

WAYANAD : THE LAND OF PAZHASSI

A Project submitted in a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of a B.A Degree in History St. Teresa's College (Autonomous)

Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University Kottayam

ANNA ANCY AUGUSTINE

Reg. No: AB16HIS029



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

ST. TERESA'S COLLEGE

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CERTIFICATE

This is to verify that the project work entitled "**WAYANAD : THE LAND OF PAZHASSI**" being submitted by ANNA ANCY AUGUSTINE in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of B.A Degree in History of St Teresa's College(Autonomous), Affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University is a bonafied record of the work done by her under my supervision and guidance. No part of this work has been submitted elsewhere for the award of degree.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this project work entitled a study on "**WAYANAD : THE LAND OF PAZHASSI**" is an original work done by me under the supervised guidance of Smt. Stancy S , Associate Professor , Department of History, St. Teresa's College(Autonomous). No part of this work has been submitted elsewhere for the award of any degree.

Place: Ernakulam
Date:

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Place: Ernakulam

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III BA HISTORY

CONTENTS

SI No	CHAPTERS	PAGE NO
1	INTRODUCTION	1-2
2	HISTORY OF WAYANAD	3-6
3	PAZHASSI RAJA: LION OF KERALA	7-23
4	TRIBAL PEOPLE OF WAYANAD	24-31
5	EDAKKAL CAVES AND SHRINES OF WAYANAD	32-37
6	CONCLUSION	38-39
7	BIBLIOGRAPHY	40
8	ANNEXURE 1	41
9	ANNEXURE 2	42-44

INTRODUCTION

Wayanad as its name signifies is the land of forests. The correct name is Vana- nadu (forest country) which, by lapse of time ,is pronounced Vayanadu or Wynadas it is now spelt.

It is a mountainous country with a general elevation of 2000 to 4000 feet and with range of hills some with peaks over 7000 feet high. To the west and south are the low lands of Malabar, to the east rise the Nilgiri hills, to the North West the chain of ghats stretches away into the province of Coorg.

It is the sanatorium of Malabar from October to the end of February when the climate is dry, cool and salubrious. March, April and May are the unhealthy months when malarial fever is prevalent. Its fertility is unsured and its scenery is picturesque. When Sir ME Grant Duff, Governor of Madras visited the district, he is said to have asserted that had Wayanad been in Europe its fortune would have been made as a pleasure resort: it would be the favourite haunt of the landscape painter and views from it would appear in every picture gallery.

For the sportsman there is a game in plenty. Tiger ,panther and bear ,wild Elephant and bison, deer ,jungle sheep ,jungle fowl all these are in evidence in this country.

According to tradition, Wayanadu was under the sway of Vedar kings. These are conquered by the Kottayam and Kurumbranadu Rajas who partitioned the country unto Wayanadu and Parakkumeethil. Subsequently the Kottayam raja the ruler of Wayanadu proper, secured the sovereignty of Parakkumeethil also, and the whole country was under the sway magen Tippu of Mysore exacted from the senior Raja of Kottayam a deed of relinquishment of his rights over Wayanad in 1786. On the fall of Seringapatanam in 1699, Wayanad became part of

British Empire. Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja of Kottayam revolted against the British power and was killed in 1805 after which peace reigned in the country interrupted only by a small rebellion of Kurichiyas and Kurumbars in 1812.

In 1876, three of the amsams that formed part of Wayanad viz Munnadan, Nambala - kode and Cherankode, were transferred for administrative purposes to the district of Nilgiris. An enquiry into the jenmam titles to lands in Wayanad was commenced in 1884 and four years later the properties that belonged to Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja and his adherents were formally declared to belong to Government. In 1889 the settlement of land revenue on modern lines was introduced into Wayanad. Excluding the portion transferred to the Nilgiris Wayanad as it now exists cover an area of 821 square miles and its population according to the census of 1901, was 75149.

The chief wet crop and ragi the chief dry crop. Rice is the staple food of the inhabitant's ragi being used more by the hill tribes. Cardamoms are grown near Peria and Koroth on the on the slopes of the ghats: coconut trees and areca nuts do not thrive in the country. Pepper an indigenous product of North Malabar was first introduced by the natives of Wayanad; subsequently European planters extended its cultivation.

To these planters belong the credit of introducing coffee cinchona rubber and tea and the last named product has taken a firm hold in the country. Wayanad has a bright future before it but for the dark spot which threatens to render it unpopular. The opening of the railway communication through these forests would induce people from the plains to settle in Wayanad and to reclaim the extensive waste lands: this is evidently impracticable and but a dream.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORY OF WAYANAD

ANCIENT HISTORY

The earliest record of a ruling family in Kerala exists in Wayanad in the shape of a rock inscription in the Edakkal cave four miles south west of Sultan Bathery. The walls of the cave are covered with rude fanciful drawings and one of the inscriptions was suggested by Dr Hultzch to be the 'writing of the glorious Vishnu Varma, the propagator of the Kudumbiyil family'.

That Kudumbiyil family held sway over Wayanad must be accepted as an established fact but it is impossible to fix the period when they lived and reigned. The author of the Malabar Gazetteer writes that 'tradition points to a time when a line of Vedar kings held sway and the story goes on to record that an ill judged capture of a Kshatriya pilgrim to the famous Tirunelli shrine led to the invasion and subjugation of the country by the Kshatriya princes of Kottayam and Kurumbranadu'.

This tradition as recorded by certain leading inhabitants of Wayanad on 15th Vrishchikam 986 M E is given below. The Vedar kings were ruling the country when the Kshatriya ruler of Kumbala happened to go on a pilgrimage to the Tirunelli temple. He was taken prisoner and carried before the Vedar Raja at the Velikumbam fort and on being pressed to marry a daughter of the Vedar ruling family he consented on condition that the ceremony should be celebrated in accordance with Kshatriya customs.

This was allowed and an auspicious day a month hence was fixed for the celebration of the marriage. Meanwhile the Kumbala Raja communicated with the Rajas of Kottayam and Kurumbranad who came up with their forces and encamped in the neighbourhood of the fort. The Kumbala Rajas attendant an ascetic with matted hair and an Erati by caste was entrusted with the duty of beating the drum to commence the festivities; but this was the really a signal to commence the onslaught and on hearing it the two Rajas with their united forces destroyed the Vedar king; Kumbala Raja was rescued but he insisted that as he had promised to marry the Vedar girl he must at least find a substitute and one Nanthillath Nambiar was then prevailed upon to marry her.

On this marriage he was appointed as the ruler of Velikumbam with supreme authority over the surviving Vedars. Kumbala Raja having left the country back to go to his own domains it was decided that Wayanad should be partitioned between the Kottayam and Kurumbranad Rajas. The Kottayam Raja left Mathangode and the Kurumbranad Raja left Koyilandi and it was settled that their meeting place should be the boundary between the two countries. They met at Pazhuthapur and the North West Wayanad known as Wayanad proper became the Kottayam Rajas share and the South east Wayanad known as Parakkumeethil the Kurumbranad Rajas share.

