

# A Study on caste and historical background of Daivathar theyyam in Andaloor kavu



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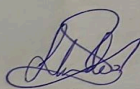
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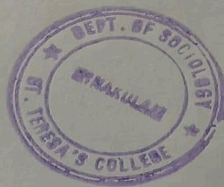
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## CERTIFICATE

I certify that the thesis entitled "A STUDY ON CASTE AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF DAIVATHAR THEYYAM IN ANDALLOOR KAVU" is a record of bonafide research work carried out by ASHIKA. M under my guidance and supervision. The thesis is worth submitting in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Post graduate degree in Sociology.



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### **DECLARATION**

I, ASHIKA.M hereby declare that the thesis entitled “**A STUDY ON CASTE AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF DAIVATHAR THEYYAM IN ANDALLOOR KAVU**” is a bonafide record of independent research work carried out by me under the supervision and guidance of Dr. LINDA THERESE LUIZ. I further declare that this thesis has not been previously submitted for awarding any degree, diploma, associateship, or similar title.

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I feel extremely grateful to the present and former directors of our college and the Principal Dr. Alphonsa Vijaya Joseph for giving me this opportunity.

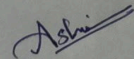
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I would like to express my gratitude to respondents of the study without whose co-operation this study could not have been conducted successfully

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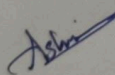





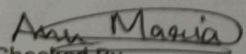
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## CONTENTS

<b>SL.NO</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>PAGE NO</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>8 - 12</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>REVIEW OF LITERATURE</b>	<b>13 - 16</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>17 - 20</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>21 - 27</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>FINDING AND CONCLUSION</b>	<b>28 - 33</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>36 - 48</b>

**CHAPTER - 1**  
**INTRODUCTION**

## INTRODUCTION

Our little Kerala is in the middle with the Arabian sea stretching in the west and the savior mountain Western ghats in the east. like mid land and coastal areas found their means of livelihood through agriculture. Our Kerala was decisively affected by Monsoon. It rains in Kerala, then the flowers and fruits grow and chingham (Lion) arrives . Kanni (Virgo) is the harvesting season and rain in the month of Thulam (Libra) . Theyyam begins exactly on the 10th of Thulam (Libra). Gods came down to the earth to share the sorrows, hopes and joys of the common people. The ritual is called Thira because it was performed in all the village temples of the Malabar region of Kerala . Thira is a Kaliyattam season where nature and people are one.

Theyyam is a ritual art that has a rich tradition of centuries. Theyyam is a highly beautiful ritual art that has strengthened the social and cultural life that has made North Kerala famous. It can be said that there is no other art form that combines dance, musical instruments (Asuravaadya), song (Thottam), sculptures, painting (Mukathezhuth). Theyyam is a great work of ritual art that has received worldwide attention. Theyyam or Theyyattam is a very ancient ritualistic art . It is also a way of worshipping God . Theyyam is another form of the word God. They are known in various ways such as Kaliyattam, Thira, Theyyattam. The season is from Thulam month (Libra); the 'Kaliyattam' and 'Perumkaliyattam' are generally held in the north Malabar region. Kaliyattam is a method of playing on a fixed date every year. But the Perumkaliyattam means the practice of playing after a gap of ten to twelve years. Perumkaliyattam is a grand festival where a village is rewarded for its many years of hard work by offering food and other ceremonies. Mainly Perumkaliyattam takes place in Muchilottu kavu of vaniya community and Kannangatu kavu of the Yadava community (Payyanur, (1969)) Theyyattam generally takes place at sacred groves called 'Kavu'. Theyyams are dancing Gods . Theyyam is a part of the culture of north Malabar. Legend has it that those who have been slaughtered by the Naduvazhikal and who have lost their lives due to fraud are reborn. Approximately in Kerala there are 456 Theyyam Kolam. 112 Theyyam Kolam is the most important .



## ANDALLOOR KAVU

Andaloor Kavu is located at Andalur in Dharmadam village in Thalassery taluk of Kannur district in north Malabar . Dharmadam is an island bounded by the Arabian sea on the west and the Ancharakandy river and Kuyyalipuzha on the other three sides . They are recorded in William Logan's Malabar Manual, which details the modern history of Dharma Pattanam, which includes Andaloor Kavu. In 1732, when Somasekara Naik of southern Karnataka attacked Kolathunadu, the Raja of Chirakkal and the neighboring Raja of Kottayam came under military pressure. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the King of Kottayam, King Pazhassi, was forced to make peace with the British. In 1735, a Kottayam king transferred his rights over Dharma Pattanam in writing. With this, the Karnataka army, which was camped in Dharma pattnam and Dharmadam Thuruth, retreated following the British advance. The ruins of the Karnataka Army camp, which was once located in Dharmadam, are still there.

