

Prof. K. V. Krishna Ayyar has a unique place among the modern scholars who have worked on the fascinating topic of the History of Kerala. He has devoted himself with singular spirit of dedication to this mighty task as a life mission and his untiring efforts have reaped a rich harvest. Although attempts have been made by many scholars to throw light on specific aspects of Kerala History, the credit of writing a comprehensive history of Kerala based on independent research and covering all facets, goes to Prof. Krishna Ayyar. His is a pioneering work. It is particularly gratifying that in the absence of any other complete history of Kerala deserving to be accepted as a text book for students of history in Collegiate classes, Prof. Krishna Ayyar's book has admirably filled this void. I am glad to commend this book for earnest study by students of Kerala History

A SHORT HISTORY OF KERALA

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K. V. KRISHNA AYYAI



PAI & COMPANY

ERNAKULAM

8 INDIA



PAI & COMPANY

1966

FIRST EDITION OCT. 1966

PRINTED IN INDIA

BY THE MATHRUBHUMI PRESS, ERNAKULAM

PUBLISHED BY S. V. PAI. PAI & COMPANY, ERNAKULAM

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INTRODUCTION

Kerala has a place of its own in the history of the world. It was here that the west came into direct contact with India by sea. In the first half of the first century A. C. the Roman navigator Hippalos, arrived at Kodungallur. The prospect of a prosperous trade kindled the ambition of its Cherman rulers and they conquered the Laccadives and much the greater part of South India which produced the lucrative exports of the Roman Empire. Though this contact gradually faded out after the voyage of the eccentric monk, Cosmas at the beginning of the sixth century, Vasco da Gama came from Portugal in A. D. 1498. Kerala pepper became a decisive factor in European politics. It was one of the causes of the Anglo Dutch wars of the seventeenth century and the Anglo French wars of the eighteenth.

Till the eleventh century Kerala had a common language and culture with its Tamil neighbours. But their wanton and continued aggression for more than a century engendered a fierce nationalism, as the result of which it broke away from them in the first quarter of the twelfth century. Its culture became more and more sanskritic, and a new language called Malayalam gradually took shape.

Though the Chera dynasty disappeared during the Chola invasions and Kerala came to be divided among a number of petty Tampurans or chieftains, perpetually quarrelling among themselves they were all held together as one nation and one people by what is known as *Keralamaryada* or unwritten law of Kerala. With *Live and let live* as its basic principle it allowed perfect freedom of worship and an equally perfect freedom of conversion. In one and the same village might be found a Hindu shrine, a Christian church, a Muslim mosque and even a Jewish synagogue, the votaries of each religion living in perfect amity and concord.

In Kerala we have patriliney and matriliney sidebyside. Before the British occupation among the matrilineal Nayar boys and girls had to undergo a training in the *Kalar* or gymnasium as in ancient Sparta. Far from being looked upon as backward matriliney enjoyed the same respect as patriliney. In fact, it was the hypergamous union between the matrilineal and the patrilineal peoples through *Sambandham* that was mainly responsible for the grand outburst of genius in literature, arts, science and philosophy during the rule of the *Tampurans* (A.D. 1100-1750) comparable in brilliance to the Periclean age in ancient Athens.

Keralamaryada abhorred revolution. The newly invested Nayar was enjoined to conduct himself as his *Karavans* or ancestors had done. The incoming chief had to make a solemn promise that he would protect his subjects as had been done by his departed elders. The cry of the oppressed always was: Restore the rights granted by your *Talya Annamans* or great uncles.

The rules of warfare were much more humane and civilized than those prescribed by Dharmaputra and Krishna. *Keralamaryada* forbade a promiscuous and mercenary army; it insisted upon equality of status in the contending foes. It prohibited night fighting, surprises, ambush, treachery and the employment of various devices like smoke screens, illusions and release of snakes to cause confusion in the enemy's ranks. Advance notice of the time of the contemplated attack and of any new contrivance proposed to be brought to the battle-field had to be given. The safety of non-combatants was so scrupulously guaranteed that even the *Chavers* who came to Tirunavay for almost every *Malamagla* celebrated once in twelve years with the avowed object of cutting down the Zamorin who presided over the festival were allowed all freedom to move about, mingle with the crowds and disport themselves as they liked until they donned the battle dress and left their allotted camp on their avenging mission.

To students of political science Kerala offers two different systems of government: the highly centralized paternal despotism of the Travancore rulers and the highly de-centralized semi-feudal suzerainty of the Zamorin of Calicut based upon locality and birth. The caste and communal councils still functioning

in Palghat, are survivals of the ancient government by *Airoadham* or consensus. The temple-states of Kerala, with the deity as the head, were quite different from the theocracy of the Mediaeval Church in Europe. *Pattini*, or fast, for obtaining justice was known in Kerala in the thirteenth century, that of 1721 at Trivandrum being the last. The threatened secessions of the people of Nanjinad in the latter half of the seventeenth century recall the famous Secession of the Plebs in ancient Rome, while Velu Tampi's movement against anarchy and misrule in 1799 reminds us of the similar movement led by Simon de Montfort in England in the thirteenth century.

Under British supremacy (A.D. 1729-1947) Kerala had been governed as three separate administrative units: Travancore, Cochin and Malabar. The glory of Travancore and the prosperity of Cochin, ruled by their respective native Rajas, must make every Britisher regret that a grand opportunity was lost, when, instead of restoring Malabar to its indigenous chiefs as promised in 1790, the East India Company annexed it and directly assumed its government in 1792.

Kudallur, Via Kunisseri, }
S Malabar, 15-9-1966 }

K. V. Krishna Ayyar

CHAPTER I

GENERAL SURVEY

No part of India is so widely known as Kerala. As early as the days of Solomon (c. 1000 B. C.) the ships of Tarshish used to come here once in three years for ivory, apes and peacocks. The fame of Kerala pepper brought the Romans to its ports in A. D. 30. In the middle ages Kerala was the entrepot of the trade between the east and the west. With the coming of the Portuguese captain, Vasco da Gama, to Kozhikkode in 1498 began a struggle for Kerala pepper among the nations of Europe. With rubber and cashew now added to its exports, Kerala is certain to become more and more important in the economy and history of India and the world.

It is the traditional belief that Sage Parasurama created Kerala by causing the sea to withdraw and gave it away to the Brahmins whom he brought from Ahicchathra. And the land came to be so called in memory of the first *Perumal* or President, whom they appointed as their ruler for twelve years.

Geographically Kerala must have been formed by the annual deposit of silt brought by the rivers from the Western Ghats. Sanskrit scholars derive the name from *Kera* or coconut, which is one of the staple products of this region. Others regard *Kerala* as a variant of *Cherala*, which is a corrupt form of the Tamil *Charal* meaning mountain slope. It is significant that the *Malabar* of the Arab and the Persian writers and the *Malanad* of the early Malayalam and the mediaeval Tamil literature mean the land of hills and mountains.

The discovery of microliths or small stone implements near Kozhikkode and Cochin point to the presence of man in Kerala as far back as 4000 B. C. If the interpretation of a Mohenjodaro epigraph as referring to Kerala is correct, it must have become

a distinct political and geographical entity by 2500 B C. The *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharatha* mention Kerala. The *Chera padah* of the *Taittiriya Aranyaka* and the *Sri* of the Buddhist *Jatakas* might also refer to Kerala. Kerala was known to *Hiuen T'sang* (c 350 B C) and *Kautilya* (c 300 B C). Nevertheless the recorded history of Kerala cannot be said to begin before *Asoka's* Rock Edict II (c 257 B C). It refers to the Kerala king as *Keralaputa* (*Keralaputhra*) which is the *Prakrit* or *Sanskrit* equivalent of the Tamil *Cheralmakan* very often shortened into *Cheraman* and even *Chera*.

The recorded history of Kerala down to 1956 may be divided into —

- I The Age of the Kodungallur Emperors,
- II The epoch of the Thampurans and
- III The Silent Revolution

the Chola Kerala conflict (988-1120) leading from the first period to the second and the reign of Marthandavarma (1729-58) and the Mysorean invasions (1766-92) from the second period to the third.

Till the beginning of the eleventh century the people of Kerala and their eastern neighbours the Cholas and the Pandyas had a common language and culture. In the so called *Sarglam* literature of the first three centuries of the Christian era we find the Cheramans of Kodungallur extending their authority as far as Kasargod in the north, Karur and the Kollimalai in the east, Cape Kumari in the south and the Laccadives in the west. The trade with the Roman Empire and China filled the land with gold and the people were prosperous and happy. With the decline of the Roman Empire and the invasion of the wandering peoples now called Nayars and others in the fourth century the *Sarglam* political system of the three crowned kings and the seven lesser chieftains came to an end.

But already in the third century could be detected the first faint signs of the grand mental and religious stir which reached

its climax in Sankaracharya. Of the great saints and Philosophers who appeared in this period, Cheraman Perumal Nayanar, Kulasekharazhvar, Prabhakara Gurukkal, and Sankaracharya himself belonged to Kerala.

The chief feature of the political history of South India in this period was the struggle between the Pallavas and the Pandyas and the rise of the Cholas. The Cheras first supported the Pallavas against the Pandyas, and subsequently the Cholas against both.

But, as soon as the Cholas established their power, they turned against the Cheras. With the invasion of Kerala by Rajaraja I in 988 began a war with the Cholas, which came to an end only with their withdrawal in 1120. During this conflict the Cheras disappeared, and Kerala broke up into a number of petty Kingdoms, each ruled by its own Thampuran or chief. The Nayars came to the forefront. The *Sambandham* or informal union of the Malayala Brahmins, now called Namputhiris, with their women-folk gave birth to many *Anacharams* or peculiar customs. Malayalam superseded Tamil as the language of Kerala. And the *Kollamtouriantu*, literally the year reckoned from the beginning of Kollam (Quilon), became the national era.

The Epoch of the Thampurans was the most brilliant period in the history of Kerala. Though the Thampurans were always fighting amongst themselves, the Namputhiris were able to transform their wars and blood feuds into informal tournaments, conducted according to prescribed rules. A common code of conduct, called *Keralamaryada*, based on chivalry, tolerance, and scrupulous regard for the rights and obligations of every caste, as laid down in the ancient *Dharmasastras* or moral codes, came into existence. Sanskrit became the bridge of learning and culture. Literature, philosophy, arts and science flourished. The members of the matrilineal castes also learnt Sanskrit irrespective of sex, some even specializing in literature, strictly so called, grammar, astronomy, astrology, medicine and architecture. Under the auspices of the Namputhiris, Malayalam also entered on a new phase.

The Thampurans encouraged trade. As the Romans withdrew, the Hindus stepped into the carrying trade of the Indian Ocean. Gradually, as voyages began to entail loss of caste, they gave place to Jews, Christians and Muslims (Moors).

The main events in the internal history of this period centred round the rise of the Zamorins of Kozhikkode at the beginning and of the Thiruvattis of Travancore at the end. By the middle of the fifteenth century the Zamorin had extended his power to Cochin. In 1498 the Portuguese came to Kerala. Henceforward sea-power and fire-arms became the decisive factors in politics and trade, and trade and flag became inseparable. The Portuguese ousted the Moors from the Indian Ocean, and tried to impose their authority on the princes of Kerala. The combined forces of the Zamorin and the Dutch drove them out in 1663. But the Dutch also began to play the game of their Portuguese predecessors. With the munitions and other war material provided by the English the Zamorin curbed them in the north, and Marthanda Varma crushed them in the south.

With the accession of Marthanda Varma to the throne of Travancore in 1729 and Hydar Ali's invasion of Malabar in 1766 began a new chapter in the history of Kerala. Haider Ali conquered Malabar and subdued the Cochin Raja in 1766. His son, Tippu Sultan, invaded Travancore in 1790. As the allies of the Travancore Raja the English declared war on Tippu. The dispossessed Rajas of Malabar and the Cochin Raja joined them, accepting their protection, in 1792 Tippu ceded Malabar and Cochin to the English. British supremacy was established in Cochin by the treaties of 1791 and 1809 and in Travancore by the treaties of 1795 and 1805. In 1795 the Dutch surrendered their Cochin fort to the English. In 1799 they got Wynad and Canara, which included Kasargod, from the Hindu Raja of Mysore. Thus *directly or indirectly the English became masters of Kerala*.

Kerala became an integral part of the vast Indian sub continent, as the latter itself became part of the far flung British Empire. Consistently with the consolidation of their authority the English tried to introduce their own ideals and practices of government. The *Rule of Law* was enforced everywhere without any distinction.

of birth or rank. Road and rail overcame distance, and encouraged movement from place to place. Education through the English medium removed all linguistic barriers. To the age-old cultural and sentimental bonds was added a national unity under a central government. In the enlarged physical and mental horizon began to dawn a new consciousness of the unity of India and the brotherhood of the Indians. Familiarity with the history of the freedom movements in England, America and Europe gradually removed the political apathy of the Indian intelligentsia.

Freedom and democracy became their goal, and the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885. The part played by the Indians in World Wars I and II added force to the demand for freedom and self-government. With the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi as the leader the political agitation took a new turn. His Non-Violence was irresistible. At last, in 1947, the English withdrew, and India became independent. Nine years later, in 1956, was born the present state of Kerala, comprising the Malayalam speaking tracts of South India.

CHAPTER II

INFLUENCE OF GEOGRAPHY

Between the Arabian Sea and the Western Ghats, Kerala is a narrow strip of land, about 300 miles long from north to south, with an average width of about 30 miles. As communication was neither easy nor swift in ancient days the customs of the same caste tended to be different in the south and in the north. The Thuyyas and the Izhavas of the south are patrilineal, while those of the north are still matrilineal. In language the south has a Tamil, the north a Kannada, Tinge.

Situated in the south west corner of India, Kerala had been saved from the invaders who had ravaged North India from time to time. But, if distance had been an obstacle to the movement of armies, it had been an impediment also to the quick flow of reforming influences either way. It took nearly two centuries for Buddhism to reach the south, and on account of the Ghats it by passed Kerala, which received it from Ceylon. And it took more than three hundred years for the Azhvar movement to penetrate into Bengal. And it is the peculiar glory of Sankara that he had been able to establish the supremacy of his Vedanta over the whole of India, from Dwaraka to Assam and Kumari to Kashmir, in the course of a *dig vijaya* or conquering tour of only sixteen years.

The Western Ghats form an excellent natural frontier from Kizargod in the north to Aramboli in the south, where they abruptly end. Though pierced by numerous passes, the mountain defence became vulnerable only in the eighteenth century after Haider Ali and Tippu Sultan constructed their gun roads. Though the Palghat Gap is twenty four miles wide, on account of its rugged terrain and impenetrable forests infested by wild animals and snakes there had been only one invasion through it, that of Krishnadeva Raya in 1510.

As the Palghat Gap had been dangerous and difficult, the highway of traffic between Kerala and its eastern neighbours before the age of road and rail had been the Aramboli route, round the southern extremity of the Western Ghats. Countless had been the raids and inraids through it. And numberless also had been the battles fought in this region for which reason it has been called the *Cockpit of Kerala*.

While externally the mountains had been a source of protection, internally they had divided Kerala and retarded its political unity. When Ibn Batuta came to Kerala in 1342 there were twelve kings in Malabar. The contemporary *Unnunilisandesam* describes Kerala as comprising eighteen *Nads* or political divisions. From behind their mountain fastnesses the petty chieftains had defied all attempts at central control and unification. With the topography offering all facilities for guerilla warfare, Haider's soldiers were confined to their stockades, but for the genius of his Brahmin agent, Madanna, they could not have wriggled out and returned to Mysore in 1768.

The influence of the sea has not been less profound than that of the mountains. On account of the sea the peoples and religions of the west came first to Kerala. And the fortunes of Kerala have throughout depended on its sea borne trade.

Kerala has a coastline of over 300 miles. Behind it and almost parallel with the shore are the backwaters, 400 square miles in area. Connected with the sea, they are navigable throughout the year for country boats. From the coming of the Portuguese dates the importance of Cochin, commanding the entrance to the Vempanad Lake, midway between Kasargod and Trivandrum. In 1503 the Portuguese built a fort here, and ever since its European masters had directly or indirectly controlled the politics of Kerala. Its strategic position in the Arabian Sea led the English to convert it into an up-to-date harbour and a subsidiary naval base in 1928.

Kerala cannot boast of long rivers. The Bharathappuzha is the longest river, with a course 156 miles. On its banks stand Chittur sacred on account of Thunjaththu Ezhuththassan, Palghat

with its massive fort, Thirunavay famous for its *Mahamagha* discontinued since Haidar's invasion of 1766, and Ponnani memorable as the original home of the Kunjali Marakkars. The Periyar, with a total length of 146 miles, rises in the Ayiramalai, sacred to Goddess Korravai, and flows through Kalati, where Sankaracharya was born, and Alwaye now a popular health resort. On the biggest of its many branches through which its water reach the sea stands Kodungallur, which had been the capital of Kerala down to 1018.

Short as the rivers are, they perform a two fold function in Kerala. Linked with one another and the backwaters, they provide uninterrupted water transport from Trivandrum to Kasargod. They are also slowly but continuously adding to the land area by filling up old backwaters and forming new ones. At the beginning of the Christian era the coastline of Kerala had been a few miles east of even the eastern bank of the Vempanad and Ashtamuti lakes, Cochin coming into existence only by 1341.

The river mouths form the ports where the goods are loaded and unloaded. In the mud bays which are peculiar, Kerala has also some natural off shore harbours, which provide safe anchorage even in the roughest weather. Vasco da Gama's ships would have been wrecked during the monsoon of 1498 but for the mud bay off West hill Panthalayini, to which they had been taken for safety by the pilots of Kozhikkode.

On account of the abundant annual rainfall agriculture has been and is still the chief occupation of the people, and rice their staple food. Nevertheless, agriculture was and is still the weak point of Kerala economy. And the European powers had often tried to impose their will upon the Malabar prince by cutting off their rice supplies by sea. Palghat and Kuttanad alone were surplus regions as now. The numerous dams that have come into existence since 1947 are useful only as reservoirs for the year. They too depend on the rains for their annual supply.

The monsoon therefore still controls all agricultural operations, which generally begin after *Vishu* or the vernal equinox. The agricultural season comes to a close with the harvest in

September Then the southwest monsoon will have also abated sea become calm With the arrival of the ships from Arabia in October the ports begin to stir with life The busy season reaches its peak in February March In April the Arab ships start on their return voyage, and by June, the ports will have all become empty and lifeless

From the beginning of history down to the present day pepper and spices have been the chief exports With the beginning of the struggle for colonies and commerce among the European nations in the sixteenth century timber, coir, and other ship-building materials began to figure in the export list Rubber and cashew have also become important exports now and one-third of the foreign exchange of India is earned by Kerala

In ancient days the campaigning and hurting season began after the *Navarathri* or *Dasra* festival With the onset of the monsoon the soldiers returned home The enemy would be foiled if the campaign was prolonged till the beginning of the rains

The ancient poets describe the Chera army as consisting of infantry cavalry, elephants and chariots But it is only a poetic convention Before the gunroads of the eighteenth century there was little scope for wheeled vehicles except in Palghat and South Travancore The horse cannot thrive in the climate of Kerala Though the forests abounded in elephants the peoples and princes of Kerala knew the nature of these tricky animals too well to take them to the battlefield The infantry therefore was the backbone of the army The indigenous system of fencing called *Kalaripayattu* is the product of the peculiar topography of Kerala its regular ups and downs and deep and narrow lanes the former discouraging heavy arms, the latter long handled weapons

The climate is hot and moist so daily bath is a necessity for man and beast For the same reason plain white clothing is preferable to dyed stuffs and more than the absolute minimum is a positive discomfort

Hill slopes in North Kerala and criss-cross canals and water ways in South Kerala do not permit contiguous houses in a

street; so except in Palghat and the plains of South Travancore people generally live in isolated houses. Hence they are self-reliant, pragmatic and alert. With the three natural regions of *Kurinchi* or hill, *Marutham* or plain, and *Neythal* or coast, in a narrow compass they have acquired admirable adaptability, tolerance and resourcefulness. Their passion for literature and poetry might also be due to Nature. Its exuberance and variety help to turn the mind from the small and the common-place to the vast immensity and the superb orderliness and beauty of the Infinite.

Historically, the Laccadives, literally one hundred thousand isles, belong to Kerala. Parasurama is said to have built a strong fort at Santhumaththuvu, which is Androth of the Laccadives. The language of the islanders, like that of the people of Kerala, was Tamil before it became Malayalam. The islanders, again, are matrilineal like the Nayars; and some of the houses in the islands and Malabar bear the same name. The sanskrit words in their language point to the presence of Brahmins in the islands some time in the distant past.

Geographically, the Laccadives seem to have been once connected with Kerala. Future research in this region clear up the mystery of the ancient *Gondwana* continent of which South Africa had been the western, and South America the eastern, end.

CHAPTER III

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

In spite of a century and more of social reform, Kerala still remains a museum of races and cultures. Amongst its peoples are found negritos, proto australoids, mediterraneans, and nordics in varying degrees of purity. We do not know when and how they came to Kerala.

The negritos were the earliest peoples of the land. They were short and dark, with puffy lips, broad nose and woolly hair. They had all been *food gatherers*, subsisting on roots, fruits and nuts which they had collected, and on the small game which they had been able to seize or shoot down with their primitive slings or bows. The use of fire for cooking was unknown to them. Their language survives now in the Andamans only. Everywhere else it had been superseded by that of the proto australoids.

Short, black, and flat nosed like the negritos, but long headed, and hairy in face and body like the whites, the proto-australoids imposed themselves on the earlier inhabitants. The two races together form the aborigines of South India. They have got so mixed up that it is now difficult to distinguish the one from the other. Consisting of the jungle tribes and the Cherumas and the Pulayas of the plains, they had attained a very high degree of civilization when the Tamils came from the Mediterranean region.

Their implements and tools were made of stone. The micro-liths found near Kozhikkode and Cochin belonged to them. They developed the neo lithic industry in South India. The pointed but axe was an irresistible weapon in war and chase. They fought also with the stick, bow and arrow, boomerang and blow gun.

Besides *food gatherers* they were also *food producers*, cultivating rice, breeding cattle, and rearing fowls and pigeons. They

cooked their food, consisting of rice, flesh, fish and vegetables over the fire, in pots made of stone or clay. They collected honey, and made *gur* from sugar cane. They were fond of betel, areca-nut and coconut, all of which played an important part in their daily life as well as in their worship, feasts and festivals. They tamed horses and elephants. They wore cloths made of cotton, and their princes and nobles lived in buildings provided with cots, beds and sofas.

They spoke a language belonging to the *Munda* or *Kolarian* group. They were familiar with numbers. They reckoned days according to the phase of the moon, and observed the full moon and the new moon with veneration. They were also adepts in sorcery and magic.

Besides the Universal Mother, they worshipped animals, birds and trees. Every settlement had a *Kavalmaram*, or tree that keeps watch, with a platform all round its foot called *Mannam*, on which were installed the images of their deities and the stones representing the spirits of their deceased ancestors.

The relations between the dead and the living were very intimate. The former were believed to help and protect the latter. The dead were buried at the bottom of a pit, fully stretched east to west. By the side of the dead body were placed pots containing food and drink, and a knife if the deceased was a male, a jewel if a female, or a toy if a child. The funeral rites came to a close with the installation of a representative stone on the *Mannam*.

There was no daily worship at the *Mannam*. Each family made its offerings to the gods and its departed ancestors as and when it chose. But at the annual festival every family offered flowers, fruits, coconuts, liquor, and rice and flesh cooked on the spot to all the gods and spirits at the *Mannam*, and followed it up by song and dance at the end of which the unseen powers conferred their blessings on the votaries through the oracle.

The peoples of the Mediterranean region began to come here some time about 1800 B.C. The *Termiloi* were the first to settle

in South India. Hence all those who came after them were also called *Termiloi*, which gradually changed as *Tamil*.

The Mediterranean peoples settled also in the Indus valley. On account of floods some of them came to South India. Of these the Villavar amalgamated with the Cheras, the Kozhiyar with the Cholas, and the Minavar with the Pandyas.

Fighting with weapons of iron, the Tamils easily overpowered the aborigines who could defend themselves only with weapons of stone. The vanquished were driven to the hills or reduced to slavery. And for greater protection the conquerors erected a wall round their settlements.

The Tamils were highly advanced in the arts of peace as well as of war. And with their keen eye for commerce they developed every industry based upon the produce of the three regions, hill, plain, and sea. As the Tamils settled along the east coast also an inland trade began through the Aramboli route in the surplus produce and articles of each region.

been made of Malabar rose-wood. A study of the graffiti or potter's marks shows that out of sixtyseven symbols, fortyseven are common to South India and the Indus valley

Kings and warriors formed the apex of society. Learned men were called *Ayyar* and *Kizhar*. Adult marriage was the rule, cross cousin marriage deemed most desirable. Inheritance and pollution were traced through the father. Women and children took their food, seated along with adult males. Rice cooked overnight and soaked in water was the universal breakfast.

The Tamils were familiar with the art of writing. They imposed their language on the conquered, though they freely drew from their vocabulary when necessary. Their system of reckoning was based upon eight, and they calculated the month according to the stars.

The Tamils looked upon their god as a super-king, his temple being bigger than the royal palace. Devotional sacrifice of one's life and limb was not uncommon. Gradually they began to worship the local deities, birds, animals and trees of the earlier inhabitants.

The Tamils adopted the beliefs and practices of the vanquished about the dead also. The dead were buried, and a monument, temporary or permanent according to the rank of the deceased, was set up. In course of time the dead bodies of kings and nobles were burnt. The uncalcined bones were collected in a pot and placed in a big jar or multi legged sarcophagus and buried, or deposited in a hole scooped out under a big monolith called *menhir*, or simply buried and the spot covered with an umbrellstone called *Kutakkallu*, or housed in a stone box, square at the base but tapering upwards to serve as a rest for the big *Thoppikkallu* or hat stone, or in a rectangular dolmenoid cist called *Nannangadi*, or in a cave with one or more chambers. The east-to-west orientation of the *Nannangadis* and the caves is indicated by the ramp points to a periodical worship, which ceased with the coming of the Brahmins.

Though the Brahmins are believed to have been brought to Kerala by Parasurama, no evidence has yet been discovered of

their presence here before the fourth century B C Tall, fair-skinned, long-nosed and long-headed, they belonged to the nordic race They came here not as conquerors but as priests Their coming was a slow, imperceptible infiltration, never stopping and never sweeping

In all probability the Nayers are the descendants of the Aratta Vahukas of the *Mahabharatha* They were *Ayudhajnyus* or people living by arms for their profession, their women enjoyed considerable freedom, and among them a man's heir was not his own son but his sister's son In the *Mahabharatha* they are found living in the region of the five rivers By the time of *The Periplus* of the first century A C they had reached the valley of the Narmada The Sakas, Satakarnis, Pallavas and Kalabhras, each in turn pushed them southwards, and their irruption accounts in part for the decline of the Cheras in the fourth century. Divided into a number of tribes, and with their movement spread over a number of years, they could not have all proceeded to one and the same place or by one and the same route Some must have moved by way of Mysore and Coorg into South Canara, some must have come by way of Salem and Coimbatore to Palghat, Trichur and Central Kerala, some must have made their way by the Aramboli route to South Kerala, and still others must have proceeded to Ceylon and the Laccadives Without a common plan or leader, some of them must have split up or coalesced on the way, and some even stayed midway, like the Malayalis and the Javdi Hills in North Arcot, the Kollimalais in Trichinopoly and the Sivarays of Salem

The Izhavas and the Thiyyas represent a movement back to the mainland, the former from Izham or Ceylon, the latter from the Laccadives Separated only by a narrow streak of water, Ceylon and Kerala have been from the beginning within easy reach of each other, and economic and political motives must have brought the Izhavas in large numbers to Kerala The instability of the Laccadives and the disappearance of one island after another, more than economic and political reasons, must have been responsible for the coming of the Thiyyas

Though Kerala had been known to the Jews as early as the days of Solomon, no evidence of a Jewish settlement before the beginning of the Christian era has been discovered. They came to Kerala in large numbers after the destruction of their temple at Jerusalem in 68. They settled at Kodungallur, Panthalayini Ezhi-Matayi, Palayur-Chavakkad and Kollam (Quilon).

CHAPTER IV

THE IMPERIAL CHERAMANS:

(I) EXPANSION OF EMPIRE (1-300 A.C.)

In the reign of Asoka (272-32 B.C.) South India was divided among the Keralaputhras or Cheramans, the Sathiyaputhras or Athiyamans, the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Hida or Idaya Raja. The Cheramans had sixty elephants, while the Pandyans had five hundred.

At the beginning of the Christian era Kerala was the same small kingdom that it had been in the reign of Asoka. Its capital was Kodungallur, which was known also as Vanchi, Thiruvanchikkulam, Musiri and Musiri pattanam. Comprising only Kutanad, Kerala was bounded in the north by Thulunad, in the east by Kongunad, in the south by Kuttanad, and in the west by the sea. In the Tamil poems, *Patirruppaththu* or Ten-Tens and *Purananuru* or External Four Hundred of the *Sangham* literature and contemporary Roman accounts we see the Cheramans gradually extending their power as far as Kasargod in the north, Karur and the Kollimalais in the east, Cape Kumari in the south, and the Laccadives in the west.

The arrival of the Roman navigator, Hippalos, at Kodungallur in 30 was the turning point in the history of the cheramans. The prospect of a prosperous trade with the Roman Empire fired their ambition. They resolved to conquer all those regions in South India which produced the articles that were in great demand in the Roman market.

Under Perunchorruthiyan, or Uthiyan the Great Feeder, the Cheras started on their imperial career. He gave his daughter in marriage to Nannan I of Thulunad, partly to extend his influence northwards, partly to wean him from his alliance with the pirates

who preyed upon the Roman ships. He entrusted the task of suppressing the pirates to his elder son, Imaiavarampan. And appointing his younger son, Palyanai, to guard the southern frontier and if possible to extend the Chera influence southwards from Uthiyanperur, he proceeded inland towards Punnad to seize its beryl mines. With friendly chiefs in Pazhani and Poranad or Palghat it was not difficult for him to move up to the Coimbatore plateau. Advancing by way of Kollangode and Kottampalam, he entered Kongunad. But the Chola king, Karikala Perumal, opposed him, and in the battle that ensued Uthiyan died.

In the meanwhile Imaiavarampan had performed his task. As Nannan I continued to help the pirates the Chera prince turned first against him. He drove him out of Puzhinad, occupying Thindilim near Thirunavay, Nittur near Tellicherry, and Mantha or Matayi near Cannanore. Then he proceeded against the pirates and captured their island stronghold of Katampinva or Katamat of the Laccadives. Thus the sea became safe, and Kodungallur steadily rose in importance, frequented by ships from Egypt in the Roman Empire and from Orissa and Bengal in Aryavārtha.

Finishing his campaigns against the pirates, Imaiavarampan turned against his neighbours. Defeating them and receiving tribute, he assumed the title of *Ezhumutimarpan* meaning he who wore the garland of the seven crowns on his chest.

On the death of his father he ascended the throne. He resumed his father's war for Punnad, but with no better result. He was killed in the battle of Por or Thiruppur, his Chola adversary also dying at the same time by the Cheraman's spear. As crown prince and king Imaiavarampan is said to have reigned fifty-eight years.

Palyanai succeeded his elder brother, Imaiavarampan on the throne. His full name was *Palyanai sel kezhu kuttuvan* or conqueror of Kuttanad, possessing many elephants. Already during Uthiyan's reign he had won his spurs and earned the title of *Kuttuvan* or conqueror of Kuttanad by expelling the Pandians. This was followed by the submission of the Ays of Venad. He destroyed also the fortress of Akappa. And when Imaiavarampan became king he became *Purujarkon* or Governor of Puzhinad, which included the Cherpu Hills.

The greatest achievement of Palyanai was the conquest of Kongunad. With the marriage of his son, Anthuvan, with Poraiyan Perundevi, heiress of Porainad, he became the virtual Ruler of Palghat. Proceeding by way of Umparkatu or Anamalai, he entered Kongunad. Establishing his base at Vanchippalayam, he occupied Thiruppur. In the meanwhile Ay Antiran had also come up from the south. Unable to withstand the combined forces, the Kongus gave up all resistance and surrendered. To guard the beryl mines of Punnad coveted by all its neighbours, Palyanai established a viceroyalty with Karur as its headquarters, and appointed his son, Anthuvan, as Viceroy some time about 120 A.C.

With the conquest of Kongunad the ambitions of Uthiyan were all fulfilled. As masters of Punnad the Cheramans possessed the monopoly of beryls in the ancient world. They controlled the entire pepper country, comprising Kolaththunad and Kuttanad. By the occupation of the Laccadives they had the monopoly of the valuable tortoise shells. Though the Pandyan port of Korkai also produced pearls, the oyster beds of Panthar or Panthalayini and the mouth of the Periyar gave them a not inconsiderable share in the pearl trade.

Palyanai's only son, Anthuvan, died. Realizing the futility of all earthly pomp and power, he abdicated the throne in favour of Imaiavarampan's son, Narmuti. In all, Palyanai's reign is said to have lasted for twenty-five years.

The full name of Narmuti was *Kalamkaykkanni narmuti cheral*, meaning the Chera king with the garland of black berries and the crown of sweet-smelling *Vettiver*. On the abdication of Palyanai, his sister's son, Nannan II, invaded Puzhinad, and occupied Vakaiyur at the mouth of the Bharathappuzha. His General, Gnimili, killed Ay Ayinan, whom Narmuti had sent against Pazhi to seize the Thulunad chieftain's treasures stored there. But Nannan II's success was shortlived. Narmuti destroyed his fleet in the battle of Vakaiyur and drove him out. The crown prince, Senkuttuvan, pursued him, and capturing Viyalur and destroying Kutakur on the opposite bank, compelled

him to give up all his claims to Puzhinad and recognize the Chera king as his suzerain

The Athiyamans and the Cholas had helped Nannan II Narmuti turned first against the Athiyamans, led by Netuman Anchi. He overran his country, in the end however he pardoned and re-instated him. Then he proceeded against the Cholas, and occupied Nerimalai and the pass of Nerivay, leading to the chola kingdom. After a reign of twenty-five years, Narmuti died, and he was succeeded by his half-brother, Senkuttuvan.

As heir-apparent and king, Senkuttuvan reigned for fifty five years, from 125 to 180. Succeeding to a vast empire, he was able to hold it against the numerous enemies who threatened it by sea and land. Like his father, Imaiavarampan, he took a deep interest in the sea. The poet addresses him as *Paniththurai harathava* or fisherman diving in the cold waters of the deep harbour, and refers to him as *Patukatalottiya vel pukazhi kuttuvan* or Kuttuvan of the famous spear who drove away the enemies coming by sea.

He spent also sleepless nights, thinking of ways and means to foil the enemies who might attack him by land. He helped Arukai by destroying Mokur of the Pandyan Pazhayar Maran. He upheld the claims of his Chola cousin and defeated his nine rivals at the battle of Nerivay. With the Chola king virtually dependent on him and the Pandyan Mokur razed to the ground the seven lesser chieftains also submitted to him.

The most permanent memorial of Senkuttuvan's reign is the shrine of Kodungallur Bhagavathi, the consecration of which is described by his brother Ilanko Atikal, in his *Silappathikaram*. In 171 A.C. the Pandyan king unjustly executed one Kovalan mistaking him for the thief who had stolen the queen's anklet. A riot broke out in protest, and Madura was burnt to ashes. Kovalan's widow Kannaki, left Madura, and coming to Chenkunnur in Kerala became a *Sati* by burning herself to death. Deeming her to be an incarnation of Kali, Senkuttuvan went north and defeating and seizing the kings who opposed him brought a stone from the Himalayas to be set up as her image.

It was consecrated with great pomp and ceremony in the presence of numerous kings and chiefs, including Gajabahu of Ceylon in 175

Of Senkuttuvan's two younger brothers, Atukotpattu died before him, and Ilanko Atikal had become a monk. Senkuttuvan dedicated his only son to a hermit's life. So, on his death he was succeeded on the throne by Anthuvan's son, Selvakatunko.

Selvakatunko's full name was *Selvakatunko azhi athan* meaning great and prosperous king, lord of the sea. He was the first of the Cheral Irumporai. He combined the title of *Irumporai* inherited through his mother with the paternal title of *Cheraman*. Like his predecessor he was also supreme in the sea. The Cholas and the Pandyas combined to invade his dominions. But he drove them away, himself leading his forces on foot, with his *ol val* or shining sword, and returned to Karur in triumph. Hence the poet calls him *Karuvur eriya ol val ko peruncheral irumporai* or King Peruncheral Irumporai who entered Karur in triumph with his shining sword. After reign of twenty five years he died at Chikkarppalli.

When his son, Peruncheral Irumporai, succeeded him, the Cholas and the Pandyas renewed their invasion. Though they were joined by Vel Vichchikko, the crown prince, Ilancheral Irumporai, defeated them all, and penetrating into the Chola capital, brought the image of *Chathushikabhutham* to Kodungallur. Perhaps Peruncheral's campaign against the Idayar chief, Kazhavul, was due to the help given by him to the Cholas and the Pandyas.

But the most important event of Peruncheral's reign was the destruction of Thakatur or Dharmapuram, which was the capital of the Athiyamans. The Cheramans and the Athiyamans were descended from the same ancestor. Ilancheral died before his father. And as Peruncheral had no other son then, the Athiyaman, Ezhini, hoped to succeed him. But the Chera king performed a *Puthrakameshti* or sacrifice for the birth of a son, and a son was born to him in due course. Unable to bear the disappointment Ezhini began to cast doubts on the legitimacy

of the new-born Chera prince, which naturally caused considerable resentment in Peruncheral

Peruncheral obtained a pretext for declaring war on Ezhin. He had driven out Kari from his kingdom. Kari appealed to Peruncheral for help, and re-inforced it by killing Ori, and handing over his Kollimalu to the Chera king. Ezhin sought the assistance of the Cholas and the Pandyas. But Peruncheral defeated the confederates with great slaughter at Kollikurram, Ezhin himself being slain. The Chera king followed up this victory by destroying Thakatur. Hence he was called *Thakatur erinthaperuncheral irumporai* or Peruncheral Irumporai who burnt Thakatur.

Appointing his General, Pittan Korran as Viceroy of the newly conquered territories, Peruncheral proceeded to Thirukoyilur to re-instate Kari. Then he marched to the Chola capital, Pukar or Kaveripattinam, and plundering it, returned with the spoils to Kodungallur. In all Peruncheral is believed to have reigned for seventeen years.

Yanaikkatchey, literally the king with the elephant look, was the last of the imperial Cheramans. The various titles by which he is referred to indicates that the Chera empire remained intact during his reign, and it extended from the Kollimalu in the east to Thundilam and Manthai or Matayi in the west.

Yanaikkatchey was as warlike as his predecessors. He won a victory at Vilankil or Vellakkovil over the Chola king, and pressed him so hard that he had to seek the assistance of Thervan Malayan Kari to protect his capital. Nevertheless, in the course of his war with the Pandyan Netunchezhiyan, he was taken captive, but he managed to escape and return to Kodungallur.

Yanaikkatchey was an ideal Ruler. And he died lamented by all. Seven days before his death the whole of Kerala was frightened by the fall of a meteor in the western ocean.

After Yanaikkatchey the Cheramans began to decline. His successors were indolent and incompetent. Ilankuttuvan bewails the sufferings even of an unfaithful queen, who elopes with

an unknown stranger! Perunkatunko proclaims that the lady one loves is like the deity he seeks! Kanaikkal Irumporai quietly submits to his fate when imprisoned by Chenganan, till released by the intercession of a common friend, Poygaiyar. The cowardice of Kothai Marpan seems to be highly criminal. Defeated by Killivalavan in Kongunad, he fled to Kodungallur. And while the soldiers were shedding their blood in the defence of their capital, the king was seeking delight in the wine and women of the harem.

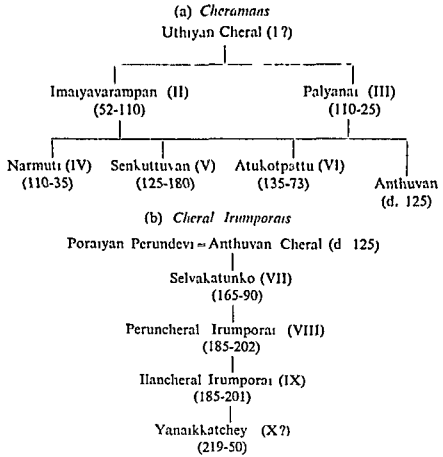
This natural deterioration was hastened by the luxuries brought from the west. Among the annual imports from the Roman Empire as presents for the king and his nobles were costly silver vases, instruments of music, handsome young women for concubinage, superior wine and the choicest unguents. More and more Roman soldiers began to be employed as guards for palace and garrison duty. There were two cohorts of Roman soldiers at Kodungallur ostensibly to protect the *Yavanachcheri* or Roman settlement, but really to be hired out.

While the Roman luxuries and fashions were sapping the innate vitality of the people, the Roman demand for the products of Kerala began also to decline. Weakened by political commotions within, the Roman Empire could not withstand the barbarian invasions from without. A great plague ravaged Rome and Italy from 250 to 265, and it must have come in the Roman ships and ravaged South India also, which alone would account for the general desolation lamented in the *Sirupanarruppadai* by Nattattanar.

External invasions hastened the decline of the *Sangham* Cheras. Pushed by the Kalabhras from behind, the Nayars entered Kerala, and undermined the power and authority of the Rulers of Kodungallur. The Kalabhra king, Achutha Vikkanta, seized the 'three crowned kings' and held them captive for a time at Kumbhakonam. The Kadambas wrested Thulunad from the Cheramans in the fourth century, and the kongus asserted their independence a little later. East of the Ghats Karur alone remained with the Cheramans.

Genealogical Table

(The ordinals within brackets indicate the *Pathithu* of the *Patir-ruppaththu* and the cardinal years *A. D.*)



CHAPTER V

THE IMPERIAL CHERAMANS: (II) GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY (1-300 A. C.)

The Chera empire at its zenith comprised Venad, Odanad, Kuttanad, Kutanad, Puzhinad, Porainad, and Kongunad, that is, all the coastal districts from Cape Kumari in the south to Kasargod in the north, and the inland districts of Wynad, Palghat, Coimbatore, Salem, and Trichinopoly Kollimālai, with Pazhani as the most favoured dependant. Across the sea it included the Laccadives.

At the head was the king, generally called *Ko*, *Kon* or *Kovai*. As the empire expanded, viceroys were appointed to rule the newly conquered regions. Succession was hereditary and patrilineal, the oldest male member traced through the father ascending the throne. The junior princes moved up the ladder from one vice-royalty to another according to seniority. The heir apparent did not have a separate appanage. He remained in the capital, assisting the king and sharing the burden of government with him.

The accession of the king to the throne was celebrated with becoming pomp and *eclat*. After the king was seated on the throne, the junior princes were formally invested with the higher *Sthanam*, or dignity, to which they had just succeeded.

The regnal years were counted from the accession of the prince to the lowest dignity. As they must necessarily overlap one and the same event might find a place in more than one reign, but assigned to different regnal years. A Cheraman with a long reign would obviously outlive his junior with a shorter reign.

The personal names of the Cheramans have not come down to us. They were denoted by some characteristic feature, habit,

outstanding achievement or even by some epithet in some poem in their praise *Perunchorruthuvan* was the king who gave a *Perunchoru*, or memorial feast to the spirits of the Pandavas and the Kauravas while on a pilgrimage to Kurukshetra. *Uthayan* was also called *Vanavarampan*, meaning friend (*Ampin*) of the gods (*Vanavar*) or the king who had the sky (*Vanam*) for the boundary (*Varampu*) of his kingdom *Imaiyavarampan* might mean also friend (*Ampin*) of the gods (*Imaiyavar*) or the king who had the Himalayas (*Imayam*) for the boundary (*Varampu*) of his empire

Polygamy was not unknown *Imaiyavarampan* had two queens, the Pazhani princess *Padmandevi*, and the Chola princess, *Manakkili*. While describing parentage therefore the name not only of the father but also of the mother and her father were mentioned

The chief queen was called *Koyilal* or *Perundevi*. She stood by the side of the king in all religious rites, as in *Peruncheral's Puthrakameshti*. The chief queen had a seat by the side of the king in the council chamber. None of the queens however accompanied the king to the battle field

The king was regarded as the very life of the state "Rice is not life," says the poet, "water is not life, the king alone is the life of this wide wide world" He was the protector of his subjects, their *Mejmarai* or armour. The ideal king looked after them as a father looked after his children

He was the commander in chief and leader in war. Seated on his elephant, he directed the fighting. At times he led his men on foot also. Exposing himself on the battle-field, he was sometimes killed like *Uthayan* and *Imaiyavarampan*, or taken captive like *Yanaikkatchey* and *Kanaikkal Irumporai*

The maintenance of justice was another important duty of the king "In his sceptre", says the poet, "righteousness resides" King *Senkuttuvan* praises the death of the Pandyan as soon as he knew that *Kovalan* was innocent "Glory to the Pandyan", said the Kerala king, "who straightened the rod of justice bent by *Kovalan's* execution"

The princes were given a training in arms and the *Dharma-sastras* or ethics. As viceroys they obtained practical experience in government and administration. There was, thus always a successor ready and prepared to take over the burdens of the empire.