The Erati ascetic did good service and it was resolved to reward him. The Rajas thought him a lucky man and in entrusting him with the sovereignty of Muttill called him the founder of Bhagiya Swarupam which name has since been abbreviated to 'Pakka Swarupam

POLITICAL HISTORY

Wayanad stands unique in its political history. This was the only taluk in Malabar which never bowed its neck to the Mysore yoke and which defied the British power until its ruler fell, fighting against the British. This ruler was the Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja of Kottayam dynasty and his history is practically the political history of Wayanad from 1786 to 1805. Hyder Ali hordes were devastating Malabar in 1766 and the rulers of Kottayam had fled away for safety to Travancore where the child Varma was living with his relations. Wayanad remained undisturbed until 1773 when a Mysorean army passed through the country by the Tamarasseri gat on its way to Calicut. In 1780 on the outbreak of the second Mysore War Ravi Varma the senior Raja returned from Travancore with his nephew Kerala Varma and assisted the beleaguered English factors at the siege of Tellichery with an army of 2000 Nayars and in 1786 when Ravi Varma visited Tippu Sultan in Coorg he the sultan exacted from him a deed of relinquishment of all his rights over Wayanad. The Kottayam family had then three branches:

1. Kizhakke Kovilakam
2. Patinjare Kovilakam
3. Thekke Kovilakam

Wayanad was under the sovereignty of the Western branch of which Kerala Varma was the head. He resented the action of the senior Raja and refused to submit to the Mysoreans with whom he was engaged in desultory warfare from 1787 to the beginning of the third Mysore War in 1790. On 4th May of that year Robert Taylor Chief of the English settlement at Tellichery granted a cowle to Kerala Varma Raja that the English East India Company would assist and protect him and do everything

in their power to render him independent of Tippu if he would enter heartily into the war against Tippu. The war was waged under the treaty of peace dated 18th March 1792 Malabar was ceded to the Company by the Sultan of Mysore.

CHAPTER 2

PAZHASSI RAJA: THE LION OF KERALA

Pazhassi Raja was born as Kerala Varma and was also known as Cotiote Rajah and Pychy Rajah. He was one of the earliest freedom fighters in India. He was a warrior prince and de facto head of the kingdom of Kottayam, otherwise known as Cotiote, in Malabar, India, between 1774 and 1805. His struggle with the British East India Company is known as the Cotiote War. He is popularly known as Kerala Simham (Lion of Kerala) on account of his martial exploits. He was the only person to defeat Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington in a war. Pazhassi Raja was a member of the western branch of the Kottayam royal clan. When Hyder Ali of the Kingdom of Mysore occupied Malabar in 1773, the Raja of Kottayam found political asylum in Travancore.

Pazhassi Raja, the fourth prince in line for succession to the throne during this period, became one of the de facto heads of state, surpassing several older royal contenders. He fought a war of resistance against the Mysorean army from 1774 to 1793. On account of his refusal to flee and due to his effective resistance to Mysoreans, he gained firm support of his subjects. In 1792, after the Third Anglo-Mysore War, the East India Company imposed control in Kottayam in violation of an earlier agreement of 1790 which had recognised its independence.

Vira Varma, to whom Raja was a nephew, was appointed by the East India Company authorities as the Raja of Kottayam. To meet revenue targets fixed by Company authorities, Vira Varma ordered an exorbitant tax to be collected from the peasantry and this move was met in 1793 by a mass resistance led by Pazhassi Raja, who had always been opposed to the Company's rule. In 1796, the Company made an attempt to arrest Pazhassi Raja, but he

evaded capture and instead fought back using guerilla warfare. After a string of serious setbacks, the Company sued for peace in 1797. The conflict was renewed in 1800 over a dispute on Wayanad and after a five year long war of insurgency, Pazhassi Raja was killed on 30 November 1805 in a gunfight at Mavila Thodu (small body of water), in the present day Kerala-Karnataka border, 10km away from Pulppally in the Wayanad district .

KINGDOM

Pazhassi Raja was born in the Padinjare Kovilakam (Western Branch) of Purannattu Swarupam , Peralam Village, the royal clan of the kingdom of Kottayam in North Malabar not Kottayam District in south Kerala. This branch was located at Pazhassi which lay south west of Mattannur. Kerala Varma got the name Pazhassi Raja as he was a native of Pazhassi. The early British documents wrote Pazhassi Raja as Pychy Rajah, while the name Cotiote Raja comes from the anglicizing of Kottayam to Cotiote.

Kottayam covers what is today the Thalassery taluk of the Kannur District and Wayanad district, along with the Gudalur taluk of Nilgiris district .As a royal clan, Purannattu Swarupam had three branches: the a western branch (Padinjare Kovilakam) at Pazhassi, near Mattannur, an eastern branch (Kizhakke Kovilakam) at Manatana, near Peravoor, and a southern branch (Tekke Kovilakam) at Kottayampoil, near Koothuparamba.

RESISTANCE TO MYSORE OCCUPATION (1773–1793)

Pazhassi Raja's warfare with Mysore troops can be divided into two phases based on the rulers of the kingdom of Mysore. First phase lasted from 1773 to 1782 during this time Mysore ruler was Hyder Ali. Second phase extended from 1784 to 1793 and during this phase he fought troops of Tippu Sultan, son and successor of Hyder Ali:

Resistance to Hyder Ali (1773–1782) in 1773, Hyder Ali marched into Malabar for the second time, for non-payment of tributes from the Rajas (kings) of Malabar as agreed after war in 1768. Most of the Rajas of Malabar, along with many Naduvazhis or vassals fled to seek political asylum in Travancore. Princes and younger noblemen who refused to flee the invasion organised resistances. The Malabari partisans made excellent use of the wooded hills that covered most of Malabar during this rebellion.

In 1774, at age of 21, Pazhassi Raja took over the throne to replace his uncle who had fled to Travancore. He vowed to resist Hyder Ali's troops, and stayed in Kottayam where he gathered a force and began guerrilla battles against the troops of Mysore as he had neither guns nor troops enough to face them in an open battle. He set up a large number of bases in the nearly impenetrable forested mountains of Puralimala and Wayanad and repeatedly inflicted severe minor losses to the Mysore army in Kottayam as well as in Wayanad.

Once true Raja of Kottayam had fled away three royals rose to power in Kottayam. Nephew of escaped Raja named Vira Varma and his nephews, Ravi Varma and Pazhassi Raja now took over the reins of government. Vira Varma was skilled in political intrigue and manipulation whereas Ravi Varma was too incompetent to play any serious political role and hence his role only was nominal. Pazhassi Raja became the most powerful figure in Kottayam, much to the chagrin of his uncle Vira Varma. Hence Vira Varma played a series of

power games aiming to check the growing clout of his niece. So the relation between Vira Varma and Pazhassi Raja was one of enmity right from onset. Military situation was grim for Pazhassi Raja and his troops – in 1774, Coorg had joined hands with Hyder Ali on promise of being gifted Wayanad and a large Coorg army camped in Wayanad to help Mysore troops. In 1776, Hyder Ali re-installed Hindu Raja in Chirakkal and latter joined Mysore war effort to crush Pazhassi Raja.

This triple alliance which lasted till 1780 reached nowhere near defeating Kottayam army. During his long war with the Mysore and then the English East India Company, Pazhassi Raja increased his sphere of influence significantly eastwards as far as the outskirts of Mysore. His men regularly looted enemy treasuries and sandalwood from southern Karnataka and his enemies could do little to check these raids. This enabled him to lay claim on a great chunk of the Mysore district – as far as Nanjangod in the east. Also Pazhassi Raja and his men frequently raided the domains of neighbouring Rajas in northern Malabar and Coorg to harass the enemy regiments posted there and he was often supported by local population of those territories. Along with this he had close ties with Ravi Varma and Krishna Varma, who were princes of Calicut and popular rebel leaders of southern Malabar.