Andaloor is this low lying area full of fields .The main attraction of Andaloorkavu is the trees .There are trees here that are about two thousand years old. Andalur Kavu is one of the ancient temples with a very rich history. The Andaloor temple has two main kavu Melekavu and Thazhekavu . The main deity is the Daivathar. There are four places (desham) of Dharmadam village in incharge of Kavu . They are Andalur, Palayad, Melur, Dharmadam. The festival here takes place in the month of February. The Andalur festival, which is the major festival of Dharmadam, is called Andutthira (Festival held every year). Andalur festival is completely different from many other festivals in Kerala. The entire village celebrates, leaving no group of people behind. In connection with the festival, the locals clean all the places where they live, paint every corner of the village, but also buy new pottery and other utensils for their homes. All the villagers observe a fast by eating vegetarian food. The villagers of Dharmadam give importance to Andaloorkavu over other places of worship in the deshams, which is why even those who work in other places come to the village to observe the festival. Andaloor Kavu has many legends. In Andalur kavu is based on the story of Ramayan. Lord Rama , Lakshmana ,

Hanuman, Sita, Lava, Kusha and Balisugrivas play Theyyattam as it is a play based on the story of Ramayan . Other Legends say that Andaloor Kavu was built by Parasurama, an incarnation of lord Vishnu. Different legends are associated with this temple.

The main worship at Andaloor kavu is 'Daivathar theyyam'. Daivathar theyyam is the traditional art form of Andaloor kavu. Daivathar theyyam is representing lord Rama. Daivathar theyyam also known as Daivathar ishwaran and Andaloor Nayanar. The other important theyyam is 'Ankakkaran Theyyam' and 'Bappuran theyyam'. Ankakkaran Theyyam represents Lakshmanan in Ramayana and Bappuran represents lord Hanuman. Daivathar theyyam, Ankakkaran Theyyam, and Bappuran theyyam Kaliyattam or Theyyattam are together. Andaloor Kavu has two main parts Melekavu and Thazhekavu. Here Melekavu is conceptualized as Ayodhya and Thazhekavu as Lanka. The deity concept in Melekavu is Lord Rama (Daivathar theyyam) and his entourage, an incarnation of lord Vishnu. 'Athiralan' is the concept of Worship in Thazhekavu. Athiralan means Sita . In the story of Ramayana , Ravana kept Sita in Ashokavanam in lanka . Thazhekavu is seen as that of Ashoka Vani. It is home to many trees , medicinal plants and other rare species of plants. Andaloor kavu play is based on two parts of Adhyatma Ramayanam kilippattu, Sundarakandam and Yudhakandam.

Andaloor Kavu Thira begins with the arrival of the Harijans or Pulayas on the 15th of Capricorn month. This temple's entry ceremony is very festive. In earlier times Pulaya or Harijans who belonged to lower castes were not allowed to enter the temple. But if they want to start Theyyattam today, they are the ones who have to enter the Temple first and initiate Thira. On Capricorn 27, a ceremony called Uchar takes place . Uchar means that all the people of Dharmadam village will accept the tira by cleaning their own house and surroundings as part of the tira. Kubham 1 is the ceremony of 'Thenghathaakkal'. Coconuts are collected from coconut trees in the area and delivered to the temple yard. Aquarius 2 is 'Chakkakoth' . Dharmadam people started eating jackfruit only after the jackfruit cutting ceremony at Andalur temple. Aquarius 3 comes to 'Kudavarav'. Melur residents bring Olakkuda to Andalur Kavu from Thrikuda sthanam. Then Aquarius 4 to 7 begins the play based on the story of Ramayana. There will be firecrackers by the people of Palayad, Andaloor, Melur and Dharmadam on each day. These seven days and nights will be a sleepless celebration for the people of Dharmadam village. A sea of people come from many countries to see Theyyattam. In Andalur Kavu Priest is

performed by the Thiyya community. They are known as Embran. In most places in North Kerala, the priests are called Embran But in some places it is known as Shanti .