If there was only a daughter, her son inherited the principality after her father's death, as Selvakatunko became the ruler of Porainad. Adoption had not yet become a common and recognized method of averting extinction. Even in his old age Peruncheral Irumporai of Thakatur fame preferred a *Puthrakameshti* to the easier and surer adoption for providing himself with an heir.

There was no permanent council to advise the king. The poets refer to an *Ajimperunkozhu* or Grand Council of Five, an *Emperajam* or Council of Eight, and a *Surrani* or those who were near the king on the spot. Besides the *Purohit*, or priest, astrologer, prime minister, commander-in-chief and finance minister the king sought the advice of those who were competent to offer it.

Kodungallur, situated at the *Kutungal*, or junction, of the river and the sea, was the capital of the empire and the seat of the emperor. With Senkuttuvan's consecration of the temple of Kannaki it obtained a new importance as the centre of a cult which soon spread over the whole of South India, if not beyond, and Ceylon.

Though the poets make constant mention of the fourfold army, the kings relied mostly on the infantry, consisting of the *Val-pata* or swordsmen, *Vil-pata* or bowmen and *Vel-pata* or pikemen. The soldiers were protected by coats and gloves made of leather. Barricades of thorns and thorny shrubs were thrown across the road to stop the advance of the enemy. As at home on the battle field also, distinctions of rank and status were observed, foot-soldiers fighting only with foot-soldiers, nobles only with nobles, and kings only with kings. The battle was decided by the flight, death or capture of the enemy king or commander.

The cities all conformed to one common plan. At the centre was the palace of the king or the residence of the commandant, protected by a wall with a gate in each of the four sides. Within this wall or immediately outside, were the armoury and quarters for the guards. Beyond these lived the common people, each caste having its own particular locality. The main temple was separate from the royal chapel. A little removed from the temple and the palace was the main bazaar.

The outer wall was generally of mud or laterite, granite being available only in Palghat and other regions near the Ghats. It was surrounded by a deep moat, full of crocodiles. Like the inner wall the outer wall also had four gates, but provided with storeys also. Their huge doors were made of wood, reinforced by iron plates, from which protruded long and stout nails as a protection against elephants and battering rams. At the same time they were held firm inside by cross bolts and posts driven deep into the ground. On the walls were mounted murderous engines of Roman make, operated by fierce looking Yavanas.

Beyond the moat was the *Kavarkkatu* or forest of guardian trees, which served as watch towers and observation posts. The enemy's first task was to cut down these trees so that the besieged might not communicate with anyone outside.

The Cheramans had the palmyra for their guardian tree, the bow for their emblem, and the garland of palm berries and flowers for their characteristic badge. Their tutelary deity was the dreaded *Korravar* on the Ayiramalai, propitiated by offerings of rice, flesh and liquor. The warriors were summoned by the sacred war drum, which was taken out after due worship. A *Perunchoru*, or grand feast, was given to them by the king on the eve of their departure for the fighting front and after their triumphant return from the battle field.

Campaigns were generally short. If long, an elaborate camp was constructed for the king and his warriors on the model of the capital city. Every operation like assault and defence, siege and sortie, even cattle raiding and the pursuit of the raiders, had its own peculiar flower, which was worn as a garland round the neck or tuft on the head by those engaged in it to ensure success.

Cattle lifting was a common pretext for war among the *Kuruvula manjar* or lesser chieftains. Gradually the pauranic ideal of the *Samrat*, or emperor, became a convenient cloak to cover the sordid ambition of the *Muvvarasar* or three crowned kings, Cheras, Cholas, and Pandyas.

As a rule no mercy was shown to the vanquished. Senkutuvan caused the women of Mokur to be shorn of their hair. Kanaikkal Irumporai pulled out rebel Muvan's teeth. Imaiya-varampan poured *ghu*, perhaps boiling *ghu*, on the head of the *Yavana* renegades who had joined the pirates. The reinstatement of Athiyaman by Narmuti and of kazhavul by Peruncheral II therefore caused surprise to friend and foe alike.

Among the *Muvvarassar*, the Cheramans alone possessed a navy. It protected and policed the seas, and maintained the communications with the Laccadives.

For administrative purposes the Chera empire was divided into a number of provinces. Kutanad was ruled by the king himself from Kodungallur. The viceroy *Puzhiyarkon* governed Puzhinad from Thondi or Thundilam near Valaiyur, and the Laccadives from Manthai or Matayi near Cannanore. The *Kuttuvan* was in charge of Kuttanad and Venad with headquarters at Kottar. Kongunad was a heavy responsibility with the beryl mines coveted by Ori of the Kollimalai, the Cholas and the Pandyas, and the *Aongarko* protected them from Karur.

Birth and caste determined one's rights and obligations. The function of the king or chief was only to protect these rights and enforce these obligations as declared by the elders of the community formally meeting as *Parishad* or *Parisha* at the *Mamam*.

In the literature of this period we find the Brahmins accorded the greatest respect and occupying the highest place in society. Cheraman Adukotpattu founded a Brahmin settlement in Kuttanad, while Selvakatunko dotted the land with Brahmin colonies. Uthayan and Palyanai encouraged them to perform sacrifices. The capital city, says the poet, is dark with the smoke arising from the sacrificial halls of the Brahmins and the feeding

houses maintained by the king Peruncheral II's *Puthrakameshti* is the only one of its kind known to history, as distinguished from the *Puranas*

Palyanai learnt the Vedic scriptures from Bharadvaja, and Senkuttuvan entrusted the education of his son to Parinar. Though the mother tongue of the Brahmins was Sanskrit, they learnt the language of the people, and made them familiar with the *Puranas* and their heroes. Bharadvaja even translated the *Mahabharatha* into Tamil, for which reason he came to be known as *Netumbharathayanar*.

As now, then also the Brahmins were divided into two classes: the orthodox and the saintly, like Vinnandayan and Parinar, and the worldly, like Kapilar. The former were priests and preceptors, performing sacrifices and teaching the Vedas. The latter mingled freely with princes and peoples, revelling in meat and drink.

Kings and nobles, called *Sanror* or *Marhavar*, were ranked as Kshathriyas. The scars of wounds received in battle were their most brilliant decorations. Their mothers are described by the poets as going to the battle field, and plucking off their breasts if they found their sons dead with a wound on the back, and dancing with joy if they found them mangled and dismembered. Uthayan committed suicide on the battle field simply because the enemy's spear, piercing through the heart, had come out through the back wounding it. They believed that death by weapons was the only way to heaven and cut asunder the bodies of those who died at home so that they might obtain a place in the blessed regions.

Very little is known about the Vaisyas, who formed the trading community. The parents of Kovilan and Kannaki, the hero and the heroine of the *Silappathikaram*, were merchant princes, trading even with distant lands across the seas.

The Brahmins, Kshathriyas, and Vaisyas traced their descent and inheritance through the father. Virgin marriage was the rule among the Brahmins and the Vaisyas, though among the Kshathriyas brides might be even twenty years old. Arundhati was

held forth as the ideal wife. When the husband was away, the wife, even the queen put aside all her jewels, except the *Thali*, the sacred symbol of her marriage, and abstained from flowers and betel. Widows led an ascetic life in the strictest seclusion, discarding everything that might add to their appearance. The horrid rite of *Sathu* or burning oneself along with the dead body of the husband on the funeral pyre, was unknown to the people of Kerala, though performed occasionally in *Paradesa* or Tamilnad east of the Ghats, memorial stones being erected for such heroines and worshipped. But, as in *Paradesa*, here also conjugal fidelity was one sided. Besides polygamy, males enjoyed considerable freedom, and many a devoted wife like Kannaki had to suffer in silence the desertion of her husband for the company of public women like Madhavi.

The staple food of the upper classes and the luxury of the lower were rice and meat, washed down the throat by imported wine or sweet smelling toddy, Kuttanad toddy being the best. The *Sangham* poets frequently refer to the sumptuous feasts of rice boiled with meat, and pulses broiled into porridge, or fried and mashed with water into *Chatni* or Thukayal. Salt and pepper made the dishes tasty and appetizing. Curds, butter-milk and *ghu* were served in abundance. Besides honey and the fruits of the season, there were also sweets prepared in sugarcane *gur*. The liberality of the Cheramans became proverbial. Imayavarampin exhorted his guests to eat and drink as much as they could, and commanded the damsels of the royal kitchen to ply them with every kind of food and liquor.

Feasts were followed by amusements of various kinds, the most popular being poetry, song and dance. The Cheramans were very fond of poetry and some of them were even poets. Ilanko Atikal wrote the *Silappathikaram*, perhaps the earliest, most original and also greatest epic in Tamil literature. Perunkatunko was the author of the *Palai Thinaṭi*, describing love in the *Palai* or arid regions. Kottampaliththunjiya Makkoṭṭai, Kanaikkal Irumporai, and Ilankuttuvan were poets, their poems being embodied in the *Purananūru* or the *Akananūru*. Under Yanaikkatchey's auspices Kutallur Kizhar compiled the *Aṁ Kurunūru*. Proud of his ancestors, this Chera of the elephant

look might have been responsible for the unique collection known as the *Patirruppaththu* in praise of his ancestors

Fond of poetry, the Cheramins were very lavish in their rewards to the poets. The authors of the *Paththus* of the *Patirruppaththu* received gifts of gold and land which might seem incredible. The singing and dancing Adukotpattu even married his panegyrist, Nachchellaiyar.

Song and dance were provided by the *Nattuvans*. The danseuse went through a course of seven years from the age of five. And the more fortunate among them like Madhavi were honoured by the presence of the king himself when they made their debut in public. In the Roman ships came also girls from Europe seeking the patronage of kings and nobles.

The lesser folk had to be content with the performances of the Panans and the Panaththi or Pattis. The former played upon the instruments, the latter sang and danced. They went from court to court and village to village, ekout a precarious existence.

We know very little about land tenure in this period. Attendants and guards for daily duty at the palace and necessities for the consumption of the royal household were provided by the villages comprising the royal domain. Similarly the nobles must have had also some nucleus of their own for their daily needs. Thus we have the dim beginnings of the later *Karayina*. As new lands were conquered they must have been shared by the king and his followers on conditions of protection and service as in the feudal system. The kings must have made their gifts to temples and Brahmins out of the royal demesne, and the nobles out of their original nucleus. In such absolute grants which the poetess, Auvvaiyar exhorts the *Muviarasar* to make to the Brahmins we have the origin of the *Nirattipper*, which was in vogue till the second half of the nineteenth century.

The Vellalas were the cultivators. Whether land lords or tenants, they cultivated the land with the help of the members of their family and slaves, who were all descendants of the earlier

inhabitants conquered by the Tamils. The tenant gave to the land-lord a *Pattam*, literally what is due to the *Pathi* or lord, after a fair reduction for seed, wages and incidental or unforeseen expenses from the gross produce.

As rice was the staple food it was the staple crop. Pepper, sugarcane, betel, ginger and pulses were also raised. With the coming of the Romans the area under pepper steadily increased.

In ancient times, as now, men attended to ploughing, sowing and digging, women to planting, reaping and threshing, besides hulling, beating rice, pounding pepper, and cooking food. The children were employed in looking after the farm cattle and in scaring away stray cattle and birds from the crops and the threshing yard. Bullocks and buffaloes were utilized for draught purposes. Cows, she buffaloes and goats provided milk, which was converted into curds, which, again, was directly consumed or churned into butter and buttermilk. Around his dwelling the farmer grew plantain, coconut, mango, jack and bamboo, and raised edible vegetables. He had also his poultry. The tanks and rivers provided fish. Toddy was indispensable, especially for the farm labourer, before he retired for the night. Women wore ornaments of shell, bone and glass.

The farmer was harassed more by the grain dealer than the landlord. His cattle and lands were also exposed to occasional raids from across the border. Depending on the monsoon he suffered also from its vagaries.

Along the coast and the river-banks men were engaged in fishing and diving, and women in mending or making nets and cooking food, and children in collecting shells. In the busy season there was considerable demand for adult labour for loading, unloading and transport.

In hills and forests the chief occupations of the males were hunting, elephant-trapping and collecting honey and ivory. Women and children gathered roots, fruits and nuts.

Every village or group of villages had its own families of toddy tappers, barbers, washermen and artisans to cater to its

small needs. On account of special trade and manufacturing facilities some places became famous, as Kollangode for iron tools and implements, Kotumanam for jewelry, and Panthar or Panthalayim for pearls.

The inhabitants of the village belonged to different castes, and their social and political life centred round their respective places of worship—the *Koyil* of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, and the *Mannam* of the others. Even the slaves had their *Mannams*. Meeting in the presence of their gods their assemblies had no president. Though at times feelings might run high, in the end reason would prevail, decisions being made not by counting votes but by *Ayirodham* or consensus.

After the conquest of Punnad some attempt must have been made to reach Karur by a short cut through the difficult Palghat Gap. But the grand highway from Kodungallur to Paradesa passed through Aramboli. In hills and forests porters and pack animals provided the transport, on the plains carts fitted with double iron axles were available, though in the rainy season they got stuck up in the mire.

From the beginning there must have been some trade by barter between the different regions. The peoples of the coast and the hills must have brought their products to the plains and exchanged them for rice, toddy and cloth. With the expansion of the empire inland trade must necessarily increase; the deficit areas obtaining their requirements from the surplus regions. Kongunad got salt, dried fish, coral and pearls from the sea coast, gold and timber from the auriferous sands and forests of Nilambur, and pepper and other spices from Kuttanad and Puzhinad. In return it provided cattle for milch and draught purposes as well as slaughter, hides and skins for shoes, shields, sheaths and armour, blankets made of cotton and wool, cotton for spinning and weaving coarse cloth, different kinds of grain, oil seeds, copper, brass and bronze ware, *gur*, ready-made jewels and beryls.

Thanks to the Roman writers, we know more of the sea-borne commerce of Kerala than of its inland trade. By discovering the direct route across the sea in 30, Hippalos reduced the

voyage from Egypt to forty days. Within fifty years, by 77, the annual value of the exports to Rome, much the greater part of which was provided by Kerala, had risen to fifty-five million sesterces, equivalent to about seven crores of rupees today. As Imaiavarampan and his successors kept the sea safe for merchant ships, the trade with Rome in the west and China in the east steadily rose, and a number of new ports and marts sprang up.

The first century *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* describes the trade of Kerala with the Roman Empire as follows — “The ships that frequent these ports are of great size, and take in large and bulky cargoes of pepper and betel. The imports here are treasure in great quantities, topazes, a small assortment of plain cloth, flowered robes stibium, coral glass, brass, lead, wine about as much as at Barugaza (Brouch), cinnabar, arsenic and wheat not for sale but for the use of the crew. Pepper, which is brought only to this port (Bakare), is the chief export and is called C (K) ottanarikon from the district where it is grown. Other exports are pearls in great quantity and of the best quality, ivory, fine silks, spikenard from the Ganges, betel from the countries further east, precious stones of all kinds, diamonds, jacinths and tortoise shell from the golden Chersonese and from the islands off the coast of Limurike.” To these were added beryls from Punnad after its conquest by Palvanai in 120 A.C.

The Romans did not proceed to Bengal or the Pacific. The people of Kerala themselves carried on this trade. They had four kinds of water transport. Otams, or canoes scooped out of single logs for purely local and domestic needs, *Changatams* or wooden platforms constructed on small boats bound together as pontoons, *Kettuvallams*, or big boats provided with thatched roofs and cooking facilities for coastal voyages, and *Pattamars* and *Kappals*, which are small ships for long oversea voyages. Ship-building was a very flourishing industry in Kerala in the *Sargham Age*.

The chief export to the east also was pepper. In fact the size of the ships trading with China was indicated by the number of pepper bags they could hold. In the first century the Chinese emperor sent an envoy to Vanchi to obtain this highly prized

article on favourable terms. The chief imports were silk from Kalinga, spikenard from the Ganges, betel from Malaya, and sugar and silk from China.

Some of our popular beliefs are as old as the *Sangham* poets. Meteors and comets frightened them. Anything contrary to the familiar processes of Nature, like butter not melting when heated, alarmed them. Dreams, again, like darkness at noon, filled them with fear. The throbbing of the right side was held lucky for the male and of the left for the female. The common lizard also indicated coming events. Kings and warriors tried to divine the fate of battles from the cotton tree. Rainfall was determined by the position of Mars and Venus in the zodiac. A smoking Saturn brought only evil. And the protection of the gods was sought by prayers, worship and dances against every apprehended evil and calamity.

Every year after the harvest an Indra festival was celebrated at Kodungallur. This was quite different from the festival of this name celebrated at Kaveripattanam in *Mesha* (April-May) and the *Onam* rejoicings of *Kanya* (September - October) in Madura. The *Karthukadipam*, or festival of lights, in the month of *Vrischika* (November - December) was celebrated in *Sangham* times as now.

Every family, caste, profession and village had its own tutelary deity. Kali or Mother-Goddess Siva, Vishnu and Subrahmanya were worshipped by all. The Cheramans were famous for their devotion. Imaiavaramban filled the land with temple and shrines. Palyanai worshipped the Vedic gods as well as the family deity on the Ayiramalai. Senkuttuvan prayed to Siva and Vishnu and deified Kannaki as *Kodungalluramma* or the guardian mother of Kodungallur and of the empire of which it was the capital. Selvakatunko made over the village of Okanthur to Vishnu, and perhaps founded also the Vishnu temple of Thiruvavay.

The increasing familiarity with the *Puranas* made kings and nobles more and more eager to visit the holy places mentioned by them. Uthayan made a pilgrimage to Kurukshetra. The conquest of the country as far as the Himalayas attributed to

Imaiyavarampan might be a poetic version of a pilgrimage to the north. The Ganges tended to become as holy as the Kaveri. Pari's ashes were consigned to the Kaveri by his daughters. Senkuttuvan went early in his reign with his mother to the Ganges, presumably to commit his father's remains to its holy waters.

This mode of disposing of the relics of the dead shows the change that had come over the ideas about death. The Brahmins taught that the spirits of the departed took no interest in their living kinsmen as had been believed, the disembodied souls went to heaven or hell according to their *Karma* or deeds while living, after enjoying the pleasures of heaven for their merits and undergoing the punishments of hell for their sins they were born again, life here was only a stage in the journey of the soul towards deliverance from the seemingly endless cycle of birth, death and rebirth, and hence no useful purpose was served by preserving and worshipping the remains of the dead.

The Jains and the Buddhists also believed in the *Law of Karma* and the migration of the soul. The first Jains must have come to Kerala from Madura by way of Aramboli. Buddhism came from Ceylon. The first Buddhist monastery was built at Kodungallur in Imaiyavarampan's reign.

The coming of St. Thomas in 52 and of the Jews after 68 to Kodungallur could not have been noticed by the *Sangham* poets. They must have overlooked them, the former as one of the many *Parivrajakas* or poor preachers, who roamed about the country, the latter as the kith and kin of the *Yavanas* settled in the land.

CHAPTER VI

MENTAL AND RELIGIOUS STIR (300-850 A. C.)

The first faint beginnings of the mental and religious stir that culminated in Sankaracharya's Vedantha in the ninth century can be detected in the *Sangham* literature of the first three centuries of the Christian era. In Kovur Kizhar's praise of the Brahmin Vinnandayan as the Champion of Siva's ancient lore against the sophistry of the false doctrines we have the first indication of the rivalry between Hinduism on the one hand and Jainism and Buddhism on the other. In Perunchozhan we have the materialistic agnostic, in Poygaiyar the earliest of the Azhvars or Vaisnava saints, and in Chengaman the earliest of the *Nayanars* or Siva saints.

The *Sangham* epoch ended in gloom and despair. The economic depression that followed the decline of the western trade, the plague and the series of invasions that desolated the land served to convince every one of the futility and evanescence of all earthly pomp and power. People began to enquire into the nature and cause of joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure, and prosperity and adversity. In the *Law of Karma* and the theory of metempsychosis they found an explanation for present misfortune and a promise of future welfare.

But they differed about the ways and means to free the soul from its bondage. Sages and philosophers went about the land expounding each his own solution, and exhorting the people to adopt it as the sole panacea for all their ills. Proceeding to the various cities of South India, like Kodungallur, Madura and Kanchipuram, they set up *Manatpas*, or halls of debate, challenging their rivals to defeat them in argument or become

their disciples Where arguments failed, the champions resorted to ordeals and miracles also

Setting aside the few *Bhuthavadis* or materialists, we may divide the sages and philosophers who appeared in this period into those who emphasized Karma or external works, Yoga or control of the mind and concentration, *Bhakthi* or devotion and *Jnana* or knowledge

The *Karmavadis*, or advocates of external works, insisted on the strict observance of *Varnasramadharma* or rules prescribed for each of the four castes and each of the four stages in life student, householder, forest dweller and monk The duty of the Brahmin was to study and teach the Vedas and perform sacrifices of the Kshatriya to rule the land and promote the welfare of the people, of the vaisya to produce wealth by agriculture, industries and commerce, and of the Sudra to serve the other three To the *Karmavadi* the fulfilment of the prescribed duty was the only way to emancipation

Mezhaththur Agnihothri was the first, and Parbhakara Gurukal the last, of the great *Karmavadis* of Kerala Agnihothri's father was the famous astronomer and grammarian, Vararuchi After completing his studies here he went to Kanchipuram, where he might have been a fellow student with Mayurasarman (345-60) who founded the Kadamba dynasty After his return home he constructed a sacrificial hall in his family seat at Yajneswaram and performed in all one hundred sacrifices, the last being completed on the *Kali* day 1270701, corresponding to A D 378-79 He wrote also a sacrificial manual in Tamil known as *Adhvaramsampradaya*

Prabhakara belonged to the Kuththulli house in Sukapuram. He completed his studies under Kumarila Bhatta On the invitation of King Kulasekhara the North Indian sage came to Kerala to open the *Sastraic* college at Udayathunkeswaram Prabhakara became the head of this college and wrote two commentaries on *Sabarabhashya*, the *Brhathi* of 12 000 *slokas* and the *Iaghi* of 6 000 *slokas* They form the basis of what is generally called *Gurumatha* Though inspired by Kumarila it is regarded

as an independent system by itself. Praised by Salikanatha and Ramanuja, it was studied in all the Vedic colleges of South India. Like Kumarila's philosophy, its study also was encouraged by numerous endowments in the temples of *Paradesa* as well as of Kerala.

Kerala had no *Yogi* of Gorakhnath's stature. Kerala abhors extremes. Nevertheless, in Agnihothiri's supposed step-brother, Narayanan, it produced a saint with many *Siddhis* or miraculous powers. Called *Bhranthan* or mad man, he was a terror to all the formalists and ritualists who were concerned with external conformity only.

On account of a great famine in North India in 297 B. C. a large number of Jains led by Chandragupthā Maurya and Bhadrabahu came to Sravanabelgola in Mysore. In course of time they spread all over South India, Pataliputhram near Kanchipuram, Kanchipuram itself, and Madura becoming its chief centres. At Madura Vajranadi established a Jain *Sangha* in 470, on the model of which a *Sangha* was invented by commentators for the Tamil literature of the first three centuries of the Christian era consisting of *Patirruppaththu*, *Purananuru* and other works. In Kerala Jainism became popular in Wynad, Palghat and in the inland regions of Travancore. Nagarkovil and Thiruchcharanaththumala, where there was also a convent became famous pilgrim centres.

Coming by sea, Buddhism was popular in the coastal districts. Karumati, Mavelikkara, Bharanikkavu, Pallikkal, Karunagappali, Itappalli, Dharmapattanam, Matayi and Pallikkunnu were its chief centres. It spread also to the Laccadives. Sri-mulavasam, now under the sea, whether off South Kerala, North Kerala or among the Laccadives it has yet to be discovered, attracted pilgrims from distant Kashmir and Afghanistan.

Jainism and Buddhism, which could not be easily distinguished from each other even by the learned, made very little appeal to the upper classes. Only two kings are said to have become Buddhists. Pallivana Perumal of Nilamperur, who is supposed to be the Bana Perumal of the *Keralolpathi* and Varaguna

Vikramaditya, who made extensive grants to Srimalavasam. The strength of Jainism and Buddhism lay in the comparatively backward classes. Even to them they tended to become less and less attractive.

They were more concerned with the food that was provided than with the education imparted in their *Pallis* or sacred halls. Further, though outwardly the members of the *Sangha* were all equal, the distinctions based on birth were secretly observed. Again, *Ahimsa*, or non violence, and asceticism on which Jainism and Buddhism were based were inconsistent with their food habits and aesthetic and ecstatic instincts. Gradually the forms and practices of Hinduism found their way into these religions. Their founders were raised to the rank of gods with annual festivals as in the Hindu shrines. Like the *Kettukazhcha* of Bharanikkavu their pomp and pageantry outdid the processions of the Hindu gods. By prayers and *Manthras*, or sacred formulae, Buddha and the Jain *Thirthankaras* or saints were believed to grant all the wishes of their votaries, including *Siddhis* like the never-failing bowl and the power to change shape at will and fly in the air.

Provoked by the persecution of the Buddhist king, Kalabhra Achutha Vikkanta (c. 500) of Kumbhakonam, the Saiva *Nayanars* and the Vaishnava *Azhvairs* went from place to place, chanting the Lord's names, and singing and dancing in ecstatic joy. Buddhism and Jainism could hardly resist such an appeal to inborn instincts. The Jain and Buddhist *Pallis* became Hindu shrines, Buddha and the *Thirthankaras* were transformed into Siva, Krishna, Sastha (Ayyappan) or Anantha, and Thara and Padmavathi into Durga, Bhagavathi or Lakshmi. As the characteristic feature of Buddhism was celibacy the depletion of the *Sangha* by apostasy or death could not be made good by natural increase.

Jainism has survived only because its members are allowed to marry. Nevertheless, the number of the Jains is steadily diminishing. Of its once numerous shrines in Kerala only a few remain. Kallil, Mundur, Palghat and Sultan's Battery.

It is not possible to exactly assess the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. With a common heritage the importance of the

new religions as compared with that of Hinduism may be exaggerated or be-littled. There is no doubt that the strict abstinence of the worldly Brahmin from fish, flesh and liquor in South India was in part due to them. It is also on account of the new religion, that *Nerchas* or vows and *Nolmpus* or fasts have become a regular feature in the religious life of the people. The *Chakkīyar kuththu* of the Hindu temples is an adaptation of the Buddhist monk's religious exposition. Addressing the masses in their mother tongue, the Jain and Buddhist monks must have also improved Tamil. The Jain and Buddhist *Sanghas*, again, might have served as a model for Sankaracharya's monastic orders and the *Thiruk-kuttam*, or sacred assembly, of the *Sivanatīyar* or devotees of Siva.

Though Siva came to be regarded as the teacher of the Vedas and Krishna as the brother of Indra, the Vedic sacrifice lacked the warmth and direct appeal of the old worship. The priest alone knew what it was, the others, including the *Yajamana*, or patron for whom the sacrifice was performed, had to remain silent spectators. There grew also a feeling that the calamities that clouded the end of the *Sangham* epoch might have been due to the neglect of the ancient modes of worship. So gradually they were revived, and in the process they became more elaborate and imposing. The welkin began to resound with drums and cymbals. The resonant hymns which the Brahmins introduced, added to the solemnity of the worship. At stated times the image of the Lord was taken out for the edification of the devout with all the paraphernalia of a royal procession.

The iconoclasm of Achutha Vikkanta raised a storm which overwhelmed the new religions. The *Nayanars*, like Appar and Sambandhar, and the *Azhvars*, like Thirumalisai and Thiruman-gai, toured the land, kindling the religious fervour of the masses by their *Bahayan* or devotional parties and processions. They *vanquished also the Buddhist and Jaina monks by argument, ordeals and miracles*. Of the sixty three *Nayanars* Viramanitar and Cheraman Perumal, and of the twelve *Azhvars* Kulasekhara belonged to Kerala.

Viramaintar was born at Chenkunnur. In his old age he left his native place for Chidambaram. He compelled Saint

Sundaramurthi to show proper respect to the *Sivanatiyar Thirukuttam*, saying that wherever the *Atiyar* were assembled there Siva also was present.

Cheraman Perumal was the son of Chera princess by a Chola prince. The Cholas had lost their kingdom, and they were now living with the Cheras and the Pandyas. With no throne to inherit, the young prince spent his time in the temple of Thiruvanjikkulam worshipping the Lord. He was called *Kazharirariyar Nayanar* because he knew the wishes and wants of every creature by its cries or sounds.

Some time about 690 the Pandyan king, Arikesari Maravarman, who was known also as Kuna Pandya (670-710) defeated the Chera king, Sengor Poraiyan, and took him captive with all his near kinsmen. So his ministers and nobles crowned the saintly Nayanar as their king.

The *Nayanars* and the *Azhvars* hastened the decline of Jainism and the disappearance of Buddhism. Kings and nobles founded temples, while the lesser folk made endowments for various items of worship according to their ability. The *Bhakti* movement brought into existence the familiar *Bhaian* parties and *Harikatha-kulakshepams* or recital of the stories of Krishna to the accompaniment of appropriate songs and instruments. The festival of *Thirunathira* obtained a new importance by Manickavachakar's song, *Thiruvempavai*, in praise of Siva, and Andal's song, *Thirupavai*, in praise of Vishnu. The complete dedication of body and soul to the Lord by the *Nayanars* and the *Azhvars*, including women like Karaikkal Amma and Andal, became a new feature of Hindu mysticism and social service.

Cheraman Perumal's songs form part of the orthodox Saiva canon in the *Thevaram*, while his *Thirukkailayajnanaula* in praise of Vatakkunnathan of Trichur or Southern Kailas became the model for a new style of poetic composition in Tamil. Kulasekara's songs, collectively known as *Perumalthirumozhi*, have their place in the Vaishnava canon embodied in the *Nalayiraprabandham*. Thiruvanjikkulam, associated with Cheraman Perumal and Sundaramurthi, and Trivandrum and other places, praised by the *Azhvars*, attracted numerous pilgrims from *Paradesa*. With Kulasekhara began the worship of *Unmkrishna*, or Lord Krishna as a boy, and of Sri Rama, whom he claimed as his ancestor. His emotional identification with the scenes and characters in the *Puranas* spread to Bengal and became a chief feature of Bengal Vaishnavism. Allegiance to a common Lord, Siva or Vishnu, tended also to relax the rigours of caste among his devotees. The worship offered to the Parayanayanar Nandan in Siva temples and the Pana Azhvar Chirupanan in Vishnu temples led to the free admission of the lower classes to *Thanthric* worship.

Kali or Durga, neglected by the *Nayanars* and the *Azhvars*, began to be worshipped as *Sakthi* in the *Thanthras*, which claimed to lead the votary to salvation by a short cut. In course of time the *Thanthric* mode of worship was adopted by some of the devotees of Siva and Vishnu, who called themselves Virasaivas and Viravaishnavas respectively. The *Thanthras* penetrated even into Buddhism,

Gradually all these religious sects began to succumb to fanaticism. The advocates of external works insisted upon the correct and exact performance of every rite and ritual, the departure even by a hair's breadth sending the aspirant to hell. The followers of Siva and Vishnu began to quarrel for precedence and superiority. The *Thanthric* worship became a midnight orgy with women and liquor. Some of the sects took to secret murder and even cannibalism. During the Kannaki festival a goldsmith was even publicly slaughtered at Tiruvorriyur.

When religion was thus becoming tainted with vice and crime, Sankaracharya was born at Kalati in 805. He lost his father in 810 but he was a prodigy. It was enough for him to read or hear once to remember it. He could not bear the sight of people quarrelling in the name of God and indulging in immorality and bloodshed to propitiate Him. Declining the gold and position offered by King Rajasekhara of Kodungallur, he left Kerala in 821 for Kanchipuram and thence went to the banks of the Narmada famous for saints and seers, to discover the Truth.

He became the disciple of Govindapada, who had been a disciple of the famous Gaudapada. Learning all that Govindapada had to teach him, he proceeded to Kasi. A chance encounter with a Chandala or one belonging to the lowest caste, opened his eyes to the Truth he was seeking: that high and low, rich and poor, animate and inanimate, pleasure and pain, and attractive and repulsive, are all the manifestation of one and the same divinity. In the light of this discovery he wrote a commentary on the *Brahma Sutras* and the *Bhagavadgitha*, and left Benares on a *Digvijaya* or tour of conquest.

In the course of a long tour extending over ten years broken only once in 832 to come to Kerala to see his dying mother and perform her obsequies, he visited every important place from Dvaraka in the west to Gauhati in the east, and from Cape Kumari in the south to Katmandu and Balkh in the north, convincing the learned everywhere of the truth of his *Advaita* or one without a second. At last, the philosophers in Kashmir also acknowledged the superiority of this system, and he ascended, as the poet says, the Throne of Omniscience in back temple of Sarasvathi or Goddess

of Learning Coming back to Kerala he attained *Mahasamadhi*, or great absorption, while offering his prayers to the Lord at the temple of Vatakkunnathan at Trichur in 837 .

Sankara's journey itself was a marvel He had to contend not only against the difficulties and dangers of the road, infested by wild animals, reptiles and robbers, but also against the blood thirsty fanaticism of the rivalsects But for his disciple, Padmapada of Thrikkantipur, Ugrabhairava of Kalahasthi would have cut off his head, and offered it to his deity, and Abhinavaguptha of Assam would have liquidated him by poison Again, another disciple, King Sudhanva of Ayodhya, who had accompanied him, saved him from the Kapalika Karkasa and his gang of murderers

He converted his rivals not by miracles and ordeals, as Appar and Sambandhar had done, but by logic in which he even excelled the Buddha In fact Sankara carried the Buddha's reasoning to its logical conclusion, and deprived his philosophy of its separate place among the Indian systems

Sankara's *Advaita* reconciled popular Hinduism with the philosophy of the Upanishads By offering worship to Siva, Vishnu, and other members of the pantheon without any difference, he condemned the narrow sectarianism of his contemporaries, and re affirmed the truth of the Vedic *Mantra*, *Ekam sat viprah bahudha vadanti*, the reality is one, the sages call it variously

His *Sthothras* or *Slokas* in praise of the various deities have given the learned as well as the illiterate a form of prayer at once simple, consoling and exhilarating The Hindu can pray to any or all of them without incurring the anger of any one of them

The importance of his *Manasapuja*, or mental worship is yet to be appreciated It enables every Hindu to worship his *Ishtadevatha*, or favourite deity, without any material apparatus, ancillaries or rituals

Perhaps he came to Kerala from Kashmir to establish a college of *Advaita* at Trichur, similar to the Udayathunkeswaram college of Mimamsa founded by King Kulasekhara and presided over

by Prabhakara, the four *Mutts* of his disciples, Padmapada, Sureswara, Hasthamalaka, and Throtaka, forming the nucleus. Besides abolishing bloodshed and liquor in worship and installing *Sivalingams*, or stones representing Siva, and *Yantras* or talismans, in the important temples he visited, he instituted also an order of monks and founded the five great *Mutts* of Badari, Dvaraka, Kanchipuram, Puri and Sringeri, to protect Hinduism and spread his *Advaita*. Even before his death his disciple, Sivasoma of Kambujadesa, had spread it in the Far East. Maxmuller took it to Europe in the nineteenth century and Swami Vivekananda conquered America for it in the twentieth.

CHAPTER VII

KERALA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS (650-1120)

Politically the three centuries that followed the death of Yanaukkatchey (c 250) was a Dark Age in South India. Towards the end of the sixth century the Pallavas and the Pandyas began to expand, the former from Kanchipuram under Simhavishnu (575-600) and the latter from Madura under Katunkon (590-620).

With the assumption of the title of *Vanavan*, meaning *Cheraman*, by Katunkon's grandson, Jayanthavarman or Chenthan (645-70), began the aggression of the Pandyas against Kerala. The rulers of Kerala therefore allied themselves with the Pallavas, who were the natural rivals of the Pandyas. A joint army of the Keralas led by Sengor Poraiyan and of the Pallavas under Narasimhavarman II (680-720) offered battle to Arikesari Maravarman Kuna Pandya (670-710), unfortunately, as has already been mentioned, the allies suffered a disastrous defeat, Sengor Poraiyan being taken captive with all his near kinsmen. The enthronement of Cheraman Perumal stopped Kuna Pandya's advance, and after his conversion by Sambandhar to Saivism the Pandyan sent his court musician, Pana Bhadra, to Cheraman Perumal, and peace was made between the two countries. In the course of his pilgrimage the royal saint of Kerala visited Madura, and his captive kinsmen were released.

Cheraman Perumal had no son. On his death he was succeeded by the oldest among Sengor Poraiyan's kinsmen. The new king naturally resumed the policy of Pallava friendship. So Kochchatayan Ranadhira (710-40) assumed the title of *Vanavan* invaded Venad, and won a victory at Maruthur. His successor, Maravarman Rajasinha I (740-65) defeated the Pallavas and the

Cheras, occupied Karur, and compelled the Chera king to give his daughter in marriage to him

Rajasimha's son, Varaguna Maharaja (765-815), broke up the confederacy of the Pallavas, the Athiyamans, and the Keralas, and advanced as far as Perur, near Coimbatore. Returning to Madura, he invaded Kerala by the Aramboli route. Killing the Venad chief in battle, he destroyed his capital, Vizhinjam, and fortified Karavandapuram. The new Venad chief allied himself with another Ay chief, named Karunandan, and recovered Vizhinjam. This brought the Pandyan once more to Kerala. By 788 he had destroyed Karunandan's Aruviyurkotta, and by 782 re-captured Vizhinjam. But the irrepressible Venad chief defeated the Pandyans at Karaikotta, and recovered his ancestral capital. So Varaguna's son, Srimara Srivallabha (815-62) invaded Venad. Defeated at Kunnur, the Venad chief fell back on Vizhinjam. Defeated here also he withdrew to Kollam (Quilon), and made it his headquarters. Thus began the *Kollamtonri antu*, or the year of the beginning of Kollam (Quilon) in 824-25.

But Srimara was defeated by the Pallavas at Tellaru and Arisil, and was killed while defending Madura against the Ceylonese. These misfortunes induced his successor, Varagunavarman (862-80), to make an alliance with Sthanuravi of Kerala and seek the hand of a Kerala princess for his brother's son and heir apparent, Vira Narayana (880-900).

With the accession of Sthanuravi to the Kerala throne in 844 began a period of Chola Kerala friendship, cemented by marriages between Chola princes and Kerala princesses. It was mainly with the help of the Keralas that the Cholas rose to power. Sthanuravi himself went to the assistance of Adithya I (871-907), and fought at the head of his forces against the Pallavas. The marriage of Paranthaka Chola (907-55) with Sthanuravi's daughter, Kokkizhanatikai, and Vijayaraja's daughter, Iravi Nilai, secured the neutrality of the Kerala kings when he proceeded against their nephew, the Pandyan Vira Narayana's son, Maravarman Rajasimha II (900-20). Prince Vallabha of Valluvanad was the military adviser and Vellin Kumaran of Nandikkarai one of the generals, of the warden of the north-west frontier, Prince Rajadithya (d. 949),

who was Paranthaka's son by Kokkizhanatikāl. Inscriptions have preserved the names of some of the Kerala soldiers also who had fought in Paranthaka's wars.

As the Chola empire expanded the importance of the Kerala alliance began to diminish. Further, with the establishment of peace and order in Europe after the barbarian invasions the trade with the west began to revive. Already masters of Pandya, the Cholas could not long remain indifferent to the advantages of having Kerala, with its monopoly of pepper, under their control. A Chola-Kerala conflict became inevitable. It was hastened by the decline of the Rashtrakutas, who had been threatening the north west frontier, and the accession of Rajaraja I (985-1014) to the Chola throne.

Rajaraja I was the younger brother of Adithya II, assassinated in 969. He was determined to avenge the death of his brother. His first act was to banish the Brahmin generals and nobles who had conspired against him. King Bhaskara Ravivarman (961-1019) was closely related to Uththama Chola, who had caused Aditya II to be murdered. Rajaraja I looked upon the Kerala king as the prime mover in the plot against his brother.

The Chola king seemed irresistible. Sending one of his generals against the Kongu Cheras he proceeded with the main army to Kerala. Seizing the Pandyan king, Amarabhujanga, on the way, he advanced through Aramboli. Capturing Vizhinjam, he destroyed the great arsenal of Kandalsala near Trivandrum. Protecting himself thus against an attack from the north he proceeded to the systematic conquest of the south. By 1001 he had occupied Suchindram, Kottar, Nagakovil and Kumari, and organized the conquered territories as *Rajarajahennadu*.

Leading his army northwards, he occupied Kollam (Quilon) and Kolladesam, and arrived at Kodungallur. Bhaskara Ravivarman submitted. Ostensibly to sweeten the bitterness of defeat, but really to protect the Chola interests in the Kerala court, Rajaraja I caused Bhaskara Ravivarman to marry a Chola princess, and returned to his capital in 1005. In 1008 he suppressed a revolt in Udayagiri, and towards the end of his reign sent an

expedition against the old islands of the sea numbering 12000" to put down another movement against him

On the death of Rajaraja I in 1014, Bhaskara Ravivarman refused to acknowledge his son, Rajendra I (1012-44), as his suzerain. In 1018 the Chola king came down with a large army. Driven out of Kodungallur, Bhaskara Ravivarman fled to the island of Santhimaththivu, now known as Androth. In the following year, Rajendra I crossed the sea, and destroyed Santhimaththivu, Bhaskara Ravivarman dying in its defence. As Bhaskara Ravivarman's son, Rajaraja Chera, by the Chola princess was still a boy, Rajendra I placed Rajasimha Chera on the Kerala throne. Suchindram was renamed Sundaracholachathurvedimangalam, Vizhinjam as Rajendracholapattanam and Kettar as Rajendramummuticholanallur. Stationing an army at Kottar under one of his nephews, Vijayadithya Vikki annan, Rajendra entrusted the supervision of Kerala and the islands to one of his sons, named Jatavarman Sundara Chola Pandya, who was already viceroy of Madura.

The peoples and princes of Kerala were not prepared to tamely submit to the Chola conqueror. They sought the help of the Pandyas and the Ceylonese. The third Chola war broke out in 1034. Rajendra I sent his son, Rajadhiraja I (1018-54) to Kerala. He inflicted a crushing defeat on the confederates in 1036. Among the killed were King Manabharana of Ceylon and the chiefs of Ramakutam and Venad. Sundara Pandya fled to Mullaiyur, and Rajasimha Chera took refuge in the forests. The Kongu Chera prince, Vira Kerala, was taken captive and caused to be trampled to death by the state elephant.

Assuming the title of *Malanadukontachola*, or the Chola king who conquered Malanadu, and issuing coins in commemoration of his victory, Rajadhiraja I proceeded northwards. Destroying the arsenal of Kantholursala rebuilt by the Keralas, he advanced as far as Izhimala north of Cannanore, and stationed a garrison there under the command of an officer, called *Rajendra chola samaya senapati* or the army commander who carried out the orders of Rajendra Chola.

The Keralas still refused to bear the Chola yoke. According to the ancient rule of *Kutippaka* or blood feud, they were bound to avenge the death of their masters or die in the attempt. The fourth Chola war broke out in 1075, the Pandyas helping the Keralas as before.

The Chola king Kuloththunga I (1070-1120) sent his ablest general, Naralokavira to Kerala. Annihilating the Pandyan army under Parakrama he placed Paranthaka Pandya on the throne at Madura. And taking Paranthaka with him, ostensibly as second in command but really as a hostage, he marched towards Kerala.