FIRST REVOLT (1793–1797)

Pazhassi Raja was not on good terms with his uncle Vira Varma, Raja of Kurumbranad. In 1793, foxy Vira Varma who had surrendered Kottayam to British back in 1792 convinced British Commissioners to let him collect tax in Kottayam. He calculated that a good collection might please the British and that that would let him seize all of Kottayam. British had by this time adopted a hostile approach to Pazhassi Raja who had consistently refused to accept British suzerainty and hence they made obedient Vira Varma as head of Kottayam. Pazhassi Raja was angry at this British move. He felt betrayed. After all he was the only Raja

in Northern Malabar to have helped the British consistently in the war with Mysore. Vira Varma Raja on the one hand undertook to collect tax in Kottayam directly, but on the other hand he instigated Pazhassi Raja to oppose the British. Moreover, the British assessment was harsh and beyond the peasants' capacity to pay. They resisted its forcible collection by the agents of the British, and Pazhassi Raja took up their cause. As seen before, Raja was deadly opposed to extortion of the peasantry.

In 1793, Pazhassi Raja made sure that no tax was collected in Kottayam by the British – as a mark of his protest. He also threatened that if British officials did not give up their enumeration of pepper vines, he would have the vines destroyed. Local British authorities, however, debated with Raja and soon both discovered Vira Varma's dirty games. So the British put forward a solution acceptable to the Raja by which 20 percent of gross revenue would go to Raja and another 20 percent would go for the temples' expense. No tax would be imposed on temple property in the immediate future. In 1793, Tippu's Vakils protested to the British that Pazhassi Raja, who was a British tributary, had overrun most of Wayanad, still under Mysore.

Soon the Raja was supreme in the Wayanad Plateau. But the Governor General unwisely revoked the agreement in 1794 and gave Kottayam to Kurumbranad Raja on a five-year lease. The Raja was truly angry at this decision and decided to retaliate by ruling his country as per customary law. The year before the lease was concluded the Raja had provided asylum to a Nair noble, Nambiar belongs to the Iruvazinad royal clan, who had been declared an outlaw by British for the murder of three men who had killed his kinsman. The Raja's kind treatment of Nambiar irritated the British.

The British also became angry that the Raja impaled two robbers as per customary law. British planned to arrest Raja for 'murder', but gave up the idea as the Raja had a bodyguard

of 500 well armed Wayanad Nayars. In 1795, even after a year Vira Varma Raja got Kottayam on lease, he was not able to collect tax in Kottayam-thanks to his nephew Raja's determination. So British troops arrived in Kottayam to help Vira Varma's tax collectors, but Pazhassi Raja's men resisted them with success .In 1796, orders were issued from Bombay to collect tax arrears for 2 years in Kottayam. For British no more pretexts were needed to arrest Raja.

300 men under Lieutenant James Gordon marched from Talassery and seized Raja's fortified house at Pazhassi but Raja fled four days earlier to Manattana [near Kottiyur]. Gordon plundered the palace where traditional treasure of Raja was kept. Raja was angry at this loot and sent a letter to Supervisor at Thalassery. Raja was also angry that one of his former general named Pazhayamviden Chandu had become an agent of Kurumbranad Raja and what angered him even more than that was that this turn-coat had the audacity to boss him with Vira Varma's and British blessings Raja shifted his HQ to Purali Range and then into Wayanad.

Raja then blocked all British communications between Wayanad and Low Malabar through Kuttiyadi Pass. The British retaliated by cutting all communications between Raja and Low Malabar. But as they did not have enough troops to chase him they waited for reinforcements.The British commandant was Colonel Dow, whom Raja knew well during Siege of Thalassery. So Raja thought that this old friend might help him mediate with the British government.

Raja offered to give up the struggle provided he was pardoned and his treasure and house restored. The Colonel and Raja being old soldiers hated needless bloodshed and so he forwarded Raja's request to Commissioners, who through they were bitterly opposed to Raja's

independent style, agreed to the Colonel's suggestion as there was a risk that Raja might ally with Tippu.

So Northern Superintendent ordered the restoration of the Raja's house [but not treasure], and the Raja's pardon was confirmed by the Bombay and Supreme Governments. But the orders of government were communicated to the Raja via Vira Varma – which meant that uncle Raja took care not to report to his nephew that the British had agreed to his requests. Uncle Raja had a vested interest in war between the Company and his nephew Pazhassi Raja. Vira Varma also removed Kaitheri Ambu, a favourite noble and general of Raja, from home administration of Kottayam. Ambu along with followers went to Kannavam [also spelled Kannavath and Kannothe], where he planned and executed a mass resistance with people's support, which made sure that Vira Varma could make no tax collection in Kottayam. But Ambu acted clearly on guidance of Raja, who felt expulsion of Ambu was another of his uncle's conspiracies to undermine him.

Raja feared that British planned to seize him [not knowing that their truce terms were kept blocked from him by his uncle] and retreated into depths of Wayanad. British troop build up in Wayanad also accelerated his doubts. However Raja was still eager to avoid a war and came to meet Northern Superintendent with a bodyguard of 1500 armed Nayars. Vira Varma Raja was also ordered to be present.

Pazhassi Raja's main demand was that Kottayam must be under his rule—a demand his uncle was not ready to accede. British Commissioners' attitude also was arrogant—they were already prejudiced towards Raja and so were blind towards Raja's logical argument that Vira Varma had no business in Kottayam. As talks broke down, Commissioners' issued a threat proclamation in Kottayam that if those Kottayam men in service of Raja do not desert him and come home, they would be declared enemies and their properties would be confiscated.

But this proclamation had little effect in Kottayam where resistance to British-Kurumbranad rule became stronger. British, to their horror, found out that a large number of Vira Varma's troops had deserted to join ranks of resisters and Vira Varma himself was not much interested to help British-after all his aim was to create a flare up between his nephew and British for sake of pure self-interest.

Raja then visited to Mysorean commandant at Karkankotta in 1796 and in 1797 held an audience with old enemy Tippu in Mysore who posted 6000 men at Karkankotta to aid Raja in case of war and also to supply ammunition to rebels. He also began to collect troops and armament. War was imminent. 1200 troops and artillery under Major General was sent by Bombay Government to deal with Pazhassi. British also began to set up outposts in Kottayam and sent more troops to Wayanad. In early 1797, Nair militia rose all over Kottayam and British outposts were trapped in a true state of siege. Partisan bands became active all over Kottayam and harassed reinforcements and supply convoys. Same was the case in Wayanad where British troops that moved out of safety of block-houses risked being way-laid by Kurichia bowmen. British suffered good loss in terms of men, ammunitions and stores in these ambushades. Victory at Periya Pass This event was the most important in the whole war. In 1797, Colonel Dow & force marches into Wayanad. His plan was to block Periya Pass and then crush a large rebel force in Kannothe once their retreat is blocked. Reinforcements under Lieutenant Mealy were to reach Dow at Periya, but on way they were severely harassed by a force of Nayars and Kurichias and suffered a casualty of 105 men. So instead of Periya they retreated to their original base. Dow's troops suffered chronic shortage of supplies and so Dow applied for reinforcements and re-supplies to be sent under Major Anderson of Bowles' regiment. But as Mappila guides of Anderson deserted at last moment. That caused a delay in journey of Anderson-a delay that had fatal consequence for British .

