabar.

Read also the Malabar Collector's endorse-
 ment No. 2688 dated 23rd August 1889.

| S No. | Name of land | Extent | In the petition read above |
|-------|--|--------|---|
| 127 | Kappumad Vettu Kaudi | " 53 | In the petition read above the petitioner objects to the im- position of genna bhogam on the marginally noted lands situa- ted in the Edachana desom of Nallamad desom. |
| 134 | Meelale Vettu Kaudi | 2.95 | |
| 202 | Cheppile Vettu Kaudi | 7.42 | |
| | Thottam | 1.90 | |
| 202 | Do Do | 2.08 | |
| 221 | Thalapeta Kunnoo. | " 72 | |
| 175 | Panni Cholla Kunnoo. | " 15 | |
| 203 | Cheppile Pura | " 33 | |
| 206 | Thalapeta Kunnu | " 36 | |
| 207 | Do | " 22 | |
| 208 | Do | 2.45 | Petitioner having now R moved Kats. Nos 218 and 229. were acquired subs- quent to the date of the Pychi rebellion in which the mem- bers of the Edachana Sar- wad, have largely impli- cated the genna bhogam them will now be cancelled. |
| 209 | Cheppile Nilam. | 2.45 | |
| | Kunmati Chola Kunuaru | | |
| | Nilam | | |
| 218 | Arampali Nilam, Cha- lappali Nilam, Cheppile Pali Nilam, Karakuni Nilam | 25.5 | |
| 229 | Karakuni Nilam. | 1.43 | |

That charged on the rest will stand.

To,
 Cheppile Veetil
 Edachana Thema Nethiyar.

Special Asst Collector
 Malgiris & Malabar

Courtesy : Malayankizhu Gopalakrishnan

Appendix IV E
Muniyara at Arattupara



Courtesy : Biju Arattupara

Appendix IV F

Kuliyam in athikolly Tharavadu vellamun



Courtesy : Suja K.S.

Appendix IV G
A paniya kavu at chedleth



Courtesy : Soumya

Appendix IV H

Aalacheettu

Handwritten text in Malayalam script, likely a list or record. The text is dense and covers most of the page. At the bottom, there is a numbered list of five items:

- 1 കുഴി അമ്പലം പള്ളിയിലെ തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ പട്ടിക 6000
- 2 കുഴി അമ്പലം പള്ളിയിലെ 9000 തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ പട്ടിക 7000
- 3 കുഴി അമ്പലം പള്ളിയിലെ തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ പട്ടിക 7000
- 4 കുഴി അമ്പലം പള്ളിയിലെ 2000 തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ പട്ടിക 1000
- 5 കുഴി അമ്പലം പള്ളിയിലെ 1000 തൊഴിലാളികളുടെ പട്ടിക 500

Courtesy : Thoriambath Balakrishnan Meenangadi

Appendix IV J

Cartering of woods from Pulpally Devaswam

To
The managing Trustee,
Pulpally Nair's forest
Wynad.

Dear Sir,

I wish to bring to your notice
that your manager, who is taking
care of the forest which belongs to
Devadaya (Temple), has checked us
while we were carting, as per your
permission saying that the assessment
have to be increased ~~and so on~~ ^{so that till it}

Under the above circumstances
I request you, since I have got urgent
order to be supplied, to permit us
to transport timber from our jungle
as usual. So in this connection I will
have to see you personally within
a fortnight.

Courtesy : M.P. Vasantha Thoriayambath

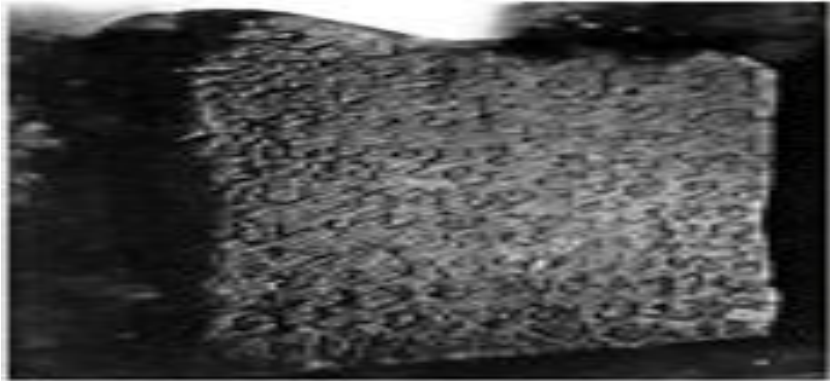
Appendix IV K

A mullukuruma chieftain ascended his position



Courtesy : Indira

**Appendix IV L
Thazhekkavu inscription**



Thazhekkavu Vattezhuthu inscription 1051 AD

This stone Vattezhuthu inscription was installed in the Parshwanatha Jain Temple in Thazhekkavu near Pulpally on 1051 AD by the famous trade guide of Nalphenayiravar in South India. This trade group founded a *nagaram* (trade centre) in Pulpally and donated land to this temple. They set apart land yielding 24 *potis* of paddy in Kutampadi and land yielding 12 *potis* of paddy from Nagarporai for the lamp instituted for Yaksha (attendant deity of the Jaina Tirthankara). This inscription also warns those people who obstruct the deed. Those who obstruct the deed shall be deemed as those who violated the rule of Tirukunava temple.

താഴെക്കാവ് ശാസനം - 1051 AD

പുല്ലുളളിക്കടുത്തു താഴെക്കാവിൽ സ്ഥിതി ചെയ്തിരുന്ന പാർശ്വനാഥാ ജൈന ദക്ഷ്യതത്തിൽ ക്രിസ്തുവിനു മുൻപ് 1051 -ൽ സ്ഥാപിച്ച വട്ടെഴുത്തു ശിലാ ശാസനമാണിത്. നാലുത്തെണ്ണായിരവർ എന്നറിയപ്പെട്ടിരുന്ന കച്ചവട സംഘം പുല്ലുളളിയിൽ ഒരു നഗരം സ്ഥാപിക്കുകയും, ദക്ഷ്യതത്തിലെ യക്ഷൻ വിളക്ക് വയ്ക്കുന്നതിനും മറ്റാവശ്യങ്ങൾക്കുമായി 24 പൊതിയും, 12 പൊതിയും വീതം യഥാക്രമം നെല്ല് ലഭിക്കുന്ന ഭൂമി പുല്ലുളളിക്കടുത്തു കുറ്റംപാടി, നഗർപോറ എന്നിവിടങ്ങളിലായി നൽകുകയും ചെയ്തതായി ഈ ലിഖിത്തിൽ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയിട്ടുണ്ട്. ഈ ശാസനത്തെ ധിക്കരിക്കുന്നവർക്ക് ശിക്ഷ ലഭിക്കും എന്ന മുന്നറിയിപ്പും ഈ ലിഖിതത്തിൽ രേഖപ്പെടുത്തിയിരിക്കുന്നു.



താഴെക്കാവ് ശാസനം - 1051 AD

Courtesy : Joshi Mathew, Museum of Pazhassi Raja College, Pulpally

Appendix IV M
Karinthandan and Chain tree



Courtesy : Suja K.S.

Appendix IV N
Machineries used in Tea factory Wayanad



Courtesy : Tea Museum, Achoor





Courtesy : Achoor Team Museum Pozhuthana, Wayanad

Keni at Thachambath in "Modernised form"



Courtesy : Anilkumar P.K. Irulam