The Keralas were led by the Venad chief, Ramar Thiruvati Koyiladhikari Kulasekhara Chakravarthikal. The defenders disputed every inch. The road to Kottar was filled with blood. But Naralokavira could not be stopped. From Kottar he came to Kanthalursala. After destroying the arsenal once again erected there by the Keralas he moved to Kollam (Quilon) and burnt it in 1096. Pleased with his success Kuloththunga I conferred upon him the title of *Kollam azhivu kantan* meaning he who destroyed Kollam and founded an era called *Kollam a'mantha antu* or the year of the destruction of Kollam.

Ramar Thiruvati did not despair. He retired to Kodungallur, and in the name of the ancient emperors called upon their former *Samanthas* like himself and other nobles to make one last effort to free the land from the hated invader. Joined by reinforcements from all sides, he advanced towards Kollam (Quilon) in 1099. We do not know whether the Cholas offered any fight. Anyway by 1102 Ramar Thiruvati had recovered his capital. He won over Paranthaka Pandya by giving him his daughter in marriage.

We know nothing about Ramar Thiruvati after 1102. The Cholas were slowly pushed back to Aramboli and beyond. With their retreat began a new epoch the *Epoch of the Thanjuranas*, in the history of Kerala.

CHAPTER VIII

GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

(300-1120)

Thanks to the Pallava alliance against the Pandyas at first and the Chola alliance against the Pallavas and the Pandyas afterwards, the Cheras of Kodungallur were able to retain the empire inherited from their *Sangham* ancestors more or less intact till the flight of Bhaskara Ravivarman in 1018. Nevertheless, under the stress of the Pandyan invasions, the Karur viceroyalty became hereditary with palatine powers. With the pragmatism and the team spirit characteristic of the Cheras, the Kodungallur kings refrained from asserting their authority over their Karur Kinsmen, while the latter, content with the freedom they enjoyed, did not also put forward any claim to the Kodungallur throne. The Karur chiefs even dated their deeds according to the regnal years of the Kodungallur kings.

With the invasion of the Cholas in 1005 Kodungallur began to decline. Rajadhiraja I must have destroyed the palace of the Chera kings in 1036. Bhaskara Ravivarman's son, Rajarajadeva whose name is found in a Tinneveli inscription of 1038 could not have been recognized as king by the Kerala leaders as his mother was a Chola princess and therefore a national enemy.

The form of government was of course monarchy. The kings claimed descent from the sun and the moon. The coronation was marked by elaborate ceremonies like *Thulabhara* or weighing against gold and silver, *Hiranyagarbha* or passing through the entrails of a cow made of gold for the purpose, and *Padmaagarbha* or dipping in the sanctified waters collected in a huge lotus like vessel, also made of gold for the occasion.

The kings are found referred to by personal names in literature and inscriptions. Some of them had the cognomen of *Varman*. Some of them, again, like Sthanuravi and Rama, bore the title of *Kulasekhara*. In two inscriptions Bhaskara Ravivarman is described as *Konoyinmeykontan*, that is, the king all healthy, without any disease.

The Kerala kings celebrated their birthdays with special worships in temples; but they were not paid any divine honours or worshipped after death as was done among the contemporary Cholas. The rite of *Sathu* was also unknown. On Cheraman Perumal's death, however, *Nayanar* perumizhalai Kurumbar, his sister, and five hundred of his followers committed suicide so that they might go to Kailas to serve him. If he had married, his queen also would have similarly accompanied him.

The Kerala kings were not generally polygamous as the Cholas were, Rajaraja I having had not less than eleven queens. A number of Kerala princesses had been married by 'Chola princes, but no Chola or Pandyan princess of this period is known to have been married by a Kerala prince. The queens bore the pronomen of *Deviyar*, *Madeviyar*, or *Thrihuvanadevi*.

The succession of the throne was patrilineal, the oldest male member of the family ascending the throne. The regnal years were counted as in ancient times from the accession to the lowest dignity. But, with the Karur viceroys virtually independent and the *Nads* comprising the empire governed on a quasi-feudal basis, there was no dignity below the heir apparent.

All deeds and documents were dated according to the regnal year of the king. Sometimes the actual regnal year is directly mentioned; but more often it was described as th year *etir* (opposed to) ...th year, the actual regnal year being obtained by adding the *opposed* years. Once in a way we find a reference also to the *Kali* year or *Kali* day as well as the regnal year of the chief. Many of the records of this period mention the position of Jupiter besides the regnal year. But the former is not of any great help in calculating the date as there was no uniformity in reckoning the position of Jupiter. The *Perumal Vyazham*, or

Jupiter of Sripadmanabhaswami's records, is found to be always behind the Jupiter of the lesser Jovian cycle of twelve years by not less than 60 degrees

The king was the commander-in chief, and he himself led the army. But as the fate of battle depended on him, he was the target of the enemy's attack. The Chols were very cruel to the vanquished. While Sengor Poraiyan and his kinsmen were only imprisoned by the Pandyan, Rajadhiraja I's treatment of Vira Kerala was very crude and barbarous.

As the protector of his subjects the king punished the wicked. All offences against caste and minor offences against person and property were punished by the local *Parisha* of the community to which the culprit belonged. Refractory offenders and serious offences were dealt with by the *Nadunazhi* or local governor, and in the last resort by the king. The accused proved his innocence by the ordeal. Kulasekharazhvar is said to have proved the innocence of his fellow devotees, who were accused of theft, by thrusting his hand into a pot containing a cobra and taking it out unscathed.

Every caste and order had its prescribed dress, ornament, conveyance and even dwelling. The king rewarded his subjects by granting them some privilege which they were not entitled to by their birth. Thus, Bhaskara Ravivarman conferred upon the Jew, Joseph Rabban, the right of *Pakavilakku* or having a lightened lamp carried before him in daytime whenever he went out, *Pavata* or a coarse cloth spread out all along the way for him to walk upon, and *Thoranaivilathanam* or decorated doors and door-posts.

The commands of the king were written down by an officer called *Kehay* or *Thuruvaykkezhai*, literally he who hears what comes from the mouth or auspicious mouth. The written order was called *Thirumukham* or auspicious face, and it was taken to the person concerned by the *Anathithi* or *Anaval*, literally he who goes or comes.

The king derived his income mainly from the crown lands. It consisted of *Pattam* or rent in kind, measured out every year.

after the harvest by the tenants, who were called *kutikal* or *Kutiyans*. The daily services and the necessities for the daily consumption of the household were provided by persons holding lands on the *Karayma* tenure. Even articles like pottery, umbrellas, baskets, mats, ropes, fans, windowing fans and sieves were annually supplied on a *Karayma* lease.

Excise duties in kind like *Kutanozhu*, or one small measure for every *Kutam* or big pot of toddy and oils, and *Arupathulonnu*, or one (*Onnu*) for every sixty (*Arupathu*) articles bought or sold, brought a large income. His officers collected also certain small dues in money, like tolls on merchandise generally 8 *Kasu* for every cart load, and 4 *Kasu* for every boat load and head load, poll tax of one *Fanam* on slaves per head from their owners, professional taxes also of one *Fanam* per head from artisans and toddy tappers, washerman paying one *Fanam* for every stone on which they beat the cloths while washing. Fines from offenders and penalties for default, which were equal to the amount due, were also not negligible.

Besides the *Komuraippatu* or customary presents to the king on the new year day and his birthday, the feudatories paid tribute every year. *Purushantharam* or succession fee for the recognition of the heir, and a fee for permission for adoption were also levied by the king. He collected also contributions in kind or money on occasions like marriage and coronation.

The empire was governed on quasi feudal principles. The king had no standing army. Though in the *Chavers* he had a bodyguard bound to avenge his death, he relied mainly on the contingents furnished by his feudatories. The Cheras must have had a navy to maintain communication with the islands. But it does not seem to have offered any fight to the Chola navy when it transported Rajendra I's army to Santhimaththivu.

The various *Nads* or divisions which comprised the empire had each its own hereditary *Naduvazhi* or governor. The greater *Naduvazhis* were called *Uthayavar*, literally owners. Though there was no council of *Uthayavars* and *Naduvazhis* to advise the king, he must have consulted the more powerful among them on all important occasions.

Under the *Naduvazhis* were the hereditary *Vazhukavazhis* or *Desavazhis*. They had the same rights and the same obligations in respect of the *Naduvazhis*, as these latter had in respect of the king.

The *Koyiladhikari* managed the affairs of the *Koyil*, which might be the royal palace itself or a temple. In the context of the inscriptions the *Koyil* could refer only to the latter, and the *Koyiladhikari* must be the executive head of the temple, who might be the local chief himself or chief of some other *Nad*.

Apart from the religious movements already described, the settlement of the matrilineal folk produced far reaching changes in society. The Hindu society was now divided broadly into two groups, patrilineal and matrilineal.

The former consisted mainly of Brahmins, Kshathriyas and Vaisyas. As priests the Brahmins were already at the top of the social pyramid. Their daily life was regulated by Manu's *Dharmasastras*, as expounded by his disciple, Bhargava, who is not to be confounded with Parasurama. The education of the boys began generally at the age of seven. After finishing their course under the local *Vadhyans*, or instructors, they proceeded to the *Sabhamathams*, *Sanyasimathams* or *Salas* like Udayathunkeswaram, Kanthalur and Parthivapuram. For still higher studies they went to Kanchipuram, and thence to the sages on the banks of the Narmada or the Ganges, especially Kasi. At the age of thirty or thirty two they completed their education, and married and settled down as *Grhasthas* or householders. After the birth of a grandson they left their homes, and led a wandering life in the forests as *Vanaprasthas* for some time as a preparation for *Sanyas* or renunciation and religious seclusion.

The prolonged Chera-Chola conflict completely altered this age-old family system in Kerala. Trained not only in the *Sasthras* but also in arms, the *Chatththirar*, literally Brahmins learned in the *Sasthras*, of Kerala as well as of *Paradesa* took an active part as commanders and warriors under their respective chiefs. On account of the strong central government in *Paradesa* the Brahmins there could rise only to the rank of ministers.

with the title of *Brahma Marayan*. In Kerala, where even the nominal central government disappeared after 1036, the Brahmin generals like Thirumanasserī and Thinyancherī, Chittur and Kutamalur (Ampalappuzha), Perumpatappu and Vattam, became independent chieftains.

Only bachelors enlisted in the army. The casualties of the war must of course reduce the number of eligible bridegrooms. The parents, again, would be naturally reluctant to give their daughters in marriage to those who might leave them at any time to join the army. In *Paradesa* the problem of securing bridegrooms did not become very acute as Andhra Brahmins were available. But Kerala was cut off from Andhradesa by the Cholas.

The war took its toll of the Nayar warriors also. And they tried to solve their difficulty by inviting their Brahmin comrades in arms to enter into *Sambandham* with their sisters. As *Sambandham* involved no responsibilities at this time, the Brahmin youths became more and more averse to marriage within the caste with its secular and sacerdotal obligations. As it became more and more difficult for Brahmin girls to be married at the early age prescribed by the *Sasthras* post puberty marriage gradually came into vogue and crystallized into a permanent custom. As the oldest son alone remained at home and married, polygamy, which was allowed for the Brahmin male, was now encouraged to save the Brahmin womenfolk from enforced spinsterhood. As the younger sons lived as bachelors in theory they could not claim the partition of the family property which thus became impartible. Thus Kerala Brahmins became a class by themselves on account of their *Anacharams* or peculiar customs in respect of marriage and property rights.

Under the influence of the *Bhakti* movement people began irrespective of caste to adopt the names and synonyms of Siva, Vishnu and other gods as their personal names. The Brahmins used the cognomen of *Sarman* invariably in prayers and ceremonies. They were distinguished from other castes and from one another by appropriate pronomens. Thus *Nampi Sri (Thiri)* Raman was Raman the temple priest. *Nambu Sri (Thiri)* Narayanan was Narayanan who performed *Nambu* or worship in the temples,

and *Somayi Sri (Thiri)* Narayanan was Narayanan who had performed the *Soma* sacrifice. In course of time *Nampi* came to denote the Malayali Brahmins exclusively. As priest, parent or chief the Brahmin, had become so influential that the Chinese historian, Chau ju kua (1225 A C), refers to Kerala as the *Nampi* country. With the honorific *Thiri (Sri)* the Kerala Brahmin came to be called *Nampiyathiri, Namputhiri, Nampuri* and *Nampiti*.

The Kshathriyas were distinguished by the cognomen of *Varman*. They solved the bridegroom problem engendered by the unprecedented slaughter of their youths in the Chola Kerala conflict by adopting *Sambandham* and matriliney, their women, generally called *Nankachchi* or *Nampittari*, entering into unions with men of their own caste or Brahmins. The Kshathriyas manifested their natural contempt for death in times of peace by self immolation for their deities or saints.

The Vaisyas adopted the cognomen of *Guptha*. They were the great merchants of the land, engaged not only in inland but also in foreign trade. At Kodungallur and Kollam (Quilon) they had a *Manigramam* or corporation (*Gramam*) or merchants (*Mivaniks*). Their headmen were called *Cheraman loka perumchetti*, literally the great merchant (*Perumchetti*) of Cheraman's empire (*Cheraman loka*), and enjoyed all the privileges and insignia of the local nobility. By royal grants they levied tolls and settled disputes among merchants, suspending those who defied their orders. They held the *Karayma* of their respective towns and collected the payments due to the king. The Valanchiyar also were merchants, but they were engaged only in sea born trade. In some towns like Vellani they had corporations of their own on the model of the *Manigramam*.

The *Devadasi* or *Devaratyal*, literally servants or slaves of the Lord, corrupted into *Thevidichechi*, who still play an important part in temples and have been not a little responsible for the development of dance and music, were the offspring of the *Bhakthi* movement. The early *Devadasis* belonged to noble or princely families like the daughters of Kulasekharazhvar, who had renounced their accustomed pomp and comforts to serve the Lord and His devotees. Gradually, what had originally been an act of

supreme devotion and sacrifice became a means of material profit and sensual gratification

Artisans and craftsmen claimed descent from Visvakarma Kings, nobles and temples were their chief patrons. The numerous shrines, palaces, forts and arsenals, that rose in this period created a demand for architects, masons, carpenters and workers in iron, steel and leather. Generally wares and goods were made only to order, though the craftsmen were not wholly indifferent to the sales that might be made at the time of the annual festivals of the great temples. Every craft and trade had its own headman, corporation and place of worship.

Ayyan Atikal's grant of 849 gives us some idea of life and organization at the agricultural level. He transfers to the Church of St. Theresa (Tharisappalli) two families of *Siviyar*, one family of *Thachchar*, four families of *Vellalar*, four families of *Izhavar* with eight *Izhakkaiyar* and one family of *vanniar*. As the land was given in absolute ownership the Vellalar must have been tenants, who had been cultivating the land and paying rent to the king. If the grantees were cultivating the land the Vellalar might have been assigned as cultivation agents to direct and supervise the agricultural operations. The Siviyar provided the unskilled labour for tending cattle, digging, carting and watching the crops and the trees. They might also catch fish and add to the food supply. The *Thachchan* looked to the maintenance and repair of boats, carts, ploughs and other wooden appliances. The *Izhavar* tapped toddy, plucked nuts and looked after the palm trees. Their women, the *Izhakkaiyar*, plaited mats and thatches and made coir. The *Vannan* washed cloths. All these received a *Para* or large measure of paddy at the beginning of the harvest and for local and national festivals, besides the customary wages when actually employed.

Rooted in the soil were the agricultural slaves consisting of the Cherumar, Pulayar and Parayar whose masters paid their *Alkasu* or poll tax, of 1 *Kasu* per annum. Though they were treated as chattels their condition was not so hopeless as that of the agricultural slaves of ancient Rome and the negro slaves of the sixteenth century Spain. Their masters were bound to maintain

them throughout the year, provide cloths and quarters and defray all the expenses of their marriage, confinement and death. So indispensable were they in agriculture that till the beginning of this century their masters used to perform special ceremonies to avert a threatened extinction of any of their families. They could not be sold out of the village in which they were born, and they had their own *Mammam*, *Parisha* and festival. The faith in the *Law of Karma* softened the relations between master and slave, as has been already mentioned the *Paraya Nandi* is even now ungrudgingly worshipped along with other *Nayanars* like Cheraman Perumal and Sundaramurthi.

The matrilineal folk now called Nayers are generally classed as Sudras, because they do not wear the sacred thread. The word *Nayar*, derived from the Sanskrit *Nayaka* was at first a military designation meaning commandant and appears for the first time in a Thirukkatiththanam record of Ravi Ramu Barbosa extended its connotation to the hereditary militia of the Kerala chiefs, and the British who disarmed the Nayers in 1802, included under the term *Nayar* all the matrilineal peoples between the mixed castes who were all temple servants and the Izhavars and the Thiyyas. In Kerala society the bigger chiefs were placed below the Kshathriyas as *Samanthas* and the lesser chiefs as *Nayers* below the *Samanthas*.

The Nayers had at first no cognomen or pronomen to distinguish them. They were divided into a number of tribes or self-contained communities each under its own chief with its own warriors called *Lokar* or *Malokar* priests merchants artisans cultivators and slaves.

The female was the centre of the Nayar family pollution and inheritance being traced through the mother. Their marriages called *Sambandhams* were free matrilineal unions preferably hypergamous but never hypogamous without objection to polygamy and polyandry. The seniormost male member managed the affairs of the family though the family property was held in the name of the seniormost female.

At the head of the *Nad* which was the territorial division occupied by the tribe, was the hereditary chief. Within the *Nad*

they lived in groups of Three Hundred, Six Hundred, and so on, according to the number of families comprising them or the number of warriors who should accompany the chief to the battle-field. Their tutelary deity was the Kali, worshipped in the open shrine called *Kavu* at or near the *Mannam*. Their assembly, called *Nizhal Kuttam*, met under the guardian tree of the *Mannam*. Like the *Parishads* of other castes, it decided all affairs of common concern including the annual festival of the *Kavu*. When occasions arose it might even restrain the chief and compel him to comply with its wishes. The Chola Kerala conflict brought the Nayars to prominence, and the unique intimacy between them and the Namputhiris was responsible for the glory of the *Epoch of the Thampurans*.

The growing complexity of society was reflected in land tenures. They might be broadly divided into freeholds and leaseholds. Freeholds are now called *Janmam*, possessed and inherited in absolute and unconditional ownership of everything on the surface, below as far down as *Pathala* or the nethermost world, and above as high up as *Siarga*, or heaven, subject perhaps to the payment of the *Katamai* or land tax. The earliest mention of *Janmam* is found in a record of 922 in Trichinopoly.

The leaseholds, again, were either agricultural or service tenures. The tenant paid a *Pattam* to the landlord as his share of the net profits. The *Pattam* leases again, were either *Verumpattam*, or simple lease, or *Kanam* so called from some *Kanam*, or money, having been advanced by the tenant originally as security for rent, but subsequently as a sort of loan also to be returned only when the tenant surrendered the holding.

The service tenures, again, were either military or non-military. The more important of the military tenures were *Enadiperu* and *Pataiperu* for the maintenance of *Enadis* or generals and *Patalialis* or warriors respectively.

The non-military tenures were generally called *Karayma*. The *Karaymas* were of two kinds, involving service or supplies. The *Karayma* held by the Brahmins, generally only in temples, were called *Vriththis*, the service being the exposition of the *Puranas*,

especially the *Mahabharatha*, recitation of the Vedas and the teaching of the philosophy of Kumarila, Prabhakara and Sankara. The *Bhogas* were endowments for the feeding of Brahmins or Brahmin *Chattas* or students.

The dues from land by way of services and payments in kind or cash were called *Perus*, literally what were born. *Viduperus* were the rights over land that were given away. *Nirattipper* was any absolute gift of rights over land (*per*), accompanied by the formal pouring (*Attir*) of water (*Nir*). Another formality observed when such absolute gifts of land were made was *pitinataththal* or the leading (*Natatththal*) of a cow elephant (*Pitt*) along the boundaries as though to fix and confirm them. It might also be an easy way of demarcating them in a region thickly overgrown with bush and thicket.

The inscriptions of the period reveal the gradual beginning of a money economy. The copper *Kasu* was the coin of the lowest denomination. *Pon*, *Kanam* and *Kazhamju* were gold coins of the weight indicated by their names. *Kanam* was a coin of the weight of a horse gram. Ten *Kanams* were equivalent to a *Kazhamju*. The *Thimaran* of king Rajasekhara's inscription (c. 840 A.C.) might be the Roman denarius itself, or a local imitation equivalent to one anna or six paise.

No part of India has had so many eras as Kerala. In addition to the *Kollam* or *Malayalam* era there were others associated with the shrines of Thirikkantiyur, Thriunelli, Thirikkulasekharapuram, Thirunakkara and Nankunnappuzha (Puthuvaippu). The earliest document in the *Kollam* era so far discovered is the Mampallaplate of 973 (149 M.E.). In the course of one of the many thrusts towards the east during the Chera-Chola conflict the Venad chiefs introduced it in Tinnevelli sometime before 1076. The adoptions from Cochin and Kolaththunad spread it to these regions; merchants, especially horse dealers from Trivandrum and Tinneveli, brought it to Kozhikkode. The new year of the *Kollam* era begins on the first day of *Chingam* (Leo) in August. But the ancient mode of reckoning the new year from the first day of *Kanni* (Virgo) in September is still retained in Palghat and North Kerala.

The patrilineal Chettis and the matrilineal Ravaris or Vyaparis were engaged both in inland and foreign trade. The Valanchiyar confined themselves to coastal trade. The *Nanadesis* of South India formed the biggest commercial corporation of the mediaeval world, with five hundred settlements spread all over India and outside, as far as Kish at the head of the Persian Gulf in the west and Strirajya somewhere in China in the east.

The Christians were not yet interested in trade. Among those who came from the west, Constantius (c. 354), Thomas of Cana (c. 745) and Maruvan Sapir Iso (c. 823-50), who built Tharisappalli and installed the famous Persian crosses—one each at Kottayam, Katamattam, Muttuchura and Alangad, were concerned only with their faith. The eccentric Byzantine monk, Cosmas (c. 525), who visited Dharmapattanam, Valarpattanam and Puthuppattanam, was prompted by a desire to prove that the earth was flat!

Islam was brought to Kerala by Malik Bin Dinar. According to an inscription preserved in the Kasargod mosque, he came here in A.H. 22-23 (644-45 A.C.) and founded ten mosques in the west coast, at Kodungallur, Kollam (Quilon), Ezhimala (Matayi), Srikanthapuram (Cannanore), Dharmapattanam, Panthalayini, Chaliyam Barkur, Mangalore and Kasargod. But till the eleventh century it was Jews who carried on the trade with Europe.

Their corporations were called *Anjvannam* (*Anjuman*), and their headmen enjoyed considerable powers. Jointly with the *Manigramams*, the *Anjvannams* of Kodungallur and Kollam (Quilon) enjoyed the *Karayma* of their respective cities and regulated their trade. Perhaps it was in recognition or anticipation of their help in the conflict with the Chols that Bhasakara Ravivarman conferred upon Joseph Rabban various privileges and honours in 1000. "They travel," says Ibu Khurdadbeh, "from the west to the east and from the west to the east now by sea. They take from the west eunuchs, female slaves, boys (for the harem), silks, furs and swords. On their return they bring musk, aloes, camphor, cinnamon and other products of the eastern countries."

Benjamin of Tudela (c 1170) has nothing but praise for the princes and peoples of Kerala "The nation is very trustworthy", says he, "in matters of trade, and whenever foreign merchants enter their port three secretaries of the immediately repair on board their vessels write down their names and report them to him. The king thereupon grants them security for their property, which they may even leave in the open fields without any guard One of the king's officers sits in the market and receives goods that may have been found anywhere and which he returns to those applicants who can minutely describe them".

According to him the Indian merchants carried the spices of the mainland and the products of the islands to Kish And the merchants of Mesopotamia, Yemen and Persia bought them and took them to Turkey and Europe

CHAPTER IX

THE ZAMORINS OF KOZHIKKODE (Calicut) (Down to 1498)

The chieftains who emerged from the ordeal of the Chera chola conflict were eighteen in number. Of these the chiefs of Venad, Onad or Odanad, Venavalinad or Bimbalinad, Netum poraiyurnad or Palghat, Valluvanad, Eralanad or Ernad, Polanad and Kolaththunad had been the *Samanthas*, or great feudatories, of the kings of Kodungallur, all of them except the last two appearing as attestors in Bhaskara Ravivarman's grant of 1000 to Joseph Rabban. Of the remaining ten, Thirumanasserī, Perumpattappu, Vattam, Parur and Purakkad or Ampalappuzha were Brahmīns, and the chiefs of Pazhayanur, Thanur, Puravazhinad, Parappunad and Kodungallur were Kshathriyas.

The militant nationalism engendered by the occupation of Kerala by the Cholas did not subside with their withdrawal. And in the absence of a common king to restrain the chiefs at home or lead them abroad they began to turn their arms against one another.

Material causes for war were also not wanting. The revival of the trade with the west gave an immense advantage to the coastal chiefs over their hinterland brethren. The former held in fee the export trade of the latter, especially in pepper. Puravazhinad was cut off from the sea by Kolaththunad and Ernad by Polanad.

Kolaththunad extended northwards from Elaththur to Kasargod. Its chiefs called Kolaththuris had their original seat at Payyanur. They were the descendants of Muvan, punished by Kanaikkal Irumporai. In the tenth century they moved to Parasuramakutam or Iramakutam near Ezhimala. They had 35 000 Nayars under them. They were also the lords of the laccadives, and they had a navy under the command of Arayankulangara Nayar, who came to be known later on as Azhī Rājā.

Polanad extended southwards from Elaththur to the Kallay river. Its chief, known as the Porlathuri, had 10,000 Nayars. Most of his Thampurattis had *Sambandham* with the Kolathiris.

Thirunelli was the original seat of the Puravazhinad chiefs. Divided into two branches, Kottayam and Kurumbranad, the Puravazhinad chiefs had *Sambandham* with the *Thampurattis* of Ernad. Kottayam and Kurumbranad between them commanded 35,000 Nayars.

The original seat of the Ernad chiefs was Netiyiruppu. They could get easy access to the sea only through Polanad. They had 30,000 Nayars under them. They were also in possession of the Chera *Sword of State*, which Rajasimha had given to their ancestor on the eve of his flight to the forests in 1036 with the injunction to strike and slay the enemy and seize his Kingdom.

With the collapse of the Kodungallur monarchy the chief of Ernad also became independent like the others. At first referred to by his courtiers as *Swami Thirumulpad*, meaning respected king, he came to be called *Samuthurippad*, *Samuthiri* and finally *Samuri*. "The sultan of Calicut," says Ibn Batuta, who came here in 1342 on his way to China, 'is an idolater, known as the *Samuri*'. And *Samuri* was transformed into *Zamorin* by the Portuguese.

Calicut is the European form of the Arabic *Kalikut* and the Malayalam *Kozhikkode*. It was founded by the Zamorin after the conquest of Polanad. Overgrown with legend, the war between the Erlathuri or Ernad chief, and the Porlathuri, or Polanad chief, cannot be easily described. The Kottayam chiefs sent their able minister Mangat Achchan to advise the Zamorin. And Mangat Achchan is said to have seduced the Polanad Nayars and even bribed the Porlathuri's consort to admit the Ernad forces into his fort. He made a last stand at the Siva temple of Kuttichchira. Defeated here, he fled to the Kolathiris.

The Zamorin shifted his residence to Polanad. Nevertheless the fiction that he was still residing in his ancestral palace was

maintained by a door-panel, called *Pallimaratti*, taken from Netiyiruppu, accompanying him wherever he went. Near the palace on the bank of the Kallayi river rose the city of Kozhikkode, deriving its name from the neighbouring hill, which served also as a landmark for ships approaching the port.

To attract merchants the Zamorin gave up the prerogative of *Atinja Urukkaal*, by which *Urukkaal* or ships compelled for some reason to put in at a port for which they were not bound, were confiscated by the chief to whom the port belonged. He even helped such ships to proceed on their voyage. Further, in return for a duty of five per cent *ad valorem*, his officers became responsible for the safety of all merchandise brought into the city, and even found a broker to get it sold.

He made over the temple of Kuttichchira desecrated by bloodshed, to the Muslims. He allowed them their own *Kazi*, giving them even freedom to convert his subjects to Islam. All offenders, irrespective of religion, were put to the ordeal, and those found guilty were punished. Gradually, Kozhikkode became the most popular port in the west coast, and its fame spread to Europe. Poets referred to it as *Punthura* and its ruler as *Punthurakkon*.

The Brahmin Mussad *Uralers*, or managers, of the temple of Thalī sympathized with the Porlathiri. To humiliate the Zamorin they helped a reckless Kolaththiri prince to smuggle himself into his household, disguised as a Brahmin. A Thampuratti fell in love with the prince, and eloped with him, the Thalī Mussads helping them.

The Zamorin disinherited the Thampuratti and her descendants, and invaded Kolaththunad. Accepting responsibility for the prince's admittedly guilty outrage the Kolaththiri acceded to all the demands of the Zamorin. He formally ceded all the lands occupied by the Zamorin's forces, including Panthalayini, transferred all his rights over the Thalipparampa temple and provided a separate appanage for the Netiyiruppu princess at Nileswaram.

The Zamorin then turned against the Mussads. He expelled them from the management of the temple. And when they tried to

recover their rights by *pattin* or fast, he allowed them to die. Building a fort and a palace at Velapuram near Thal, he abandoned his residence on the bank of the Kallayi river.

The *Kur Matsaram* or rivalry between Panniyur and Sukapuram gave the Zamorin an opportunity to extend his power southwards. Panniyur and Sukapuram were two famous Brahmin villages, some six miles apart, in the Ponnani Taluk. Their rivalry began as a healthy and friendly emulation in learning and scholarship. Gradually it grew into a bitter rivalry for influence and power. Their emissaries went from place to place and chief, enlisting to chief supporters and volunteers. Almost every village in central Kerala was divided between a Panniyur party and a Sukapuram party. Their respective adherents even adopted different fashions in dress, in wearing the caste mark, in the mode of tying the top-knot on the head and even in slicing vegetables. On account of the peculiar intimacy between the Namputhiris and the Thampurans, the latter were also drawn into the *Kur Matsaram*. Panniyur was supported by the Zamorin and Vattam, and Sukapuram by Perumpatappu and the Vallatri.

Vattam and Perumpatappu were two Brahmin chiefs living in the vicinity of and in *Sambandham* relations with the two Kshathriya dynasties of Thanur and Pazhayanur respectively. Vattaththunad, literally the *Nad* round (Vattaththu) the Thirkkantiyur temp'le, was famous for its learning. Hence it was called *Prakasanad* or land of light, and its ruler *Sriprakasasri*, transformed into Chinese as *Shilopachulikan* by chau ju kua. The Perumpatappu chiefs were famous for their knowledge of the vedas, and they had *Koyima* rights in all the temples from Thriuvilamala to Thiruvalla, including Vaikam, on account of which they assumed the title of *Gangadhara Koviladhikarikal*. In course of time both Vattam and Perumpatappu became extinct, and their *Nads* and rights were inherited by their Kshathriya descendants.

the Chola-Kerala wars they extended their authority as far as Tharur.

The traditions of the Vallatris or Chiefs of Valluvanad go back to the days of Sthanuravi. Prince Vallabha was the friend of the Rashtrakuta king, Krishna III, and the military adviser of Sthanuravi's grandson, prince Rajadithya Chola. Unable to save his master at the battle of Takkolam in 949, he renounced the world and became the head of the Lakulisa *Mutt* at Thiruvorriyur with the title of *Chathuranana panditha*. After the *debacle* of 1036 the Valluvanad chief became the independent ruler of Valluvanad with the privilege of celebrating the *Mahamagha*, popularly known as *Mamankam* or *Mamakam* at Thirunavay. With 30,000 Nayars under him the Vallatris was one of the most powerful chiefs of Kerala.

As the Brahmin youths were all trained in arms, a series of border incidents between Panniyur and Sukapuram, each more aggressive than its predecessor, finally culminated in war. The Sukapuram Brahmins stealthily removed an image of Siva, which was being installed at Panniyur, and set it up in their own village. As the leader of Panniyur, the Thirumanasseri Namputhuri marched against Sukapuram at the head of his 3,000 warriors, recovered the image, and returned after unroofing the enemy's houses. So Sukapuram sought the help of Perumpatappu, and Panniyur of Vattam. Finally the Vallatris joined the fray on behalf of Sukapuram, upon which Panniyur appealed to the Zamorin for protection.

As a matter of fact the Zamorin was only waiting for an opportunity to move southwards. He had by now consolidated his hold on Polanad and Panthalayini. With the Jews, Christians and Chinese dominating the trade of the southern backwaters, the Arab merchants, called also Moors, of Kozhikkode became eager to secure the trade of the Bharathappuzha basin, and penetrate if possible to the rich and fertile plains watered by the Kaveri through Pazhani and Perur. They made therefore an unstinted offer of money and ships.

As the Parappanad chiefs were allies by *Sambandham*, the Zamorin moved southwards without any opposition. With the *Munlapad*, or Third Prince, and Vattam as his lieutenants, he

established his headquarters at Thrprangot. The *Eralpad*, or Second Prince, with Thirumanasserī as second in command, crossed the river, and set up his camp opposite Thirunvay to cut it off from Perumpatappu

The war for Thirunavay was bitter and protracted. The shrine of Vishnu had been founded by Selvakatunko, and it has been praised by Thirumangai Azhvar and Nammazhvar. Its *Mahamagha* celebrated once in twelve years, was the grandest festival in Kerala. To the Vallatrī and his people, the Vallodis, the temple with its festival was not merely a matter of politics but also of pride and prestige. They were therefore determined to shed their blood to the last drop in resisting the aggressor.

The astute Mangat Achchan however exploited the natural jealousy of the junior branch and seduced Katannamanna Ilaya Vakayil Vallodī. At the same time the Zamorin began to propitiate his enemy's guardian deity, Thirumathankunnu Bhagavathī. Gradually the morale of the Vallodis was undermined. They were unnerved by a growing feeling that their goddess was deserting them. And some of them even began to see her fighting against them: The Vallatrī at last withdrew when two of his princes fell fighting. The Zamorin entered Thirunavay and assumed the privilege of celebrating the *Mahamagha*. Ever since, the *Chavers* of the Vallatrī used to come to Thirunavay for every festival to avenge the death of their princes and recover their ancient rights, though invariably losing their lives in the desperate attempt.

According to the ancient rule of *Kutippaka*, the Vallatrī should kill at least two princes of the Zamorin's family before he stopped fighting. So the war continued, though the odds were against him. Many of his feudatories succumbed to Mangat Achchan's diplomacy. In return for submission and a fair tribute they were confirmed in their ancient privileges, and allowed to rule over a large part of their original *Nads*. In this way the Zamorin became the master of Malappuram, Nilambur, Vallappanattukara and Manjeri.

But the Brahmin Karivayur Mussad rejected Mangat Achchan's seductive overtures. He even killed the Zamorin's Brahmin minister, Thirunayancherī Ilayathu. The Zamorin therefore sent the

Muralpad against him. In the battle of Patappurampa Karivayur Mussad was killed, and Pantholur and Kottakkal were annexed.

The Netungeri or chief of Netunganad was everything a *Naduvazhi* should not be. Hence his Nayars sought the assistance of the Vallatri to oust him. So he appealed for help to the Zamorin promising to join the Kozhikkode Nayars at his frontier with the stipulated amount for their expenses. Either the Netungeri could not raise the necessary funds, or he thought that, once committed to a war with the Vallatri, the Zamorin would turn back. Anyway he did not keep his word. In the meanwhile, frightened by the approach of the Kozhikkode forces and encouraged also by the well known moderation of the Zamorin, the Netunganad Nayars had decided to submit. And when the *Eralpad* arrived at the frontier he found the Netungeri's rebel Nayars waiting to receive him with offers of submission. As the Netungeri had proved treacherous the Zamorin annexed Netunganad, and assigned it to the *Eralpad* as a separate appanage. In pity for the Netungeri he granted him a subsistence allowance and permitted him to retain his *Koyma* rights in the temple of Cherplacheri.

Dynastic dissensions in Kakkad and Chavakkad led to the Zamorin's intervention and their ultimate submission. The founder of the Kakkad dynasty was a Brahmin. The Kalabhra Achutha Vikkanta sent with released chera captive one Bhutharaya (Bauddharaya) to uphold his suzerainty and carry out his Buddhist policy. Provoked beyond endurance by the Bauddha's desecration of Hindu temples and confiscation of their property, Kakkad killed him. Rid of the Bauddha incubus, the Chera king bestowed Chavakkad on the deliverer. In course of time extinction overtook this family also, and Kakkad and Chavakkad passed on to his Kshathriya descendants by Sambandham. Gradually three branches, Punnaththur, Ayinikkur (Cheralayam) and Manakkulam came into existence. Subsequently Kakkad also became extinct. And the three branches began to quarrel about their respective share. Punnaththur secured the support of the Zamorin, and Ayinikkur and Manakkulam submitted. As a mark of special favour the Zamorin conferred upon Punnaththur the privilege of standing on his left in all public functions as Vattam stood on his right side.

The growing city of Kozhikkode depended on rice imported by sea. The Zamorin therefore began to cast his eyes at the fertile fields of Palghat. But he was too wise to directly strike at the homeland of the Sekharivarmas. He would first cut them off from their Perumpatappu allies.

The powerful Patinjarretaththu Namputhiri of Trichur offered all support. And the Zamorin's forces led by the Kuthiravattam Nayar proceeded by way of Karakkad to Trichur. As the *Pura Lojma* of Vatakkunathan temple Perumpatappu had already come there. The Kuthiravattam Nayar surrounded him in the Vatakkichira fort, where he had taken up his residence. The intrepid chief however escaped disguised as a temple priest.

Instead of pursuing him, the Kuthiravattam Nayar continued his advance. Through Pattikkad he descended upon Vatakkancheri. And proceeding by way of Thrppalur, Kunisseri, Pallavur and Pallassena, he arrived at Venkunnunad. The Venkunnunad Nampiti had originally been a Brahmin. It was he who provided *Soma* for the sacrifices of the Sukapuram Brahmins. Extinction overtook this family also, and its rights and privileges passed on to the descendants of the last Nampiti by *Sambandham*. On the approach of the Kozhikkode Nayars, Vira Ravivarma of Venkunnunad or Kollangode submitted. Then, advancing as far as Uththukuzhi near Pollachi the Kuthiravattam Nayar turned back and established his headquarters at Kotuvayur.

An unlooked for opportunity in the south led the Zamorin to suspend operations against Sekharivarma and turn his arms against Perumpatappu. Perumpatappu was now divided into five families, Muththa Thavazhi, Ilaya Thavazhi, Palluruththu, Mataththumkizh and Chazhur. The seniormost male member in all the five families taken together became the chief. As the chief could belong only to one family, the other families had some injustice, real or fancied, to complain of.

Apart from this, the chief of Ilangallur or Itappalli sought the Zamorin's assistance against Perumpatappu. Starting as priests in the Thrkkakkara temple founded or renovated in 604, the

Ilangallur Namputhiris became its trustees, and finally the rulers of all the lands which were made over to the deity by the devout. In this way the island of Cochin came into their possession. And one of the chiefs gave it away to a Perumpatappu Thampuratti and her children. This was naturally resented by his successor and the Zamorin agreed to help him to recover the unlawfully alienated Cochin.

Chittur, Peruvanam and Kodungallur, lying between Kozhikkode and Cochin, virtually belonged to the Zamorin. Harassed by Perumpatappu, Chittur lived under the protection of the Zamorin. He was a favoured courtier, responsible for making all arrangements for the *Ariyittuvazhcha*, or formal inauguration of the new Zamorin, which included the privilege of affixing his own signature on behalf of the new ruler during the fourteen days of the pollution for the deceased chiefs. The temple state of Peruvanam looked up to the Zamorin for protection against Perumpatappu. The Kodungallur chiefs, known also as the Patinjarretaththu Kevil, had *Sambandham* with the Netiyiruppu Thampurattis and were responsible for *Kalavara* and *Uttu*, or stores and feasts, during the *Mahamagha*. Establishing his base at Kodungallur, the Zamorin proceeded against Cochin.

The details of the campaign are not known, it could not have been long or arduous. Perumpatappu was wise enough to yield. The Ilangallur Chief was compensated for the loss of Cochin. The Zamorin allowed Perumpatappu to retain Cochin as his vassal. As a vassal the Cochin Raja agreed to obtain the Zamorin's recognition for every succession, pay an annual tribute in money and elephants, send fixed contingent of Nayars to join the Zamorin's army in his wars, and refrain from roofing his palace with tiles and striking coins without his permission. The Cochin Raja transferred also the monopoly of the pepper trade to the Kozhikkode Muslims.

The submission of the Cochin Raja brought the Zamorin to the Bembard Lake and the proximity of Kuttanad famous for its rice. The princes of Vatakkankur, Thekkankur, purakkad or Ampalappuzha and Odanad or Kayankulam sought his friendship.

by timely overtures and offerings. The *Munalpad* took advantage of the contacts thus established to go on a pilgrimage to Rameswaram.

On his way back, one of his Brahmin *Harikkars*, or heralds, was seized at Kannetti by the local *Desavazhi*, or governor. The *Munalpad* killed the *Desavazhi*, released the Brahmin and returned with him. Determined to avenge the *Desavazhi's* death, the Venatri, or ruler of Venad, assembled his army and started northwards. At the head of his army the Zamorin moved southwards to stop his advance, and through Kariapuram, Alappuzha (Aleppey), Thirakkunnappuzha and Karthikappalli reached Odanad or Kayankulam. As neither the Venatri nor the Zamorin wanted to be involved in a prolonged war, peace was made. The Venatri paid the Zamorin's expenses, ceded *Munchiramukkatham* and certain rights in the temples of Trivandrum and Chengannur, and promised to send a flag to Thirunavry for the *Mahamagha*. The Zamorin on his part made over *Munchiramukkatham* to Lord Padmanabha and his rights in Trivandrum to *Ilankur* or second Prince, of Venad transferring his rights in Chengannur to Thirumaniseri.

Thus by the end of the fifteenth century, the Zamorin had become, directly or indirectly, by peace or war, the ruler of nearly half of Kerala. His authority extended along the coast from Puthuppattanam in the north to Odanad or Kayankulam in the south and inland as far as the Ghats, and even beyond to Uththukkuzhi in the east except Valluvanad and Palghat north. He had an army of nearly 60 000 Nayars under his own *Thalachechannavars* or commanding officers ready to take the field at a moment's notice. The feudal levies comprised 76 000 Nayars, in addition to the Cochin contingent. He had also a battalion of Muslim musketeers and a corps of artillery manned by Muslims, both under the command of the Brahmin *Thunayancheri*. Besides a well filled treasury of his own and the customary ships provided by the local merchants the Arab Moors could be counted upon to place all their resources at his disposal. He had no long and exposed frontier to guard. In spite of banishment the Nileswaram Thampuratti might be expected to act as a bridle on the Kolathiris' ambitions. There were no dynastic squabbles, the princes all pulling together in

willing obedience to a single leader. There was also a band of able and devoted ministers to offer advice. Everything therefore indicated a union of Kerala sooner or later under the aegis of the Zamorin. But the unexpected arrival of four strange ships off Kozhikkode on May 20, 1498, completely changed the course of events and involved him in an enervating struggle with European imperialism for nearly two centuries and a half.

CHAPTER X

THE PORTUGUESE IN KERALA

1498 1663

The strange ships belonged to the king of Portugal. For some time past the kings of Portugal had been sending ships to discover a sea route to India to secure the monopoly of the pepper trade, destroy the Muslims, and spread the Christian faith. In 1486 one of their navigators, named Bartholomeo Dias, was driven by storms round the southern end of Africa to the Indian Ocean, but instead of continuing his voyage he returned to Portugal. On July 8, 1497, King Manuel sent Vasco da Gama with four ships to India. With the help of the pilots he found in the African coast he crossed the Arabian Sea. On May 18, 1498 he sighted Mt. El, and two days later reached Kozhikkode. Thus, one thousand eight hundred and twenty five years after Alexander the Great (327-25 B.C.), India and Europe once more came into direct contact.

The Zamorin was then at Ponnani. He was immensely pleased with the arrival of the Europeans. And he made every arrangement for the safety and comfort of the new-comers. As the monsoon was about to begin he sent his pilots to take their ships to the safety of the mud bay off Westhill Panthalayam. And he himself came to Kozhikkode to receive the captain sent by the king of Portugal.

Da Gama and party were brought in procession all the way from Kappat by the *Thalachannavar*, or commandant, of Kozhikkode. So grand was the reception that the Portuguese captain remarked 'They little think in Portugal how honourably we are received here'. After the customary enquiries and greetings the audience came to an end, and da Gama was led to the lodgings prepared for him.