Dow then received news that Tippu had sent sepoys to aid Raja as Tippu considered British entry into Wayanad a violation of Seringapatam Pact. Dow decided that he will go to Talassery to consult authorities there and to plan a greater operation to deal with troops of Raja and Tippu simultaneously in Wayanad. He left with a small band of men but was ambushed on way by Raja's men aided by Mysorean sepoys but Dow escaped unhurt .Day after he left, British force of 1100 under Major Cameroon in Periya decided to descend into Kottayam via Periya Pass as their supplies have exhausted. But what they did not know was that Raja who learnt of true state of British army laid a trap for them-he ordered troops lay concealed in camouflaged stockades built on both sides of pass.

Once the whole British force entered the narrow pass, hidden troops were to pounce on their enemy who must be caught unawares. Plan worked well and what followed was great slaughter of British. Had it not been for arrival of Major Anderson's force the following day, hardly any would have survived due to lack of medical care. Most of enemy were killed and all their guns, ammunition, baggage and cattle were plundered along with Union colours. Senior British officers like Major Cameroon, Lieutenant Nugent, Lieutenant Madge and Lieutenant Rudderman were killed in action. Around this time, Commissioners took a decision on advice of Swaminatha Pattar, a Tamil Brahmin who was minister of Zamorin that sowed the eventual downfall of Pazhassi Raja. They decided to raise an irregular force of local traitors to harass Pazhassi Raja. This force was a fore-runner of the Kolkar, who became infamous for their sycophancy to British and cruelty to resisters and people. But for time being, Raja was in a strong position .

On account of British disasters, Bombay Government sent a Committee of Government composed of men of highest ranks-Commander-In-Chief Lieutenant General Stuart and Governor Jonathan Duncan. They decided to make peace as they were anxious that guerrilla warfare in a mountainous and forested terrain could last long and that Raja might join forces

with Tippu or French. They also decided that Kurumbranad Raja Vira Varma should be ousted from administration of Kottayam. Rajas of Chirakkal and Parappanad acted as mediators in negotiation between Raja and British and a peace pact was signed between Pazhassi and British in 1797. The Treaty of 1797 agreed on following points:

Pazhassi Raja was to be 'pardoned'.

He will be returned his treasure.

He will be provided an annual allowance of 8000 rupees.

He will be given back his confiscated house at Pazhassi.

Ravi Varma, elder brother of Pazhassi Raja will be head of Kottayam.

A pardon and restoration of property was also extended to Narangoli Nambiar of Iruvazhinad.] Thus Raja's efforts of four years ended in a political victory. Peace dawned after four years of antagonism and war. Tippu Sultan in his letter to French government notes with glee that British had lost 1,000 European soldiers and 3,000 native sepoys in four years of war between British troops and Kottayam army. Undeclared hostilities (1797-1800) Despite the peace treaty of 1797, real peace did not emerge between Pazhassi Raja and English East India Company. Skirmishes continued across Kottayam.

Main reason for this was that Company did not attempt to end its efforts to subjugate Kottayam and collect tax. But this was successfully foiled by partisans of Pazhassi Raja headed by Kaitheri Ambu. Pazhassi Raja also went ahead with his policy of defiance of English directions, continued with his military enlargement program and even shifted his seat of power to Mananthavadi in Wayanad - all of which were deemed as "injurious to interests of Company in Kottayam" by Colonel Dow, English representative in Kottayam. But since

Raja clearly had upper hand since victory of 1797, English were powerless to put an end to his activities.

SECOND REVOLT AND DEATH (1800–1805)

After fall of Tippu, Wayanad fell to British. They sent a Mysore Commission to seize Wayanad and planned to annexe it to either Canara or Coimbatore. But as Wayanad was a traditional possession of Kottayam Raja and that Pazhassi is in control of this region since 1793, Pazhassi correctly saw move was an encroachment on his country's ancient provinces. Raja retaliated by collecting a large force of Nayars which was now supplemented by Mappilas and Pathans, latter being ex-soldiers of Tippu who became unemployed after Tippu's death. British Government at Madras appointed Major General Arthur Wellesley as British army commandant of Mysore, Canara & Malabar. He planned a double-pronged move from Malabar Coast and Mysore into Wayanad and began preparations for that end. Raja observed Major General-latter had brought reinforcements and building roads in Wayanad and outposts across rebel country. In response, Raja also recruited numerous men which so alarmed Wellesley that latter even wanted to kidnap kith and kin of rebels so as to check Raja's recruitment.

Raja learnt that Wellesley had left to Deccan on a military mission-Raja who understood that Major General's absence is a great chance swiftly made his move. He marched across Kuttiyadi Pass and below he made a junction with Unni Mootha Mooppan, a Valluvanad Mappila leader & his men and soon several great nobles like Kampuratt Nambiar of Iruvazhinad, Peruvayal Nambiar and Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar also joined Raja with their men. By monsoon of 1800, rebels who controlled all of country-side of Kottayam threatened to overwhelm British outposts in Kottayam. Wellesley sent a large force under Colonel Sartorius to recapture rebel held Kottayam. But the plan could not be carried out as

there were not enough troops in Malabar. Wellesley advised Commissioners to stop all communications with Wayanad so as to starve Raja of supplies .

But shortage of troops also meant this plan too remained on paper. By the time, Wellesley decided to smash Raja by a double drive from Malabar Coast and Mysore into Wayanad, Manjeri Athan Gurikkal an Ernad Mappila leader along with his followers agreed to support of Raja. By 1801, a large British force of over 10,000 men swarmed all over Kottayam and Wayanad and they blocked all passes that linked Wayanad with Malabar. Before so large numbers, rebels thought wise to go under-ground for time being. Raja also found that he could no longer contact his supporters in Southern Wayanad and Southern Malabar. Raja became a wanderer in forests but even then, to surprise of British, he ruled out compromise it seems he understood that there was no alternative to full freedom.

Raja had six close aides and 25 musketeers in his wanderings. First he went north via Payyavur along montane forests of eastern Chirakkal to rally support.

But British were on his trail but failed to catch him. Raja then visited his secret bases in Kottayam and then moved into Kadathanad and into jungles of Kurumbranad. British were angered that where ever he went, nobles supported him in secret and decided to punish them for their help to rebel Raja. As a part of terrorisation, Peruvayal Nambiar who was arrested was hanged. British also threatened brutal penalty and confiscation of property for all those rebels who failed to surrender in six weeks time. But a pardon was also issued for surrendered rebels. But none of these threats and temptations worked and Raja was still at large. But some of his chief supporters were arrested of whom Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar was most famous. Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar and his son were hanged too and their property was confiscated. Following murder of Kannavath Nambiar, a deceptive calm descended on North Malabar-calm before storm. Collector Major MacLeod believed that war

was over and went ahead with exploitation program. He immediately declared a total disarmament of Malabar and threatened those who kept arms with death penalty.

He also doubled the rate of tax and ordered a reassessment of tax of whole Malabar in a mere forty days. All these 'reforms' paid back in 1803 when Malabar was on verge of revolt as people were pushed to wall. MacLeod tried to calm this with corrective measure-He cancelled all his 'reforms' and old system was reinstated. But it was too late for Wayanad where Raja's men were prepared for a rebellion. Capture of Panamaram Fort The first major event was the capture of Panamaram Fort. Edachena Kungan Nair planned the operation and was helped by 150 Kurichia bowmen under Talakkal Chandu. Fort had 70 men under Captain Dickenson and there was a large force of 360 men under Major Drummond only a few miles away in Pulinjali. So if Major came to help Captain in time Kurichia force would be overwhelmed by gun-fire and numbers. But Kungan and Chandu decided to take risk. Whole garrison was slaughtered in the surprise attack led by the two generals and they lost only 5 dead and 10 wounded. Dickenson himself was killed. Rebels got 112 muskets, six boxes of ammunitions and 6000 rupees. They also destroyed the whole fort. Wellesley was enraged at this rebel audacity and dispatched 500 men to retaliate. But by then rebel victory had roused all of Wayanad and Kottayam.

Edachena Kungan, hero of Panamaram success, went to Pulpally shrine and issued a proclamation to people to join Raja's war.3000 men volunteered. They were posted at Valliyurkav at Mananthavadi, Motimjarra, and Edappally and 100 of them under brother of Kungan posted themselves at Periya Pass and 25 men were posted at Kottiyur Pass. Rebel outposts were set up en route from Dindimal to Valliyurkav. The rebel army was mostly composed of archers and sword men, but some had muskets .

Edachena Kungan Nair led an attack on a British detachment headed from Mysore to Mananthavadi. Harassment began once this force entered Wayanad till it reached a stream between Manathavadi and Bhavully river. There they were blocked by a rebel force entrenched on opposite side of stream. But to ill luck of rebels a reinforcement which had caught up with blocked British army outflanked the rebel entrenchment and took a large number of prisoners. All these prisoners were disarmed and marched to a road where they were murdered. Besides, British reinforcements arrived in Wayanad from all directions. But British could find rebels nowhere. The rebels now concentrated in Kottayam. In 1802, they raided a supplies convoy near Kottiyur. British were frustrated by Kottayam people's total lack of co-operation. To add to their trouble, in 1803, a rebel force took to field in Kurumbranad & Payyormala and people were sympathetic to rebels. Kungan marched towards Pazhassi to wipe out the British outpost there but had to retreat, though British suffered serious losses. Soon rebellion spread into Chirakkal where armed bands of partisans launched operations and often fought British openly. Raja's army by end of 1803 was ranging as far as Kannur and Thalasseri. An estimated 3350 partisans of Pazhassi Raja took part in this operation that extended south as far as Ernad. [*Both in northern and eastern parts of modern Calicut District] In March 1803, a rebel force marched as far as Calicut and captured Sub-Jail where they killed all guards and seized their firearms and ammunition. They also released prisoners, many of whom joined ranks of rebel army. This was too much for MacLeod and he resigned immediately after this event. In 1803, Wellesley left for Europe, after three years of inconclusive war with Pazhassi Raja, later destined to become Duke of Wellington, vanquisher of Napoleon at Waterloo. In 1803, British had 8,147 soldiers to fight Pazhassi Raja. But as situation was slipping out of control, British military command in Malabar requested for another 5,000 men.

This reinforcement arrived in early 1804 and thus increasing British force to 13,000 men. In 1804, a large British army arrived and 1200 Kolkar were also ready for action .Most importantly Thomas Hervey Baber, a civil servant was appointed as Sub- Collector .It was he who crushed Pazhassi 's Revolt forever. It is indeed ironic that what a military genius like Wellesley could not attain was achieved by Baber – said to be just a 'civil servant.' Baber had both a personal motive – to avenge the death of his friend Major Cameron, the first husband of his wife Helen Somerville Fearon at the hand of Pazhassi Raja on 9 January 1797 at Periya Pass. Baber became a civil servant to protect the interests of a small but influential group of merchants that included his in laws – the Inglis and Money families of Bombay. It is noteworthy that Baber's son Henry Fearon Baber married the Granddaughter of George Harris, 1st Baron Seringapattam and the nemesis of Tippu Sultan. In 1804, a huge rising led by Kalyat Nambiar and Raja's men in largely forested eastern Chirakkal was crushed by British. If there was large and long revolt warfare in Chirakkal, it would have immensely profited Raja. Though there were a lot of supporters of Raja in Chirakkal, as revolt collapsed fast as rebels opted for open confrontation instead of time honoured guerrilla warfare. Another cause for failure of revolt was treacherous Kolkar also served their White paymasters well. So once more rebel force had retreat to Wayanad. They were hotly chased by British who had 2000 Sepoys and 1000 Kolkar. A reward of 3000 pagodas was offered for Raja along with 1000 Pagodas for Edachena Kungan and bounties were put on heads of 10 other associates of Raja. But rebels, mostly Kurumbas, struck at Churikunji in Wayanad. Though they had to withdraw, they had devastated their enemy.

That year, a party of Kolkar nearly caught Raja but he escaped thanks to timely warning of a Kurumba guard .But monsoon and brutal climate of Wayanad soon aided Raja. Of 1300 Kolkar only 170 were not sick by October. Raja and Edachena Kungan organised a large force of Kurichias and Kurumbas at Pulpally shrine and positioned them to as far as

Kurichiyat .Also effort of Kungan to rally Nair nobles of Wayanad to support Raja's war-effort had also succeeded. British for past couple of years did not have to suffer loss on a scale of Periya in 1797, but matters were not easy for British at all. Even in Kottayam which had become quiet might explode once more and a large rebel force with Raja as head was still at large. But one must remember that the whole revolt is a one-man show as Wellesley himself remarked once-“We are not fighting 1000 men [Raja’s army] ... but one man ... Kerala Varma.”-Raja's end would mean end of revolt. Betrayal and death T.H. Baber went to Mysore to direct operations himself and began a large search for informants and traitors. True, British themselves admit that they did not get lot of informants as locals were devoted to Raja, but some of those few informants proved devastating to revolt-one of them a Chetti, found out where Raja had camped and informed Baber who took to field with 100 Kolkar and 50 Sepoys. There is one school of thought that blames Pazhayamviden Chandu as solely responsible for fall of Raja and end of his revolt.

Pazhayamviden worked with British military authority as an "adviser" like Pallore Eman, but in reality spied for Raja. But in autumn of 1805 Pazhayamviden decided to betray all military secrets of his master for a large sum of money. In light of above points, it will not be far fetched to believe that Chetti who guided British troops to Raja's hideout mentioned by Baber in his letter could be a servant or agent of Pazhayamviden Chandu. On 1805, 30 November, Raja and retainers were camped close to Karnataka on the shore of a stream named Mavila or Mavila Tod [not far from pulpally]. Raja and party were caught by surprise and an intense but short fight followed. Six rebels were killed. One of the earliest rebels to be killed was Pazhassi Raja. But evidently, wounded Raja did live long enough for a few more minutes to raise his loaded gun and then tell Canara Menon, an East India Company minor official, not to come too close to his dying body and pollute it. Raja's contempt and sarcasm for a man

who chose to serve unclean foreigner is evident. But it also showed his uncompromising stand towards collaborators and foreign invaders.

The precise nature of Raja's death is controversial. Folklore insists that he committed suicide by swallowing a diamond ring to avoid capture after he was wounded but Baber says he was killed by a clerk named Canara Menon. W. J. Wilson, who wrote on the history of the Madras Regiment, credits Captain Clafam and his six sepoys for killing. This third version is more likely as Baber was not on good terms with military authority throughout the war. He is alleged to have credited Menon so as to deny credit to Clafam and his superior Colonel Hill. Kunjani, the wife of Raja who was taken prisoner, committed suicide in captivity at Kappanaveedu, near Thalassery. As reprisal on his family, property was confiscated and the palace at Pazhassi was demolished and replaced with a highway. The sorry state of his family aroused sympathy in local Thiyyas, who were loyal followers and built a new house for his family.