The Zamorin assigned to the Portuguese a ware house with Nayers to guard it and brokers to sell their merchandise. For some days everything went well. The people entertained the European strangers in their houses, and the Europeans in turn took them to their ships and gave them their food. The Portuguese were able to exchange also some of their goods for the produce of the country, and moved among the people as freely and quietly as if they had been in Lisbon.

As the wares da Gama had brought were common place and as the busy season was already past when he came, the sales and the purchases did not come up to his expectations. As the time for departure drew near he peremptorily demanded a *Bhara* each of cinnamon, cloves and other spices in return for his unsalable wares. The Zamorin replied that he should buy what he wanted for gold and silver instead of dumping his unsold stock in exchange, and he must pay the usual customs duties. He sent also a letter to the king of Portugal informing him of his willingness to provide abundance of cinnamon, cloves, pepper and precious stones in exchange for gold, silver and scarlet. Enraged with the Zamorin's reply, da Gama suddenly left Kozhikkode on August 30 without sending back the fifteen fishermen whom he had enticed to his ships.

On September 9 1499, da Gama reached Portugal. The profits of the expedition amounting to sixty times its cost and da Gama's account of the political and economic conditions of Kerala induced King Manuel to send a much greater expedition. Consisting of 13 ships and 1500 men it left Portugal on March 9 1500 under Pedro Alvares Cabral with secret instructions to make cruel war on the Zamorin if he would not expel the Muslims from his empire. Losing more than half his ships on the way, Cabral arrived at Kozhikkode on September 13.

Now also everything went on smoothly at the beginning. The Zamorin was pleased with the return of the fishermen whom da Gama had taken to Portugal to exhibit before his countrymen. He made over to them a godown as an absolute gift and allowed them to fly their own national flag over it. He nominated a local Moplah named Koya Pakki a person of their own choice, as their

broker And for some time the Portuguese moved and traded with the people of Kozhikkode as safely and freely as in their own native Europe

With all his efforts and knowledge of the people Koya Pakki could not get enough lading for his Portuguese patrons Cabral accused the Moors of deliberately outbidding him, and sending away all the pepper that came to the market To maintain the reputation of Kozhikkode as a free port for fair trade the Zamorin allowed him to search the Arab ships and take whatever he found them after paying to the owners what they themselves had paid and the customs duties to his officers But at dead of night Cabral seized an Arab ship and transferred its contents to his godown This midnight robbery led to a riot in which fifty Portuguese were killed and a few taken captive As the people remained excited, the Zamorin sent his officers to protect the Portuguese godown and captives from fresh outbreaks of mob violence

Cabral in the meanwhile had come to know from Koya Pakki of the Cochin Raja's ambition to make himself independent at any cost Convinced that the Zamorin would not expel the Muslims from his empire at his request, he seized the ten Muslim ships that were anchored in the harbour and set fire to them after killing their crew And bombarding the city, he sailed away and arrived at Cochin on December 24 The Cochin Raja and Cabral concluded a treaty of mutual help the latter even promising on behalf of his master to conquer Kozhikkode for the former

In 1502 King Manuel sent a fleet of 15 ships under da Gama to establish his authority in the Indian Ocean and bring the Zamorin to instant obedience. Da Gama came looting and burning Muslim ships. At Cannanore the Kolaththiri concluded a treaty, agreeing to provide pepper and spices at the Cochin prices and obtain Portuguese passes for the ships of his subjects.

Hanging the Zamorin's envoy who brought him a message of peace and good will from his master, da Gama opened fire on Kozhikkode; the Zamorin brought down his guns and returned the fire. To starve the city da Gama plundered the rice ships that had just come from Mangalore. To terrorize the people he seized all the men on board the rice ships, cut off their nose, ears and hands, and knocked off their teeth. Tying their feet together, he put them all on board a small vessel, and setting fire to it, sent it with the wind to the shore.

Arriving at Cochin on November 7, he imposed his conditions on the helpless Raja. The Portuguese were to have the monopoly of the entire foreign trade, the prices being fixed by them! They were to have also the right to erect forts, factories and churches wherever they liked. And the Cochin merchants were to take Portuguese passes before sending their ships out to the sea. Though the Raja agreed to all these terms, da Gama refused to remain and protect Cochin against the impending invasion of the enraged Zamorin. Sending Sodre to grapple with the Zamorin's fleet waiting for him at Panthalayini, he left Cochin on December 9.

Almost everyone in Cochin wanted the Raja to submit to the Zamorin and accede to his wishes by expelling the Portuguese. But with a daring unexampled in history and a wisdom too deep for his contemporaries, he refused to give up the Portuguese alliance. The permanence of his dynasty depended upon the support of a power which had absolutely no local affiliation.

On March 31, 1503, the storm that had been brewing burst at last. The Zamorin's forces invaded the dominions of the Cochin Raja. A series of engagements, culminating in the death of the heir-apparent, Prince Narayanan, and his two nephews, enabled the Zamorin to cross the backwater to Cochin. The

Cochin Raja made a last stand in front of his palace. But, wounded and defeated, he took refuge in the sanctuary of Ilankunnappuzha with his Portuguese friends. Transferring the coronation stone of the Cochin Rajas to Itappalli and leaving a small force at Cochin to blockade Ilankunnappuzha, the Zamorin withdrew to Kodungallur for the rainy season.

On September 2, however, Francis Albuquerque came to Cochin with a fleet and the Zamorin's blockading force withdrew to the mainland. The Cochin Raja now came back with his Portuguese companions. For their better safety, on which his own crown depended, he allowed them to build a fort, himself laying its foundation stone on September 27.

As the military preparations of the Zamorin were not complete he organized a commercial boycott, commanding the merchants of Cochin and Kozhikkode not to sell any pepper to the Portuguese. Francisco tried to secure it by plunder. But as it brought very little he sent his brother Alphonso, to Kollam (Quilon). The Rani of Attingal allowed him to build a factory and gave him loading for two ships. As the newly built fort would be the Zamorin's principal target, the Albuquerque provisioned it for a siege and appointing Pacheco as its commandant left for Portugal on January 31, 1504.

The Zamorin began his second war with an imposing force of over 60 000 Nayars advancing by land and an armada of 150 *Paraos*, each carrying 2 guns and a number of musketeers proceeding by sea. The battle of Cochin was the longest battle on record before World War I. It lasted for 108 days from March 18 to July 3. It was also the first battle between the Zamorin and the Portuguese. A narrow strait divided Cochin from the mainland and the engagements centred round the Zamorin's attempts to get a foothold on the opposite bank.

Pacheco had many advantages. He was fighting on the defensive. His ships and guns were superior. Though the back water could be crossed in two places one was feasible only by ships at rising tide, and the other only on foot at ebbing tide. A simultaneous crossing was impossible. Further, as Pacheco

commanded the inner lines he could quickly move his men from one place to another as circumstances required. Towards the end the rains hampered the Zamorin's movements. Cholera also broke out. Above all Pacheco was not bound by the *Kerala Mariada* which obliged the Zamorin to inform the enemy of his plans and movements beforehand. This enabled the Portuguese captain to take the necessary precautions in time. He erected a wooden stockade in the middle of the strait to block it against the Zamorin's floating fortress constructed on twenty *Paraos* held together by iron chains. He was also able to foil the Zamorin's last and ingenious attempt to destroy the midstrait stockade by fire proof booms which stopped at a safe distance the burning castles sent down with the outgoing current.

Though the Zamorin withdrew on the onset of the rains he assembled a huge army at Chetway for renewing the campaign in January. But Pacheco and Soares who came with reinforcement from Portugal destroyed the boats which had been prepared for its transport at Kodungallur.

It now became clear to the Zamorin that Cochin could not be recovered unless the Portuguese were expelled from the Arabian Sea altogether. So he sent envoys to the Muslim rulers of Gujarat, Persia, Egypt and Turkey to send a fleet to his help.

The battle of Cochin and the secret hostility of the Muslims of Cannanore and Kollam (Quilon) opened the eyes of the king of Portugal to the necessity of maintaining forts, garrisons and a permanent navy in the Indian Ocean. With this object he sent Francisco Almeida as his viceroy to Cochin in 1505. On his way he erected a fort at Anjediva and another at Cannanore. At Cochin he enlarged and strengthened the fortress already constructed in 1503. To keep the Cochin Raja always in subjection to Portugal he changed the rule of succession. Confining it to the *Ilayi Thiruvazhi* he nominated Unni Ramavarma as heir to Unni Godavarma who had retired into religious seclusion before his arrival.

As the Portuguese did not honour their own passes troubles broke out in Kollam (Quilon) and Cannanore. The wanton and diabolical murder of Mammali of Arakkal induced the *Kolathiri*

to invite the Zamorin in 1507 to a joint siege of the Portuguese fort at Cannanore. Cutting off the supplies sent by Almeida from Cochin, the besiegers had almost succeeded in starving the defenders to surrender, when da Cunha arrived from Portugal and relieved them.

Reinforced by da Cunha's ships, Almeida raided and burnt Ponnani. One of its merchants, named Kunjali, losing his all, dedicated himself and his descendants to the destruction of the Portuguese. Conferring upon him the title of *Marakkar*, the Zamorin entrusted him with the defence of his coast.

In 1508 appeared an Egyptian fleet under Mir Husain in response to the Zamorin's request. Almeida sent his son, Lorenzo, against it. Joined by Kunjali Marakkar with the Kozhikkode fleet and Malik Ayaz with the Gujarat fleet, Mir Husain defeated the Portuguese off Chaul in March 1508, Lorenzo himself dying in the course of the battle. Almeida, however, avenged his death. He seduced Malik Ayaz who was a Christian convert to Islam, and defeated Mir Husain and Kunjali Marakkar off Diu in February 1509. Thus the Portuguese became supreme in the sea.

On November 4 Almeida handed over charge to Alphonso Albuquerque. Taking advantage of the absence of the Zamorin, he attacked Kozhikkode. On January 4 1510 he landed near the Jamaat mosque early in the morning. Burning it, he made his way to the Zamorin's palace. But the Kozhikkode *Thalasshannavar* and his Nayars killed Marshal Coutinho who led the Portuguese soldiers and drove Albuquerque to the refuge of his ships with a wound on his back.

At Albuquerque's request Krishnadeva Raya invaded the Zamorin's dominions in Palghat. But the Kuthiravattam Nayar defeated the Badagas and pursued them beyond the Anamalais. Albuquerque realized that the Zamorin was not so weak on land as the Cochin Raja had represented.

In spite of the disaster off Diu the Zamorin was not also powerless in the sea. Avoiding pitched battles, the Moplah sailors resorted to guerilla war, harassing the Portuguese ships and

progressively hampering the trade of Cochin. At the same time, evading or defying the Portuguese patrols, they were able to load and unload their ships and carry on their trade.

The position of the Portuguese at Cochin was also tending to become insecure. The Cochin Raja was always seeking to involve them in a land war with the Zamorin. They were themselves divided between Cochin and Kozhikkode, the Kozhikkode party being profusely patronized by Mangat Achchan. Albuquerque began even to fear that they might even betray the Cochin fort to the Zamorin. So he resolved to make peace with him, and as a first step transferred the Portuguese headquarters to Goa, which he had captured towards the end of 1510.

The Zamorin was also becoming inclined to a peace with the Portuguese. In the first place, it would prevent them from actively assisting the Cochin Raja against him. It appeared also doubtful whether the Muslims could expel the Portuguese from the Indian Ocean. So peace was made in 1513. The Portuguese agreed to pay customs duties, while the Zamorin allowed them to build a fort at Kozhikkode, and asked his merchants to obtain Portuguese passes for their ships.

In 1515 Albuquerque died. Believing that they had bridled the Zamorin by their fort at Kozhikkode, the Portuguese reverted to their policy of treachery and opportunism. They declined to honour their passes. In 1517 they even tried to seize the Zamorin while on a friendly visit to their fort. And clashes between them and the Muslims becoming more and more frequent, the Zamorin resolved to expel them from their fort at Kozhikkode, and laid siege to it in 1524. Kuttī Alī Marakkār, who had succeeded Kunjalī Marakkār, began to intercept the supplies sent from Cochin.

The Portuguese raided Ponnani. Dī Gama came in October to conduct the war more vigorously against the Zamorin. But he died in December. For another year the siege of Kozhikkode dragged on. Though Kuttī Alī was defeated at Kappat and Cannanore, Goa and Cochin could not send supplies to the beleaguered garrison. At last, on November 1, 1525, the Portuguese left Kozhikkode after destroying their fort.

In 1531 they persuaded the chief of Vattam to grant them Chaliyam. Here they demolished the ancient mosque built by Mahk Bin Dinar, and constructed a fort with its materials. When the Zamorin attacked Vattam for the favour shown to the Portuguese they helped the Cochín Raja to raid Itappalli in 1536, and recover the sacred stone removed from Cochín in 1503. They built also a fort at Kodungallur.

In the meanwhile Kuttī Alī had been succeeded by Kunjali II in 1531. He carried on the war against the Portuguese in the sea. In a single year he is said to have destroyed fifty ships. He went to Ceylon to fight against the Portuguese candidate for the throne. In 1536 he appeared before Cochín, and compelled the Portuguese who had been ravaging Itappalli, to return to protect their fort. In 1537 he fought a battle with them off Negapatam, and though defeated in 1538, the appearance of Suleiman Pīsha with a fleet in the Arabian Sea encouraged him. Hoping to stop his activities through the Zamorin, the Portuguese concluded the treaty of Ponnani in 1540, virtually giving the Zamorin a free hand against the Cochín Raja.

But Kunjali II continued his hostilities. In sheer despair the Portuguese began to kill every Muslim they were able to seize. But Kunjali II refused to be cowed. He destroyed or defeated their fleet off Cannanore in 1563, off Puthuppattanam and Bhatkal in 1564 and off Diu in 1569. Driven to desperation the Portuguese vented their anger on the Moplah settlements of Thikkoti, Panthalam, Kappat, Thanur and Ponnani. So, in 1570, the Zamorin declared war and laid siege to Chaliyam, while the sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur attacked Diu and Goa respectively. While the Zamorin blockaded Chaliyam by land, Paththu Marakkār Kunjali III, who had just succeeded Kunjali II, cut it off by sea. At last in November 1571, the garrison surrendered, and the fort was completely razed to the ground.

In 1572 the Portuguese raided Parappanangadi, Ponnani, Kozhikkode and Thikkoti, and began to systematically intercept the rice ships coming to Kozhikkode. In 1577 they captured not less than fifty rice ships. In 1582-83 Kozhikkode was reduced to starvation. Fortunately troubles broke out in Cochín. The

Portuguese provoked a riot by imprisoning the Raja and compelling him to sign away his share of the port dues in their favour. Lest the Zamorin should send help to the rioters they made peace, the Portuguese exempting the merchants of the Zamorin's empire from passes for sending their ships to the ports of Gujarat, Persia and Arabia, and the Zamorin allowing them to build a fort at Ponnani.

In recognition of Kunjali III's services at Chaliyam the Zamorin gave him permission to fortify Puthuppattanam and hold it as his vassal in 1572. The Marakkar however did not like the erection of a fort by the Portuguese at Ponnani. Luckily the Portuguese themselves played into his hands. Contrary to the treaty of 1586 they began to insist upon passes for the Zamorin's merchants. So the Zamorin declared war, and Kunjali III began to waylay the Portuguese ships. The Portuguese therefore came to terms with the Zamorin in 1591. While they withdrew from Ponnani the Zamorin allowed them to settle at Kozhikkode and helped them to build a church.

In 1595 Kunjali III was succeeded by Kunjali IV. He was a great swordsman, having had his training along with the famous Othena Kurup under the same preceptor. He was very ambitious. He strengthened his fort, ostensibly to protect himself against the Portuguese, but ultimately to make himself independent. His name spread far and wide. He was the terror of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean.

As he became more and more powerful he grew also more and more indiscreet. He called himself King of the Moens, which the Muslim leaders of Kozhikkode did not like, and assumed the title of the *Lord of the Indian Seas*, which the Zamorin interpreted as a challenge to his own title of *Kunnalakkonathur* or Lord of Hills and Waves. He incurred the enmity of the Nayar nobility by his freedom with their womenfolk. The immediate cause of the misfortune that overtook him was the seizure of an elephant belonging to the Zamorin.

In 1597 the Zamorin agreed to help the Portuguese to dislodge him from his fortress. A joint force consisting of the Portuguese

and the Nayars surrounded Kunjali's fort. For two years Kunjali held his own. In 1600 he surrendered to the Zamorin, who handed him over to the Portuguese, hoping that according to their agreement, they would treat him with all honours due to a distinguished prisoner of war.

But the Portuguese hanged him like a common felon, and the Zamorin declared war. Immediately they instigated the Cochin Raja to invade the Zamorin's dominions. So in 1604 the Zamorin proceeded to Kodungallur to capture their fort. But in the absence of sea power his attempt proved fruitless.

In 1656, the Cochin Raja, Rama Varma died. And his mother carried on the government till 1658, when at the instance of the Portuguese she adopted five princes from Vattam and retired. The Muththa Thavazhi princes were the natural heirs of the deceased Rama Varma. And they appealed to the Zamorin. In 1660 he came to Cochin and though he defeated the Vattam adoptees one of whom was even slain the battle was not decisive.

In 1661 the Dutch made their appearance. The Muththa Thavazhi princes and the Zamorin entered into an agreement with them for the expulsion of the Portuguese and the Vattam princes. On January 15, 1662, the Kodungallur fort surrendered to the allies. Allowing only the bastion to stand, the victors proceeded to Cochin. A bitter battle was fought in front of the palace at Mattancheri, and three more of the Vattam adoptees, including the chief, died fighting, the surviving prince seeking safety at Cherthala. The aged Rani was compelled to recognize the Muththa Thavazhi prince as the legitimate ruler of Cochin and was perhaps handed over by the Dutch to the custody of the Zamorin in whose care she must live enjoying all the honours due to her high rank until her death in 1676.

After enthroning the Muththa Thavazhi prince the allies laid siege to the Portuguese fort. On January 7, 1663, it surrendered. The Dutch then sailed to Cannanore and besieged the Portuguese fort. It capitulated on February 13. Thus ended the Portuguese power in Kerala.

The failure of the Portuguese must be attributed mainly to the hostility of the Zamorin, which has given him an abiding place in the history of India. The Kunjali Marakkars preyed upon their shipping and crippled their sea power.

They could not also secure the whole-hearted co-operation of any of the Kerala chiefs. Individually and collectively they were corrupt, self-seeking, unscrupulous, treacherous, fanatic and cruel. Twice they confined the Cochin Raja in his palace in 1510 to prevent him from abdicating in favour of the lawful claimant, and in 1583 for claiming the port dues guaranteed by treaty. They plundered his temple of Palluruthi after killing one of its peacocks in 1543. They assisted him only when they were in need of his help. The Purakkad Arayan co-operated with them in their attack on Panthalayam in 1525, but, thinking that he was half-hearted, they fired at him and wounded him in the leg. Allowed to erect only a house at Kollam (Quilon) in 1516, they built a fort. And as the promised pepper did not come in time, they plundered a caravan moving through the Aryankavu pass, seizing all the five thousand bullock loads of pepper in 1519. In 1543 they plundered the temple of Thevalakkara after killing the watchmen and the priests.

Their resources in man-power were very slender, and the means they adopted to make them up were inadequate. Local marriages served only to combine the worst qualities of both races in their offspring. In 1581 Portugal became part of Spain, and the Portuguese ships were now exposed to the attacks of the Dutch, who were the enemies of Spain. Soldiers and sailors were seldom paid. The funds of the state were used only to fatten the priests.

The Portuguese empire in India consisted only of the forts of Cannanore, Kodungallur, Cochin, Kollam (Quilon), Goa, Diu and Daman. Nevertheless they were able to control the whole of the Indian Ocean. This was due mainly to their sea power and sense of duty to their king. Their ships, seamanship and gunnery were superior to those of their enemies. Whatever their faults, their loyalty to their king and country was admirable. "They obeyed to the letter," says Sheik Zainuddin, "the order of their superiors, notwithstanding the distance by which they were removed

from their government. This general obedience to authority enabled them, notwithstanding the smallness of their numbers, to overcome the native princes of Malabar, who, as well as the Muhammadans, were all intriguing for power amongst themselves, every man being desirous of authority and prepared to encompass the death of all who stood in his way to it".

Politically, the arrival of the Portuguese put an end to the advance of the Zamorin and prevented the unification of Kerala under him. Their treaties and dealings with the lesser chiefs perpetuated existing divisions and strengthened their innate love of independence. Fire arms and sea power became decisive factors in politics and commerce; but the Nayers and the Namputhuris refused to take to them, clinging obstinately to the ancient *Kalari-payattu* or fencing system.

Economically, the Muslims were ousted from the profitable oceanic trade in ginger, pepper and costly spices with Arabia, Persia and Europe in the west and with Malacca and China in the east. They were confined to the petty coastal trade in Indian nut, coconut and cloth. Though the Portuguese encouraged the cultivation of ginger, pepper, coconut for coir, and other articles which were in great demand in Europe and introduced cashew and tobacco the profits of the trade were retained by them and spent in Portugal. With the arrival of Vasco da Gama began a drain to Europe resulting in the progressive impoverishment of Kerala.

The social atmosphere was also poisoned by them. Their policy, so utterly different from the *Kerala Maryada* of *Live and Let live*, substituted hatred and suspicion for love and trust, selfishness and opportunism for co-operation and idealism.

Kozhikkode retained its former importance. The Moplah settlements were however badly hit everywhere. Kodungallur had hardly recovered from the ravages of the Chola war when the Portuguese came; and becoming a bone of contention between the Zamorin and his enemies it entered on a period of desolation. Cochin alone gained by the arrival of the Portuguese, and it steadily rose in importance.

The coming of the Portuguese led to a large increase in the Christian population. Though Albuquerque expelled from the Portuguese settlements all those who were not Christians his policy of intermarriages with local women led to a natural increase of the Christian population every year. In 1516 the Rani of Attingal gave permission to the Portuguese to convert her subjects. And Francis Xavier who came to Travancore in 1541 converted a large number of fishermen to Christianity. In 1544 the Travancore Raja allowed the Christians the privilege of being tried by the Portuguese commandant in return for the abolition of the slaughter of cows in the Portuguese settlement. In 1567 the Christians were forbidden to resort to Hindu physicians and hair dressers. The Synod of Diamper convened in 1599 accepted the authority of the Pope over the Kerala Christians.

The upper classes however were not attracted by the new faith. The Cochin Raja Unni Ramavarma evaded the honour of baptism offered by Albuquerque in 1511 while the Vattam chief exploited it in 1548 to his advantage. The only person of some note to accept Christianity was Unni Godavarma's kinsman inadvertently taken to Portugal by Cabral in 1502. King Manuel consulted him on Kerala affairs and his letters giving a glowing account of the Portuguese must have sustained the faith of the Cochin Raja during the crisis of 1503-04.

The Portuguese learnt Malayalam for their commercial and proselytizing purposes. Xavier translated the Bible and it was printed at Goa in 1557 with the title of *Vedopadesam*. A printing press was set up in Kerala in 1577 and the first book in Malayalam to be printed in Kerala was *Doctrina Christina* or *Krsthyavedopadesam*. The enquiries of Duarte Barbosa and Correa must have increased the interest of the educated in the history of their land. Every temple and chief maintained a *Nalathu* or day to day account of the important events in their respective *Nads*. The exhortation and the promise to do every thing as in the days of the *Valya Ammamans* or great uncles show the innate historical instinct of the people of Kerala.

CHAPTER XI

THE THIRUVATIS OF VENAD OR TRAVANCORE

(Down to 1729)

Thiruvati, meaning holy feet, is an honorific used to denote only the Venad chiefs. *Venad* or *Velud* means the land of Vels who were petty chieftains under the Cheramans. The now familiar *Travancore* is the westernized Thiruvithamkode, where the Venad chiefs had been residing when the Europeans came to Kerala in the sixteenth century.

The earliest chief known to the inscriptions is Ayyan Atikal Thiruvatikāl of the Tharissappalli grant of 849. He might have been the founder of the *Kollam antu*. Other chiefs whose names are found in inscriptions before the twelfth century are Vallabhan Kothai of the Mampalli plate of 973, Govardhana Marthandan of Bhaskara Ravivarman's Thirukkatūththanam records and the Jewish grant of 1000, and Ramar Thiruvati Koyiladhikari Kulasekhara Chakravarthikal of the Kollam grant of 1102. Perhaps it was as the descendants, or in imitation of Ramar Thiruvati that some of the Venad chiefs assumed the title of *Kulasekharapperumal*.

Nothing definite is known of Venad for two centuries after Ramar Thiruvati's grant of 1102. The relations between the Thiruvatis and their Pandyan neighbours were at first very cordial with intermarriages between the two families. But as they expanded dissensions broke out in both, leading to mutual interference and wars on behalf of rival claimants.

In 1299 Ravivarman Kulasekhara succeeded his father, Jīya sīmha, in Venad. His mother, Umadevi, was the daughter of the Pandyan Maravarman Kulasekhara (1268-1311). When Vikrama Pandya rebelled against Maravarman, Ravivarman not only

defeated him but also took him captive. He was released only after he gave his daughter in marriage to Ravivarman as a sort of security, for his good behaviour.

In 1311 Maravarman Kulasekhara died, and his sons, Vira Pandya and Sundara Pandya, began to quarrel. Ravivarman supported Vira Pandya. But before he reached Madura, Vira Pandya had fled, Sundara Pandya had abandoned Madura in fear of Alauddin's general, Malik Kafur, and Malik Kafur himself had been defeated and compelled to leave the city by his father-in-law. But, as his father-in-law had died in the battle with Malik Kafur, the Pandyan throne was virtually vacant when Ravivarman arrived. So he ascended it, celebrating his enthronement and coronation on the banks of the Vaigai.

Vira Pandya did not like the usurpation of his rights by Ravivarman. To compel the latter to return to Venad, Vira Pandya tried to instigate the heir apparent, Udaya Marthanda Varma, against him. So Ravivarman proceeded against Vira Pandya and drove him to the wilds of Konkan. Coming back, he celebrated his victories by a *Virabhisheka*, literally pouring of consecrated water on the head of the victorious hero, at Kanchipuram, Thiruvathi, and Srirangam, and assumed the title of *Dharmamaharaja Maravarman Thiribhuvana Kulasekhara Chakravarthi*. In keeping with his imperial position as the lord of the Pandyas and the Cholas also, his emblem in the Punamalli inscription has the Chera *Ankusa*, or elephant goad above the Pandyan fish and the Chola tiger.

Unfortunately, like Ramar Thiruvati after 1102, Ravivarman also disappeared after 1313. It is difficult to find in history a King like him who fully deserved every one of his titles. His victories show that he was really a *Sangramadhura* or one valient in battle. On account of his proficiency in arts and learning, he could be called without any hesitation a *Chathushashtikalavallabha* or master of sixty four arts. He was *Dakshina Bhoja* or Bhoja of the south, a patron of poets as well as a poet like Bhoja of the north. Above all, he was *Sripadmanabhapadakamalaparamaradhaka* or the devout worshipper of the lotus feet of Lord Padmanabha. If he had not already dedicated his two daughters, one to the Lord of

Kanchipuram and the other to the Lord of Srirangam, he would have certainly made them over to Lord Padmanabha. For the Lord's annual festival he wrote a drama called *Pradyumnaabhyudaya* and founded the *Kanchipuramkontanmatham*, or house of the conqueror of Kanchipuram for conducting the Lord's worship at sunrise.

The sudden disappearance of Ravivarman robbed his northern expeditions of all their value. With Thontamandalam and Pandimandalam re-occupied by their former rulers, only Venad and western Tinneveli were left to his successors.

Though the Pandyas steadily declined after the death of Maravarman Kulasekhara, the rulers who stepped into their place one after another raided the southern frontier off and on. And the Thiruvatis were obliged to remain almost always near the threatened spot, away from Kollam (Quilon).

Madura became the seat of a sultanate in 1334. And till its conquest by the Vijayanagar prince, Kumara Kampana, in 1370 the muslims continued to harass Nanjinad and Tinneveli. Their first raid took place in 1336, and the Thiruvati went to Kalakkad to drive them away. The brothers, Ravivarman (a 1350) and Adithyavarman Sarvanganatha (a 1376), had their military headquarters at Thovala.

The troubles with the Vijayanagar rulers began in the reign of Adithyavarman Sarvanganatha. Chera Udaya Marthandavarman (1383-1444) resided mostly at Sermadevi (Cheramahadevi) in Tinneveli. The Thiruvatis were not always content with remaining on the defensive. With an army consisting of 20,000 horsemen and 6,000 archers they took the offensive. Marching from Thiruvithankode Ravi Ravivarman (1484-1512) and *Puli* (Tiger) Udaya Marthandavarman (1516-35) established their hold over the pearl fisheries of Kayal (Korkai) by extending their authority not only to the eastern coast of Tinneveli but also to the corresponding western coast of Ceylon.

In 1529 the Thontamandalam governor, Chellappa, rebelled against his master, and sought the Thiruvati's protection. Krishna-deva Raya died before he could send an army to the south. His

successor, Achyutha Raya (1530-42) sent his general, Saluka Thimma, against Travancore. In 1532 he defeated the Thiruvatt on the bank of the Thamravarni. As the price of peace the Thiruvatt had to surrender Chellappa, cede the pearl fisheries and agree to pay tribute.

War again broke out in 1544 when the Thiruvatt gave asylum for the fishermen from the pearl fishery coast whom Sadasiva Raya (1542-76) wanted to punish. His general Vittala occupied Kottar and Suchindram, and the Thiruvatt submitted, surrendering the fugitives and agreeing to pay tribute. As the tribute was not paid Vittala invaded Travancore in 1558. But he was defeated and killed.

The Nayaks of Madura, who succeeded the Rayas in the government of South India were sorely tempted by the fertility of Nanjinad. At the same time the Thiruvatts were not prepared to recognize the Nayaks as the legitimate successors of the Vijaya nagar rulers. They also said that with the death of Vittala all accounts with the Rayas had been settled. When the Thiruvatts rejected the unjust demand for tribute Thirumala Nayak (1623-59) invaded Nanjinad in 1634. Iravikkutti Pillai led the Travancore army. But he was killed in the battle of Kaniyankulam and the Thiruvatt submitted and promised to pay tribute. As the tribute was always in arrears the Badagas as the Nayak's soldiers were called raided and plundered Nanjinad almost every year, causing infinite suffering to the people.

The last of the Nayak attacks occurred in 1697. It was also the worst. The king had only himself to blame for it. After employing the Badagas to put down his enemies at home he invited them to a feast and hacked them all to pieces. Regent Mankamam (1689-1706) sent Dalavay Narasappayya to avenge their death. Narasappayya wreaked a terrible vengeance. The Thiruvatt submitted, paid the arrears of tribute due by him and sent also costly jewels as presents to mollify the regent.

The troubles in the frontier ended only in 1766. In 1740 Chanda Sahib came to collect the 'arrears of tribute' and he was paid off. In 1752 Moodemiah appeared in the frontier, and he was

similarly sent back. But Mahfuz Khan and Kuhammad Ali could not be so easily sent away. At last, in 1766, through the mediation of the English, the frontier problem was finally solved, Travancore giving up all its territory east of the Ghats, but retaining Shencotta and Cape Kumari.

Dynastic squabbles and intrigues hampered the systematic pursuit of a strong frontier policy. Some time after the death of Ravivarman Kulasekhara the Venad chiefs adopted the matrilineal system for want of families of equal rank and status for the marriage of their princesses. As time went on, a younger sister transferred her residence from Kollam (Quilon) to Kunnummel, and thus founded the *Kunnummel Ilayetam*, or junior branch. For administrative convenience Venad was divided between *Desinganad*, as the original stem was called, and the newly established *Kunnummel Ilayetam*, the former governing the coastal districts the latter the regions adjoining the Ghats. Gradually *Kunnummel Ilayetam* put forth two branches also called *Perakam* and *Kottarakkara* from the place of their residence. In the same way *Thrppappur* branched off from *Desinganad*. In the partition between them *Desinganad* retained the original name and place in west Kallada, and obtained its share in *Kizhperur*, *Thrppappur* and *Chirava*, and *Thrappappur* similarly retained its original name and place, and obtained its share in *Desinganad* called *East Kallada*, *Kizhperur* and *Chirava*.

The first adoption for *Thrppappur* was made in the reign of Sarvanganatha Adithyavarman. Two Thampurattis were adopted from the family of the Kolaththiris and they were settled in Chittatinkara. Thus came into existence the *Attingal Swarupam*, consisting of the *Thrppappur* Thampurattis only. It was and is still an exclusively female *Swarupam*, though the *Thampurattis* are called *Thampurans* on account of their separate appanage and ruling powers with in their domains. The *Attingal Swarupam* is the *Queen Kingdom* of the European writers and travellers.

With Asvathi Thirunal Umayamma Rani began a new chapter in the History of Travancore. She built the foundation on which her grandson Marthandavarman, built modern Travancore.

She came to prominence by the management of her *Swarupam*. There were no proper accounts. Arrears accumulated, collections

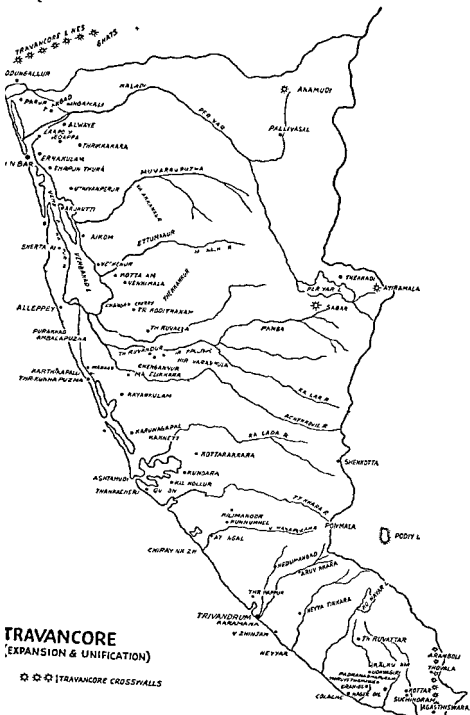
disappeared, and debts increased. By insisting upon proper accounts and the prompt collection of arrears and current dues, she converted the deficit into a surplus, and provided a regular income for the *Swarupam*. Thus she won the confidence of her senior Thampurattis, who never did anything which was not approved by her.

In 1674 an adoption had to be made. King Adithyavarma (1673-77) who was himself an adoptee from the Vallarappalli branch of the Cochin Raja's family, recommended his natural sister's son, named Ramavarma. Vira Keralavarma of Perakam put forward the claims of his younger brother against the proposed adoption. The seniormost Thampuratti of Attingal alone could make the adoption. Umayamma Rani did not like the Cochin candidate on account of the proved incompetence of the Vallarappalli princes. The Perakam candidate was indeed able, but he might undermine *Thrappappur*. As he could be excluded only by adopting Vallarappalli Ramavarma, Umayamma Rani supported Adithyavarma's proposal and Ramavarma was accordingly adopted by the Attingal Muththa Thampuratti.

In 1677 Adithyavarma died. His successor, Ravivarma, was still a boy. So, Umayamma Rani, who was now *Elamura* or Second Princess, acted as Regent with the approval of the Valiya Thampuratti.

Her first task was to improve the finances of the kingdom. She ordered the preparation of the accounts of every village in the kingdom and the strict collection of all arrears and current dues. All those who had misappropriated the public money were compelled to refund it, and punished according to the gravity of their offence.

Armed now with the powers of the Regent she began to punish also those who had defied her while she had been managing the Attingal estates. All those who lost or had to lose by the Regent's policy flocked to Vira Keralavarma. With the mercenaries of Kalakkad Chidambaranatha Pillai he advanced against her at Trivandrum by way of Kalkulam and Neyyattinkara. Her retainers opposed them at Karamana and under cover of this engagement she withdrew to Varkala and thence to Attingal.



TRAVANCORE

EXPANSION & UNIFICATION

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In 1678 she became the head of the Attingal Swarupam. In pursuance of her policy of eliminating the collaterals she adopted a prince and two princesses from the Kolaththuri. So Vira Keralavarma took up arms on behalf of his brother. She defeated him at Nemam and Edakkode, and took up her quarters at Kalkulam. Immediately Vira Keralavarma surrounded the fort. The Rani however made preparations for attacking Nedumangad, where Vira Keralavarma's ancestral lands lay, and sent orders to her retainers at Attingal to invade it. Vira Keralavarma at once left Kalkulam to defend his home province.

Just at this time came Puravazhinad (North Kottayam) Kerala Varma, famous as a swordsman, statesman and poet. The Rani adopted him as her son with the title of *Prince of Hiranjanallur* and appointed him as her minister.

His arrival was a godsend. In 1680 a Mughal adventurer came by way of Aramboli with intent to establish an Islamic state in Travancore, somewhat similar to what Aurangzeb had been attempting in North India. The *Mikilapata* advanced as far as Idava, converting the Hindus all along the route. Kottayam Keralavarma at once took the field against him. Pursuing him, he compelled him to fight a battle at Thiruvattar in which he was not only defeated but also killed.

With his talents and experience, Keralavarma knew how to win the nobles. And when the Rani summoned a council to consider the question of adoption and the claims of Perakam Keralavarma the result was a foregone conclusion. It declared that the *Perakam* branch had no claim to the throne.

Umayamma Rani suspected the Dutch on account of the proximity of their fort to the Desinganad palace and their long association with it. She relied for the stability of her dynasty on the friendship of the English, who were their rivals. In 1644 they had obtained permission to build a factory at Vizhinjam. In 1684 she gave them Anjengo, where they erected a fort in 1695.

As Ravivarma came of age in 1684 Umayamma Rani's regency formally came to an end. Fortunately Ravivarma was wise enough

to be guided by her. Consistently with her policy of excluding the collaterals, he adopted two princesses and a prince from Kolaththunad in 1688.

She must have been responsible also for the removal of *Pulappetti* and *Mannappetti*. Any woman touched by a *Pulaya* or a *greestic* slave or a *Mannan* or washerman lost caste and she was sold as a slave. Taking advantage of this the Pulayas and the Mannans lay in wait for them, sometimes disguised as animals, and suddenly pounced upon them and touched them when they came near, so as to sell them as slaves in the settlements of the Portuguese and the Dutch. In 1696 a proclamation was issued declaring that no woman touched by a *Pulaya* or a *Mannan* would lose caste, and the defilement caused by his touch would be removed by immersion in a tank and the sprinkling of some consecrated water by the temple priest.

This great social reform was followed by a tragedy. Kottayam Keralavarma began to alienate the nobility by his domineering temper. Unfortunately in the proclamation against *Pulappetti* and *Mannappetti* issued by him as a minister of state the words *by order* had been inadvertently omitted. His enemies made much of this omission. Giving out that the Prince of Hiranyanallur was trying to set aside the legitimate Raja, they formed a plot against him, and killed him while he was returning from the Rani's palace at night after an interview. Shortly afterwards Umayamma Rani also died.

Umayamma Rani was very devout. She wanted that the worships and festivals in the temples should be properly conducted. As a devotee of Lord Padmanabha, she tried to improve His finances. While she stayed at Trivandrum she would go every day to His shrine to make her obeisance and never take her food before the noonday worship. And it is on record that once she had to forego it altogether as for some reason the noon day worship could not be performed.

CHAPTER XII

MARTHANDAVARMA (1729-1758)

On the death of Umayamma Ram the evils that she had kept down began to raise their head. The people of Nanjinad were harassed by the *Pillamars*, or tax-collectors, of the king. They refused to obey his commands, granting remissions and other reliefs, and outdid the Pindaris in torturing and plundering the poor. They did not spare also Lord Padmanabha's property. They laid violent hands on His servants and even killed those who resisted.

On February 11, 1729, Ramavarma died, and Marthandavarma succeeded him. Born in 1705, he began to assist his uncle as soon as he came of age. In 1722 he negotiated a treaty with the Nayak of Trichinopoly for sending a suitable force to maintain the royal authority for an annual payment Rs. 3,000. He concluded a treaty with the English in 1723 by which they promised to assist the Travancore Raja to put down his enemies.

As soon as Ramavarma died, his sons, popularly known as the Kunju Thampis, claimed the throne as his lawful heirs, and appealed to the Nayak of Trichinopoly for assistance. He sent Azhagappa Mudaliyar, who had been the commandant of the subsidiary force sent under the treaty of 1722, to enquire into their claims. Money was the only argument which weighed with Azhagappa. He was disappointed when the *Yogakkar*, or supreme authorities of the Padmanabha temple, declared for Marthandavarma, and refused to hand over to the Thampis the accumulated treasures of the Lord. After the obsequies for the late king were completed at the end of the year, Marthandavarma sent his able and trusted servant, Ramayyan, to Azhagappa to present his case. Ramayyan accomplished his mission so successfully

that Azhagappa declared in favour of Marthandavarma, and after advising the Thampis to be loyal to their king returned to Trichinopoly. But the Thampis continued their intrigues, and Marthandavarma seized and executed them in 1731.

If the Kunju Thampis had challenged Marthandavarma's claim on the basis of the patrilineal law, Unni Keralavarma assailed it under the matrilineal law of succession. He was the oldest male member in all the branches taken together. And his claims were upheld by the *Ettuvittil Matampis* or Great Nobles of the Eight Houses, the *Arukuttam Pillamars* or Six Groups of the King's Officers, the chief of Kayankulam and the Dutch.

The chief of Kayankulam is found for the first time in Viraraghavachakravarthi's grant to Iravi Karthan some time in the thirteenth century. For a long time Kayankulam had been waging war with Venad for the territories of the *Chirava Swarupam*, till at last they were divided between them. Kayankulam however wanted to annex the lands of the latter, lying contiguous to or mixed up with his own share in the partition. In his hatred for Marthandavarma, the Desinganad claimant bequeathed his kingdom to the *Ilama*, or Second Prince, of Kayankulam. The Dutch had been associated with Desinganad ever since they occupied the Portuguese fort of Quilon called Thanka cheri in 1659-61, and though they were on friendly terms with the Rani of Attingal they supported Unni Keralavarma.

In 1731 Unni Keralavarma attacked East Kallada which belonged to *Thrippappur*. But on the approach of Marthandavarma he submitted. And he was taken to Trivandrum, where he was virtually kept a prisoner. In 1732 however he escaped, and joined Kayankulam, inviting the *Ilayetam* princes of Kunnummel, Perakam and Kottarakkara to make common cause with him.

Imprisoning the *Ilayetam* princes and princesses at Trivandrum and occupying their lands Marthandavarma proceeded against Kayankulam in 1734. A series of cavalry battles were fought, in one of which the chief of Kayankulam was killed. His successor refused to submit. And inheriting Desinganad by the death of Unni Keralavarma in 1734, he adopted the offensive. But with the

mercenary horse under Ponnampandyan Thevar Marthandavarman stopped his advance

In 1735 the *Etuvattil Matampis* and the *Arukuttam Pillamar* formed a plot to kill Marthandavarman as he escorted the Lord's procession to and from the sea during the *Appist* festival. Ramayyan who had become *Dalaya* foiled it by arresting the ringleaders. After the festival they were put to death their lands and houses confiscated and their women and children sold as slaves. Thus at last, the semi-feudal nobility and the dominating bureaucracy were liquidated.

In 1736 a Thampuratti alone remained alive to represent *Ilayetam* and she escaped from her prison to Marthandavarman's enemies in the north. They recognized her as the *Ilayetam Muppu* and the Dutch sent a contingent to escort her ancestral estates in 1741. But Marthandavarman inflicted a crushing defeat on her, the Dutch contingent being annihilated and she fled to Cochin. Thus at long last, the *Ilayetam* branch came to an end.

The help given to the *Ilayetam* princess by the Dutch was but part of a wider campaign to destroy Marthandavarman. The Dutch landed at Colachel and advanced as far as Kalkulam. Coming back from the north, Marthandavarman defeated them with great slaughter at Colachel and compelled them to abandon their fort. Among the prisoners were twenty-four Europeans. At their request Marthandavarman took them all into his service and one of them, named D. Lannoy, became a trusted general of the king with the title of *Valiya Kappiththan* or great captain.

The Dutch tried to retrieve their losses in the south by carrying on the war more vigorously in the north. For a time it even seemed they would succeed. Ramayyan had to abandon the siege of Thankacherry and even allow the enemy to occupy Kallimanur. But the tide turned with the arrival of mercenaries hired by minister Samikkutty Annava. Driving the enemy out of Kallimanur, Marthandavarman entered Kayankulam. The chief submitted, and by the treaty of Mannar, concluded in 1742, formally ceded Desinganad and agreed to pay tribute.