CHAPTER 3

TRIBAL PEOPLE IN WAYANAD

Wayanad is said to be the home of over half of the 4 lakh strong tribal population of God's Own Country. While they were the original inhabitants of the area, the coming of the British led to them moving to their current settlements. This rate of migration would get severe in 1940s and many communities were displaced. The native Adivasis (tribals) of the district belong to various sects like Paniyas, Kurumas, Adiyars, Kurichyas, Ooralis, Kattunaikkans and Uraali Kurumas. Their houses are easily identifiable with thatched roofs, mud, bamboo and brick houses, which are usually set in swampy valleys and plateaus.

RELIGION

Adivasis belong to the Hindu fold, but their rituals and customs are a little different from that of the usually practised ones in the town area. They follow primitive forms of worship – ancestral worship and offerings to please the spirits of ancestors are still prevalent among Adivasis. Apart from the Hindu Gods of various temples, Adivasis mainly worship two deities called Thampuratty and Vettakkorumakan. The presence of centuries old temples here suggest that there were efforts made to bring Adivasis to the Hindu fold. Adivasis worship and participate in the festivals of the temples like Thirunelli and Valliyoorkavu in Wayanad district and it shows the connection between aboriginal mind and the Hindu system of belief.

TRIBAL MEDICINE

Another peculiarity of the tribal life is their holistic herbal medicine. Having lived in harmony with nature for centuries, the tribes have identified various herbs which can heal a

variety of diseases. They have no side effects. This indigenous stream of herbal medicine gets increased attention nowadays and more and more people, not only belonging to tribal community, but those from the outside civilised world, approach the tribal medical experts to take the medicine. Their approach to curing the disease not only includes taking the medicine, but also following some diets along with it. They may also suggest some changes in the lifestyle also depending on the type of diseases.

VARIOUS TRIBAL SECTS

1. KATTUNAYAKANS

The Kattunayakan tribe of Wayanad district are one of the only true heirs of its murky forests. Once the kings of jungles, even to this day they rarely mix with other tribes and still follow their ancient traditions of black magic and sorcery. Completely dependent on forest and forest products for sustenance, they subsist on honey, roots and barks of plants and what small animals that they trap or fell with their primitive weapons like bows and arrows. They are also known as Then Kurumas as they collect honey from the forest. They have the distinctive features unique to the hill-tribes of Wayanad and communicate through a mixture of all Dravidian languages. Their religion has deep cultural roots and they worship animals, birds, trees, rocks and snakes and almost everything emanating from nature. The ancient practice of worshipping their ancestors is also followed. The Kattunayakan community is found nowadays in Wayanad, Kozhikode and Malappuram districts.

2. KURICHIYAS

Kurichiyas are one of the most developed tribes in Wayanad district. It is said that the name 'Kurichiya' is derived from the kuri or the sandalwood paste that they apply on their

foreheads and chests as a custom. They are small land owners and largely depend on agriculture for a living. They have clean food habits and keep their houses, premises and dress always clean. They follow a matrilineal system and live in joint families. In their small plots, they mainly grow pepper and other crops. They select a chieftain called Pittan and the function is followed by a ritual performed before their idols.

A frenzied dance also accompanies the ritual and the chieftain wears an auspicious silver handled knife at his waist on the occasion. Under the control of this chieftain, Kurichiyas live in harmony. Polyandry and breaking dietary laws are some of the offences for them and the offenders are excommunicated. They follow age-old customs and one of them is, on returning from a journey, they will bathe before entering the home. The martial skills and traditions of Kurichiyas are well known and history speaks a lot about their valour in fighting the British, along with Pazhassi Raja in the early 19th century. Their skill in archery is famous and they are experts in hunt for game meat. Nellukuthu pattu is their art form.

3 . THE URAALI KURUMAS

The Uraali Kurumas consider themselves as the descendants of ancient powerful Kurumbas, who lived in south India. They are also called Bet Kurumas, who are now mainly found in Mysore district of Karnataka and speak Kannada. But those in Wayanad speak a mixture of Kannada and Malayalam languages. There are also Mulla Kurumas and Jen Kurumas belonging to this Kuruma sect and the Mulla Kurumas consider themselves superior of other Kurumas. Uraali Kurumas are an artisan tribe and their versatile skill in art and handicrafts are well known. They play flute and drum during festivals. One of their deities is 'Bettu Chikkamma' and an old man performs rituals before the deity and women are not allowed to participate in these ceremonies.

They also worship deities like Bamadu and demons and ancestral spirits. They believe that when one person dies, his soul becomes god if he is good and becomes devil if he is bad. They choose their life partners from the tribe itself and their main occupation is pottery, mat weaving etc. It is mostly the women who are involved in these tasks. They make baskets and mats of various types with reeds and bamboo.

4 .THE PANIYANS

Paniyas, as their name indicates were workers and during earlier times, the landlords used to sell them as bonded labour, along with the plantations. Now they work as paid farm hands. A majority of the tribes seen in Kerala belong to this tribe and they constitute about 70 percent of the tribal population in Wayanad. If you are keen on observing their lifestyle, you can go to their settlement near Tholpetty and see their huts with thatched roofs and mud plastered walls. Monogamy is practised in this sect and widow marriage is allowed. In marriage, bride price has been practised.

The Paniyas worship a deity called Kali and banyan tree. They hesitate to cut banyan trees and believe that if anyone attempts to cut the tree, they will fall sick. During the earlier times, they were headed by a chieftain called Kuttan appointed by the landlord and the head of the family was known as Mudali. Both Kuttan and Mudali are called Mooppanmar. But nowadays there is no headman for this sect.

5. THE ADIYAS

Adiyas are a slave tribal sect, like Paniyas. They are traditionally known as Ravulayar. But they have a distinct social identity and polygamy is allowed. No punitive measures are taken against the sex offenders. This tribe calls the woman who commits such 'offences' as Chullachi and they allow them to undergo purificatory ceremony known as 'Kalachu Veypu'

to join their community back. The Adiya tribal community is divided into 20 classes called 'Mandu', headed by a chieftain called 'Chommikkaran' or 'Peruman Tribal arts Adivasis have a different lifestyle compared to others and they have a rich legacy of arts and crafts –be it music, dance, ornamentation or handicrafts.

Their arts are inspired by the natural themes, motifs and materials. They have separate music instruments made of bamboo and wood. The Kurichiya community have a great tradition of martial arts and their skill in archery is well known. There are a variety of tribal arts belonging to various communities and the major one among them are Vattakali and Koodiyattam using thudi and kuzhal by Paniyas, Gadhika by Adiyas, Kolkali by Kurumas and Nellukuthu pattu by Kurichiyas.

TRIBAL DANCES

1. GADHIKA

Gadhika is an art form practised among the Adiya community of Wayanad district. It is a kind of dance and there are two variations of Gadhika called Naattu Gadhika and Pooja Gadhika. While Naattu Gadhika is staged publicly, Pooja Gadhika is performed for ritualistic purposes, mainly to cure illness or as part of a ritual for having a safe delivery of child. The format of this art form is like a dance drama and it will be accompanied by musicians who play wind instruments and drum.