Kayankulam had no intention of abiding by the treaty. Relying on Ampalappuzha Thekkankur and Vattakkankur he withheld his tribute in 1746. Marthandavarma sent Ramayyan against the contumacious chief. As no help came from the allies the Kayankulam chief threw all his valuables in the Ashtamuti Lake and fled. Kayankulam was annexed.

Ramayyan then proceeded against Ampalappuzha. The Brahmin chief had placed all his reliance on the poisoned arrows of his archers. Ramayyan's soldiers were unable to face them and they fell back. But reinforced by D Linnoy's Musketeers he defeated the Raja's forces at Thottappalli. Already the latter's uncle and chief adviser, Thekkedaththu Bhittathiri had deserted him. Now his commander in chief Maththur Panikkar also went over to the enemy. The Raja fled and his kingdom was annexed.

The annexation of Kayankulam and Ampalappuzha (Purakkad) frightened the Dutch and they came to terms with Marthandavarma in 1748 by the treaty of Mavelikkara. I though it was ratified by the Batavian Government only in 1753. By this treaty they withdrew from all their engagements with the other Kerala princes and promised that they would not give any sort of assistance to those against whom Marthandavarma might declare war. Another important event of 1748 was the adoption of four princesses from Kolaththunad.

Besides promising assistance to Kayankulam the chiefs of Thekkankur and Vattakkankur the southern and the northern halves respectively of the ancient Venavalinad of Bhaskara Ravivarman's grant to Joseph Rabban they had incurred his wrath for other reasons also. The former had supported the *Ilaiyem* Thampuratti; the latter had given Vechchur to the Dutch. Domestic dissension provided Marthandavarma with a pretext for invasion. In Thekkankur the chief murdered the heir apparent for transferring his rights to the Travancore king; in Vattakkankur the heir apparent murdered the chief for his Travancorean sympathies. In 1750 the Travancore forces started for Venavalinad. Thekkankur offered but a feeble resistance and Vattakkankur no resistance at all. Venavalinad was annexed and its rulers pensioned.

The same year Marthandavarma made over all his rights and possessions on behalf of himself and his successors to Lord Padmanabha, being content to hold them as His *Dasa* or servant. This grand dedication of 1750 was not any sudden impulse of a neophyte: it was the ripe and mature fruit of a deep rooted and long growing devotion. It was also an act of supreme statesmanship. Henceforward every attempt at rebellion or invasion became a crime against the Lord. The empire was thus protected against disruption and his dynasty against usurpation.

The Cochin Raja had assisted Kayankulam and he had to be punished. The Cochin Raja and the *Perumpatappu Muppu* who was the seniormost in age in all the branches of the Cochin dynasty taken together began to quarrel for the management of the temple of Thiruvalla. The *Perumpatappu Muppu* had also certain rights in Karapuram and Cherthala. Marthandavarma persuaded him to surrender these rights as well those over Thiruvalla in his favour.

The Cochin Raja resolved to recover his rights by force. Promising help to all the princes dispossessed by Marthandavarma he proceeded southwards to invade Travancore. Marthandavarma sent Ramayyan and the heir apparent, Ramavarama. Two battles were fought: the first at Purakkad and the second at Ampalappuzha. The latter was decisive: among the captives were the commander-in-chief, Itikkela Menon, and chief minister Paliyam Komu Menon. With no army left to oppose them Ramayyan and Ramavarama approached Cochin by two different but converging routes. So the Cochin Raja submitted. By the treaty of Mavelikkara II concluded in 1754 he agreed to treat Marthandavarma's allies and foes as his own.

Accustomed to the freedom of a semi-feudal government the people of Ampalappuzha, Thekkankur and Vatakkankur rose in revolt. The Cochin Raja secretly helped them. He even invited the Zamorin to join him to get rid of the Travancore menace. Occupying Alangad and Parur the Zamorin proceeded against Venad. Warned by the Dutch of the Zamorin's movements Marthandavarma had an army ready at Arukuttu to stop the advance of the Kozhikkode army. At the battle of Arukuttu the Travancoreans under Ramayyan were successful. Lest Ramayyan

should follow up his victory by marching upon Cochin, as in 1752, the Cochin Raja sued for peace. In 1757 it was agreed that Cochin and Travancore should declare joint war upon the Zamorin and expel him from the territories he had occupied.

In 1757 Marthandavarma's able and faithful minister and companion, Ramayyan, died. With it the king also seemed to lose all interest in life. He became moody, a prey to melancholy thoughts. Cheered by the heir apparent Ramavarma's assurance that he would not depart a hair's breadth from his policy, he gave up his soul on July 11, 1758.

Marthandavarma completed what Umayamin Rani had begun. By eliminating the collateral families and their supporters Travancore assumed also its present shape. A strong central government came into existence, with a king at the top keeping his control over the remotest village through a hierarchy of officials.

To the newly annexed districts Marthandavarma extended the administrative system of Venad. The village was its unit. It was looked after by a *Pravarthikkal* appointed by the government. He collected taxes, maintained accounts, prepared the *Pathuvakanakku*, or budget for the year, supervised irrigation works, managed the *Sarkar* or government temples, and tried and punished petty offenders. A number of villages constituted a *Mantapaththumavathukkal* with a *Karyakkal* over it, appointed, transferred, promoted or punished, by the *Sarvadhikaryakkal*, who was appointed by and responsible to, the king.

A grand council was held in 1748 to settle the rule of succession. It consisted of the king, the Senior Rani of Attingal, and the *Yogakkal*, or supreme assembly of Sripadmanabha's temple. It was decided that whenever there was a failure of heirs female, adoptions were to be made from the family of the Kolaththis only. The oldest male member alone was to govern the country as *Chiravay Muppu*. The princesses were to hold rank according to seniority of age as *Attingal Muththa Thampuram*, *Attingal Ilaya Thampuram*, and so on while the princes were to hold rank as *Chiravay Muppu Ilamura Munammura* and so on.

The revenue system was re-organized. The *ryotwari* system with periodical settlements was established after a preliminary survey of the lands by Mallan Sankaran in 1738. Chowkies were established to collect excise and customs duties. Monopolies on pepper tobacco cassia salt areca and other articles brought a large income. Another fertile source of revenue consisted of the *Atiyara* fees for permission for adoption and grant of titles like *Chempakaraman* which was newly created and of privileges like *Changalavilakku* or lamp with the chain *Virachangala* bracelet of heroes and the like.

Marthandavarma was deeply interested in agriculture and trade. He constructed a number of dams the Ponmani dam being constructed under his own personal supervision. He erected a number of rest houses mainly for the convenience of merchants and pedlars and instituted weekly fairs. For the quick movement of goods the backwaters were linked together by canals.

Besides the hereditary militia armed in the traditional fashion he had a standing army of 50 000 soldiers comprising infantry cavalry and artillery trained and equipped according to the European fashion. The policy of friendship with the English brought an unfailing supply of munitions and other war materials. He established also a foundry at Udayagiri for casting big guns and small arms. He repaired old forts and constructed new ones at Kollam (Quilon) Udayagiri Mavelikkara Chenganaseri Kottayam Errumanur and Muvarrupuzha. Kalkulam was renamed Padmanabhapuram and its fortification suitably strengthened and enlarged. The Aramboil route was protected by a cross wall from Udayagiri to Cape Kumari. When necessity arose he hired mercenaries also from Tinneveli and Malabar.

Marthandavarma was fortunate in his ministers the ablest and the most famous being Ramayyan of Aruvikkara. From cook and *Harikkar* he steadily rose in service accompanying him and sharing in all his privations and dangers and ultimately becoming his second self. Effacing himself in his master's service he died as he was born a poor man with only the proverbial *Kinnam* or eating plate and the *Kutti* or spouted water vessel. He was the last of the *Brahma* Marayans or Brahmin generals of

South India. If Asoka stood for *Dharma* Rāmayyān stood for incorruptibility in politics.

The grand dedication of 1750 with the annual *Panguni Utsava* or March-April festival in its commemoration stands unparalleled in the history of man's devotion to God. Apart from this the reconsecration of the image of Ananthasayana, the construction of the *Eastern Gopuram* which had been planned as early as 1566, the *Siveliyura*, the *Orrakkalmantapa* or single stone platform and the golden flag staff, the institution of the six yearly *Muralapam* or chanting of the Vedas for fifty-six days, and the *Slodasamahadanas* or sixteen great gifts of 1750-53 each by itself entitles him to the first place among the royal devout.

Primarily a man of action, Marthandavarma found delight in poetry. He sought to overcome the tedium of what was in those days a long journey from Vaikam to Trivandrum by listening to Ramapuram Sankara Varier's rendering of the Kuchela episode as a *Vanchipattu* or boat song. The immortal double personality writing in Sanskrit as Ramapanivadan and in Malayalam as Kunjan Nampiyar was a protégé of his. Apart from poetic adulation he had every claim to be the hero of the drama *Bala marthandavayan* written by his court-poet Devarajakavi.

Everyone must admit that Mathandavarma was great as a warrior, statesman and devotee. One might even say that he was an incarnation of the ideal ruler depicted in the *Malabharatha*, the *Karmayogi* that Lord Krishna wanted Arjuna to be. At the same time it cannot be denied also that he paid scant respect to the *Kerala Maryada*.

CHAPTER XIII

THE DUTCH IN KERALA (1663-1795)

The Dutch East India Company was formed in 1592, and the first Dutch fleet appeared in the east in 1595. In 1604 and 1608 their ships came to Kodungallur while the Zamorin was besieging the Portuguese fort, they promised to help him but did not keep their word. In 1616 they came to Kodungallur, but on the arrival of the Portuguese fleet they sailed away. In 1642 they concluded a treaty with the chief of Purakkad, Siam Britsherry Vambar (Swami Vatasseri Vambar). Nevertheless they turned their attention to the Kerala coast only after they had established their power in Ceylon, with Colombo as their headquarters.

They occupied the Portuguese fort of Thiruvanchery in Kollam (Quilon) in 1658, but went back to Colombo in the following year. In 1661 they came back and establishing a garrison here proceeded to Kodungallur, as has already been mentioned. They captured the Kodungallur fort in 1662, and the Cochin and Cannanore ports in 1663.

Though the Dutch were interested only in trade, they had to step into the place of their predecessors to protect and further it. They reduced the Cochin Raja to subjection, and refused to hand over the Kodungallur bastion and the Cochin fort to the Zamorin. As the Cochin Raja had ceded Chetway and other places to the Zamorin for the expenses of the war, the Zamorin refused to return them. Gradually therefore the Zamorin and the Dutch drifted into war, the Zamorin trying to expel them from Kodungallur, the Cochin Raja and the Dutch trying to recover Chetway. Kodungallur commanded the eastern and Chetway the western, route between Kozhikkode and Cochin.

The Zamorin's attempts to dislodge the Dutch from Kodungalur began as early as 1664. After many a raid and counter raid, the Dutch vacated it in 1669. But as the Zamorin did not occupy it the Dutch came back and re-occupied it in 1673. Numerous attempts were made by the Zamorin to recapture it. At last in 1758 it seemed as though it must fall, though the Cochin heir-apparent himself had come to relieve it. But the treaty concluded between the Cochin Raja and Marthandavarma induced the Zamorin to abandon the siege on March 3.

Chetway however changed hands many times. The Zamorin's ministers were divided. Mangat Achchan favoured the Dutch, but Thimma Panikkar was against them. And in 1678 Van Rhee de succeeded in obtaining Chetway.

In 1685 the Bharami Thirunai became the Zamorin. On account of the strategic importance of Chetway he resolved to recover it. He formed a network of alliances against the Dutch and the Cochin Raja, his agent, Bavan Pattar persuading Vatakankur, Thekkankur, Purakkad and Kayankulam to join his master. Internal troubles in Cochin also played into his hands. The Cochin nobles did not like the abject submission of their Raja to the Dutch. The Raja also made no secret of his desire to be freed from the restraints imposed upon him by them. To prevent the Zamorin from making common cause with the Cochin malcontents the Dutch returned Chetway in 1691.

Immediately the Zamorin allowed the English who were the rivals of the Dutch to open a factory here. And as he knew that the Dutch would seize the earliest opportunity to recover Chetway he erected a series of stockades at Pappanivattam and other places to add to its protection. In 1699 he concluded an alliance also with the English for an abundant supply of arms and ammunition.

As soon as the nobles at Cochin were brought round, the Dutch instigated the Cochin Raja to provoke the Zamorin by a series of raids across his frontier. So war broke out in 1701. Purakkad advanced on Cochin by way of Karipuram while the Zamorin's forces proceeded from the north to Kodungalur. But in 1705 Bharami Thirunai died. And the Dutch, who had remained

outwardly neutral, now declared war on the Zamorin. Pre-occupied with the rites for the deceased Zamorin and the *Mahamagha* of 1707 the war was not conducted properly by the Zamorin's ministers. At last the Zamorin surrendered Chetway and peace was made in 1707.

At once the Dutch erected a fort in the immediate vicinity of Chetway. The war party under Thamme Panikkar, who held extensive lands in this region, made a loud outcry. The English factor, Mr Adams, liberally supplied arms, even lending a large sum on his private account. And the Zamorin's Nayars occupied the Dutch fort in 1715.

Two attempts were made by the Dutch to recover their fort, and both of them failed. Towards the end of 1716 a large and well-equipped force came under Jacobz. He attacked Pappanivattam. It was defended by Thamme Panikkar himself. But the Dutch artillery proved superior, and the Panikkar abandoned the fort. The road to Chetway was not yet free it was blocked by the Kozhikkode Nayars. And a battle was fought at Urakam, it was not however decisive. The Dutch were not prepared to prolong the war, and the Zamorin was also anxious to end it. So in 1717 peace was made, the Zamorin paying Rs 30 000 for expenses and ceding Chetway, Pappanivattam and the lands belonging to Thamme Panikkar in these places.

In the meanwhile the policy of intervention in the domestic affairs of the Kerala chiefs was bearing its bitter fruit for the Dutch in Travancore. They had a particular grudge against the Venad rulers. By the treaties of 1659, 1661, 1662 and 1665 they had been granted the monopoly of the foreign trade and other privileges enjoyed by their Portuguese predecessors. Unfortunately for them most of the rulers of Venad happened to belong to the Thrppappur branch, and no love was lost between them and their Desinganad cousins, with whom the Dutch were more intimate. As the Thrppappur princes could not rely on the loyalty of the Dutch they began to cultivate the friendship of the English, who were their rivals. In 1644 the English opened a factory at Vizhinjam. In 1684 they received Anjengo from Umayamma Rani, and fortified it in 1695.

In their jealousy the Dutch instigated the people to murder the English factor and his attendants after they offered their *Vishu* or New Year presents to the Rani of Attingal and even to besiege Anjengo. The Rani expressed her regret for the massacre, and a treaty was concluded in 1723 by which they promised unstinted support to Marthandavarma against his enemies, in return for which his mother, the Rani of Attingal, allowed them a factory at Idava in 1726.

The Dutch supported Marthandavarma's rivals, Unni Kerala-varma of Desinganad and the princess of *Ilayetam*. While carrying on the war in conjunction with Kayankulam in the north they set up the *Ilayetam* princess, who had escaped from Marthandavarma's custody, as the legitimate ruler of her ancestral estates. They tried to establish a principality also of their own in the south. With this object in view they fortified Colachel, captured Thengapattanam, Midalam and Katiyapattanam, plundered Hiranyanalur, occupied Kottar, and marched to Kalkulam.

But Marthandavarma, as has been already said, drove the *Ilayetam* princess out of Nedumangad. Then he defeated the Dutch at Colachel, and compelled them to abandon it, leaving behind all their guns and other military stores besides a number of prisoners.

Beaten in the south the Dutch tried to retrieve their honour in the north. A combined Kayankulam and Dutch force seized Vamanapuram. But Ramayyan drove them out and besieged their fort at Thankacheri. It was bravely defended by the Kayankulam minister, Achyutha Variyar. Ramayyan was obliged not only to withdraw but allow him to occupy Kilimanur. Marthandavarma was too strong and quick for his enemies. Recovering Kilimanur after a siege of sixty five days he occupied Thankacheri, and compelled the Kayankulam Raja to expel the Dutch from their settlement by the treaty of Mannar in 1742. By Marthandavarma's annexation of Purakkad in 1746 the Dutch lost another settlement, perhaps their oldest settlement in Kerala dating from 1642. These successes hastened them to conclude the treaty of Mavelikkara in 1748 as the only means of preserving their Cochin settlement when Marthandavarma should declare war on Cochin. And he would have annexed the kingdom of Cochin itself but for the surrender of the disputed rights and settlements and the submission of the Cochin Raja in 1754 by the treaty of Mavelikkara II.

On the confederacy of 1728²⁰ against the Dutch Vatakkankur, Thekkankur, Purakkad and Kayankulam had been annexed by Marthandavarma. And though deprived thus of all help from the south the Zamorin declared war on the Dutch in 1752. Obtaining an ample supply of powder and shot from the Danes he occupied Pazhancheri, Pappanivittam, Alangad and Pirur. In 1756 he occupied Enamakka and even sent a force to assist the Cochin Raja to recover his former rights in Cherthala and Karapuram and the freedom fight of the people in Ampalappuzha and other territories annexed by Marthandavarma. In 1757 the Zamorin recovered Chetway and proceeding through Mullurkara laid siege to the Dutch fort at Kodungallur. In the meanwhile the Travancoreans victory at Arukutti and the retreat of the Zamorin's forces unnerved the Cochin Raja and deserting the Zamorin and sending the heir apparent to help the Dutch at Kodungallur he concluded a treaty with Marthandavarma for a joint attempt to recover the territories occupied by the Kozhikkode chief. To secure the neutrality of the Dutch in the impending war with Travancore the Zamorin withdrew from before Kodungallur and restored Chetway to the Dutch to in 1758.

In 1766 Haidar Ali occupied Kozhikkode. In view of Haidar's aggressive designs the Dutch sold Cannanore to Azhī Raja in 1771-72. In 1776 Haidar's general, Sardar Khān, occupied Chetway. As Tippu Sultan was contemplating an invasion of Travancore through Malabar, the Dutch sold Kodungallur to Travancore in 1789. In 1795 the English captured their Cochin and Thankacheri forts, and the Dutch departed from Kerala.

Their refusal to adopt the Portuguese system of passes for ships was of immense benefit to the Kerala merchants. Gradually they began to recover from the losses inflicted by the Portuguese. Further, the Dutch introduced the plantation system, improving the cultivation of coconut, indigo and even rice. They also encouraged salt farming and dyeing. The export of cotton goods, coconut products including jaggery, and tamarind increased. Tobacco, imported from Jaffna at first and subsequently cultivated locally, became a national habit. The Dutch captains, like D lannoy who chose to enter the service of the local Rajas introduced disciplined mass fighting, and improved military architecture and engineering besides the manufacture of fire arms and gunpowder.

In the Memoirs of successive governors about the state of their settlements we have valuable sources for history. The *Hortus Malabaricus*, compiled by the direction of Van Rhee de with the collaboration of the native physician, Itti Achyuthan, helped to reveal to the world at large the medical lore of Kerala and its wealth in medicinal plants and drugs.

Many factors contributed to the disappearance of the Dutch from Kerala. In the first place, Kerala was but an unimportant part of their settlements, a Cinderella by the side of Ceylon and the Archipelago. Weakened by the wars with the Zamorin and beaten by Marthandavarma, they were unable to stand on their own legs. Prompted by motives of profit rather than of prestige they sold away what they could not hold. They could not also contend against the rivalry of the English, who were superior to them as merchants, statesmen and seamen.

CHAPTER XIV

TEMPLES AND POLITICAL HISTORY

The temples of Kerala have played an important part not only in its religious but also in its political history. There might be nothing unique in the Chera kings propitiating their tutelary deity Korravar before they started on their warlike expeditions. Marthanda Varma again might not be doing anything peculiar when he got his sword consecrated at the temple of Adikesava at Thiruvattar before he attacked the Dutch at Colachel in 1741. But the worship offered by the Zamorin not only to his guardian deity but also to the tutelary deity of the enemy was original, a new device in state-craft seducing not only the enemy's allies but also his deity!

The kings of Kerala very often consulted their deities before they embarked upon any important undertaking. When Pyrard de Laval visited the Zamorin in 1607 he found him seeking to know the goddess's will about his war with Cochin through the oracle. The Rajas of Travancore ascertained Sripadmanabha's wishes about adoption through lot. It was only after receiving Lord Nataraja's approval through a mystic voice that Cheraman Perumal accepted the crown of Kerala after the flight of Sengor Poraiyan.

Devotion prompted the chiefs of Kerala not only to build temples of their own but also serve the Lord by associating themselves with the management of the temples of others as *Pura koyma* or *Koviladhikari*. The Venad chief Ramar Thiruvati appears as the *Koviladhikari* of Peruneydal in an inscription of 1100. The chiefs of Perumpatappu were once the *Pura koyma* of Vaikam with the title of *Gangadhara Koviladhikarikal*. Marthanda Varma dedicated his kingdom with all his rights and privileges to Lord Padmanabha in 1750 and chose to remain His servant. Whatever the difficulties, seldom did a chief decline to accept the offer

of a *Pura Koymaship* With the sultans of Madura battering at the eastern frontier, Adithyavarma Sarvanganathar it is said, did not hesitate to accept the invitation of the Vaikam *Yogam* to become its *Pura Koyma* though to reach Vaikam from Trivandrum he would have to pass through the kingdoms of hostile chiefs

Ambition also had led the chiefs to become controlling authorities of famous temples The management of Thirunavay and the celebration of the *Mahamagha* festival kept the Zamorin and the Vallathri perpetually hostile This festival was deemed so important by the Zamorin that he delayed operations against Kunjali Marakkar in 1600 till after the *Mahamagha* Though Haidar Ali was known to be advancing he did not proceed northwards to stop him till after the *Mahamagha* of 1766 Thiruvilvamaala and Thrprayar remained throughout objects of dispute between the Zamorin and the Cochin Raja The preoccupation of the Thrprayar dispute proved as fatal to him in 1773 as the *Mahamagha* of 1766 While he was quarrelling with the Cochin Raja about Thrprayar Haidar quietly occupied one fort of his after another and thus reconquered Malabar without striking a single blow But for British supremacy a war would have broken out between the Rjas of Cochin and Travancore in 1808 about the appointment of the *Thachchutaya Kaimal* the supreme internal authority in the temple of Kutalmanikkam at Irinjalakkuta

A large number of temples in Kerala were sovereign states with a well defined territory called *Sanketham* and well defined organs of government Some of these temple states were very small like Pallavur with a *Sanketham* of only two square miles and some of them were very big like Peruvanam Ilanunnappuzha and Trivandrum with *Sankethams* comprising hundreds of square miles

The origin of these temple states is shrouded in obscurity In a semi feudal age ownership of land carried with it the privilege of protecting and punishing those who lived within its boundaries Every endowment and dedication therefore conferred some power or other according to its terms Again in the wave of religious devotion that swept over the land under the leadership of the *Nayanars* and the *Ashvins* the members of the village

republics might have made over all their lands and properties to the Lord to be governed by him according to His will. Not only single villages but two or more might combine like-wise and establish a temple state. Trichur seems to have come into existence by the synoecism of two villages, Trivandrum of three and Guruvayur of five.

The Lord was the head of the temple state. Everything was done in the name of the Lord or of His auspicious asterism. The spokesman or human representative of the Lord was the sacerdotal head of the temple called *Pushpanjali*, *Yogathirippad*, *Pataram Thiruvati* or *Swamiyar*. The Lord kept Himself in touch with the day to day affairs of His state, so to speak, by having the *Thirthola*, or holy palm leaf showing the daily income and expenditure, read out in His presence before the temple was closed at night. The Lord of Guruvayur had a privy purse of His own, the income consisting of the *Atiyara* fees which every *Santhu*, or temple priest, had to pay on his first appointment, and the remuneration of an assistant cook for every feast of a hundred measures of rice or more.

The festival of the Lord served as an annual review of the administration. Complaints were invited at the beginning and at the close of the festival and the grievances, if any, had to be redressed before proceeding further. The Peruvanam festival had to be suspended for a year because one of the people assembled came forward saying that he could not get a suitable bridegroom for his daughter, and the festival was celebrated only after a bridegroom was found and the girl married. The *Arattu* procession at Guruvayur stops even now at a certain spot and does not move forward till after a descendant of the temple servant murdered here comes forward and says "We have no grievance."

The festival of the Lord was the celebration of His birthday also. So the normal activities of the season, like the annual renewal of the fences and thatches of the roofs and husking and hulling of rice were forbidden, to enable everyone to take part in the rejoicings. Those who had gone out of the village had to come back, if they did not return for the festival they were deemed dead and their obsequies performed.

Besides promoting learning culture and devotion as other temples the temple states had been of the greatest importance in Kerala. They had served as sanctuaries where the oppressed and the vanquished could take refuge. As has been mentioned already the Cochin Raja and his Portuguese companions escaped capture by the Zamorin by their flight to the near by Ilankunnappuzha *Sanketham*. In the same way the Rani of Attingal saved herself in 1730 from the Raja of Kayankulam by resorting to the sanctuary of Netumpuram Thali.

The administration of the temple state was also more enlightened and humane. Corruption was unknown. No inhabitant of a temple state had to suffer from the harassment of any administrative officer big or small. And if any unscrupulous chief laid violent hands on the property or person of anyone in the temple state its authorities punished the aggressor. Besides paying damage and compensation he had to dedicate to the Lord an elephant for every one killed and a silver pot for everyone wounded. If he proved defiant the temple authorities resorted to *Pattani* or fast.

CHAPTER XV

GOVERNMENT

(1120-1750)

At the beginning of the twelfth century Kerala consisted of a number of temple-states, village republics and principalities.

The temple-states and the village republics belonged to the Brahmins. Their constitution conformed more or less to the same pattern, the only difference being in the temple-state the Lord was regarded as the head and everything was done in His name. The territory under their rule was called *Sanketham*. In all matters, internal and external, they were absolutely free and sovereign. They could levy or remit any tax. They could inflict any punishment including confiscation and hanging. They could prohibit the pursuit of any trade or profession. They could declare war and make peace. And no one could enter the *Sanketham* without permission.

The sovereign body of the temple-state and the village republic was the *Yogam* or *Janam*. It consisted of the heads of the original founder families and of families who had been not only allowed to settle within the *Sanketham* but formally admitted to the *Yogam* or *Janam*. The day to day government was carried on by smaller body called *Sabha* or *Uralar*.

The *Yogam* or *Janam* met once a year to elect the members of the *Sabha* or the committee of *Uralar* and pass the accounts of the previous year and the budget of the year to come. Extraordinary meetings of the assembly were also held for the *Avarodham* or appointment of the sacerdotal head of the temple called *Pushpanjali Yogathirippad*, *Patarar Thirunati* or *Swamijar*, already mentioned and the secular *Aka-koyma* literally internal (*Aka*) chief (*Koyma*)

to maintain internal discipline and arrange for and regulate ordinary and extraordinary worships for recognizing the new medium if the deity had one as the *Velichchappad* or oracle for performing special rites and ceremonies for appointing the *Pura koyma* or chief executive for matters external and for the restoration of the *San-ketham* after a violation

The *Pura koyma* was the protector of the temple against invaders from outside and law breakers inside. At first every temple and village republic had its own Brahmin militia. But with the extinction of the Brahmin families the Brahmin militia also disappeared and the temple state and the village republic sought the services of a ruling chief. The assembly was free to dismiss the *Pura koy na* for incompetence as well as abuse of authority. Even after the *Pura koyma* became hereditary the importance of the *Yogam* survived in some ceremonial formality.

The records of Sripadmanabhaswami temple bear evidence to the vast powers once enjoyed by the *Yogam* referred to as *Ettara* literally Eight and a Half. It is not improbable that *Ettara* is a corrupt form of *Ettukara* meaning eight *Nads* or territorial divisions. It consisted of the *Swamijar* the *Sabha* the *Sabhanj than* also called *Srikaryam* the two *Desis* or groups of *Empranthiris* known as *Akkaradesi* and *Ikkaradesi* the three *Gramams* or villages the *Vadhyans* or priests and preceptors of five *Mukkahattams* or temples and others qualified to offer advice on the matter to be considered. The king was not a member of the *Ettara*. The only occasion on which he was present at a meeting of the *Ettara* was when it passed the account of the annual festival his presence being due perhaps to his having been an active participant. Even after the *Pura koyماشip* had become indefeasibly hereditary the new chief had to obtain the *Ettara's Anujna* or permission to receive Lord Padmanabha's sword. Even Marthandavarma deemed it necessary to secure the concurrence of the *Ettara* for the regulation of the succession in 1748.

The meeting of the general assembly and the governing committee was held in the temple the Lord being supposed to preside. In Gurvayur the Lord was believed to do everything with the advice of the *Uralar* in session as the phrase *Uralar ullirunnu* indicates.

The *Sabha* or the *Uralar* might divide itself into committees for specific purposes, or like the Brahmin *Variyams* of Trivandrum carry on the management by rotation every two months. In Guruvayur the *Paththukkar* Variyar assistants, consisting of three families made arrangements for the offerings and maintained accounts by rotation for ten days each. No member of the *Sabha* or the *Uralar* committee could plead ignorance or disown responsibility for its proceedings by absence, being required to nominate some other member to represent him.

The restoration of a *Sanketham* after its violation and dissolution could be effected only by the *Yogam* or *Janam*. The *Sanketham* was violated and dissolved if any stranger laid violent hands on the person or property of those living within it. All feasts and festivals were immediately suspended, and the daily routine worship alone were performed. In Trivandrum the violation of the *Sanketham* was announced by hoisting the *Rudhirakkoti* or red flag, in the western *Gopuram* or gateway. And the *Ettara* restored the *Sanketham* only after due amends had been made by the aggressor. Between 1345 and 1721 Padmanabha's *Sanketham* was dissolved and restored not less than fourteen times. And it was only by the timely dedication of an elephant that Marthandavarma was able to forestall the raising of the red for the violence of his mercenaries in 1732.

the rice mixed with *Thumpu* flowers in their cupped up palms and poured it three times on the head of the new chief with the injunction "Rule the land as your *Karnavans* or *Valiya Ammamans*", forefathers or distinguished uncles respectively, had done. This was followed by a procession to the nearest temple and a feast. In regard to chiefs, like the Vengunnattu Nampiti, the *Avarodham* took the place of the *Ariyittuvazha* the only difference being the former took place in a temple

The family of the chief was protected against extinction by adoption. It was made by the chief in patrilineal families and by the seniormost Thampuratti in matrilineal families. In partilineal families only males were adopted and the *Upanayanam*, or investiture with the sacred thread, of the adoptee was performed not by the natural father but by the adopter. In matrilineal families girls were adopted for continuing the family and boys were adopted if there was no male child or adult, for the time being. The adoptee, if a girl, was married only after adoption. As the rites were performed with the adoptee seated in the lap of the *Valiya Thampuratti*, boys could not have reached their teens at the time of adoption. The adoptee should also be of the same caste as the adopter. In these two respects Umayamma Rani's adoption of a Brahmin boy in 1672 when she had been *Ilamura*, or second princess, and of Kottayam Kerala-varma in 1690 as *Muththa Thampuran*, or senior Princess, were anomalous. A peculiarity of the adoptions was the adoptee did not lose his rights in his original family. Thus Marthandavarma annexed Martha by causing a Thrppappur Thampuratti to be adopted by the Martha *Muppu*, and the Kayankulam chief adopted by Unnikeralavarma claimed Desinganad when the latter died in 1734. In 1550 the Zamorin sent a force to Vatakkankur when its chief died to establish the claim of the Vatakkankur prince adopted in the Netiyiruppu Swarupam.

The *Ariyittuvazha* of the princes next in rank was performed after that of the chief. In the Zamorin's family there were five *Sthanams*, or dignities with separate appanages, in cochin three. *Sthanams* with a well-defined precedence came into existence in Travancore only in 1748, when Marthandavarma regulated the succession.

The chiefs claimed no divine right. No special sanctity protected their person. The secular law of *Kutippaka* or blood feud enforced by the *Chavers* deterred the enemy from rushing to kill the enemy chief as was done by the Tamils.

The chief's consort was called *Nayaththiyar* or *Neythiyar*. She lived with him, the rule of matrilocality being relaxed in consideration of his rank and position. Nevertheless she had to yield precedence to the Thampurattis.

The Thampurans and the Thampurattis were all given a grounding in Sanskrit under the family preceptor. It was thought *Infra dig* to talk in Malayalam except to the servants, though as time went Malayalam also rose to the level of Sanskrit. The Thampurattis pursued their literary studies, but the Thampurans were trained as they grew up in arms and statecraft, so that by the time they came to the *Masnad* they would have become experienced commanders and administrators. Ramavarma for example was closely associated with government since his boyhood, taking an active part in his uncle's wars by leading his own division against Kayankulam, Ampalappuzha and Cochin.

The orders of the Zamorin were called *Thuttu*, a contract of *Thiruvezhuthu*. They were known, also as *Netiya Thiruvezhuthu*, a shortened form of which was the Travancore *Nittu*. Letters and petitions were not directly addressed to the chief, but to this chaplain with the request that the contents might be communicated to him at his leisure. All letters, accounts and deeds were dated according to the *Kollamtonriandu*.

The chief himself led his forces to the battle field. If he was killed his *Chavers* wreaked a terrible vengeance. They either killed the enemy chief himself or his princes. They never returned alive without accomplishing their mission.

The chief was the source of honour. Grant of titles and honours brought a large income. He conferred the title of *Menon* on Nayars, *Muppan* and *Arajan* on Izhavs and *Thiyyas*, and *Marakkhar* on Muslims. Marthandavarma created the title of *Chempakaraman*. The king might also grant privileges similar to

those which Joseph Rabban received from Bhaskara Raviyaman. He might award *Virachangala* or bracelet of heroes for meritorious service. *Changalavilakki* or lamp with a chain. *Thukkuvilakku* or hanging lamp, and *Kuththuvilakku* or long handled lamp were other forms of distinction that came into vogue in this period.

The function of the chief in the administration of justice was the maintenance and enforcement of the *Azhimariyada* or ancient custom as declared by the elders of the locality. Under the influence of the Brahmins the institutes of Manu and other *Smriti* *thikaras* also came to be observed by the upper classes. Mahishamangalam Narayanan Namputhiri codified them in his *Vjaya haramalla* at the close of the sixteenth century.

In civil and social disputes the chief could not act on his own initiative but only at the request of the aggrieved. He appointed certain persons learned in the law, an *Aka koyma* to see that the law was properly declared, and a *Pura koyma* to enforce the decisions of the tribunal. All affairs of honour were decided by *Ankappor* or trial by battle. The only civil dispute of note decided by *Ankappor* was that between Unikkonar and Unichandror about the date of their birth on which depended the *Karanavanship* or right of managing the family estate. They were however allowed to engage professional champions to fight for them.

The sanctity of contract was scrupulously maintained. Debts were not scaled down. The debt once proved before the king or his officer the creditor could easily get his money by drawing a line round the debtor on the ground with the words. In the name of God king and Brahmins you should not leave the circle before paying me. A creditor it is said recovered his loan in this way from a ruler of Venad.

People accused of crime including *Maranam* or encompassing death by witch craft had to prove their innocence by the ordeal. Besides the serpent ordeal by which Kulasekharazhvar established the innocence of his Vaishnavite friends there was the ordeal of the boiling *ghī* at Kozhikkode and Suchindram in which the accused had to pick up a *Fanam* from the bottom of a pot of boiling *ghī*. In the ordeal of the red hot iron the suspect had to lick an axe or ploughshare heated red hot. In the crocodile ordeal at Kodungallur

the accused had to swim across the river near a ford infested by crocodiles. In the ordeal of the poison the accused had to swallow three grains of arsenic mixed with thirty-six grains of *ghi*. The ordeal was resorted to only if the accused did not admit his guilt. Very often he confessed to crimes which involved only fine and imprisonment as a lesser evil than the ordeal.

The prisons generally called *Ara*, were small cells of the size of a man in length, breadth and height, the jailer sleeping on the loft immediately above. Capital punishment was awarded for counterfeiting currency, rape, theft, murder and treason. The convict was put to death by stabbing, impalement or beheadal. Hanging came with the Portuguese. Musketeers guilty of these offences, desertion or treachery were disposed of by a firing squad. Treason involved the death of the traitor and the confiscation of his family house and property, women, children and other dependants being given a compassionate allowance as at Kozhikkode or sold as slaves as at Trivandrum. Brahmuns, women and children were not put to death however heinous their crime they were only exiled.

The Nayar corporations, like the Three Hundred and the Six Hundred, which were very powerful in the eleventh century, receded to the background as the chiefs became the protectors of the temple state as well as the village republic. Visscher refers to a meeting of the 'National assembly of the Malabars' at Kozhikkode in 1720. In 1634 the Lokar compelled the Zamorin to declare war on Vattam. Between 1692 and 1722 the people of Nanjinad held a series of meetings to protest against the oppression of the king's servants and even threatened twice to secede from the state. In 1799 Velu-Thampi convened a grand assembly, consisting of the representatives of the people from Aleppey to Thovala, at Karamana, and compelled the king to exile the Diwan and order two of his agents to be publicly whipped in the presence of the assembly. These are only exceptional instances of direct action. Such meetings and assemblies had no place in the regular government of the land.

or estates, he allowed the original chief to rule the rest of his *Nad* provided he paid a succession fee and an annual tribute, and sent also the prescribed quota of Nayers to his army whenever he embarked on war. He annexed polanad and Nedunganad because the porlathuri fled and the Nedungeri cheated. Because the Vallatri and the Sekharivarman refused to submit he occupied Thirunavay and Natuvattam in Plaghat.

Marthandavarma ousted the hereditary chiefs and annexed their principalities. And the organization of his empire was therefore different. It was divided into a number of *Mukhams* each of the *Mukhams* again into a number of *Mantapams* and finally each of the *Mantapams* into a number of *Pravithus*.

The quasi feudal militia armed with the conventional weapons generally fighting hand to hand formed the backbone of the army. The sling and the bow were the common long range weapons. The Zamorin's army was the biggest consisting of one hundred and fifty thousand Nayers. While on active service they received an extra allowance for food and the indispensable betel. In a land full of hills and forests mass fighting under a commander was unknown. Pitched battles involving large numbers were rare. A fight in which twenty lives were lost was considered a serious affair. The insistence upon the removal of the dead body from the battlefield immediately after death and other rules which were not observed even in the battle of Kurukshethra proved a serious handicap while fighting against those who did not care for them.

From very early times people were familiar with fire works. We do not know when fire arms made their appearance on the battlefield. At any rate in 1500 the Zamorin was able to bring some big guns to the shore to reply to cabral's bombardment. In 1503 he employed two Italians to teach his gunsmiths the art of casting guns in the European fashion and in the course of a year they were able to make between four hundred and five hundred pieces of ordnance. As has been already mentioned Marthandavarma set up a foundry at Udayagiri under D Lannoy for making cannon.

The musketeers of Kerala were not inferior man to man to those of Europe. Their first shot generally hit the *Manthiras* or Thirayanacheri perhaps helping to give the soldiers a sureness of

aim and a steadiness in handling their weapons Marthandavarma employed D Lannoy to train his soldiers in European methods

With the conventional forces alone the rulers of the Travancore Rajas employed mercenaries also to defend the country against external raids and invasions as well as to suppress internal disorder By the treaty of 1722 the Nayak of Trichinopoly agreed to send a subsidiary force and by the treaties of 1795 and 1805 guaranteed complete protection against external invasion and internal subversion

They had also to construct a series of fortresses to defend their land frontier The military architect and engineer Thajkkad Namputhiri constructed a sort of Chinese wall to protect the south eastern frontier while the Dutchman *Valiya kappiththan* D Lannoy protected the northern frontier by the *Travancore Lines*

None of the chiefs except the Zamorin maintained a large navy the Moplah merchants providing the necessary ships sailors and equipment The opposing ships held themselves fast to each other by grappling irons the soldiers fighting hand to hand as on land The Moplahs were admirable swimmers Ludovic Varthema refers with admiration to some of them who swam over twenty miles sometimes under the water and some times on the surface and thus saved themselves from capture

The expenditure and the income of the quasifeudal empire of the Zamorin must necessarily be smaller than of a highly centralized empire like Marthandavarma's The chief items of expenditure in any state are the army and the civil government In the Zamorin's empire they were based on land Money was required only when the militia went out on a warlike expedition the conventional allowance per day being 1 *Fanam* equivalent to three or four Rupees now The Zamorin's money income consisted of the proceeds from the sale of the surplus *Pattam* or rent from the crown lands the annual tribute paid by the feudatories customs duties at five per cent *ad valorem* on all exports and imports succession fee and occasional aids and levies in money profits of coinage fee for gold washing ranging between 2½ and 5 per cent fee for holding a trial by battle amounting at times to 1000 *Fanams* tolls and excise duties on inland

trade, atonement for unintentional offences, fines imposed on law-breakers, poll tax on slaves collected from their masters, presents on various occasions, fee for keeping people in detention, poll tax on boatmen and artisans, fee for providing special escorts and guards, an annual fee for protection levied from all land-owners, royalties on elephants caught in the forests, sale of wrecks and enemy's battle ships that might be captured or driven ashore by winds and fees for conferring honours and titles. He was entitled also to all freaks among cattle, tusks of elephants, skin and claws of the tiger and skin and horns of the stag, killed or dead all of which he might sell. The accumulated savings of the Zamorin in 1503 consisted 'of two magazines of ingots of gold and stamped gold money which even a hundred mules could not carry'. But on account of the decline in trade consequent on the wars with the Portuguese and the Dutch the income from the customs duties was considerably reduced, at the same time the expenditure on the manufacture and purchase of fire arms and other war material considerably increased. He borrowed off and on from the English, and the accumulated debt in 1738 amounted to 576492 *Fanams*.

In addition to these the Travancore Rajas augmented their income by monopolies in pepper, salt, tobacco cassia and areca, a land tax based on a periodical settlement, fees for transfer of land, the clearing of silt and dedication of bulls, and *Upathi*, *Viniyogam Vetti* and *Vekari*. No where did the fees for titles and honours bring so large an income as in Travancore it amounted to 1,46,210 *Puththans* in 1757. Nevertheless the war with Tippu entailed a debt of Rs 16 00,000.

goods arriving for the king; others the dues and taxes paid day by day, others expenditure of the king's household; others the notable incidents of each day, both what happens at court and in the rest of the kingdom; in fact all news, for he has everything registered; and each clerk has his separate room. They keep also a register of all strangers who come here." The records so admirably kept, of Malabar were destroyed during the Portuguese raids (1500-1600) and the Mysorean occupation (1766-92); those of Cochin and Travancore alone are now available for the historian.

The conventional celibacy of the younger brothers and the steady rise in the age of marriage progressively reduced the birth rate among them, which the eldest son's polygamy could not counteract. They did not take advantage of Yajnavalkya's *Smṛti* and raise their children born or *Sambandham* with the matrilineal folk to their own caste. Hence the Namputhiri families began to die out, resulting in the concentration of wealth in the surviving reversioners.

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By the withdrawal of the Cholas after 1102 the Aramboli route once more became the highway of communication between the east and the west. The enterprising Brahmins of Pandya, called Ayyars and Pattars, were the first to come and settle here. Coming as bankers and merchants they were eagerly welcomed by the chiefs, who gave them free food in all their temples and choultries, adding also small presents now and then in cash on feast days and their birthdays. By the seventeenth century they had established their *Samuhamadhams* or common rest-and-welfare houses in every important village and town. When, on the advent of Haidar Ali, the Namputhiris left Palghat, the Sekharivarmas brought a number of Brahmins from the Kaveri basin and settled them in Palghat.

The Konkanis came from Goa to escape the inquisition set up in 1560. Theirs was the only mass movement of Brahmins into Kerala known to history. The special favour shown by the Dutch, who brought their local requirements only from them and engaged them as their agents, brokers, and interpreters, led them to abandon Kozhikkode for Cochin and Alleppey.

Below the Brahmins came the martial classes, consisting of Kshatriyas, Samanthas and Nayars (*Lokar*). They were all matrilineal, their women being free to live in *Sambandham* with a member of their own caste, or of a caste higher than theirs, the latter invariably preferred if available. Girls were adopted to continue the family, the adoption being made by the seniormost lady. The Kshatriyas were marked off from the samanthas and the *Lokar* by the sacred thread. After a preliminary course in Sanskrit and Malayalam they began their training in arms in the *Kalaris* or military gymnasium, which was more or less the same for all.

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The training of the youth lasted for ten years or more according to his aptitude or aspirations. Then, on an auspicious day, generally on the last day of *Dasra*, when Goddess Kali is believed

CHAPTER XVI

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS (1120—1750)

In the seven centuries that followed the disappearance of Bhaskara Ravivarman in 1019 a profound change had taken place in social and economic conditions. A large Christian and Muslim population had come into existence by the side of the Hindus. The Jews had left North Kerala, and in the coastal towns once occupied by the Portuguese a few Eurasians had sprung up as a consequence of the mixed marriages introduced and encouraged by Albuquerque.

The Hindu society itself had become more complex. Kolkunnaththu Sivankal forbade the Brahmins to give their daughters in marriage to people outside the Perunchellur *Kazhakam*. And for want of suitable families of equal rank for marriage matriliney came into vogue amongst the Namputhiris of Panniyur. On account of the decline of the Pandyas, with whom Venad had intermarried, the matrilineal system was adopted by the Travancore chiefs. Again, on account of the great slaughter of the Chera chola conflict other Kshatriya dynasties and the Kshatriyas in general gave up their patriliney.

A meticulous regard for cleanliness, which had been responsible for the idea of pollution by touch gradually engendered also a feeling of defilement by approach. As the result of differences in occupation, food and environment each caste had developed its own peculiar odour. And from the Brahmin downwards every caste had come to consider itself polluted by the approach within a certain specified distance of people belonging to castes below theirs. The Namputhiri considered himself defiled by the approach of a Nayar within six feet. A Pulayan, almost at the other end of the social scale, would bathe five times

if touched by a Parayan, and seven times if approached within the prohibited distance by an Ullatan, and symbolically empty himself of his polluted blood by pricking his finger with a thorn and shedding a few drops before his last bath

In spite of wars, invasions, and raids, the shrine and the *Mannam* remained the unit of all religious, social and political life in the community. Unless exasperated the people seldom discussed politics or interfered with government.

The Brahmins occupied the top of the society as in the *Saighant* Age and after. They consisted now of four groups: the Malayala Brahmins or Namputhiris, Thulu Brahmins or Empranthiris, Tamil Brahmins or Ayyars and Pattars, and Konkani or Canarese Brahmins. The pride of place was enjoyed by the Namputhiris. At every religious rite performed by the Travancore Rajas the Namputhiris received seven *Fanams*, the Empranthiris five, and the others only four.

Some of the causes of the predominance of the Namputhiris have already been mentioned. As chief, warrior, parent and priest they were closely associated with all the ruling families, nobles and *Lokar*. Thanks to the *Sambandham*, which allowed them to enjoy all the conveniences of a family life without any of its worries and responsibilities, they dedicated their lives to the pursuit of religion and knowledge. They were consulted on all matters, sacred and secular, and their decision was accepted as final. With the chiefs and the *Lokar* sworn to protect them, and the weapon of *Pattini*, or fast, to keep the chiefs to their word, the Namputhiris were supreme in Kerala.

Some of the *Anacharams* or peculiar customs, of the Namputhiris have already been described. Not to be confounded with the Brahmins and the Brahmin warriors of *Paradesa* they adopted some of the fashions and customs of their Nayar comrades in arms. They wore their tuft on the top of the head and for clothing, both man and woman invariably took to white. While the former was already distinguished from the Nayar by the sacred thread, the latter, when going out, began now to cover the face with a palm leaf sunshade.

Below the Brahmins came the martial classes, consisting of Kshatriyas, Samanthas and Niyars (*Lokar*). They were all matrilineal, their women being free to live in *Sambandham* with a member of their own caste, or of a caste higher than theirs, the latter invariably preferred if available. Girls were adopted to continue the family, the adoption being made by the seniormost lady. The Kshatriyas were marked off from the samanthas and the *Lokar* by the sacred thread. After a preliminary course in Sanskrit and Malayalam they began their training in arms in the *Kalaris* or military gymnasium, which was more or less the same for all.

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to have slain the demon, he offered flowers to the deities presiding over the *Kalarī* under the direction of his preceptor, called *Asan*, *Kurup* or *Panikkar*. Then he offered the *Gurudakshina* or preceptor's fee, and prostrated before him. Getting up after receiving his blessings, he made his obeisance to every one present, individually and severally, and stood ready for the investiture. The investiture was very simple, consisting in the preceptor placing in his hands a naked sword and shield with the injunction "Protecting cows and Brahmins, conduct yourself in everything as your *Valiya Ammamans*, or distinguished uncles, had done". From this time onwards he was entitled to all the privileges of the *Lokar* to attend the meetings of the *Parisha* at the *Manram*, to take his arms with him when he went out, to settle his disputes by wager of battle, to go on escort duty and the like.

The *Kalarī* training was not confined to the *Lokar*, though it was compulsory for them. The *Izhava Chekos*, literally attendants, who earned their livelihood as champions of rival parties in the *Ankappor* or trial by battle, had their own *Kalaris*. They might have been the descendants of those who had accompanied Manabharana in 1036. In the sixteenth century we find them settled in Kolaththunad and Kurumbranad, their respective leaders, Aringotar and Aromal Chekavar, enjoying all the privileges of the local nobility. The fee some of them charged might seem astounding. In the famous case of Unichandror v Unikonar, Aromal Chekavar received from the latter 100 purses of 1001 *Fanams* each, a fee by no means too high as they were risking their very life, the vanquished not enjoying even the privilege of an appeal to the spectators to spare his life as in the gladiatorial combats of ancient Rome.

The Christians and the Muslims also had their *Kalaris*, training in which was deemed a good equipment for the sea also. Tichcholi Othenan's friend, Kunjali IV, was a famous swordsman. A commendable feature of these *Kalaris* was the absence of exclusiveness amongst them. In fact, they vied with one another to attract pupils belonging to other communities. One of the preceptors of Othenan was, in fact, a Muslim known as Mathilum Gurukkal.

The military efficiency of the *Lokar* was maintained in various ways. Besides the *Patakkali*, or war dance, there was the annual *Vattakkali* or circular dance, at the *Mannam*, the movements of which were calculated to keep up the suppleness and nimbleness acquired in the *Kalarī*. The sham fights which are now held in some places during the national *Onam* festival were real fights in ancient days, ending now and then in the death of the participants. The *Ankappor*, or trial by battle, served the same purpose. One of the most popular attractions of the annual festivals of the big temples, like Vaikam, was the demonstration of skill in acrobatics, fencing and wrestling. The *Kutippaka* or blood feud, again, started a cycle of slaughter and counter slaughter.

The *Chavers* or people who had sworn to die, deserve more than a passing mention. They consisted of people who were sworn to die for king and country like the Pandyan *Chavers* referred to in the inscriptions or who were bound to avenge the death of their master or die in the attempt by holding lands on the *Chaverruvrththi* tenure. The *Apaththuthavikal* of the Cholas and the Pandyas could return even if they were not successful, but the *Chavers* could not and did not. The *Chaverruvrththi* was peculiar to Kerala. While the *Chavers* made their appearance at Thirunavay for every *Mahamagha* to 'kill the Zamorin and avenge the death of their princes', the death of Rajadithya at Takkolam in 949 and of Rajadhiraja at Koppam in 1054 provoked no attempt at retaliation.

The *Sambandham* being matrilineal, the women folk among the matrilineal peoples enjoyed a freedom unknown to their patrilineal sisters. They also went through a course of training in the *Kalarī* though it was short and elementary. Some of them, like Unni Archa, who was the terror of the Nagapuram bullies, however specialized in it, and their achievements have been enshrined in ballad and song. The unions being free, polyandry entailed no dishonour, though polygamy might have roused some jealousy.

The assistants in the temples below the *Santhi*, or priest, still form a class by themselves. Consisting mainly of Psharotis, Variyars, Pothuvals and Marars, they form the *Antharala Jathis* or intermediate castes.

However numerous a Namputhiri's faults might be exclusiveness in learning was not one. His children by *Sambandham* learnt Sanskrit and studied *Iyakarana* or grammar, *Kavya* or literature, *Tharka* or disputation *Jyotishha* or astronomy, and *Jyotsya* or astrology. Even Izhiyas like the Pazhur Kaniyans became famous astrologers, and Thiyyas like Itti Achyuthan became great physicians whose services were availed of by Europeans like the Dutch commander, Van Rheeде.

A number of new land tenures made their appearance in this period. The growing pressure of population on land increased the importance and prestige of the landlord in society. To retain his association with land he resorted to various devices even when making a gift of it. They were made in the form of perpetual leases under various names like *Santhathubrah naswam*, *Anubhogam*, *Sasvatha n*, *Kutuma* and *Atuma*. The transfer of land in the form of the ancient *Nirattipper* survived only among the lesser land owners. Stringently enough though all property in land in matrilineal families was vested in the seniormost female member sales and purchases were made in the name of *X Y Z and Thamp mar* or younger brothers.

Another evidence of the steady growth of population was the appearance of the *kuzh kkanam* tenure for bringing fresh land under cultivation. Virgin land was leased out to a tenant free for twelve years. At the end of this period the improvements he had effected were valued and a fresh lease was executed as *Verum pattam* or *Kanam*.

The growth of population was not the only problem. A money economy was gradually coming into vogue. The landlord stood in need of money. And he tried to obtain it by *Kanam* or *Orru*. In both the cultivating tenant made an advance deposit. The *Kanamdar* paid an annual *Purappad* or surplus to the landlord which was roughly equivalent to fair rent less interest on the deposit. In *Orru* no *Purappad* was paid to the landowner. Both *Kana n* and *Orru* were also subject to *Polichchezhuththu* or renewal of the lease. In this period it was not a great hardship occurring only at wide intervals its object being to establish direct contact between the family of the landlord and of the tenant when land

changed hands by gift, bequest, extinction, sale, forfeiture or conquest

Panayam or mortgage is the direct evidence of the immediate demand for money and its comparative scarcity *Chuntipanayam* is simple mortgage In *Kavasampanayam* the mortgagor transfers possession to the mortgagee, who enjoys the usufruct in lieu of interest The *Untaruthipanayam* is a form of usufructuary mortgage, extinguished by the mortgagee's enjoyment of the usufruct for a stipulated number of years, at the end of which the land reverts to the mortgagor

The growing demand for money in this period was due to many causes Gunpowder and fire arms required a large outlay Fortifications were also costly The Travancore Rajas had to supplement their feudal retainers by a large mercenary force, and off and on they had also to buy off the raiders on the eastern frontier. The people too were becoming addicts day by day to liquor, opium and tobacco

People of thrifty habits, like the Brahmins, bought the lands of the wasteful and the extravagant And in course of time, a large part of the landed property in Kerala came to be owned by a few Namputhiri families on account also of the extinction of their kinsmen

There was little change in agricultural organization or methods The monsoon was regular every operation had its own appointed time and the accumulated agricultural lore of the people consisted of a few simple proverbs, easily understood and remembered by all The *Vellalas*, who had cultivated the land in ancient times were now landed proprietors or merchants, the *Izhavas* and the *Thiyyas* cultivating the land in their stead

Artisans still continued to do their work at home as in ancient days Except cloth, goods were made only to order Contract work was practically unknown Dams, palaces, forts and temples, in fact all public works were executed directly by the authorities concerned The wars with the Europeans brought two new

industries to the forefront shipbuilding and the manufacture of fire arms and ammunition

Kozhikkode is believed to have been the seat of the oldest mint in Kerala. In course of time mints were set up at Cannanore, Cochin and Kollam (Quilon). The relative value of the coins minted at these places were as follows —

16 (Kollam) Kasu	=	1 Chakram
8 Chakrams	=	1 Anantharyan Fanam
3½ Anantharyan Fanams	=	1 Rupee
1 Anantharyan Fanam	=	1 Viraryan Fanam (Kozhikkode)
4 Cochin Fanams	=	1 Kozhikkode Fanam

The coin that was current throughout India was the Moorish Rupee

In addition to the Chettis and Vyparis (Ravaris) we find also a large number of Muslims, Christians and Pandya Brahmins engaged in inland trade. For every pack a duty of one *Fanam* had to be paid in every kingdom through which it was taken. The Brahmins were however exempted from duty for the pack they carried on the head though that on the shoulder was charged the usual *Fanam*. The ancient corporations like the *Manigramam*, *Anjuranam* and *Nagaram* gradually declined.

In the eleventh century the Hindu *Naradesis* and *Valanjiyars* and the Jews had been the chief carriers of the seaborne trade, the former with the east, the latter with the west. By 1178 the Hindus had yielded place to the Chinese. Kollam (Quilon) was the half way house in the trade between the east and the west. Chau ju ku (1225) refers to Kollam (Quilon) and the Nampar kingdom with Tsuan (Chou fu) as its capital. Marco Polo (1292) describes Kollam (Quilon), Ezhi (Chirakkal) and the pirate coast north of Cannanore. Ma Huan (1403) visited Kollam (Quilon), Cochin and Kozhikkode. The chief exports to China were brazil wood, ginger and go buckrams and pepper, the daily consumption of which in a town like Kuisay exceeded 3800 kilograms. The

chief imports were cloths of silk and gold, porcelain ware, camphor, rhubarb, *huang hen*, cloves, lump camphor, sandals, cardamom, gharuwood, spikenard, gold, silver, and copper. At the end of the thirteenth century the trade with the east was more than ninety per cent of the total sea borne trade.

By the beginning of the fifteenth century, when Ma Huan wrote, Kollam (Quilon) had already given place to Kozhikkode as the premier port of Kerala. In the first place, the absenteeism of the Thiruvattis and their dynastic quarrels must have undermined the original security which alone could induce merchants to come and trade. Further, as has already been said, Kozhikkode was a free port, and every ship that came here was helped on its voyage irrespective of its destination. It was also the nearest port for the import of horses from Persia and Arabia. Lastly, the Zamorin extended many facilities to the Moors, who ousted the Jews and the Chinese from the Indian Ocean trade.

The coming of the Portuguese was a great blow to the Moors. The battle off Diu in 1509 deprived them of the command of the sea, which was gradually becoming the highway of world commerce. The Dutch took the place of the Portuguese in 1663, and the Dutch in turn gave way to the English in 1795.

CHAPTER XVII

THE INGLORIOUS END OF A GLORIOUS EPOCH (1760-1810)

With the accession of Mirthindavarma the *Epoch of the Tampirans* began to end. His policy of total annexation, abolition of local and hereditary rights in government and centralization of government with foreign aid or mercenaries were strange to *Kerala Maryada*. The invasions of Haidar Ali and Tippu Sultan directly uprooted the ancient set up in Malabar, and indirectly made the English supreme in Cochin and Travancore also. With the establishment of British supremacy the old order disappeared and a new order began.

On December 31, 1600 the English East India Company was formed. In 1615 Captain Keeling brought a letter from James I and the Zamorin allowed him to set up a factory at Kozhikkode. But it withered away. In 1635 the English opened a factory at Cochin and in 1644 another at Vizhinjam. As soon as the Dutch captured Cochin in 1663 they expelled the English factors settled there.

They came to the Zamorin and he allowed them to trade in Ponnani and Kozhikkode. With his characteristic generosity he made an annual present of 1,000 *Fanams* and 2 manillas to the head of the English factory at Kozhikkode. In 1691 he permitted them to build a factory at Chetway. In 1699 he reduced by 25% the duties payable by them. And from 1710 onwards he subjected every one of the local merchants who were suspected of selling substandard goods to them to the ordeal of the boiling *ghu* or red hot iron.

Some time before 1699 the English established themselves at Tellicherry within a few miles of the Dutch at Cannanore.

As the Dutch supported Azhī Raja, the English supported the Kolaththiri and the Raja of Kottayam, and occupied Dharmadam in 1728. In 1730 the Kolaththiri gave them the monopoly of the pepper trade of Randathara and Iruvazhinad. As the Dutch did not take an active part, as the English did, in the war of the local princes against Bednur, the latter got for themselves all the trade north of the Valarpattanam river.

In the south also the English gained over the Dutch. In 1684 they got Anjengo from the Rani of Attingal. They erected a fort here in 1695, having received the ruler's permission in 1690. The misbehaviour of the English factors at Anjengo caused considerable resentment among the people. And a riot broke out at Attingal in 1721, when the head of the English factory came to offer his respects and good wishes with the usual presents on the eve of *Vishu* or New Year Day. At the instigation of the Dutch, the rioters killed the head of the factory with all his followers. They even laid siege to their fort at Anjengo, but it was relieved by a squadron from Tellicherry. In 1722 the Rani of Attingal expressed her regret for the ugly incidents, and in the following year Marthandavarma, then Prince of Neyyattinkara, concluded a treaty with the English by which they promised their unstinted support by way of munition and other way materials against his enemies. And in 1725 they got permission to open a factory at Idawa.

As the Dutch gradually declined in importance the French took their place as the rivals of the English. The French East India Company was formed in 1664. In 1673 they founded Pondicherry in the east coast. In 1725 one of their captains, named Mahe de La Bourdonnais captured Mayyazhi and changed its name to his, as Mahe. In close proximity to each other, the factors at Mahe and Tellicherry entered into an agreement in 1728 to live amicably. In 1741 even a treaty of mutual neutrality and reciprocal advantage was concluded. Unfortunately the ambitions of the French governor general Dupleix, dragged the English into a war of succession in the Carnatic in which, however, Muhammad Ali, whom the English had assisted, became successful. In the course of the Seven Years War the English captured Mahe, in 1763 they restored it also to the French.

In the meanwhile, agreeably to the treaty of 1757 with Marthandavarma his successor, Ramavarma, sent a force in 1762 to assist the Cochin Raja to recover his possessions from the Zamorin. A combined Cochin Travancore army invaded the Zamorin's dominions and occupied Alangad, Parur and Trichur. Before they could proceed further, Muhammad Ali appeared in the eastern frontier of Travancore to collect the 'irrears of tribute'. So, in 1763, Ramavarma recalled his troops, and the Zamorin agreed to formally cede the territory occupied by his forces and pay also the Travancore army's expenses.

In 1761 Haidar Ali became Nisab of Mysore. He wanted to annex Kerala. While he had been *saugdar* of Dindigul, he had sent an army to the assistance of the Palghat Raja against the Zamorin and the Zamorin had persuaded Haidar to recall his force, agreeing to pay its expenses. But on account of the war with the Dutch and the Travancorean invasion the Zamorin had not been able to keep his word. Envoys came from Haidar demanding the amount due to him. With the obligation incurred now to pay the Travancore Raja's expenses also, the Zamorin was helpless.

In 1766 Haidar invaded Malabar. Advancing by way of Chirakkal, he defeated the joint forces of the Zamorin and his allies at Perunkulam, and coming to Kozhikkode besieged the Zamorin's fort. Unable to defend it he committed suicide, and Haidar occupied Kozhikkode. Moving southwards and accepting the submission of the Cochin Raja, he built a fort at Palghat, and retired to Coimbatore before the onset of the rains.

Marthandavarma had offended Haidar Ali by asking for his assistance to put down the freedom movement in the newly annexed territories in 1754 and subsequently with drawing it. Haidar could invade Travancore either through the Aramboli route or through Malabar. The former had been protected by Marthandavarma by the erection of a cross wall from Udayagiri to Cape Kumari. Now that the Travancore frontier had been extended to Alwaye by the invasion of 1763 the northern approaches to Travancore had also to be barred. Fortunately before the submission of the Cochin Raja to Haidar in 1766 the *Valiya Kappil an* D Lannoy, had constructed the *Nedunkotta* known also as the *Travancore Lines*, from the sea to the Ghats.

To be within striking distance of the disaffected areas he transferred the headquarters of the Malabar province from Kozhikkode to Feroke. Thinking that the Nayars would be more loyal if converted to Islam he abolished matriliney and embarked upon a policy of mass conversion in 1789. The lower classes fled to the hills and the forests, and the upper classes to Travancore.

With Travancore as a refuge for the people of Malabar his hold on it could only be precarious. So he resolved to invade Travancore. To protect his communications he offered to restore to the Zamorin all the territories he had possessed before 1762, if he joined him. He promised to hand over Alangad and Parur to the Cochin Raja when conquered, and asked him to formally claim them from the Travancore chief. He opened negotiations with the Dutch to buy Kodungallur and Ayakotta so that he might by pass the impregnable *Travancore Lines*. But the Zamorin would not be ungrateful to the Dharmaraja who had given asylum to himself and his subjects in their hour of need. The Cochin Raja was not sure about his claims to Alangad and Parur, and declined to oblige Tippu. And the Dutch sold Kodungallur and Ayakotta to the Travancore Raja, who offered a higher price.

Outwitted and disappointed everywhere, Tippu launched his attack on the *Travancore Lines* on December 29, 1789. Like the battle of Cochin in 1504, the battle of the Travancore Lines also lasted for 108 days, in the course of which Tippu was wounded on the leg. A practicable breach was effected on April 15, 1790. Demolishing the hated *Lines*, he advanced southwards, and captured Kodungallur, Kuriyappalli and Verapoly. Tippu himself led the vanguard across the river. But the doughty Kunju kutti Pilla Karyakkar cut down the embankment that had kept off the sea and the rushing waters swept away the Mysoreans. Tippu himself would have been washed away but for Kaimruddin who dragged him out of his palanquin and carried him on his shoulders to the opposite bank.

Almost immediately came the news that the English had formed a confederacy against him in the north and were marching on his capital. The monsoon also was about to break in Malabar. So Tippu returned to Mysore.

The princes of North Malabar and the Zamorin at once joined the English, agreeing to pay tribute when restored to their *Nads*. The Cochin Raja also renounced his allegiance to the Sultan and agreed to pay tribute to the English. Tippu's forts at Chetway, Chavakkad and Palghat were captured one by one. Defeated at Thirurangadi on October 10, 1790, Tippu's general, Martab Khan, left for Mysore. Before the end of the year, Cannanore, Badagara, Kuttippuram and Valarpattanam were occupied by the allies. Early in 1791 they captured Coimbatore, though for want of munitions they were not able to hold it against the besiegers.

In the meanwhile the English captured Bangalore and advanced on Seringapatam. To save his capital Tippu ceded Malabar, Cochin and Coorg to the English on March 8, 1792.

Though in 1790 the English had promised to re-instate the Malabar chieftains, they virtually annexed Malabar. As Tippu was still powerful and Diwan Kesava Pillai wanted to incorporate Malabar with Travancore, the princes of Malabar, including the Zamorin, acquiesced in the arrangements made by the English for the government of the country. Only the Ravivarmanas of the Zamorin's family opposed the new rulers. They were joined by Unni Muththa Muppan, Kunju Achchan of Palghat and some of the polygars in the vicinity of Kollangode. After a generation of actual or threatened war people wanted peace, and Kunju Achchan and his friends got little public support. At last, the Ravivarmanas themselves accepted a pension and settled in Kozhikkode in 1797.

The Raja of Kottayam, known as Pazhassy, opposed the English on the ground that the tax-collection of his *Nad* was entrusted to the Raja of Kurumbranad, instead of to him as its ruler as had been done in other *Nads*. He opened negotiations with Tippu, and even cut down a detachment sent to arrest him in 1797. At last, he also accepted a pension, his uncle being made responsible for the revenue collection of his *Nad*.

In 1799 Tippu died while defending his capital. The Hindu Raja whom the English placed on the throne of Mysore ceded Wynad and Canara, which included Kasargod. Wynad was claimed by the Pizhassy Raja as part of his ancestral dominions. He took up arms to recover his rights. But, joined only by the Iruvazhinad Nampiyars and Itachchenna Kunjan, he had no chance of success. Driven from pillar to post he committed suicide on November 30, 1805.

By the treaty of 1791, the Cochin Raja became a tributary ally of the English. By the treaty of 1795, concluded with the whole hearted support of Diwan Kesavadas, the English undertook to protect Travancore against external invasion, and by the treaty of 1805, concluded on the recommendation of the popular hero, Velu Thampi, appointed Diwan in 1801, the Raja of Travancore agreed to accept the advice of the British Government, when offered. Under cover of what was intended for an emergency, the British Resident began to interfere in the day to day administration of the state to the detriment of the authority of the king and the welfare of the people. Protests having failed, Velu Thampi resolved to free the state from the domination of the British. He found an enthusiastic ally in Paliyom Komu Menon, Chief Minister of Cochin, who wanted to ruin the Resident for helping his political enemies. The confederates raised a secret army in their respective states, and even appealed to the French for help.

Expecting their early arrival, they made a joint attack on the Residency on December, 18 1808, but it failed. Velu Thampi then tried to destroy the English garrison stationed at Kollam (Quilon), it also failed. On January 14 1809, he issued a proclamation from Kuntara, calling upon the people to join him to expel the English. Recruits flocked to his standard. At the head of an army of 30 000 men and 18 guns he renewed the war. An attack on the Cochin Residency now also failed and Komu Menon ultimately surrendered to the English. Velu Thampi offered battle at Kizhikkollur on February 19, 1809 but he was defeated. Unable to raise another army he fled and escaped capture by suicide. With the surrender of Komu Menon and the collapse of Velu Thampi British authority was firmly established in Cochin and Travancore.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GLORY OF TRAVANCORE (1790-1947)

With the establishment of British supremacy ended the mediæval period in the history of Kerala. The menace of external invasion having disappeared the rulers could now devote themselves to internal reform and welfare. The traditional eighteen *Nads* or political divisions with which the *Epoch of the Nant Purans* had begun, were now reduced to three, Travancore (7625 sq miles) Cochin (1417 sq miles) and British Malabar (5787 sq miles).

The reign of *Sri Karthika Thirunal Ramavarma* (1798-98) may be divided into two periods, the earlier marked by wars and invasions, the later by reforms. His wars with the Zamorin and Tippu Sultan have been already described. He continued the policy of Marthandavarma and made over Pirur, Mangat and Alangad conquered from the Zamorin to Lord Padmanabha in 1763, 1764 and 1766 respectively. As enjoined by his deceased uncle he showed considerable self-restraint in dealing with Muhammad Ali and accepting the advice of the English solved the frontier problem by ceding all his possessions in Tinnevely except Shencottu and Cape Kumari in 1766.

He was fortunate in his minister *Dn a: Kesavadas* (1789-1810) who had earned his confidence by the excellent arrangements he had made for the grand sacrifice performed at Alwaye in 1788. The capital was transferred from Kalkulam (Padmanabhapuram) to Trivandrum. Industries and agriculture were encouraged roads repaired bridges built ports improved and new coins minted for the convenience of merchants. The pagoda begun by Marthandavarma was completed. Author of six *Kathakalis* and a treatise on *Natya* or dancing, known as *Balaramabharatham*.

opposed him, and nothing could be done. A constitutional crisis was averted only by the death of the Raja in 1810.

Rejecting the claims of KeralaVarma, the Governor General enthroned *Sri Ajilyam Thirunal Gauri Lakshmi Bai* (1810-14). The first woman ruler to ascend the *Masnad* in Kerala, she was fortunate in having the Resident Col. Munro as *Dewan*. A secretariat was established. The farming of the salt tax was abolished. The cultivators were given a *Pattayam* showing the amount due to the government as tax. The sale and purchase of slaves except in agriculture was forbidden. A judicial hierarchy was set up. Muslims and Christians were allowed the enjoyment of their personal laws, and a beginning was made to admit them into the government service. The separate management of the temple states and temples was abolished, a *Devaswam Department* being created to look after them. In 1813 the Raja gave birth to Rama Varma Swathi Thirunal. The infant prince was proclaimed Maharaja in July, but the queen mother continued to rule the state. In 1814 she died.

Rani Parvathi Bai (1814-29) became regent. Though only thirteen years old, she had a genius for administration. Cultivation was extended, the fees for the wearing of ornaments of gold and silver exacted from the lower castes were abolished, all restrictions on covering the roofs of houses with tiles were removed, those who were not Hindus were exempted from *Iyuthithi* or personal service in temples, dowries were limited, a grant was made to the Kottayam seminar in 1818, the London Mission English School started at Narakovil was encouraged, and the Nayar Brigade was brought into being. The Rule of law was strictly enforced. Corruption was severely punished, a Tahsildar being publicly flogged and sent to prison for twelve years. Unfortunately, she made an ill-advised grant to the *Dewan* in recognition of his services in 1820. But as all land now belonged to Lord Paomanabha and as the Lord alone through the *Ettara Yagam* could make any gift, it was recovered in 1822.

steadily pursued. The Huzur was brought to Trivandrum from Kollam, and the judiciary was organized on the English model. An English school was opened at Trivandrum in 1834, followed by the observatory and a free hospital. A separate Public Works or *Maramath* Department was organized, duties on one hundred and sixty five articles were abolished and a census was taken for the first time in 1836.

Swathi Thirunal's political reforms might be forgotten. But as a poet, devotee and patron of poets, his name will remain for ever in history. If Ravivarman Kulasekhara had been a *Chathushashitikalavallabha* or master of sixty four arts, Swathi Thirunal was a *Sarvakalavallabha* or master of every art known to man. Commanding eighteen languages, he could write poems in most of them and compose songs in some of them. The *Bhakti-manjari* in Sanskrit is praised as the greatest of his works. The *Syanandirapuravarnanaprabandham*, describing the glories of Trivandrum and Lord Padmanabha coming next. His *Kirthanas*, or songs in praise of God, number 186, and *Padams*, or songs describing love, 65. Performing *Thulapurushadana* and *Hiranyagarbha* he began the *Sasthamangalam* procession, ostensibly to make his obeisance at the temple there but really to show his gratitude for the support the Kupakkara Porri had given to his mother against the adoption of Keralavarma. He popularized *Harikathakalakshepanam* as performed by the Pandharpur saints. Though he was partial to music his court was adorned by masters of almost every art, including magic and *Manthra*vada, or healing by suggestion, belonging not only to Kerala and India but also to the most distant parts of the globe, from England in the west to China and Japan in the east. The famous musician among the Muslims, Suleiman Sait and Alauddin enjoyed a regular allowance from the treasury, Rev Pect of Mavelikkara got Rs. 1000 for his Malayalam *Grammar*, and Shift obtained Rs. 12 000 for painting his portrait. Rev Baily dedicated his Malayalam-English Dictionary to Swathi Thirunal. After a brilliant reign the Maharaja died in 1846.

Sri Uthran Thirunal Marthandavarma (1846-60) went on with the work of reform inherited from his predecessor. In 1853 the children of government slaves born after the proclamation were declared free. In 1859 the Shanar women were allowed

freedom to wear their dress as they liked, and in the same year a school for girls was opened. The Raja was fond of *Kathakali*, himself writing one with the title of *Simhadhinja*.

During the reign of *Sri Ayilyam Thirunal Ramavarma* (1860-80) Travancore became a model state. The reign began with the abolition of the pepper monopoly. In 1864-65 the Raja's lands were made heritable and saleable. The *Janmi Kutiyam* proclamation of 1866-67 conferred fixity of tenure on the tenants of private landlords. In 1862 a medical school was started, and in 1866 the Government College of Arts came into existence, followed by the School of Arts and schools for girls. In 1874 Law classes were started. The Varkala Tunnel, museum, lunatic asylum, civil hospital, and the Kothayar dam are other monuments of the reign. The year 1875 witnessed the beginning of the regular decennial census. Ayilyam Thirunal was the first Maharaja went also on a tour to Bombay, Benares and Calcutta in 1872. He was the first to give an important place to prose in Malayalam literature himself setting an example by writing the *Minakethanacharitham* and the *Bhashasakunthalam*.

Sri Visakhom Thirunal Ramavarma (1880-85) it is said, squeezed into five short years the work of a life time. A typical example of English thought on the South Indian mind, he contributed articles in English to the *Madras Athenaeum*, the *Indian Statesman* and the *Calcutta Review*. His first act was the release of Valiya Koyil Thampuram Keralavarma, imprisoned by Ayilyam Thirunal. He went on a tour through Upper India in 1882. He separated the police from the magistracy, introduced the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code of British India, established the High Court, and conducted an elaborate survey, following it up by a revenue settlement. He was offered a seat in the newly established legislative council of the Viceroy which he had to decline for reasons of health. He was a Fellow of the Madras University and a member of many scientific societies in England and Europe.

Sri Mulam Thirunal Ramavarma (1885-1924), fond of cricket and tennis, riding and driving, was perhaps the simplest of all the Travancore Maharajas. His civil list was the smallest in

relation to the total revenues of the state, six lakhs of rupees against an income of more than two hundred lakhs. Orthodox, he was cosmopolitan in his outlook. He combined a thorough knowledge of the details of administration with a rigid punctuality and spirit of detachment. Every department received his stimulating attention and his long reign of thirty nine years was a record of allround progress. He abolished the *Viruththis* and thus completed the work which Munro had begun with the stopping of *Purushantharam*. He created an Agricultural Department to improve agriculture, separated the executive and the judiciary, established a full bench of three judges as the highest tribunal, and improved education in all its varied aspects. Land and water transport were brought up to date. Kollam (Quilon) was connected by rail with Tinneveli in 1904 and with Trivandrum in 1918. A true conservative, the Maharaja was not exclusive. Every opportunity was availed of to raise the backward classes. The most important reform associated with the name of Srimulam Thirunal was the inauguration of the Legislative Council in 1888 and the Srimulam Assembly in 1904.

Sri Chithra Thirunal Bala Ramavarma (a 1924) was only twelve years old when he came to the throne. So the Senior Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bai acted as regent. As the result of the Vaikam *Sathyagraha* the main approach road to the Vaikam temple were thrown open to the *Avarnas*. Animal sacrifices in government temples were prohibited, the singing of obscene songs during festivals was forbidden, and the practice of dedicating girls to the service of the Lord as *Devadasis* begun by Kulasekharazhvar was abolished on account of the evils it had engendered.

In 1931 Sri Chithra Thirunal assumed the government of the state. Under him Travancore became a typical modern state, a model to the rest of India. Though opinion might be divided about the Legislative Reforms Act of 1932, everyone must applaud the courage and wisdom underlying the proclamation of 1936 opening the temples of Travancore to every Hindu irrespective of caste or sex. The Travancore University founded in 1937 not only provided for a well recognized demand but also initiated movements for similar universities for the conservation of regional

culture and research in regional potentialities. The State Transport System inaugurated in 1937 has been again, an eye opener to all as a public utility service earning a big net income for the state. Bombay was connected with Trivandrum by air services in 1935. The Pallivasal Scheme (1933-40) was the first attempt in India to harness the waterfalls to man's service by the generation of electricity. With Chithra Thurunil's tour to England and Europe in 1933-4 disappeared also the fear of losing caste by sea voyage.

CHAPTER XIX

THE MODERNIZATION OF COCHIN (1790-1947)

The Mysorean menace (1766—1799) made the British supreme in Kerala. *Sakthian Thampuran* Ramavarma remained at the helm of affairs in Cochin first as regent from 1769 to 1790 and afterwards as Raja from 1790 to 1805. In 1776 he persuaded Haidar Ali to reduce the tribute payable by Cochin to one half of what his general Sardar Khan had demanded. And from 1777 onwards a Cochin contingent of 1000 Nayars helped the Nabob to suppress his Kozhikkode enemies. In 1789 the Cochin Raja opened secret negotiations with the English and joined them as a tributary ally after Tipu Sultan left Kerala in 1790.

He made a determined attempt to stamp out mediaeval lawlessness. His strong hand fell hard, sometimes cruelly hard, upon every one who opposed him. It is even said that once he insisted upon a *Ami* Brahmin's severed head to be brought to him as *Ka u* or the first thing to cast his eyes upon in the morning. Temples and merchants were his milchcows. He kept a strict watch on corrupt officials and publicly flogged them besides sending them to jail and confiscating all their property. His officers spread like a net for thieves, robbers and murderers, and punished them in the presence of their victims the murderer being hanged in front of the houses of the murdered. People suspected of secret intrigues with his enemies were kept in tiger cages loaded with irons for a long time before they were put to death as an act of mercy. He engaged in trade maintaining a small fleet of his own. Though he was not satisfied with the English who seemed to be partial towards Travancore on his death bed he advised his successor to live in friendship with them and give them no cause for offence.

It is unfortunate that his successors took no interest in government engrossed wholly in religion or literature. Seven of them,

who reigned altogether for nearly sixty years from 1805 to 1864, were *Madhyas*, and spent their time, like Kulasekharazhvar, in the company of their co-votaries, leaving everything to their ministers. And these latter, with no reputation or traditions to maintain, some times sought to promote their own private interests in preference to the public welfare. Paliyat Achchan caused his political rivals to be drowned in the Kodungallur river or liquidated in some other manner. And because one of his intended victims, named Kunjukrishna Menon, managed to escape to the Resident Col Macaulay, he joined the lofty minded Velu Thampi in a war to get rid of the British.

The Achchan's abortive political adventure brought only troubles and sufferings for the people. The treaty of 1809 not only provided for internal interference by the British but also saddled the state with an increased subsidy and a war indemnity. The discomfiture of Paliyat Achchan again, was followed by the disbandment of his soldiers, who took to robbery and dacoity, and the appointment of his enemy, Kunjukrishna Menon as chief minister. Under him bribery became the only means of obtaining any redress. Public servants were not paid from the treasury but allowed to help themselves with the collections, in which Kunjukrishna Menon had also his unofficial share. In three years he saddled the state with a debt of six lakhs of rupees, besides allowing the subsidy and the war indemnity to fall into arrears.

In 1812 the Resident *Col Munro* himself assumed the *Divanship*. He suppressed dacoity, checked smuggling, removed all vexatious imposts, abolished the farming of taxes, put down corruption, separated the executive from the judiciary, improved the administration of justice, systematized the collections, instituted a system of accounts, established schools, and ameliorated the lot of the Christians by admitting them liberally into the public service and appointing a Christian judge along with a Hindu judge in the two courts established by him. He took over the management of the temples also. In seven years he was able to raise the total annual income of the state from 4.96 lakhs of rupees in 1812 to 7.55 lakhs in 1818, and clear the debts due to private parties and the arrears of subsidy and war indemnity due to the British.

Nanjappayya (1818—25) who had been in Munro's service succeeded him in 1818. He began his stewardship with the restoration of most of the water *panthals* and *Uttupuras* or public feeding houses abolished by Col. Macaulay. He remodelled the judicial administration, improved forests by planting teak trees, introduced allopathic treatment of diseases and vaccination and sponsored the establishment of a private English school at Mattancheri. His greatest service to the state was the *Kantezhuththu* settlement of wet lands after local inspection and collection of data by his revenue officials. Unfortunately the *Dewan* died in 1825.

The even course of reform suffered a terrible set back under *Itamana Sankara Menon* (1830—35) who looked upon the state as a vast private estate for the exclusive benefit of himself and his kinsmen. Public servants were paid at long intervals and even then they were paid not in money but in vile tobacco and filthy salt. Execrated by all, he was prosecuted and sentenced to five years' rigorous imprisonment.

Venkitasubbayya (1835—40) who succeeded Sankara Menon, proved an efficient administrator. He brought the judiciary into line with that of British India and extended the *Kantezhuththu* settlement to garden lands. He improved agriculture and introduced the cultivation of cotton and coffee. He opened an English school at Trichur and another at Mattancheri and appointed an English tutor for the education of the princes. He removed the restrictions which had been imposed on the possession of fire arms in 1809 so that the ryots might be able more effectively to cope with the wild animals that were destroying the crops. Venkitasubbayya could not however continue his work of reform. He had to retire because the new Raja wanted him to stop the allowance that was being paid to his deceased predecessor's consort. But before his retirement he had improved the finances to such an extent that no officer's salary was ever more than two or three months in arrears.

Fortunately for the state his successor *Saikara Varyar* (1840—56) had been his assistant and collaborator. Carrying on his predecessor's policy, he laid the foundation of a modern administration. Beginning his *Dinanslip* with only 371 (three

hundred and seventy-one) rupees in the treasury, at the end of the second year he had saved a lakh and a half, and at the time of his death he left behind him two lakhs in cash and nine lakhs in securities. Within a few months of his taking charge he was able to pay the salaries of his officers promptly at the end of the month and wholly in money, without levying additional taxes or stinting expenditure in improvements.

He fattened the proverbial goose that laid the golden eggs by encouraging commerce and agriculture. He covered the country with a network of roads with bridges across the rivers, connecting them with the grand highways outside the state. Wheeled traffic was established between Coimbatore and Trichur for the first time in 1844. It is said that the arrival one morning at Trichur of 12 bullock carts with goods from Coimbatore brought the whole town to witness the sight, the people not having seen such a conveyance before, and caused more excitement in the place than when the railway train first passed through it in 1902. Not less than 20 *Choultries* were constructed along the road for the convenience of merchants and travellers. At the same time well-planned canals connected Ernakulam with Trichur on one side and Thripunithura on the other. A multitude of *Chiras*, or small lakes, and tanks all over the state brought new land under cultivation.

To the infinite relief of the poor he reduced the monopoly price of salt and helped to bring down the price of other articles by a reduction of the customs and excise duties. By the proclamation of 1854 he emancipated the slaves in the state. He opened the first English school at Ernakulam which in the fullness of time blossomed into a model college. He appointed also an Englishman as tutor for the education of the princes. The position of the *Diwan* of a native state was extremely difficult: he had to serve two masters, the British Government and his own Raja. Then conflicting claims at times rendered him unhappy. Nevertheless Sankara Variyar carried on his work, and died in 1856 lamented by all. He was the Father of Modern Cochin.

Sankara Variyar's son, *Sankunni Menon* (1860—79), became *Diwan* in 1860. Like the father, the son also dedicated his life to the welfare of Cochin. He brought the judiciary into line with that of

by the Government of Cochin Act in 1938, in recognition of the rapidly expanding political aspirations of the people in the state

MAKERS OF MODERN COCHIN

Raja Sakthan Thampuran Ramavarma	1790—1805
Diwan Col Munro	1812—18
„ Nanjappayya	1818—25
„ Venkatasubbayya	1835—40
„ Sankara Variyar	1840—56
„ Sankunni Menon	1860—79
„ Govinda Menon	1879—89
„ Rajagopalachari	1895—1901
„ Banerji	1907—14
„ Bhore	1914—19
„ Vijayaraghavachari	1919—22
„ Narayana Menon	1922—25
„ Shanmugham Chetti	1935—41

CHAPTER XX

THE TRAVAILS OF BRITISH MALABAR (1790-1947)

The English had no interest in Malabar except the maintenance of law and order, the collection of revenue and the exploitation of its resources. Forming but an insignificant part of a much bigger unit, the welfare of its people depended on the local Collector.

The treaty of Seringapatam (1792) ceded to the English a Malabar ruled by more than twenty years of alien occupation. The old administrative machinery with the chief as the head of each of the numerous petty *Nads* into which it had been divided governing the people on quasi-feudal principles had completely broken down. Unni Muththa Muppan and Aththar Gurikkal now roamed about with their bands of dacoits. As the result of Tipu's policy of wholesale conversion the Hindus who had formed the bulk of the landlords had left their homes and lands, and their tenants consisting mostly of Muslims had stepped into their place. And in the course of a generation even the lands they had taken possession of had changed hands.

As the English had undertaken the protection of the chiefs in 1793 they declared Malabar a Province under a Supervisor and Chief Magistrate with headquarters at Kozhikkode. They recognized also the rights of the *Kanamidars* who could prove uninterrupted possession for the preceding six years. As the chief could pay tribute only from the income of their *Nals* the revenue collection of their respective *Nads* was leased out to them.

The revenue arrangements were not destined to succeed. Ever since the defeat of the Muslims in the battle off Diu in 1509 they were gradually drifting apart from the Zamorin. The treaties he

had to conclude with the Portuguese and his surrender of Kunjali to their custody in 1600 steadily widened the gulf. And Tippu's policy engendered a bitter hatred in the minds of the Hindus against their Muslim neighbours. With the sufferings of the exile still rankling in their minds the chiefs rated the Muslims more highly than the Hindus. With the memories of the influence they had enjoyed under Tippu, the former refused to pay the tax shaking their swords at the tax collector. The Nayars, accustomed only to follow their chiefs to the battle field barred their gates against the tax gatherer. Unable to collect the revenue one by one the chiefs surrendered their *Nads* to the British ultimately receiving a pension calculated at one fifth of the net revenue of the year preceding the surrender. In 1800 Malabar was transferred from the Bombay to the Madras Presidency, and in the following year it was placed under a Principal Collector assisted by nine Subordinate collectors.

outbreaks took place besides numerous abortive risings and conspiracies. As the victim was invariably a Hindu it is difficult not to brand them as communal. A mixed policy of coercion, conciliation and reform, disarmament, collective fines on the community, roads, economic improvement, education, precautionary measures and round the clock vigilance seemed to have wiped out what had been a disgrace to the community.