The artists of this dance drama move rhythmically according to the music and the dialect used is a mix of Kannada and Tulu languages. Gadhika is often performed in the Malayalam month, Mithunam which falls in June-July. The participants of the art form, who belong to the Adiya community, visit the houses from which they have received invitation to perform and then conduct the rituals. This tribal sect believes that someone falls ill when gods are

angry and Gadhika is performed to please the gods and thus cure the illness. The principal performer will be Moopan, the chieftain of the tribe and he invokes Lord Shiva to help cure the patient. Once Lord Shiva was brought down to earth and pleased with invocations, other gods including Chamundi, Maniamma, Malamkali and Karimkali are believed to arrive. The participants are dressed in simple, but colourful costumes and they include men dressed as women. The main function of such performers is to welcome the gods and goddesses arriving in response to the summons of Lord Shiva.

2. MEDUVA KALI

Meduva Kali is the tribal art form performed by both men and women and it is part of any wedding ceremony in the community. Local percussions like drums accompany the dance and the performers move in small circles rhythmically with the music instruments

3 . KAMBARA DANCE

Kambara Dance is another folk dance that is common among the Adiya community of Wayanad district. The community has high respect for agriculture practices and Kambara Nritham is their way to express it. Men sing folk songs and play wind and percussion instruments including the traditional drum in order to make the dance more exhilarating. They will sing and dance around the paddy fields while the women collect new saplings from the field.

4. NAIKKAR KALI

Naikkar Kali is one folk art form prevalent among the tribes of Wayanad and Malappuram districts. There are more ritualistic elements included in the dance performance and it is performed as a pooja to the family deities during marriages. Percussion instruments like

Thappu and wind instruments like Kuzhal are used in Naikar Kali and the performers wear jingling anklets round their legs. They move rhythmically clockwise and anticlockwise in tune with the instruments. They also shout 'Hoy, Hoy' in between the performance.

5. MUDIYATTOM

Mudiyattom is a tribal dance performed only by the women. Instruments like karu, maram, para and kokkaro accompany the performance and simple graceful movements of the head of the participants standing on small wooden boxes are characteristics of this dance form. In the beginning the participants sway their heads very slowly which later culminate in fast graceful movements. The participants will have uncombed hair and they let the hair flow down and swing in rhythmic waves during the performance.

6 . PANIYAR KALI

Paniyar Kali is a very masculine dance performed by the men of the Paniyar tribe. The primitive percussion instruments like Karu, Para and Udukku are used in the dance performance and dancers – numbering about 8 to 10 – stand in a circle with their hands linked together. They move around rhythmically and stamp the ground in perfect rhythm to the beats of the percussion instruments. It is interesting to watch the dance gathering momentum and the performers uttering peculiar cries in high pitch during the dance. You can also watch as they move, the circle is expanded and contracted swiftly many times.

7 .KURUMBAR NRITHAM

This dance performance is conducted by the Kurumba tribe on marriage occasions. The relatives of the bride and bride groom perform this dance before marriage while the bride and

the groom perform it after marriage. The dance is performed again at the bridegroom's house once the bride reaches there with the bridegroom.

CHAPTER 4

EDAKKAL CAVES AND THE SHRINES

OF WAYANAD

Twenty five kilometres away from Kalpetta lays two caves which showcases nature's skill and philosophy on architecture. These caves are located 1,200 m above the sea level on Ambukuthy Mala. The name 'Edakkal' literally means 'a stone in between'. Here you can see a cave formed by a heavy boulder straddling a fissure in the rock. Many legends are there behind the formation of Edakkal caves. One of the stories is that, these caves are said to be formed with the arrows fired by Lava and Kusha, the sons of Lord Sri Rama. Another one is associated with Kutti Chathan and the Goddess Mudiampilly. The local people used to have a pilgrimage trip to this place to honour the Goddess. The caves were discovered by Fred Fawcett, the then Superintendent of Police of the Malabar district in 1890, during his hunting trip to Wayanad. He discovered the Edakkal rock-shelter, situated on the western side of Edakkalmala. To his surprise, he identified the place as a habitat of Neolithic people. Edakkal caves are famous for its pictorial paintings (cave paintings), which are considered to be of 6000 B C. To reach the caves, one has to trek through the Ambukutty Mala.

It will take around 45 minutes to climb the hill and you will never get disappointed in your trip to these historic caves. Inside the cave, you can see two chambers. The lower chamber is 18 ft long, 12 ft wide and 10 ft high and the upper chamber is 96 ft long, 22 ft wide and 18 ft high. You can sight carvings of human, animal figures and objects used by humans, on the walls of the caves. These carvings give great evidence for a highly civilized society who lived in the pre-historic age. Edakkal caves have drawn great attention of archaeologists and historians worldwide. Edakkal is the only known place in India with Stone Age carvings. You

can see here carvings belonging to Neolithic and Mesolithic age. The human figures of these caves have raised hair and some have masks. They all have archaeological significance and are interesting too. Along with these pictorial carvings, you can also watch Tamil and Brahmi Script in Edakkal caves. Edakkal is said to have some links with Indus Valley Civilization too. Around 400 signs were discovered recently, which had shown its relationship with the ancient civilization. The prominent among them was 'a man with a jar cup'.

LEGENDS OF THE CAVES

The name Ambukuthimala is ascribed to the local legend which has it that the caves were formed by arrows fired by Lava and Kusha, the sons of Sri Rama, legendary hero of the Ramayana. Even today there are many who believe that Lord Rama killed Surpanakha, the sister of Ravana, in the narrow fissure at the southern end of Edakkal cave. A local legend associates Kutti Chatan (the little devil of Malabar) with the goddess Mudiampilli, and until recently local people undertook an annual pilgrimage to the peak of the hill to perform a puja (ritual offering) in her honour.

COLONIAL DISCOVERY

On a hunting trip to Wayanad in 1890, Fred- Fawcett, the then superintendent of police of the Malabar District, happened to see a Neolithic Celt (stone axe or chisel) recovered from the coffee estate of Colin Mackenzie. An enthusiast in prehistory, Fawcett made local enquiries and went round exploring the Wayanad high ranges. In the course of his rambles he was shown the Edakkal rock shelter situated on the western side of Edakkalmala. He identified the site as a habitat of Neolithic (i.e. late Stone Age, c4000BC to c1700BC) people on the basis of the nature of representations on the cave walls, which appeared to him as

engravings made of Neolithic Celts. It was an exciting discovery, as these were the first specimens of abraded drawings found in India.

LATER STUDIES ON EDAKKAL CAVES

The fascinating prehistoric rock engraving found on the walls of Edakkal caves drawn the serious attention of archaeologist and historian's world wider. It is assumed that the Edakkal caves had been inhabited at various stages in history. Inside the cave is on two levels the lower chamber measures about 18 feet long by 12 feet wide and 10 feet high and can be entered through an opening of 5*4 feet. A passage opposite the entrance leads upwards to a small aperture in the roof through which one climbs up to the next storey whose interior is about 96 feet long 22 feet wide and 18 feet high.

Light enters the cave through a big gap at the right hand corner of the roof where the boulder does not touch the facing wall a local legend associate Kutti Chathan with a goddess Mudiampilli and until recently local people undertook an annual pilgrimage to the peak of the hill to perform ritual offering. It was an exciting discovery as these were the first specimen of abraded drawings found in India. Tribal people and the Caves suggested the possibility that the carvings might have been the handiwork of Kurumbar. The mere existence of the mysterious carvings in the silent unfrequented cave would suffice to inspire the Kurumbar with a kind of awe and make him terrified to have anything to do with it.

SHRINES OF WAYANAD

1.TIRUNELLI SHRINE.