The troubles with the Pāzhāssy Raja and the Moplah outbreaks opened the eyes of the government to the importance of communications for the maintenance of law and order. The prospect of extending his influence northwards through the alliance with Haider Ali had already induced the Azhārājā in 1766 to link the Mt. Flī river with the backwaters of the Thalipparāmpa and Vālarpittanam rivers. The Collector Mr. Conolly, murdered in 1855, connected the Elathur with the Beypore river by the canal bearing his name. He wanted also to join the Kadalundi river with the Bharathappuzha. But the mud oozing up from the bottom of the former was found to be a great obstacle to navigation and the scheme was finally given up in 1857.

Before Tipu wheeled traffic was unknown. To move his artillery he constructed a series of roads passing through important places in Malabar and converging on Seringapatam through the passes of Wynad and through the Palghat Gap. On account of the heavy rainfall these roads required unremitting attention. The annual allotment was Rs. 30,000. But on account of the prudence of Engineers and the pre-occupation of the Subordinate Collectors with revenue work the annual expenditure for the twenty-five years ending 1850 seldom exceeded Rs. 18,000. With Collector Conolly began a new era of road development also. In 1846 he made roads measured 138 miles. By the beginning of the century the total mileage had risen to 1,700. Compared with Travancore Malabar still lagged behind.

The railway came to supplement the work of the roads. By 1861 it had reached Kadalundi. In 1888 Kozhikkode became its terminus. By 1903 it had been extended to Cannanore, and by 1907 it had passed beyond Kasargod to Mangalore which still remains its terminus in the west. In 1902 the Shoranur-Ernakulam

line was opened and in the twenties Nilambur and Angadippuram were linked with Shoranur. Long before this, Palghat had been connected with the main line at Olavakkot, though it had to wait for half a century to send its goods by rail to the great commercial centre of Pollachi. The Kollangode-Trichur chord line, projected by the alien government and kept in abeyance by them on economic grounds, still remains a project, though the increasing importance of the Cochin harbour has made it an imperative necessity.

While the law and order problem hastened the construction of the railways, it required nearly half a century for the English to attend to the vexed question of land tenure. With the disbandment of the hereditary militia in 1802, the Nayars began to take to agriculture. They were attracted to it not only by the loss of their hereditary occupation but also by the rise in prices. They took advantage of the law to evict their tenants or rack rent them. At last in 1856 the Sadr court forbade the *Polichchezhuththu* or renewal of the *Kanam* and *Verumpattam* lease for twelve years from the date of its execution. In 1887 the Land Improvement Act began to give compensation for unexhausted improvements. But it was not till 1928, that the hated *Polichchezhuththu* was abolished.

The constructive contribution of the foreign government to agriculture was next to nothing. Finding that in a cycle of five years only one is bad it quietly shelved the Malampuzha scheme it had prepared. The departed government has left in fact no great irrigation work as a permanent memorial.

The same story of indifference is repeated in education. With the rest of the big Madras Presidency to recruit employees from there was no urge to start schools here to train young men for the public service. The education of the people was left entirely to private effort. The Zamorin's College was founded at Kozhikkode in 1879, four years after the Raja's College at Ernakulam, but for all intents and purposes the Zamorin was only a private *Jannu*.

In the Madras Presidency Wynad and Nilambur alone produced gold. And the royalty on gold-washing was one of the many

sources of the Zamorin's revenue before the Mysorean occupation. It was not encouraged by the English because it was not remunerative. A license for prospecting for gold was granted in 1926, but it was cancelled in 1929.

In matters of health also the profit-and-loss motive decided everything. Vaccination against small-pox was introduced in 1801, and the first public hospital was opened at Kozhikkode in 1845. In Travancore on the other hand though vaccination was introduced only in 1812 three charity dispensaries had come into existence at Trivandrum by 1819; and in 1836 Swathi Thirunal established a charity lying-in-hospital also. His successor, Uthram Thirunal was an adept in allopathy, and personally attended to patients coming for treatment in the "Ilaya Raja's Dispensary," established while he had been heir-apparent.

In the administration of justice alone the English government could claim superiority. And Cochin and Travancore introduced the system prevalent in Malabar and the Madras Presidency. In Malabar the executive and the judiciary were separated in 1802, a regular hierarchy of courts was brought in existence in 1875, with the first and second appeals to the High Court at Madras and the final appeal to the Privy Council in England. But law and order alone cannot make a people happy. Literature flourishes only when and where people are happy. The history of literature in Kerala shows that it had been flourishing in North Kerala which constituted British Malabar, only till the second half of the eighteenth century, after which it suddenly withered away.

CHAPTER XXI

SANSKRIT IN KERALA

No other state in India has contributed so much to Sanskrit as Kerala. Till the middle of the eighteenth century Sanskrit was the mothertongue of the Malayala Brahmins. The restriction of the marriage to the eldest son enabled his younger brothers to devote their whole time to the cultivation of literature, arts and science. By their *Sambandhams* they imparted their love of learning in general and Sanskrit in particular to royalty, nobility and the *Antharalajathis* who formed the temple assistants, some of whom, like Achyutha Pisharoti and Nilakantha Nampisan, would have added lustre even to Vikramaditya's court.

On account of the long friendship with the Pallavas and the consequent contact with the *Ghatikasthanas* or examination halls, and *Vidyasthanas* or colleges, Kerala did not lag behind. Dandin of the Pallava court had the highest regard for Mathradaththa and Somasarma of Kerala. The Kanthalursala near Trivandrum and the Parthivapuramsala founded by Karunandan offered advanced courses in the Vedas.

Though these *Salas* were destroyed during the Chera Chola conflict, new institutions soon took their place. The *Sabharathams* of Sanglikkode, Thurunavay, and Trichur taught the Vedas, while those of Chovvannur, Itakkulaththur, Kambalam, and Udayathungeswaram, which seem to have survived the ravages of the Chola invaders, taught the *Sasthras*. Grammar, Kumarila's philosophy and Prabhakara's *Gurumattha* had each of them six *Sanghas* for their teaching and exposition. Some families, again, specialized in the teaching or practice of *Manthra-vidya* or exorcism and healing by suggestion, *Vaidya* or medicine, and *Lishavaidya* or cure of bites and stings by poisonous fauna, especially snakes. There were families dedicated also to *Thanthra*

or temple rituals, *Smṛtis* and *Dharmasāstras*, and *Saṁhita* or literature, the Kudallur Mana or family even worshipping the famous grammarian, Pathanjali, as their tutelary deity.

From Uthayan Cheral downwards the chiefs of Kerala have been famous for their liberality to poets and learned men. The unidentified Kulasekhara Perumal was the patron of Prabhakara, Sankaracharya's contemporary, King Rajasekhara, of Sakthibhadra, King Kulasekharavarma of Tholan and the *Yamakavi* Vasudeva, and King Sthanuravi of the astronomer, Sankaranarayana.

The break-up of the Chera empire added to the number of royal patrons. Every chieftain had his court poet, and some of the chieftains were themselves poets. In the Kolaththiri court flourished Cherusseri, the author of the Malayalam *Krishnagatha* and Sankarakavi, who wrote the *Krishnavijaya*. Ravivarman Kulasekhara was the author of *Pradyumnabhyudaya* and patron of Samudrabandha. The versatile Ramapuvadan Kunjan Nampiyar, who wrote almost as many works in Sanskrit as in Malayalam, was the favourite of Marthandavarma and his successor, Ramavarma. Vattathunad Ravivarman encouraged Achyutha Pisharotti, under whom Melpuththur studied grammar, and the astronomer Nilakantha Somayaji was the pet of Azhvancheri. Thamprakkal Vedanthacharya wrote his *Kavyaprakāśoththetani* at the Cochin court, and Kasi Thampuran was the patron of Balakavi. Devanarayana of Ampilappuzha has made himself even immortal by his association with Melpuththur Narayana Bhattathiri as his friend and patron.

Like their brother chiefs the Zamorins also had patronized poets and learned men. Their annual *Pattaththanam*, literally gifts to learned men, of 101 *Faṁms* each served as a standing stimulus and invitation to the learned to produce their best. Begun as an expiation in 1309 on the death of the Thali Mussids, sought by themselves by their misguided Pattini or fast, the *Pattaththanam* was confined to Brahmans only. At first limited to proficiency in grammar, Kumārila Mimamsa, Prabhakara Mimamsa and Vedānta the Thanam was extended to literature, both Sanskrit and Malayalam, architecture, astronomy and even

medicine. In course of time it became a Feast of Learning, a conference of the learned lasting for seven days from the 28th or last asterism to the sixth in the month of Thulam (November-December). Once admitted to the *Thanam* he became a member of the *Vidvatsabha* receiving it every year. New members were admitted by the Sabha itself by consensus, Mullappalli Bhattathiri being the hereditary Adhyaksha or president. The standard expected of the candidates was so high and the tests so rigorous that it is said that Melpuththur Narayana Bhattathiri failed six times and passed only in the seventh attempt. The Sabha consisted of the learned from all the eighteen Nads or Karas of Kerala, and hence it is sometimes referred to as *Pathumettukarakavikal*, vulgarized into *Pathumettarakavikal*, literally eighteen and a half poets. With the Zamorin Manavikrama as patron, the *Pathumettara* of the fifteenth century included Uddanda, the Paradesa Brahmin, who was the terror of the poetasters of the day, Kakkasseru Bhattathiri, Chennas Narayanan Namputhiri who wrote the *Tanthrasaniucchaya*, and the Malayalam poet Punam Melpuththur Narayana Bhattathiri dominated the *Pathumettara* of the sixteenth century.

Sankarā and Vilamangalam I, Melpuththur and Swathi Thirunal, stand on a pedestal by themselves. Prabhakara and Payyur Patteries can be appreciated only by a limited circle.

The *Avyās* of the *Epoch of the Thampurans*, so far discovered and identified, number over one hundred. They include five biographies, thirty-one *Champus* of which twenty nine are Melpuththur's sixteen dramas, twelve *Yamakas* which are remarkable for their linguistic gymnastics, four *Samgraha* of the epics, four historicals or quasi historicals, seven *Sandesas*.

Though inspired by Kalidasa's *Meghasandesa*, the Kerala *Sandesas* are unique in their reference to historical personalities and events. They describe also the popular pilgrim centres which the messenger is asked to visit. Following this tradition the Brahmin messenger in Kochunni Thampuran's *Liprasandesa*, written some time between 1900 and 1902, comes all the way from Benaras by rail to Shoranur, visiting all the important cities on the way, and alighting here proceeds to Trivandrum by way of

Kodungallur, Trichur, Thirupunithura and Vaikom. Two of the *Sandeshas* are peculiar in the *Hamvasandesa* and the *Chakora sandesa* the message is sent by the wife as was done by the queens of the Cheras of the *Patiruppathithu*.

Among the *Sasthras* or sciences, *Vyākaraṇa* or grammar and *Jyōtishā* or astronomy claim the first place both for quantity and originality. Kṛṣṇa Nampūthiri attempted the stupendous task of transforming grammar into a *lāvāṇa* of I II III *Slokas*. Melputhithur, who was at home in every subject, sacred and secular wrote the *Prakriyasarvasvam*, highly eulogized by the author of the *Sidhanthakamūli* in sixty days, and insisted in his *Apaniṁyapramānyasadhanam* that the grammarian should not confine himself to ancient texts, but take into account subsequent and current usage.

Apart from Bhaskaracharya Vararuchi conferred a boon on astronomers by his *Cāndrāvakyaś* for the easy calculation of the day to day position of the moon, and on scientists in general by his *Katapaṇḍi*, which offers a simple method of expressing figures in easily remembered mnemonic words and phrases. People outside Kerala are still to have a *Dṛggaṇitha* or astronomy based on local observation similar to that founded by Irinjalakūta Madhavan Nampūthiri and Vīṭasserī Pīrāmeswaran Nampūthiri.

Chennamangalam Narayana Nampūthiri's *Thanthasamuchchaya* is still the authoritative text book on temple ritual and construction in Kerala. Though Thirumangalam Nilakantha Nampisan and Thaikkad Nampūthiri specialized in civil and military architecture their works have now only an academic interest. The discoveries in medical science especially relating to Marmas or vital spots, bone setting, cure of snake bite and treatment of rheumatism are still closely guarded family secrets or embodied in Malayalam works.

The decline of Sanskrit in the nineteenth century cannot be attributed to any great extent to the growing popularity of Malayalam and English. During the Mysorean occupation, as has been said more than once, the Hindus had to take refuge in Travancore. Most of the learned men refused to come back enjoying

in the land of their exile the same patronage they had received in their original homes. So great was the dearth of learned men for the Pattaththanam that the Zamorin did not find it necessary to allot more than 101 *Fanams* for each of the four subjects. And the *Thenam* was performed only to satisfy the religious obligation the Namputhiris assembled for the feast sharing the *Fanams* among themselves.

CHAPTER XXII

MALAYALAM LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

The language of the people of Kerala came to be called *Malayalam* only in the eighteenth century. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was known as *Malayalam* or *Malabar Tamil*. The earliest works in Malayalam that have come down to us in their original form are the *Bhasha Kautilyam* and the *Payyanurpattu* of the twelfth century and Chiraman's *Ramucharitam* and Ayyipillai Asan's *Ramakathapattu* of the thirteenth

Down to the seventh century at least people of Kerala and *Paradesa* were speaking the same language and had the same literature. The *Sangham* poems, with the epics *Silappathikaram* and *Manimekalai*, and the *Saivite* and *Vaishnavite* devotional literature, *Thevaram* and *Nalayiraprabandham*, were their common heritage.

Even from the beginning there were some dialectical difference of vocabulary, idiom and pronunciation between Kerala and *Paradesa*. They became more and more pronounced as time went on, when Kerala and *Paradesa* were exposed to different influences and the same influence in different degrees. In *Paradesa* the Nayar invasions constituted only a passing phase. In Kerala the Nayars became permanent settlers.

The inscriptions of the ninth century A. C. show that the Tamil of Kerala was gradually developing on independent lines of its own. On account of the Hun invasions the Sanskrit scholars assembled at the Gupta capitals dispersed all over India, some of them even proceeding to South East Asia. Sanskrit penetrated everywhere, modifying culture and language according to the innate genius of the people. Even the impregnable Tamil

had to yield, bringing forth a *Manpravala*, a *Misra Bhasha* or mixed language, of Sanskrit and Tamil words, in which *Sripurana n*, *Dvyaaprobandha*, *akhyanam*, *Gadyachinthamani* and *Jayakumaran charitham* have been written

In Kerala the growing influence of Sanskrit is indicated by the patronage it received. While the *Sanoham* Cheramans and their poets had written in Tamil, King Kulasekharavarma and Saktubhadra wrote their dramas and Vasudeva who was the protege of King Stharuravi and Prince Rama composed his *Kajjas* in Sanskrit. The circumstances of the Chola Chera conflict increased the importance of Sanskrit in more than one way. In the first place Tamil fell into disfavour as the language spoken by the hated enemy also. In the second place the Keralas required a language, which the Chola invaders could not understand, for communication among themselves. Thirdly Sanskrit which was the mother tongue of the Brahmins, was spreading by their *Sambandham* among the leaders of the people. Prompted therefore by patriotism, prudence and a feeling of feasibility an attempt began to replace Tamil by Sanskrit, the former being reduced to the indispensable minimum. Thus grew up a *Bhashamisra* which was *Misrabhasha* or mixed language of Sanskrit and local speech like the *Manpravalam* already mentioned with the important difference that the basic language was Sanskrit *Bhasha* or indigenous words being employed only where absolutely necessary.

Gradually a number of works like *Sahasrayogam*, *Muhurtha vidhu*, *Jagamrtham* and *Lisvakarmyam* in *Bhashamisra* made their appearance. And the Kannassa Panikkars (Rama Panikkar, Madhava Panikkar and Sankara Panikkar) even wrote their poems at first in the Nambuthiri *Bhashamisra*. Still fluid without any definite form, usage or tradition and with a large number of Sanskrit words *Bhashamisra* did not appeal to the people at large. So the Kannassans were obliged to make increasing use of *Bhasha* or indigenous language. Rama Panikkar begins his *Sivarathri mahatmyam* with a promise that he will be narrating it only in *Bhasha* and ends with the request that his poem may not be received with indifference. But though *Bhashamisra* might be avoided Sanskrit could not be entirely abolished. So Tholan laid down

the rule in his *Attaparakaranam* and *Kramadipika* that the *Vidushaka*, or clown should address his audience in *Bhasha*, or indigenous language, but his reply to the hero and the heroine must be made in suitable *Manipravala*, or mixed *Sanskrit Bhasha*, the characteristics of which were finally defined in the *Ilathilakam*

The four centuries that followed the withdrawal of the Cholas in A. D. 1120 were on the whole an age of peace and prosperity. Naturally the literature of the period centred round love and romance. In *Vaisikathaitthram* or Art of Allurement, *Champus* like *Unniachchi* and *Cherlachchi* and *Sandhas* like *Unnulisandesam* we have a *Madhurasahithyam*, or Literature of Erotics, in Malayalam the like of which is very difficult to find in any other language.

Even pleasure palls. And in due course the reaction set in. The *Sandesa* writers were ridiculed in the *Kakasandesam*, in which the bearer of the message is the common crow in contrast to the ruling prince of *Unnuli*. The other writers were held up to laughter in the *Chandratsavam*, or Feast of the Moon, in which princes like the chief of Manakkulam, and poets, like Punam and Sankarakavi, come in the train of their respective lady loves, singing their praises, and the *Chathihura Namputhiris*, adepts in grammar and philosophy, come in procession with their flashing swords to attend the festival, celebrated by the beauty queen, Medinivennilavu.

Cherusseri Sankaran Nampiti's *Krishnagatha* was the first positive sign of the reaction that was beginning. His object was religious to turn people's mind from pleasure to salvation, and enable every one to secure a place in heaven. From this point of view Cherusseri appears as paving the way for Ezhuthachchan and Punthanam.

The *Krishnagatha* proved to what sublime heights Malayalam could soar without the help of Sanskrit. It was composed at the request of Udayavarman Kolaththiri (1446-75) on the model of a lullaby to enable mothers to put their little ones to sleep. With the couplet in the place of the four lined stanza and with a diction at once simple and melodious, the *Krishnagatha* won the earth

of every one, man and woman, lay and learned alike. Called *Malayalasarabhauma* or Supreme Emperor of Malayalam, Cherusseri still reigns supreme, unique and unrivalled.

The *Pattaththanam* must have hastened the reaction against the *Madhurasahuthyam*. Erotic works were excluded from its consideration. Cherusseri's younger brother, Punam, who came to Kozhikkode in 1454, employed his inimitable talents in writing the *Ramayamachampu*, which became the model for the numerous *Champus* that followed it. He anticipated also Kunjan Nampiyar in investing *Puranic* scenes with a Kerala atmosphere. Among those present in Janaka's hall for Sitha's marriage were Namputhiris, *Manthradis*, *Vaidyas*, astrologers and *Nyars* from Kerala.

The *Age of Love and Romance* came to an end with the arrival of the Portuguese. The wars and intrigues that followed created a feeling of general insecurity, which is always fatal to pleasure and romance. With Thunjaththu Ramanujan Ezhuthachchan began the *Age of Devotion* in Malayalam Literature.

Ezhuthachchan was the first to employ *Kilippattu*, literally song of the parrot, in Malayalam poetry. Originating in Thirujnana Sambandhar and Manikkavachakar, the *Kilippattu* is written only in Tamil or *Dravida* metres. Of the twelve works attributed to him, *Adhyatmaramayanam*, *Mahabharatham*, *Devimahatmyam*, and *Uththararamayanam*, were undoubtedly his. He might be deemed to have written also *Brahmandapuranam*, *Sathanukharamayanam*, and *Bhagavatham* (down to *Kaliyamardanam*). He could not have been the author of *Harinamakirthanam*, *Chuntharatnam*, *Kavalyavanantham*, *Ramayanam* (24 *Vrththam*) and the prose *Keralanatakam*. Avoiding obsolete or obscure words, he adopted a diction consisting of the best words in Sanskrit and Malayalam.

Punthanam was not only a great mystic but also a great poet. As a writer of pure Malayalam he stands next to Cherusseri only. And Kunjan Nampiyar was indebted to him for his language, if not his ideas.

Kalakkaththu Ramapanivadan Kunjan Nampiyar (1704-81) was born at Kiliukurissimangalam near Lakkiti. He found a congenial patron in Devanariyana of Ampalappuzha. And Marthandavarma took him into his court after the conquest of Ampalappuzha. He had the honour of receiving two *Virachangalas* one from Marthandavarma and the other from his successor Ramavarma. His works reveal a wonderful knowledge of Sanskrit, Prakrit, Tamil, Malayalam, astrology, grammar, *Maistravada*, medicine, music, sculpture, temple ritual and the customs of the various peoples of Kerala. As Ramapanivadan he wrote a number of works in Sanskrit and *Prakrit* and as Kunjan Nampiyar a number of works in Malayalam. His fame however rests on the *Thullal* or dance in which the actor himself narrates the story with the assistance of his party. Intended mainly for the edification of the *Bhatayanam* literally the tank and file of the warriors, the *Thullals* are short stories from the *Puranas* told in simple but forceful Malayalam with words and metre suited to the character and the occasion, sparkling wit, proverb and satire. To enhance the appeal Nampiyar fills his *Puranic* world with the peoples of Kerala. If they are found only here and there in *Purana* in Nampiyar even heaven, not to speak of *Paradesa*, Hasthinapura, Indraprastha and Ayodhya, seems to be inhabited only by peoples from Kerala. The *Kalyanasagandhi kam* is given the first place among his *Thullals* with the *Glo Jayatilra* as the second. It is said that the *Thullal* sprang up readymade from his genius to punish the *Chakkayar* who had publicly ridiculed him. For a person of Nampiyar's many-sided talents such an achievement need not be dismissed as impossible.

In the *Chakkayararkuthilu* or dance of the *Chakkayar* who expounded the *Pauranic* stories with suitable gestures in the manner of the *Sakyan* or Buddhist monk we have the origin of the famous *Kattakal*. The earliest reference to the *Chakkayararkuthilu* is to be found in the *Silappathkara*. It died out in *Paradesa* after Rajendra I (1012-44) in Kerala; on the other hand it flourished. Sometimes more than one *Chakkayar* took part in the representation and thus transformed it into a *Kuttiyattam*. Kulasekharavarman Tholan and Uddandan each in his own way improved it. With Manavedon's *Krishnattam* the *Kattakali* began to assume its

present shape. For the first time death and bloodshed were brought to the stage, three of his eight dramas ending in *Vadha* or death. He also emphasized the *Mudras*, or sign-language of the Vedic worship as elaborated in Vedic and Thantric rituals. As Manavedan's plays were all in Sanskrit, Kottarakkara Thampuran wrote the *Ramanattam* in Malayalam, representing the important incidents in Srirama's life in a series of eight plays.

The Raja of Vattathithunad improved it by transferring the recital and singing to professional songsters so that the actors might devote their attention wholly to *Angyam* or emotional expression by gestures. As the actors appeared with masks, the face and the eyes which reflected the emotions, were concealed from the spectators. So Kaplingit Namputhiri abolished the mask, substituting *Chutti-kuththal* or painting, and introduced the helmet. The intervening events between the various scenes are described in *Slokas* as in the chorus of Shakespeare's plays, the *Padams* or songs alone being acted. But as Malayalam was used for both, the spectators could not easily follow the transition from the one to the other. So with Kottayam Keralavarma (d 1744) began the practice of employing Sanskrit for the *Sloka* and Malayalam for the *Padam*. The Kalladikkode Namputhiri introduced another reform. He dropped the repetition of the *Padam* and the *Angyam*, adopting a slower *Pathinjattam* or movement.

The Cochun and Travancore Rajas took a keen interest in *Kathakali*. The Cochun Raja, Keralavarma (1809-28) produced about a hundred *Attakathas*. And through *Kiratham* and *Dakshajagam*, in both of which Siva is the hero, he even tried to propagate his Madhvan Vaishnavism to make up for Sakthan Thampuran's punishment of the Madhva *guru*, who was smeared all over with the sacred ashes and compelled to do *Bhajan* in the Chakkankulangudi Siva temple. In number the contribution of the Travancore Rajas was very modest, Aswathi Thirunal (d 1794) being responsible for four, Kirttika Thirunal (d 1798) for six and Uthram Thirunal (d 1860) for one. Uthram Thirunal was even an actor, and while he was *Ilaya Raja* he organized a troupe which came to be known after his accession to the throne as the *Ilaiya Kottaram Kathakali Yogam*. He caused also a collection of 54 *Kathakalis* to be printed in 1857-58, the editing being done by the famous,

Keralapathrika and the *Malayala Manorama* we have two of the earliest newspapers. The new interest in the old evoked by the pervading scientific and historical spirit prompted Kunjukuttan Thampuran's translation of the *Mahabharatha* and Vallathol Narayan Menon's translation of the *Rg Veda* from Sanskrit, Pachchu Muththathu's *History of Travancore* and Aymanam P. John's *History of India*.

P. Govinda Pillai published the *History of Malayalam Literature* in 1881. Ulloor Parameswara Ayyar's *History of Kerala Literature*, published in the fifties of this century shows how vast and varied a literature Kerala possesses. As the study of a new language is best begun with its grammar, the first Malayalam grammar was written by an Englishman, named Robert Drummond, for the English East India Company. More authoritative of course are Kovunni Nedungadi's *Keralakaumudi* and Rajarajavarma's *Keralapaninnyam*, both of which appeared much later.

Nothing reveals the stature the Malayalam language has attained more than its dictionaries and lexicons. Benjamin Buley's *English Malayalam Dictionary* appeared in 1846 followed by, Hermann Gundert's monumental work in 1872. The first *Nighandu* explaining the meaning of Malayalam words in Malayalam itself was first published by Richard Collins. As early as the sixties of the last century George Mathen had recognized the virility, potentiality and many-sided adaptability of the Malayalam language, equalling if not excelling the English language. And it is fully justified by Suranad Kunyan Pillai's *Malayalam Lexicon* of Himalayan proportions, published in 1965 exactly one hundred years after Richard Collins' *Nighandu*, with more than twelve thousand words beginning with the first letter *A* itself of the Malayalam alphabet.

CHAPTER XXIII

SAINTS AND SEERS OF KERALA

From Ilanko Atikal in the second century A C to Sri Narayana Guru in the twentieth a number of saints and seers have appeared in Kerala. Some account has already been given of Sankara the greatest of them all, and Cheraman Perumal and Kulasekharazhvar ranking next

Ilanko Atikal was Senkuttuvan's younger brother. He became a monk. He wrote an epic in Tamil known as *Silappathukaram*, describing the life of Kannaki and her deification at Kodungallur.

Kannaki and her husband, Kovalan, belonged to the Chola capital, Kaveripumpattanam. Losing all his fortune in the company of a courtesan named Madhavi, Kovalan came to Madura. Here he was executed by the Pandyan king on a false charge of theft, foisted upon him by the royal goldsmith. In her anguish, Kannaki plucked off her left breast and hurled it at the city, which began at once to burn. Leaving the burning city, she came to Chenkunnu in Kerala, and setting fire to a pyre erected by herself, she walked in to the flames to join Kovalan, whose spirit had come down to take her to heaven. Senkuttuvan built a shrine for her as an incarnation of Kali or Mother Goddess. King Gajabahu of Ceylon and others, who had come for its consecration solemnly promised to erect similar shrines for her after they returned home. Gradually the Kannaki worship spread not only in Kerala but also in other parts of South India and Ceylon.

The Kannaki cult has throughout been a living force in Kerala. The annual festival, generally in *Vrischika* (December-January) in the numerous shrines dedicated to her, is marked by a three days recital of the *Silappathukaram*. The annual festival on the *Bharani* or second asterism, in the month of *Meina* (March-April)

at the original shrine of Kodungallur lasts for a month, stirring Kerala from end to end, and drawing towards its close pilgrims in hundreds and thousands by bus, boat and rail, with the more devout trudging on foot

The family of Vilvamangalam I, who lived between 1251 and 1350, originally belonged to Panniyur. On account of the *Kur Matsaram* his ancestors, who were ardent worshippers of Siva, shifted to Parur. The personal name of the saint is not known. Vilvamangalam is the name of his house.

Son of Damodara and Nivi, he acquired a proficiency in grammar enough to write the *Purushakara*. Then he studied the *Saṅgamas* under Isanagurudevā and Adithyaprajña, and wrote the *Kalavadha* for the *Sivarathri* festival at Thrprangot near Thrkkantiyur. A joking taunt by his consort, Chinthamani, opened his eyes. Leaving her and renouncing altogether the pleasures of which he had been till then a passionate votary, he placed himself under Somagiri, who initiated him in Vaiṣṇavaism as best suited to his genius and temperament.

An indefatigable traveller, he visited every shrine dedicated to Krishna from Thirchambaram and Guruvayur in Kerala to Brindaban in North India. In the course of his pilgrimage he might have come into contact with Jayadeva. In Kerala he is believed to have consecrated the Srikrishna shrine of Paramakkavu at Trichur. Perhaps it was due to his influence that Jayadeva's *Ashtapadi* was substituted for the songs of the *Aḷvārs* in Vishnu temples of Kerala and even for the *Thevaram* songs in its Siva temples.

To him as to the *Aḷvārs* Lord Krishna was the supreme deity. But he did not approach Him as they had done, in a spirit of intimate personal relationship. In his immortal *Srikrishna karna nr̥tha* he invokes Him as the embodiment of all the loveliness, sweetness and beauty of blossoming boyhood and sprouting adolescence. Even the bitterest cynic could not help being swept off for the nonce by his *Aranda* or joy effable. It was on account of him that the conception of Vishnu as *Balakrishna* or *Unnikrishna* became the peculiar feature of the *Krishna* cult in Kerala.

Respected also as the Father of Malayalam Literature, Tunjaththu Ramanujan Ezhuththachchan (1495-1575) was a devotee of Srirama. Born at Thrkkantiyur in a family, with the teaching of boys as their means of livelihood, Ramanujan (more properly *Anujan*, or younger brother, Raman) quickly mastered the three R's. And attracted more by religion than by grammar or astronomy for which Thrkkantiyur was famous, he started on a pilgrimage. In the course of his travels in *Paradesa* he mastered all the available Tamil works on *Vedantha* and devotion. On his return he settled down to his hereditary occupation. And in the intervals allowed by his profession translated the *Adhyatma ramayana* into Malayalam. He conferred on his country men the blessing also of a Malayalam version of the *Mahabharatha*, as Netumbharathayanar had done in the *Sangham Age* in Tamil. The death of his wife and the danger of Portuguese raids on nearby Thanur made him leave Thrkkantiyur, and establish his residence permanently at inland Chittur on the right bank of the Bharathapuzha some time about 1550. Here he founded a temple for Srirama and a *Mutt*. To maintain the temple and its spiritual atmosphere he brought twelve Brahmin families in 1552. The *Thekke gramam*, thus founded by him, is now a flourishing village with more than three hundred houses.

Besides *Adhyatmaramayana* and *Mahabharatha*, he was also responsible for *Devimahatmya* and *Uththararamayana*. What the *Bible* is to the Christians, these works of Ezhuththachchan are to the Hindus of Kerala, offering them the greatest hope and consolation.

Of The Guruvayur saints, Punthanam (1547-1640) was only three years old when Ezhuththachchan left Thrkkantiyur, and Melpuththur Narayana Bhattathiri (1559-1625) was born only nine years afterwards, in 1559. Punthanam was not the saint's personal name but the name of his wife's family, of which he became a member by the *Sarvasvada* a form of marriage. He became crazy by the loss of his infant son, born after years of supplication at Guruvayur, and he came here in 1586 fully determined to recover his lost child (!) by prayer, as in the story of *Kumaraharana*, which he rendered into Malayalam. Gradually, however, Little Krishna took the place of the deceased little one in his heart, and

wisdom dawned upon him "With Little Krishna dancing in our hearts", asked he, "why need we little ones of our own?"

The *Jnanappana* or *Song of Wisdom* is Punthanam's testimony to the wisdom of the ancient Rishis or seers. In simplicity and force of diction, no less than in the grand truths it proclaimed, it resembles the *Bible*. Forged in the furnace of the heart there is not a single word in it that does not have the true metallic ring.

Punthanam spent the remaining fifty four years of his life in *Thunkal Bhajanam*, or monthly worship, at Guruvayur and exhorting the people to read the *Bhagavatha* everyday, and repeat the Lord's name as often as possible, as the only way to salvation. "Alone we are born, alone we go away, why then," he asks "quarrel in the short span between birth and death?" "Repeat the Divine Name" says he "and filled with the love of the Lord dance and dance like one who is mad". And he died too while dancing to the accompaniment of his own *Anandanritha*, or Dance of Ecstasy, in his ninety third year.

If Punthanam was the greatest of the Kerala mystics Melputhur was the most learned. Unable to bear the tortures of rheumatism he came to Guruvayur for *Bhajan* or prolonged prayer, to get rid of them. And he got rid of them too by his *Narayanyam*!

The *Narayanyam* consists of 1036 stanzas, grouped into 100 *Dasakas*, of more or less ten stanzas each, most of the *Dasakas* ending with a prayer to the Lord of Guruvayur to cure him of the rheumatism that troubled him. Seated on the *Mantapa* or platform in front of the Lord every day he would compose a *Dasaka*. And he is believed to have completely recovered his health as soon as he finished the hundredth *Dasaka* on the *Kali* day 1712210, corresponding to December 7, 1586.

The importance of the *Narayanyam* in the devotional literature of the Hindus cannot be exaggerated. It is a succinct summary of the *Bhagavatha* on the one hand and a prayer to the Lord of Guruvayur on the other. It offers to every Hindu all the merits obtainable by reading the *Purana* and the worldly blessings of *Ayurarogyasaukhyam* or long life, health and happiness which the Lord of Guruvayur confers on every devotee.

To the childless Kururamma (1570-1640) the Lord of Guruvayur was a son. She played with her UNNIKRISHNA, rebuked Him when naughty, and wept as a mother when He disappeared in sulk. The Lord's partiality for her and her passion for *Namajapa* or repetition of the holy name baffled her cousin, Vilvamangalam II (1575-1660) who looked upon himself as the Lord's greatest favourite.

Born in the same family as Vilvamangalam I, and becoming like him the head of the *Thekke Madham* at Trichur, Vilvamangalam II was associated with every important temple in Kerala. Prince (afterwards Zamorin) Manavedan (1595-1658) was his disciple. As the result of his devotion reinforced by Vilvamangalam II's supplication the Lord is said to have vouchsafed the prince a vision of Himself, as a little boy playing in the temple premises. And Manavedan followed this up by writing a series of eight dramas, called *Krishnagitha* or *Krishnattam* representing some of the important incidents in the life of Lord Krishna, the last of them *Sivargrohana* or ascension to heaven, being completed in 1653.

Kudallur Kunjikkavu Namputhiri and Vazhakkunnam Vasudevan Namputhiri carried the banner of Punthnam and Melputhur in the twentieth century. The Guruvayur *Sathyagraha* under Sri Kelappan in 1931-32 brought out the urgency of opening the temple to the Harijans, which had been done only once a year for the *Ekadasi* festival. With their admission in 1946, Guruvayur has become the most important place of pilgrimage in South India.

The nineteenth century was, as we have seen, a period of silent revolution in Kerala. Saints and seers became less and less idealistic but more and more pragmatic. Kunjan Pilla Chattampi Swamikal (1854-1924) and Sri Narayana Guru (1856-1928) dedicated themselves to the service of their community, instead of seeking salvation only for their individual selves by withdrawing from the world.

Kunjan Nampiyar was perhaps the first to draw pointed attention to the evils that were creeping into the Nayar society.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE SILENT REVOLUTION

The break down of the hereditary occupations and the daily contact in the railway, the law court, the school, the farm and the factory, with peoples of different castes and creeds undermined the very foundations of untouchability and unapproachability, originally based on a meticulous regard for external purity and personal hygiene. Fears of excommunication no longer deterred bold and intrepid Brahmins like (Dr.) Swaminathan of Kollangode from availing themselves of the new facilities offered for travel to proceed to England, though the ancient ban on sea-voyage was removed only in by the example of Sri Chuthra Thirunal.

English education created an admiration for English and European institutions. Traditional customs, practices and beliefs were put to the severest scrutiny, and those which could not stand the test of the new philosophy and science or baffled them were condemned and discarded. The permission granted by law for the remarriage of widows, the protection of the civil rights of Hindu converts to other religions and the gradual raising of the age of marriage for girls superseded the *Dharmasasthras* which had kept Hindu society intact for nearly two thousand years. With the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation of A.D. 1936, followed by similar measures in British Malabar in 1946 and in Cochin in 1947-48 disappeared the Kerala of *Vishnusamhitha* and *Thanthrasamuchchaya*.

English education completely changed the Indian's political outlook. From the *Sangham Age* down to the middle of the nineteenth century the king had been looked upon as the very life of the world. The educated classes now desired self-government on English lines. The recall of Viceroy Lord Ripon for initiating measures to satisfy their aspirations was immediately followed by the organization of the Indian National Congress as a protest in

1885 Beginning with a grateful acknowledgment of the benefits of British rule, its demands were at first very modest. But the government's delay, parsimony and repression led the Congress to change its methods and raise its demands. Giving up the role of a suppliant, begging for doles, it claimed, as a matter of right, self government on the English pattern in 1906, Home Rule on the Irish Model in 1916, *Swaraj* or self government in 1920 and *Purna Swaraj* or complete independence in 1927

In 1920 it adopted Mahatma Gandhi's *Satyagraha* as its weapon. As soul force, *Sathyagraha* was free from violence of every kind. It consisted of civil disobedience, that is, the deliberate violation of the obnoxious law and cheerful submission to punishment, as the Vaikam *Sathyagraha* of 1924 and the Guruvayur *Sathyagraha* of 1931, boycott of foreign goods, withdrawal of co-operation from government by the boycott of councils, courts and colleges, resignation of honorary posts, renunciation of titles, non-payment of taxes, and public *Patim* or fast, individual or collective, for a definite or indefinite period, or even unto death.

The British Government opposed the Congress by setting up the Muslims against it. The Muslims formed a minority in comparison with the Hindus, who dominated the Congress. Every minority community will naturally have a fear that the majority community might use its superiority in numbers to impose its will upon it when their interests begin to differ. Under British influence or at their instigation, the *Muslim League* formed in 1912 to safeguard the rights of Muslim countries in North Africa and Europe, demanded the partition of India. In 1940 the Mahatma asked the British to quit India and started the *Quit India* campaign. In 1942, the Muslim League leader, M. A. Jinnah said *Divide and quit*.

The Congress turned its attention to Malabar in 1903, when a conference was held under its auspices and the District Congress Committee was founded. In 1916 a branch of the Home Rule League was established, and a political conference was held for the first time. More remarkable than these was Sri K. P. Kesava Menon's walk out, the first walk out perhaps in India as a political protest. Refused permission to speak in Malayalam by the

Collector, who was presiding, Mr Menon left the meeting which he was to have addressed. At the Manjeri conference in 1920 the landlords and the tenants parted company. In the same year the Mahatma's *Non Cooperation* was adopted by the District Congress Committee, which supported the Khilafat movement with great enthusiasm. In 1921 the first All Kerala Political Conference met at Ottapalam, thus sowing the seeds of the *United Kerala* movement. The attempts of the government to suppress the Congress Khilafat agitation led to the abortive Malar Rebellion, known also as the Mopla rebellion, as the rebels mostly belonged to this community. The criminal negligence of the escorting officer led to the death of sixty one out of ninety Mopla prisoners while being taken to Coimbatore in an improvised goods waggon. The public became naturally furious, and in the excitement caused by the *Waggon Tragedy* was born by the *Mathruhumi* in 1923, followed by the *Al Ameen* in 1924.

Mahatma Gandhi's Salt *Sathyagraha* of 1930 evoked great enthusiasm, the volunteers circulating even a *Secret Congress* bulletin in defiance of the government. The *Gandhi Irwin* pact and the suspension of the Salt *Sathyagraha* (1931) came as a disappointment. The proclamation of the second *Sathyagraha* in 1932 removed it. But when this was suspended the Kerala Congress committee protested by recording its lack of confidence in Mahatma's principles.

In 1935 began the demand for the abolition of the native states of Travancore and Cochin and the formation of a *United Kerala*. In 1940, as part of the *Quit India* campaign, the Kerala District Congress Committee resolved upon mass *Sathyagraha*, instead of the individual *Sathyagraha* which alone the All India Congress Committee had sanctioned. When the provincial committee was suspended, most of its members went over to the Communist party, which had been founded in 1939. The latter co-operated with the government in its war efforts when Russia joined the war against Germany. But loyal congressmen offered individual *Sathyagraha*, and managed even to secretly conduct a *Swathanthra Bharatham* for the edification of the people.

By 1919 a District Congress Committee had come into existence in the Cochin State. The Haripura Congress of 1928, however, proclaimed non intervention in native states. So the *Cochin Praja Mandal* was founded in 1941 to agitate for full responsible government in the state. But volunteers eagerly joined the *Quit India* campaign carried on in adjacent Malabar.

In Travancore bigger than Malabar and Cochin combined, affairs were more complicated. Political agitation was not unknown to them. In 1714 and 1719 the people of Nanjinad had threatened a peaceful secession if their grievances were not redressed. In 1808-09 Velu Thampi had waged even actual war to get rid of the English. Travancore had a Legislative Council since 1888 and a Legislative Assembly since 1904. In 1910 Ramakrishna Pillai asserted the right of the press to criticize the government by attacking its policies in the *Swa leshabhimani*, though he was deported for his daring. The Travancore leaders welcomed the Indian National Congress as an ally in the cause of freedom and supported it in its civil disobedience. In 1931 the more advanced younger generation founded the *Youth League*. In 1932 the Legislative Reforms Act sought to reconstitute the legislature on the basis of a wider franchise with wider powers. Immediately the various communities joined together in the *Samyuktha* party to obtain representation for minorities according to their numerical strength. Though the government modified the electoral scheme it did not go far enough. So the *Samyuktha* party boycotted the elections starting a *Nivarthana* or Abstention agitation. Close on the resolution of Hands-off Native-States passed by the Haripura Congress, the leaders here founded the *Travancore State Congress* and elected Sri Pattom Thanu Pillai as its first President. It demanded the dismissal of the *Diwan* and full responsible government. When the authorities banned the *State Congress* and the *Youth League*, the former resolved upon direct action in spite of Mahatma's advice, and made all preparations for a show down with the authorities. So the government removed the ban but retained the *Diwan*. As the Mahatma advised the *State Congress* not to insist on the dismissal of the *Diwan* the *Youth League* seceded from it. In obedience to the Mahatma the *State Congress* passed a resolution in support of the *Quit India* campaign in 1942. Bu

as the extremists had all joined the Communist party, which supported the Government of India in its war efforts, the resolution produced no result

Elsewhere in India the *Quit India* campaign went on vigorously, and suddenly the unexpected happened. The leader of the Indian National Congress, Jawahar Lal Nehru, accepted the principle of partition, and in 1946 the British Government agreed to withdraw. In 1947 the Maharaja of Cochin acceded to India and expressed himself in favour of a *united Kerala*. In July the Maharaja of Travancore also agreed to accession to India. The British Parliament divided the Indian Empire into India and Pakistan, and abdicated all its authority on August 15, 1947.

But the great architect of Indian Independence was not destined to live long to guide his people in their freedom. To the horror of the whole world and to the infinite sorrow of his own countrymen he was assassinated on January 30, 1948. Remaining within the Commonwealth India declared itself a republic on January 26, 1950.

The Tamils of Travancore, who formed a small minority, found themselves considerably weakened in the legislature when the Cochin State members were added after the union of Travancore and Cochin on July 1, 1949. So the four Tamil taluks were transferred to the adjoining Tamil state of Madras. The bilingual Kasargode, which had formed part of the ancient Chera (Kerala) empire but administered by the British as part of South Kanara, was united with its Malayalam neighbour, and the Kerala State was formed on November 1, 1956.

Jai Hind!

Jai Kerala!

APPENDIX I

SOURCES

Hecataeus (550 B C) said that history should be based on verifiable evidence. Neither the Sanskrit *Keralamahatmyam* nor the Malayalam *Keralolpaththu* satisfies this condition. The former came into existence some time after the settlement of the Konkanis in Kerala between 1560 and 1570. Consisting of 2217 *Slokas*, divided among ten chapters of varying length, it is a *Purana* in the form of a conversation between Garga and Yudhishtira, offering all forms of earthly happiness and heavenly bliss to those who would either themselves read it or hear it read.

The Malayalam *Keralolpaththu* consists of three parts. Part I describes the creation of Kerala by Parasurama and the settlement of the Brahmans, tracing their history down to the installation of the first twelve-yearly *Perumal* in 216. Part II describes the history of his successors, thus brought from outside down to 428, when the last of them, Cheraman Perumal, divided his kingdom and left Kerala. Part III is mainly concerned with the Zamorin and the rise of Kozhikkode.

Though in prose, it claims to be an abridgement of the bigger *Keralanatakam* written by Thunjaththu Ezhuththachchan. As it refers to the *Ariyittuvazha* of a Zamorin in 1627, it could not have made its appearance earlier. Part I is pure myth and legends. The chronology of Part II is not satisfactory, and it is inconsistent with what we know of Kerala from other more reliable sources. Thus, Cheraman Perumal is said to have been sent by Krishnadeva Raya of Anagundi, and after going to Mecca and converted by Muhammad, he is described as dying of fever on his way back. According to the *Keralolpaththu* he arrived in Kerala in 355 and went to Mecca in 428. But Muhammad founded Islam in 622 and and Krishnadeva Raya became king of Anagundi in 1509. Apart

from this anachronism there is also a glaring inconsistency. His predecessor Kulisekhara Perumal is also said to have partitioned Kerala among five Kshatriyas and eight Samanthas. After this partition the Brahmins would have neither any necessity for nor any authority to bring Cheraman Perumal and enthrone him.

In Part III we can be sure only of one event, the departure of the Portuguese from Kozhikkode. There is no mention of the arrival of Vasco da Gama or Cabral, both of which created considerable excitement in Kozhikkode. Considering the *Keralolpathi* in all its aspects, to rely upon it will be like leaning on a broken reed.

As has been mentioned at the beginning, the recorded history of Kerala begins only with Asoka's edict of 257 B. C. History moved only very slowly in ancient times. And in the bare mention of the *Keralaputhra* by Asoka is condensed centuries of unrecorded history. At the same time the context in which he is mentioned foreshadows also the history of centuries to come. And the picture of Kerala that the Tamil literature of the early centuries of the Christian era presents to us causes neither surprise nor disappointment. The process of Aryanization, begun perhaps half a century before Asoka, but quickened by his benefactions, is found still going on. Aryan ideas penetrating into and transforming every department of life.

This Tamil literature, generally called *Sangham* literature, consists of 2381 poems by not less than 473 poets, to which we may add the epic *Silappathikaram*. Of these the *Pathiruppatthu* and the *Purananuru* together with their colophons are of the utmost importance to the historian of Kerala. The events alluded to in them are corroborated in a general way by the contemporary Roman works: Pliny's *Natural History* (c. 77), *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (c. 90), Ptolemy's *Geography* (c. 150) based on Marinus (c. 130) and the *Penguin Tables* (c. 225). The colophons to the poems do not mention the personal names of the kings praised in them. But this need not detract from their value. The names of the Zamorins are not generally found in their records, and the Travancore Rajas are more frequently referred to by the asterisms under which they were born than by their personal names. Some times nicknames like *Kizhavan Raja* and *Karindran* might supersede the real names.

The *Silappathukaram* is an epic belonging to the same period as the *Pathirruppaththu* collection. Though the author was not very much concerned with historical facts as such no historian of Kerala can afford to overlook it. The third and last part *Ianchikkantam* is devoted to the Kerala capital. It removes all doubts about Kodungallur having been the capital of Kerala in this period. The mutually corroborating dates of the *great fir of Madura* as indicated by the astronomical data and the *Gajabahu Senkuttiyan synchronism* are of the greatest importance for determining the chronology of the Cheras of the *Pathirruppaththu*.

For the two hundred years immediately following Yanai katchey we have nothing to go upon. For reasons already stated it is not possible to fill up the vacuum with the twelve yearly Perumals of the *Keralolpaththu*.

The chief interest of the post *Sangham Age* was religion. The evidence of the *Periাপuranam* interpreted in the light of the Pandyan inscription indicates that Cheraman Perumal was enthroned as king of Kerala on account of the crushing defeat sustained by the legitimate Chera king as the result of which he was imprisoned along with his near kinsmen by the Pandyan Arikesari Maravarman (a. 670). Calling himself a *Vel* he might have been the chieftain of Venad though his mother might have been a chera princess. The high sounding titles like *Kodai Kalsekharan Kongarkon Kollikkavalan Kolikkon* and *Kutalarkon* which he assumes must be treated as interpolations by some later commentator.

the Mampalli plate of 973, the earliest recovered according to the Malayalam era. Gradually the intervals between the inscriptions become shorter and shorter, and it is hoped that the archaeological and epigraphic departments would in course of time completely fill up the gaps. Prof M Sundaram Pillai's *Early Sovereigns of Travancore* was the first attempt to write a history based upon inscriptions in Kerala. It is due to his enthusiasm and pioneer work that the *Department of Archaeology* was started in Travancore in 1895-96, and the *Travancore Archaeological Series* began to appear from 1910 onwards.

It is not known whether the versatile Vatkam Pachchu Muthathu (1814-83) made use of any inscriptions, but he was certainly the first to attempt to write a *History of Travancore* down to 1860, based on authentic government records. The Thampurans used to maintain a *Nahazhi*, or day to day register of the important or extraordinary events that happened in their *Nads*. Unfortunately most of them including those of the Zamorin, have been lost during the Mysorean occupation. Cochin and Travancore have been more fortunate in this respect. A few *Mathulakam* records have been published as *Malayalam Appendix* in T. K. Velu Pillai's *Travancore State Manual*, Vol. II, and they indicate what a rich harvest awaits the assiduous historian in the archives of Travancore and Cochin.

For the present we have to be content with the information found in indigenous literary works and the accounts of Arab and Persian geographers and of Chinese travellers and historians. The indigenous literary works are two fold, Sanskrit and Malayalam. Among the Sanskrit works the most important are *Mahodaya-puresacharitha*, *Syanadurapuranasamuchchaya*, *Sukasandesa*, *Kokila sandesa*, *Mayurasandesa* and *Chakorasandesa*. Among the Malayalam works *Unnunilisandesam*, *Chakravakasandesa n*, *Ananthapuravarṇanam*, *Unniyadicharitham*, *Unniyachchucharitham* and *Unnichiruthicharitham* stand foremost. Nainar's *Arab Geographers Knowledge of South India* is a very good introduction for those who want to study them in the original, while in K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's *Foreign Notices of South India* will be found

copious extracts from Chinese travellers and historians, including Marco Polo Ibn Batuta spent some two years in the Kerala coast on his way from Delhi to China, and his account, needless to say, is of the greatest importance

With the coming of the Portuguese we seem to be flooded with sources. In addition to their public reports we have the accounts of Duarte Barbosa, Ludovic Varthema, Correa, Castenada and Camoens *Lusiad*. The Dutch sources are equally abundant. Besides the *Memoirs* written by every outgoing commandeur for his successor, we have Visscher's *Letters from Malabar* and the *Press List of Dutch Records*. For the British period the sources are simply inexhaustible.

The historical chapters in Logan's *Malabar Manual*, Innes' *Malabar Gazetteer*, Nagamayya's *Travancore State Manual* and Achyutha Menon's *Cochin State Manual* were based on the information then available. In K. P. Padmanabha Menon's *History of Kerala*, 4 Vols., written as a commentary on Visscher's *Letters from Malabar*, are embodied also materials discovered since. In my *Zamorins of Calicut* (1938) I have availed myself of sources which had not been accessible to Logan and Innes. K. M. Pannikar's *Malabar and the Portuguese* contains new information which he had come across in Europe. His *Malabar and the Dutch* is more refreshing than Galleti's *Dutch in Malabar*. Dr. Poonen's *A Survey of the Rise of the Dutch Power in Malabar* deserves everyone's careful attention as the result of life time study.

Quite a number of works dealing with the pre-Portuguese period in the history of Kerala have made their appearance after the publication of the *Manuals*. The works of S. Sanku Aiyar and Mankulam Kunjan Pillai which are too numerous to mention in Malayalam have thrown light on many an obscure point. K. G. Seshu Aiyar's *Ceras of the Sangam Age* and V. R. Ramachandra Dikshitar's translation of the *Silappathikaram* into English are both illuminating.

The pre-historic past has also begun to receive the attention of the historian. Thanks to the progress of science, archaeology has

been able to summon the dead to tender their evidence. And before long the mystery of the *Namagadis* and other funereal monuments will be cleared. The discovery of a multilegged sarcophagus at Porkalam points to a closer connection between the royal houses of Kanchipuram and Kodungallur than what can only be presumed from Dandin's reference to Mathrdatta and Somasarma.

APPENDIX II

PLACES AND ISLANDS MENTIONED BY THE ROMAN WRITERS (A D 75-150)

Name as found in Roman authors	Modern Name	Ptolemy's		As corrected now	
		Long E	Lat N	Long E	Lat N
Semulla or simylla	Srimulapada or Srimulavasa	110 00	14 40		
Mandagara	Matayi or Manthai	113 00	14 10		
Palaipatmai	Pazhayangadi				
Baltipatna	Baliapatam	110 30	14 20		
Byzantion		113 40	14 40		
Armagara	Dharmapattanam Dharmadam	115 00	14 20		
Chersonese		114 30	13 45		
Nanaguna (Port)		115 00	14 20		
Nitra Nitrias	Nittur	115 30	14 40	75 32	11 45
Melizeigara	Mayvazhikkara			75.34	11 42
Naura	Thurunavay				
Tundis (Tyndis)	Thindilam	116 00	14 30		
Kalaikarias	Thrkakkara	116 40	14 00	76 15	10 00
Mouziris	Musiri				
(emporium)	(Kodungallur)	117 00	14 00	76 10	10 10
Pseudostomos	Do Azhi	117 20	14 00	Do	Do

Name as found in Roman authors	Modern Name	Ptolemy's		As corrected now	
		Long E	Lat N	Long E	Lat N
Poudoperoura	Uthayanperur	117 40	14 15		
Semne	Chennaman				
(Symne)	galam	118 00	14 20	76 10	10 10
Koreoura					
(Cerevra)	Karapuram	118 40	14 20		
Bakerei	Vaikkara or Vaikam	119 30	14 30		
Baris		120 00	14 20		
Barace	Porakkad				
Kottonara	Kuttanad				
Nelkunda	}	120 20	14 20		
Melkynda					
Balita	Vizhinjam			76 55	8 20
Elangkon	Vilavankode	120 40	14 20		
(emporium)					
Kottiarā	Kottar	121 00	14 30		
(metropolis)					
Bammala	Pommala	121 20	14 00		
Kumaria	Kumari	121 45	13 30	77 36	8 04
Commāria	Do				
cape and own					
Banaouasie	Vanavasi	116 00	15 45		
Olochoera		114 00	15 00		
Mousoppalle	Pazhi	115 30	15 45		
(Metropolis)					
Naroulla		117 45	15 50		
Koubi		117 00	15 50		
Paloura		117 15	14 40		
Pasage	Pollachu	124 20	21 50	77 03	10 39
Mastanour		121 30	18 40		
Kourellour	Kudallur	119 00	17 30		
Pounnata	Punnad	120 40	17 30		

Name as found in Roman authors	Modern Name	Ptolemy's		As corrected now	
		Long. E.	Lat. N.	Long. E.	Lat. N.
Aloe		120.40	17.00		
(Halou)					
Karoura	Karur	119.00	15.50	78.07	10.58
(Carura Regia)					
(Cerobothra)					
Arembour		121.00	16.20		
Bideris		119.00	15.50		
Adarina		119.30	15.20		
Paritipolis		118.00	15.20		
Adarima		119.30	15.20		
Koreour		120.00	15.00		
Morounda		121.20	14.40		
Aigidioi	Agaththi				
Kaineitai	Kavarthi				
Ammeni	Ameni				
Kalaidiva	Karathiva				

APPENDIX III

TEMPLES

(Praised by the *Nayanars* or the *Azhvars*)

Kodungallur-

1	Thiruvanchikkulam	Praised	by	Sundaramurthi
2	Thiruvananthapuram or Trivandrum	do	do	Nammazhvar
3	Thiruppathisaram	do	do	do
4	Thrkakkara	do	do	do
5	Thiruvananthur	do	do	do
6	Thiruvattar	do	do	do
7	Thiruvaranmula	do	do	do
8	Thiruchengannur	do	do	do
9	Thirukkatiththanam	do	do	do
10	Thirumuzhikkulam	do	do	Nammazhvar and Thirumangaiyazhvar
11	Thiruppuhiyur	do	do	do
12	Thiruvalla	do	do	do
13	Thirunavay	do	do	do
14	Thiruviththuvakkode	do	do	Kulasekharazhvar

Of these temples Thirunavay and Thrkakkara rose to all-Kerala importance, the former on account of the *Mahamagha* festival, the latter on account of the *Onam* festival. In ancient days the annual festival of Thirunavay was celebrated for one month, from the *Puyam*, or eighth asterism in the solar month of *Makaram* or *Capricornus* to the *Makam*, or tenth, asterism in the following month of *Aumbha* or *Aquarius*. One of the twelve years of the lesser Jovian cycle is known as the *Mahamagha* in which the planet Jupiter will be in the sign of *Chungam* or *Leo*. The festival of the *Mahamagha* year was held very sacred because for the *Arattu*, or immersion, of the Lord's image in the river on the *Makam*, or tenth asterism, the waters of the holy Ganges also

were believed to flow in the Bharathappuzha. So people from the most distant parts of Kerala used to come to Thirunavay for the festival so that they might secure also the merit of an immersion in the waters of the Ganges without actually going to Benares.

We do not know when exactly the festival was instituted. It was celebrated at first by the Cheraman rulers of Kodungallur. After their disappearance the Vallatris took their place as its Rakshapurusha or protector. The Vallatris, as has been said, was ousted some time in the fourteenth century by the Zamorin.

Of the two existing spectacles of the festival one was the attempt of the Valluvanad Chavers to kill the Zamorin, the other the mock naval fight instituted after the defeat of the Portuguese off Chaul. It was called *Kappalveti* or fight between ships. Invariably it was a spectacle arranged for the night. Till the beginning of the eighteenth century the region between the present Thirunavay Road railway station and the temple was a backwater. A big ship supposed to belong to the Portuguese was fired at and burnt and sunk by six small ships belonging to the Zamorin. The last *Mahamagha* was celebrated in February-March 1766. In April Haider Ali occupied Kozhikode. The *Mahamagha* was to Kerala what the Olympian and Pythian festivals had been to ancient Greece.

The Thrakkakkara temple was founded or renovated in 604. The Itappalli chiefs were its priests. On account of their *Sam bandham* with the Perumpatappu princesses its annual festival ending in the *Onam* (*Thiruvonam*) or twenty second asterism in the month of *Chingam* or *Leo* became important for the Perumpatappu chiefs. In the fifteenth century the Itappalli chiefs quarrelled with the Perumpatappu chiefs and allied themselves with the Zamorin. The festival thus became important for the Zamorin's family. In course of time the temple got endowments from every part of Kerala. In ancient Kerala it was the duty of the temple tenants to whatsoever religion or caste they might belong to attend its annual festival. As those living far away could not be present at the festival they celebrated it in their own homes. Thus the Thrakkakkara festival became the national *Onam* festival.

APPENDIX IV

INTERMARRIAGES BETWEEN THE RULING FAMILIES OF KERALA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

(a) *Kerala Kings and Princes*

S. No.	Kerala King or Prince	Date	Princess	Family of the Princess	Son
1.	Uthiyan	50-100	Nallini	Chola	i. Imaiavarampar ii. Palyanai.
2.	Imaiyavarampan	52-110	Padman- devi Manak- killi	Pazhani Chola	i. Narmuti ii. Atukotpattu iii. Senkuttuvan iv. Ilanko Atikal
3.	Anthuvan	d. 125	Poraiyan Perundevi	Porainad (Palghat)	Selvakatunko
4.	Selvakatunko	165-190	Padman- devi	Pazhani	Peruncheral Irumporai
5.	Peruncheral Irumporai	185-202	Anthuvan Chellai	Maiyur	Ilancheral Irumporai
6.	Bhaskara Ravivarman	961-1019	Chola	Chola	Rajaraja Chera
7.	Jayasimha of Venad	d. 1209	Umadevi	Pandya	Ravivarman Kulaschkar (1299-1313)

(b) *Kerala Princesses*

S No	Kerala Princess	Prince	Son
1	Kairali	Pandyan Rajasimha (730-65)	Pandyan Varaguna Maharaja (765-815)
2	Do	Viranarayana Pandya (880-900)	Pandya Rajasimha II (900-20)
3	Ko Kizhanatikkal	Paranthaka Chola (907-55)	Rajadithya Chola (d 949)
4	Iravi Nilai	Do	Arinjaya Chola (956-57)
5	Kothai Pirattiyar	Arinjaya Chola (956-57)	—
6	Viranarayaniyar Kongu Chera	Gandaradithya (949-59)	—
7	Vanavan Mahadevi	Sundara Chola (956-73)	Adithya II (d 960)
8	Kairali (d 1001) (Paranthaka Ammanar)	Do	—
9	Viranarayaniyar (Kongu Chera)	Uththama Chola (970-85)	—
10	Kongu Chera Vanavan Mahadevi (Heiress)	Rajaraja I Chola (985-1016)	Chola Rajendra I (1012-44)
11	Kairali	Vira Pandya (c 1188)	Pandyan Vira Kerala (c 1188)

APPENDIX V

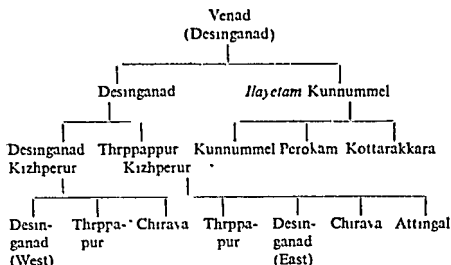
DYNASTIC HISTORIES OF THE RULERS OF TRAVANCORE, COCHIN AND KOZHIKKODE

(1) *Travancore*

Of the three important dynasties of Kerala the history of the Travancore dynasty is the most complicated. It is a tangled tale which cannot be easily unravelled. In the first place it came to be divided into a number of *Thavazhis* and sub *Thavazhis* tracing their descent from a common ancestress. In the second place adoptions were made from one *Thavazhi* to another, with the adoptee retaining his clams rights and titles in his original *Thavazhi*. Thirdly, no fixed order was observed in the assumption of the various dignities. Lastly, as certain names were common more than one person bearing the same name might be found at the same time in the same sub *Thavazhi*.

At first the rulers of Travancore were referred to as *Venad vazhkinror* or *Venad utaiyavar*. In memory of Ravivarman Kulasekhara's father, Jayasimha Venad came to be called Jayasimhanad which was gradually corrupted into Jayathunganad and finally into Desinganad and the Venad chief began to be referred to in inscriptions as *Desinganad Muththathiruvati*. In the thirteenth century the Venad chiefs annexed the *Chiraray Swarupam*, and some times adopted the title of *Chiraray Muththavar* also.

After the death of Ravivarman Kulasekhara the *Thiruvatis* as has been said adopted the matrilineal system and came to be divided into a number of branches and sub branches as shown below —



* For some reason, which we have not yet discovered, the various branches threatened to become extinct, and adoption had to be resorted to for averting it. *Ilayetam* alone survived. In the time of Marthandavarma however there was only one princess, and she fled from Travancore in 1741.

There was only one adoption in Desinganad, that of Irayamma Thiruvati in 1568. By the time of Marthandavarma the Princesses seem to have all died out. We do not know why Unni Keralavarma's mother, aunt or sister did not make any adoption. According to matrilineal law of succession Unni Keralavarma's adoption of the second prince of Kayankulam was invalid, and with Unni Keralavarma's death in 1734 Desinganad must be deemed to have merged with Thrppappur.

The Thrppappur branch was in this respect most unfortunate. As early as 1375, if not before, it had to resort to adoption. Princesses were adopted to ensure the continuity of the family, and princes were adopted to carry on the government, the enthronement of Gauri Lakshmi Bai in 1810-11 being the first instance of a princess assuming the reins of government as of right. The adoptions as found in the available records are given below —

Serial No	M E	A D	Chief at the time of the adoption	Name of the adoptee's family	Adoptees	
					Princesses	Princes
1	550	1375	Adithyavarma Sarvanganatha	Kolaththunad	2	1
2	805	1630	Unni Kerala varma	Vellarappalli	—	2
3	847	1672	Adithyavarma	Do	—	1
4	853	1678	Ravivarma	Kolaththunad	2	1
5	863	1688	Do	Do	2	2
6	893	1718	Do	Do	1	—
7	923	1748	Marthanda varma I	Do	4	—
8	964	1789	Ramavarma	Do	2	—
9	1033	1857	Marthanda varma II	Do	2	—
10	1076	1900	Mulam Thirunal Ramavarma	(Mavelikkara)Do	2	—

Adoption for Special Purposes

i	847	1672	Raman Unni Pandarathil, a Brahmin
ii	856	1680	Kottayam Keralavarma as Prince of Hiranallur
iii	974	1799	Keralavarma of Mavelikkara Kolaththunad

Some of the Thiruvatis are found with a *Chera* pronomen or cognomen and even with the title of *Cheravamsakirittapathi*. During the Chera Chola conflict, if not before there might have been intermarriages between the two families establishing their claim to a Chera ancestry.

With the regency of Asvathi Thirunal Umayamma Rani began the history of modern Travancore. Below is the date of

the accession of the Maharajas and the Maharanis who built it one after the other —

Serial No	Name of Maharajas & Maharanis	Period
1	Ravivarma Sri Asvathu Thirunal Umayamma Rani (Regent 1677-84, d 1686)	1677—1718
2	Adithyavarma	1718—21
3	Ramavarma	1721—29
4	Anizham Thirunal Marthandavarma	1729—58
5	Karthika Thirunal Ramavarma	1758—98
6	Avittam Thirunal Bala Ramavarma	1798—1810
7	Ayilyam Thirunal Gauri Lakshmi Bai	1810—14
8	Swathi Thirunal Ramavarma (b 16-4 1813)	1814—46
	Maharani Gauri Parvathi Bai (Regent 1814-29)	
9	Uthram Thirunal Marthandavarma	1846—60
10	Ayilyam Thirunal Ramavarma	1860—80
11	Visakham Thirunal Ramavarma	1880—85
12	Mulam Thirunal Ramavarma	1885—1924
13	Chithira Thirunal Bala Ramavarma	1924—56
14	Maharani Sethu Lakshmi Bai (Regent 1924-31)	
	Integration	1956

(ii) *Cochin*

The dynastic history of Cochin is not so complicated as that of Travancore. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the Cochin dynasty was divided into five branches. Muththa Ilaya Palluruththu Maruththumkizh or muringur and Chithur Thavazhus, the senior most in age among the males in all the branches taken together becoming the chief. When Cabral came here in 1500 Unni Godavarma of the Ilaya Thavazhu was the chief, but as he was very old his nephew Unni Ramavarma was carrying on the government on his behalf.

In 1510 Unnigodavarma died. And the 'nearest claimant was a Muththa Thavazhi prince. But Albuquerque limited the succession to the throne to the Ilaya Thavazhi, Unni Ramavarma agreeing to it only under duress. The Perumpatappu chief was also the *Koviladhikari* of a number of temples. And Albuquerque had to comply with Unni Ramavarma's demand, that as in times past the senior-most in age, as *Perumpatappu Muppu*, alone should discharge his obligations to the temples.

In Virakeralavarma's reign the Muringur branch was about to become extinct, and the Muringur chief adopted the heir-apparent. With the accession of Virakeralavarma's successor, Godavarma (1637-45), Muringur was absorbed by the Ilaya Thavazhi.

During Godavarma's reign the Ilaya Thavazhi became reduced to two members, himself and Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi. And she adopted a prince each from Palluruthi, Chazhur and Muththa Thavazhis. The Palluruthi adoptee reigned from 1645 to 1646, and the Chazhur adoptee from 1645 to 1656. Under Portuguese Pressure the Rani did not allow the Muththa Thavazhi adoptee to succeed, but herself carried on the government with the help of one Raghavan Kovil of Travancore. Under their influence she even adopted five princes from Vattam in 1658 and retired.

But the Vattam inter-regnum did not last long. With the help given by the Zamorin, an old ally of the Muththa Thavazhi, and the Dutch, Vira Keralavarma compelled the old Rani, who had excluded him in 1658, to admit his claim. And he was enthroned in 1663.

In 1689, again the dynasty was found nearing extinction, and a number of Chazhur princes and princesses were adopted. And the first Chazhur adoptee, Ravivarma, came to the throne in 1693.

Keralavarma (1760-75) gradually became unable to cope with the difficult problems that confronted him. The heir-apparent, Ramavarma, was also below the mark, the Travancore Raja Ramavarma (1758-98) and the Dutch persuaded Keralavarma and Ramavarma to delegate their authority to the heir-presumptive Ramavarma, known as the *Sakthian Thampuran* in 1769.

With the establishment of British supremacy dynastic problems ceased to be important. In exercise of their imperial sovereignty the English simply caused the ruler who proved inconvenient to them to abdicate. Thus, Ramavarma gave place to the heir apparent in 1914.

I *Ilaya Thavazhi*

1	Unni Godavarma	Retired 1503	
2	Unni Ramavarma	1503—1537	
3	Vira Keralavarma	1537—1565	
4	Kesava Ramavarma	1565—1601	
5	Vira Keralavarma	1601—1615	
6	Ravivarma	1615—1624	
7	Vira Keralavarma	1624—1637	
8	Godavarma	1637—1645	Absorption of Muringur
9	Palluruthi Virarayiravarma	1645—1646	Extinction of Ilaya Thavazhi
10	Chazhur Ramavarma	1645—1656	
11	Rani Gangadhara Lakshmi Vattam adoptions	1656—1658 1658	
	Ramavarma (Vattam)	1658—1662	
	Godavarma (Do)	1662—1663	

II *Muththa Thavazhi*

12	Vira Keralavarma	1663—1687
13	Ramavarma	1687—1693

III *Chazhur Thavazhi*

14	Ravivarma	1693—1697
15	Ramavarma	1697—1701
16	Raja Ramavarma	1701—1721
17	Ravivarma	1721—1731
18	Ramavarma	1731—1739
19	Do.	1739—1746
20	Keralavarma	1746—1749
21	Ramavarma	1749—1760

22	Keralavarma	1760—1775	
23	Ramavarma	1775—1790	
24	Sakthan Ramavarma	1790—1805	
25	Ramavarma	1805—1809	Nos 23 29 Madhvas
26	Keralavarma	1809—1828	
27	Ramavarma	1828—1837	
28	Do	1837—1844	
29	Do	1844—1851	
30	Keralavarma	1851—1853	
31	Ravivarma	1853—1864	
32	Ramavarma	1864—1888	
33	Keralavarma	1888—1895	
34	Ramavarma	1895—1914	
35	Do	1914—1932	
36	Do	1932—1941	
37	Keralavarma	1941—1943	
38	Ravivarma	1943—1946	
39	Keralavarma	1946—1948	
40	Ramavarma Parikshit Thampuran	1948—1949	

(iii) *Kozhikkode*

Kovilakam became the official residence of the *Valiya Thampuratti* or seniormost in age in the two branches taken together, the descendants of the elder sister shifting to the *Ki hakke Kovilakam* constructed in the *Chunthaviluppu* midway between the *Puthiya Kovilakam* and the *Samuthiri Kovilakam* a little to the north east of the former and south east of the latter

In 1525 there were only three princes. And as an act of abundant caution a *Vatakkankur Thampuran* was adopted as the Fourth Prince. In 1528 however a prince was born believed to be the result of the *Thiruvonam* feasts performed every month for three years. The death of the *Vatakkankur* adoptee in battle averted the complications that might have arisen when he would succeed to the *Muppu* in due course and become the *Zamorin*.

In 1704 an extinction of the family by the total failure of heirs female began to loom in the offing. And *Bharani Thirunal Zamorin* sent *Bavan Pattar* to *Thekkankur* to negotiate the adoption of two *Thampurattis* from this family. But *Bharani Thirunal* died in 1705 and the proposed *Thekkankur* adoption was dropped. In its stead it was decided to adopt from among the descendants of the *Kozhukkode Thampuratti* who had been disinherited for her secret romance with the *Kolaththiri Thampuran* and settled at *Nileswaram* at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Accordingly in 1706 two *Thampurattis* and one *Thampuran* were adopted into the *Puthiya Kovilakam* and two *Thampurans* into the *Ki hakke Kovilakam*. In the following year a niece also of the two *Nileswaram* adoptees was adopted into the *Ki hakke Kovilakam*. The younger sister of the two *Thampurattis* adopted into the *Puthiya Kovilakam* had come for the *Mahanagha* of 1707. The *Zamorin* caused her also to be adopted but assigned a separate residence to her somewhat to the south west of the *Ampati Kovilakam*. At first it was referred to as *Tlekke* and *Patinjare Kovilakam* but the former gradually fell into desuetude.

From the first the members of the *Zamorin's* family as has been already mentioned had been pulling together as one team with a brotherly attachment rarely found in the annals of royal dynasties. Consulting his juniors on every important matter of state the *Zamorin* tended to become a constitutional ruler.

enjoying their whole hearted respect and loyalty. The Zamorin who received Vasco da Gama in 1498 is said to have been the eighty fourth and the Zamorin who contrived to blow himself up with his fort to avoid a surrender to Haider in 1766 the one hundred and seventeenth from the founder.

The members of the Zamorin's family sought refuge with the Dharmaraja Ramavarma (1758-98) and refused to be tempted by Tippu's seductive offer of re-instatement. In 1792 they came back, the Puthiyakovilakam members choosing to reside at Thirunannur, and the Patinjarekovilakam members at Mankavu, both now forming suburbs of Kozhikkode, while the Kizhakke Kovilakam members took up their residence at Venkattakottai or Kottakkal captured from Karivayur Mussad in the distant past.

IMPORTANT DATES

B C

- 3102 - 2101 First year of Kali Yuga
272 - 232 Asoka Maurya

A D

- 30 Landing of Hippalos at Kodungallur
50 - 100 Perunchorruthayan Cheralathan
52 - 110 Imaiavarampan Neduncheralathan
52 Arrival of St Thomas at Kodungallur
68 Destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem
77 Pliny's *Natural History*
78 - 79 First Saka Year
81 - 100 *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*
100 - 125 Palyanai sel Kezhu kuttuvan
125 *Geography of Marinus*
110 - 135 Kalankaykanni Narmuti Cheral
125 - 180 Cheran Senkuttuvan
135 - 173 Atukolpattu Cheralathan
150 Ptolemy's *Geography*
165 - 190 Selvakatunko azhi athan (Peruncheral Irumporai 1)
alias Karuvur eriya ol val ko Peruncheral Irumporai
173 - 191 Gajabahu of Ceylon
175 Consecration of the temple of Kodungallur Bhagavathi
185 - 201 Ilanncheral Irumporai
185 - 202 Peruncheral Irumporai II
alias Thakatur erintha Peruncheral Irumporai
219 - 250 Yanaiikkatchey Mantharam Cheral Irumporai
354 Arrival of Constantitius
378 - 382 Mezhatthur Agnihothri's hundredth sacrifice
470 Vajranandi's *Sangha* at Madura
500 Achutha Vikkanta
525 *Cosmas Indicopleustes*
604 Earliest mention of Thirukakara in inscription

622	First year of Al Hejira (A H)
644	Arrival of Malik Bin Dinar
670 - 710	Arikesari Maravarman Kuna Pandya
690 - 715	Cheraman Perumal and Sundaramurthi
745	Arrival of Thomas of Cana
767 - 834	Kulasekharazhavar
805 - 837	Sankaracharya
824 - 825	First year of <i>Kollam tonri antu</i> (M E)
844 - 845	First year of Sthanuravi
849	Ayyan Atikal's grant to Tharisappalli
917	Accession of Kothai Ravi
961 - 1019	Bhaskara Ravivarman
973	Earliest inscription in the <i>Kollam Era</i> so far discovered, Mampalli Plate
988 - 1027	17 invasions of North India by Mahmud Ghazni
988 - 1005	I Chola War
1014 - 1019	II Chola War
1034 - 1036	III Chola War
1075 - 1102	IV Chola War
1089 - 1102	Ramar Thiruvati Koyiladhukari Kulasekhara Chakravarthikal
1096	First year of <i>Kollam Azhintha Antu</i>
1102	Ramar Thiruvati's Kollam grant
1175	Benjamin of Tudela
1181 - 1206	Conquest of North India by Muhammad Ghori
1206 - 1526	Rule of the Delhi Sultans in North India
1225	Chauju kua
1251 - 1350 ?	Vilvamangalam I
1292	Marco Polo
1295 ?	Calicut founded by the Zamorin
1299 - 1313	Ravivarman Kulasekhara
1309	Annual <i>Pattaththanam</i> instituted at Kozhikkode
1311	Death of Maravarman Kulasekhara
1336	<i>Vijayanagar</i> founded
1342 - 1344	Ibn Batuta in Kerala
1350 ?	Zamorin's occupation of Thurunnavay
1350	First year of Ravivarman of Venad
1376	Do Adithyavarman Sarvanganathi
1400 - 1450	Zamorin's Empire extended to Cochin

1403	Ma Huan
1427	Birth of Chennas, author of the <i>Tanthrasamuchchaya</i>
1427 - 1500	? Cherusseri Sankaran Nampiti, author of <i>Krishnagatha</i>
1429 - 1502	? Punam Kunju Nampiti
1466 - 1474	Manavikrama the Great
1484 - 1512	Extension of Travancore to the Tinneveli coast by Ravi Ravivarman
1495 - 1575	Tunjaththu Ezhuthachchan
1498	Arrival of Vasco da Gama at Kozhikkode
1500	Treaty between the Cochun Raja and Cabral
1502	Second visit of da Gama
1503	I Invasion of Cochun Erection of the Cochun fort.
1504	II invasion of Cochun March 18 to July 3 Battle of Cochun
1505 - 1509	Francisco Almeida as Viceroy at Cochun
1505	Erection of Fort St. Angelo at Cannanore by Almeida
1507	Abortive siege of Cannanore fort Almeida's raid on Ponnani Kunjali Marakkar appointed to defend the Zamorin's coastal districts
1508	Portuguese defeat off Chaul and loss of sea power
1509	Portuguese victory off Diu and recovery of sea power
1509 - 1510	Alphonso Albuquerque as Portuguese Viceroy
1510	Albuquerque's abortive raid on Kozhikkode Krishnadeva Raya's abortive invasion of Zamorin's dominions Imprisonment of the Cochun Raja by Albuquerque Albuquerque's capture of Goa
1511	Transfer of Portuguese headquarters from Cochun to Goa
1513	Treaty between the Zamorin and the Portuguese Erection of the Portuguese fort at Kozhikkode
1516 - 1530	Puli (Tiger) Udaya Marthandavarma's occupation of the pearl fisheries between Tinneveli and Ceylon
1516 - 1519	Treachery of the Portuguese at Kollam (Quilon)
1517	Treacherous attempt to seize the Zamorin while on a friendly visit to the Kozhikkode fort
1519	Aryankavu Pass robbery by the Portuguese

- 1524 1525 Siege of the Kozhikkode fort Withdrawal of the Portuguese from Kozhikkode
- 1524 Third visit of da Gama to Kerala Da Gama's death
- 1531 Erection of the Portuguese fort at Chaliyam
- 1532 Sralaka Thimma's invasion of Travancore
- 1536 Erection of the Portuguese fort at Kodungallur
- 1540 Treaty of Ponnani between the Zamorin and the Portuguese
- 1541 Arrival of St. Xavier in Travancore
- 1543 Portuguese destruction and plunder of the temples of Thevalakkara and Palluruthi
- 1547 1640 Punthanam
- 1557 Printing of the Malayalam *I edopadesam*
- 1559 - 1625 Melpuththur Narayana Bhattathiri
- 1563 Accession of Kunjali II
- 1570 - 1640 Kururamma
- 1570 Portuguese policy of killing every Muslim found in the sea Zamorin's declaration of war on the Portuguese siege of Chaliyam begun
- 1571 Demolition of the Chaliyam fort
- 1572 1586 Portuguese blockade of the Zamorin's ports
- 1575 1660 Vilvamangalam II
- 1577 Printing press set up in Kerala
- 1583 Second imprisonment of the Cochín Raja by the Portuguese
- 1586 *Narayanijam* completed

1634		Thirumali Nayak's invasion of Travancore Iravikuttir Pillai's death at Kaniyankulam
1642		Treaty between the Dutch and Purakkad Raja
1644		English factory opened at Vizhinjam
1644	1744	<i>Kattakali Kottayam Keralavarma (?)</i>
1653		<i>Krishnattam</i> completed
1658		<i>Ramanattam</i> completed
1658	1659	First occupation of Kollam (Quilon) by the Dutch
1658		Cochin Rani's adoption of the Vattam princes
1660		Alliance between the Zamorin and Muthitha Thavazhi princes
1661		Alliance between the Dutch Muthitha Thavazhi princes and the Zamorin
		Second occupation of Kollam (Quilon) by the Dutch
1662		Surrender of the Portuguese fort at Kodungallur
1663		Surrender of the Portuguese forts of Cochin and Cannanore <i>Departure of the Portuguese from Kerala</i>
1664	1669	War for Kodungallur Evacuation of Kodungallur by the Dutch
1673		Re-occupation of Kodungallur by the Dutch
1677	1684	Umayamma Rani's regency
1678		Chetway ceded to the Dutch by the Zamorin
1680		Adoption of Kottayam Keralavarma by Umayamma Rani <i>Mukilanpata</i>
1684		English granted Anjengo
1685	1705	Bharani Thurunal
1691		Chetway returned to the Zamorin
1695		Construction of a fort by the English at Anjengo
1696		Abolition of <i>Pulappeti</i> and <i>Mannappeti</i> Murder of Kottayam Keralavarma' Death of Umayamma Rani
1697		Narasappayya's avenging raid
1701	1710	War for Chetway
1704	1781	Kunjan Nampiyar
1710		Chetway ceded to the Dutch by the Zamorin
1715	1717	War for Chetway
1715		Chetway captured by the Zamorin
1717		Chetway ceded to the Dutch
1721		Murder of the English factors at Attingal

1722		(Marthandavarma's) subsidiary treaty with the Nayak of Trichinopoly
1723		(Marthandavarma's) treaty with the English
1729	1758	Marthandavarma
1729		Conference of Chief Ministers at Ponnani against the Dutch
1729	1731	Small pox in the Zamorin's dominions
1731		Execution of the Kunju Thimpis
1731	1734	War between Marthandavarma and Unni Kerala-varma
1732	1742	War between Marthandavarma and Kayankulam Raja
1732	1748/53	War between Marthandavarma and the Dutch
1734		Imprisonment of the <i>Ilaiyem</i> survivors by Marthandavarma Death of the Kayankulam chief Death of Unni Kerala-varma
1735	1757	Ramayyan Dalava
1735		Abortive attempt to kill Marthandavarma by the <i>Ettuvittil Matimpis</i> and the <i>Arikuttam Pillamar</i> during the <i>Appisi Utsavam</i>
1736		Escape of the <i>Ilaiyem</i> princess from Trivandrum
1741		Proclamation of the <i>Ilaiyem</i> princess by the Dutch as ruler of Netumangad Marthandavarma's victory at Colachel D Lannoy taken into service by Marthandavarma
1741		Proclamation of the <i>Ilaiyem</i> princess by the Dutch in Netumangad annihilation of the Dutch contingent and the flight of the princess Marthandavarma's victory at Colachel expulsion of the Dutch from South Travincore D Lannoy employed by Marthandavarma
1742		Treaty of Mannar and submission of the Kayankulam Raja
1746		II War between Marthandavarma and Kayankulam Annexation of Kayankulam War with the Ampalappuzha chief and annexation of Ampalappuzha
1748	1753	Treaty of Mavelikkara I with the Dutch
1748		Regulation of the succession by Marthandavarma

1749	1750	Annexation of Thekkankur and Vatakkankur by Marthandavarma
1750		Marthandavarma's Grand Dedication
1752 - 1758		War between the Zamorin and the Dutch
1753 - 1754		I War between Marthandavarma and the Cochin Raja
1754		Treaty of Mavelikkara II between Marthandavarma and the Cochin Raja
1756 - 1757		II War between Marthandavarma and the Cochin Raja
1757		Death of Ramayyan
1757		Capture of Chetway from the Dutch by the Zamorin the Zamorin's siege of Kodungallur Treaty between Marthandavarma and the Cochin Raja against the Zamorin
1758		The Zamorin's withdrawal from Kodungallur the Zamorin's cession of Chetway to the Dutch Death of Marthandavarma (July 11)
1761		Haider Ali becomes Nabob of Mysore
1762	1763	The Zamorin's withdrawal from Alangad Parur and Trichur before the joint Travancore and Cochin forces

1790	1792	III Mysore War
1792		Tippu's cession of Malabar, Cochin and Coorg to the English
1793		Malabar declared a Province by the English
1795		English occupation of the Dutch fort of Cochin
		Treaty between the English and the Travancore Raja
1797		Submission of the Ravivarmas of Kozhikkode and Pazhassy Raja to the English
1799		IV Mysore War and death of Tippu Cession of Wynad and Canara to the English by the Mysore Raja
1800		Malabar transferred to the Madras Presidency
1801	1809	Velu Thampi Diwan of Travancore
1802		Disarmament of the Nayars in Malabar
1805		Pazhassy Raja's suicide Treaty between Travancore and the English
1808	1809	Velu Thampi's war with the English
1809		Velu Thampi's Kuntara Proclamation battle of Kizhikkollur Velu Thampi's suicide Treaty between the Cochin Raja and the English
1834		First English school established at Trivandrum
1836		First Moplah outbreak
1837		English school started at Trichur and Thripunithura
1843		Abolition of slavery in Malabar
1844		Arrival of the first cart at Trichur from Coimbatore
1848		First English school started at Kozhikkode
1853		Abolition of slavery in Travancore and Cochin
1854	1924	Chattampi Swamikal
1856	1928	Sri Narayana Guru
1856		Malabar Sadr Court defines land tenures
1857		Madras University founded
1858		First Girls School at Kozhikkode
1860		Indian Penal Code promulgated
1861		Indian High Courts Act
1865		Pandaram lands made heritable in Travancore

1866	Girls School and Maharaja's College of Arts founded in Travancore
1867	Travancore <i>Jammi Kutiyam</i> Proclamation
1873 - 1932	Vakkam Abdul Khadir Maulvi
1874	First factory set up at Kozhikkode
1875	First regular decennial census in Travancore Raja's College founded at Ernakulam
1879	Zamorin's College founded at Kozhikkode
1882	Establishment of the High Court in Travancore
1884	<i>Keralapathrika</i> started at Kozhikkode
1885	Indian National Congress founded
1887	First Girls School founded at Trichur Compensation for Land Improvements Act in British Malabar
1888	Legislative Council established in Travancore
1890	<i>Malayala Manorama</i> started
1901	Chief Court established in the Cochin State
1903	Malabar District Congress Committee founded
1904	Srimulam Assembly established in Travancore
1912	Muslim League founded
1916 - 1919	I World War
1916	Home Rule League branch started at Kozhikkode
1919	Provincial Congress Committee founded in the Cochin State
1920	Manjeri Political Conference
1921	First All Kerala Political Conference Malabar Rebellion Waggon Tragedy
1923	<i>Mathrubhumi</i> started
1924	Vaikam Sathyagraha <i>Al Amin</i> started
1930	First Salt Sathyagraha Secret circulation of the Congress Bulletin
1931	Gurusayur Sathyagraha Youth League founded in Travancore
1932	Second Salt Sathyagraha Legislative Reforms Act in Travancore Joint Political Congress or <i>Sanyuktha</i> party founded in Travancore
1936	Temple Entry Proclamation in Travancore
1937	Travancore University founded
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- 1939 - 1945 II World War
- 1939 Communist party founded in Kerala
- 1940 *Quit India* campaign started Secret circulation of
Swathanthrabharatham
- 1941 *Cochin Praja Mandal* founded
- 1947 Accession of Travancore and Cochin to India,
India declared Independent on August 15
- 1948 Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi (January 30)
- 1949 Union of Travancore and Cochin
- 1956 *Kerala State formed (November 1)*
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