The village was granted with God Vishnu his shrine its revenues and power to protect and punish to the eminent Brahmins of two different families and this grant was made by pouring water into their hands as signifying transfer of proprietorship.

The village referred to its Amalaka gramam and the Amalaka kshetram or Tirunelli temple as is known in Malabar and the grant was made by Brahmadeva under the following circumstances to the Brahmins who were first appointed as it's priest's and proprietors.

On the summit of the Brahmagiri Mountain Brahmadeva performed yagam and there Vishnu with four hands bedecked with numerous fine jewels seated on an Amalaka tree appeared before him. The figure however vanished suddenly. Brahmadeva then founded a temple at the spot dedicating the same to Vishnu and gave it the name of Amalaka kshetram or Tirunelli temple. Brahmins were appointed as priests to whom the temple was entrusted as also the small village that sprung about it relics of which a till exist in the shape of old foundations of houses Brahmadeva departed but visits the temple every night to worship Vishnu. The puja in every shrine where the ordinary puja is done five times from morning to night. The priest before entering the temple in the morning swears thrice that he will not divulge what he sees there on opening the door and no priest dare give out the secret at the risk of being bitten by cobras emanating the shrine.

Whatever the present generation may think of a superhuman agency performing an unusual sixth puja in this shrine the fact remains that it is arranged for every night in the belief that Brahmadeva visits the temple and worships Vishnu. At the back of the temple a stream of clear water comes tumbling down from the hill side in a succession of pools are holy. Their

names are Papanasini the extinguisher of sins panchatirtam, Rinamochinitirtam, Gunnikatirtam, Satavinnu, Sahasravinnu and Varaham.

The water of the last is brought for temple use in a stone aqueduct half a mile long. The water of Papanasini falls on a rock called Pinnapara where offerings to the spirits of the departed name Pashanabhedi slain by Vishnu whose body was at his own prayer converted into a rock extending from Tirunelli to Gaya , Tirunelli representing his foot Godavari his middle Gaya the head. Just by Gunnikatirtam is a small cave temple dedicated to Lord Shiva.

The punarjani has a sacred function attached to it. This is a cave in the rock with opening on two sides and any person who is stuck midway in attempting to pass through is considered a sinner and his way of escape out of the difficulty is by praying to God Vishnu when he could retreat. It's the only one free from sins and sincerely devout who need attempt to pass through scathless.

2. VALLIYURKAVU SHRINE

About two miles from Manantoddy on the banks of the river is the Vallurkavu the famous fish pagoda dedicated to Durga and supposed to have been one of the four shrines erected to protect the Tirunelli temple. The carnatic carp and other fish in the pool of the river adjoining the temple are sacred and to feed them is a method of acquiring merit. This fact points to a Dravidian origins of the temple. Possible it was at one time a temple of the Valluvars a servile caste of labourers and fishermen Thousands of pilgrims come for the temple festivals which held in March. The above legend throws much light as to the true origin of the shrine.

Vallurkavu took its name from the passionate appeal to the deity by the pilgrims in their endeavour to regain the sword there is a general impression that Vallurkavu is one of the protecting shrines of Tirunelli temple. This cannot be right as the former was but comparatively recent origin after the Kottayam conquest. As regards the reference to Valluvars however interesting it may be philologically there is nothing in Wayanad to show that they ever existed in Wayanad. The origin of the shrine as traced to Cranganore is accepted as correct by the faithful votaries of Durga.

3. GANAPATHI VATTAM TEMPLE

This is a melancholy chapter to a Hindu who has faith in Ganapathi son of Shiva. When he sees that this image is mutilated and his temple ruined he feels that divine beings with divine powers have like human beings their own seasons of adversity which they cannot avoid. An arrow from a huntsman bow was the immediate cause of Sri Krishna's death or rather disappearance from the world and all must bow to fate and the Ganapathi at whose shrine every inhabitant within a radius of about 12 miles prays suffered the indignity of the mutilation of his idol which as a visible and tangible symbol to the ignorant had been placed in the temple to represent him. The legendary history of this temple is unknown but its reputation as one of the famous temples of Wayanad deserves an epic history.

CONCLUSION

Wayanad is the mountainous range in the hills of the Western Ghats which place a significant role in the history of the freedom struggle of the country. The hilly region is always praised for the brave warrior Pazhassi, who fought tremendous battle with the Britisher and attained the death. The guerrilla warfare and the tribal uprisings in the Wayanad hills are still astonishing. This adds him the title "The Lion of Kerala". In the political history it's the only regime which does not bow its head to Britisher. Thus we can understand that the great ruler Pazhassi's political skill as well as the topography plays a key role in the supremacy of the region.

The tribes are the assets which can be found large in number in the hills of Wayanad. Karinthandan one among the tribal men is the inventor of the Wayanad pass and was brutally killed by the Britishers. In the later freedom struggle the tribals play a significant role for the state which makes the Britishers to move back in the attack.

The Edakkal caves are the significant caves of the pre historic period served as the place of worship, as indicated by many symbols. From the Sanskrit inscription it follows that the cave was inhabited by a chief or king with his retinue, and that some tiger cult has its home here, in which the killed tiger was hung up in the cave. Whoever has once seen the mysterious engravings of the Edakkal Cave, will not be able to escape from its spell-binding ambience and will attempt, even like us, to do further research towards deciphering the signs and symbols on the walls of this cave.

The shrine of Wayanad shows the ancient ritualistic practices to the great Lords according to the Hindu and Jain tradition. The epics about the formation of the shrines are associated with the different Lords. The Pujas and Yagas are of various kinds which were prevailed in the then society.

So we can conclude saying that “WAYANAD” is “THE LAND OF PAZHASSI” because it was the protected by the ruler from the Britishers by offering his life. In the history of Kerala, politically and geographically Wayanad plays an important role, which is considered as the land of Great warriors of Vana nadu.

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ANNEXURE 1



ANNEXURE 2

PHOTO 1



Pazhassi Raja was born as Kerala Varma
Was one among the freedom fighters of Kerala.

PHOTO 2



Pazhassi Tomb in Kalpetta, Wayanad district of Kerala
is a memorial to Pazhassi Raja- 'The Lion of Kerala'.

PHOTO 3



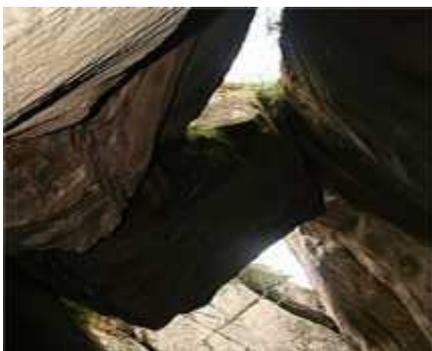
Tribal women of Paniya tribe of Wayanad

PHOTO 4



Edakkal is the only known place in India with Stone Age carvings,
These caves are located 1200 m above the sea level on Ambukutty Mala

PHOTO 5



The rock between the huge rocks which makes the name “EDAKKAL”.

PHOTO 6



Tirunelli temple one of the oldest shines of Wayanad
Dedicated to Lord Maha Vishnu on the side of Brahmagiri hill
In Wayanad.

PHOTO 7



Valliyoorkkavu is an ancient temple located high in
The Hills at Valliyoorkkavu.

PHOTO 8



Ganapathivattam Ganapathi Temple in Wayanad
Kerala for Lord Ganesha with icons of Lord Shiva,
Lord Ayyappa and Goddess Bhagavathi.