## **THEYYAM OF ANDALLOOR KAVU**

- Daivathar (Rama)
- Ankakkaran (Lakshmanan)
- Bappuran (Hanuman)
- Athiraalanum makkalum (Sita and sons - Lava and Kusha)
- Vettakkorumakan
- Malakkari
- Ponmagan
- Puthu Chekavan
- Thuvakkaali
- Nagabakavathi or Napothi
- Nakkandan
- Ilamkaruvanum puthaadiyum (Baali and sugriv)

## **CHAPTER - 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

## LITERATURE REVIEW

**'Perumkaliyattam' (1969) by Payyanur Kunjiraman :** The glory, importance and mythology of the ritual art of Theyyam are all described in this one book. It says that Theyyam is a ritualistic art that has melted into the hearts of the people like a river flowing from beyond the centuries. Theyyams are inextricably linked with the life of the people of North Kerala and have the power to curse and bless them. The book says that this is how people come to believe. The mythology of each Theyyam is quite fascinating. Theyya Kolams are a folk art form of northern Kerala. Theyya Kolams are performed at various sacred locations referred to as Kavu, Mundy, Palliara and Sthanam. Each community also has its own Theyyakavus. Vannan, Malayan, Velan, Anjutan, Munnutan, Kopalan and Mavilan are the caste of theyyam weavers. All these are low caste people. They are untouchables. But in the period of theyyam higher caste people respected them. Payyannur Kunhیرaman says this is very contradictory. "Nattunanachedathum karichuvaliyedathum bhagyam polichu kollam" It is the blessing word of Theyyam. This word is related to Agriculture practice. Theyyam is highly related to agriculture. The meaning of this blessing is that the cultivated and harvested crops can be preserved intact. "Gunam varanam gunam varanam eriyoru gunam veranam" (Payyanur,(1969) These are also the blessing words of theyyam. It means that there should be goodness.

**'Theyyam'(2015) Dr.M.V. Vishnu Namboothiri :** "The book begins by saying that Theyyam or Theyyattam is the oldest and most beautiful ritual arts in Kerala. Basically speaking, Theyyam is not a temple art but a Kavu art. Theyyam is the culture of a village. Theyya kolams are played in Kolathu Nadu and Bhootha Kolam is played in Tulunadu. Theyyam are differentiated through their behavior that is Bhagavathi theyyam, shaiva vaishnava theyyam, Manushika theyyam, Purana theyyam. To please the gods and to bring prosperity to the country and family, theyyattam and thira are also performed for some other purposes. Certain Theyyams are celebrated at certain times. In cases of infectious diseases such as smallpox, Puthiya Bhagavathy, Vasurimala,



Kandakarna and Danda Deva are worshiped in the village area. Some deities worship for agricultural prosperity and the general good of the village (Namboothiri,2015).

It is said that the worship of the deities in Theyyattam started at the roots of the trees. Devasthanam can be found in trees like Pala, Champakam, Aal , Plav, Kanjiram, Ilanji and Arayal. Tree worship paved the way for the origin of Kavas. A characteristic feature of the North Kerala village area are the sprawling daikavu's with many trees and vines. In the early days, some Westerners saw Theyyattam as a dance of bad gods (Devil Dance) . But the rural people were seen as gods. Most of the kavas, which are theyyattam positions, are Bhagavathikavas. For example : Muchilotkao, Cheermbakao etc. There are other deities in these places. Male deities are important in Palotukav and Mundyakavu. Male deities are sub-deities in kavas where female deities are important and female deities are sub-deities in kavas where female deities are important. It states that there are many opinions about the etymology of the word 'Tira' .Dr.Achuthamenon said that Tira is a thing made of wooden board and it is called 'Tira' for kolams because it is put on the head.

**Theyya Prapancham (2012) Dr. R.C. Karippath:** It has to be said that there is no other book that tells the history, sociology and anthropology of the ritual art form of Theyyam so well. It mainly describes the Theyyam artist, customs, privileges, rituals, Thirumudi, face art (Mukathezguth), chamayam, Thotam etc. It is mainly focused on Theyyam - Kavuvu - Society. In the section called 'Theyyavum Theyyakkarm' the caste group that is performed to Theyyam is highlighted. All Theyyams and all castes have no right to perform themselves. Each caste has its own Theyyams. It is the skill of tying that theyyam that the theyyam artists belonging to that caste should strive to acquire. All the Theyyas in North Kerala belong to the lower Avarna caste. Being a lower caste, they were neglected a lot by those who belonged to the higher caste. But as they become Theyyams, the upper castes respect the lower castes. A highly sacred and ritualistic art, it is a birthright learned from childhood. Not formal education methods, On the other hand, when father, uncle or elder brothers go to Kavuvu for Theyyam performance, they also practice with them. Theyyattam is self-cultivation by watching and learning the lessons of calligraphy (Mugathezhuth), helping in the oala works, joining in playing chenda, memorizing 'Thottam' songs and singing along. The first kolam that every Theyyam artist gets will be that of the

‘Veedoit theyyam’. Eight and ten-year-old boys come to visit house-to-house in the month of Cancer (Karkidakam) and in the month of Chingam. This little Theyyam is performed by the Theyyas belonging to the Vannan caste and Malata caste. Karkadothi Theyyam in the concept of Parvati is performed by the Vannan community and Kiradharjuni in the concept of Lord Shiva is performed by the Malayan community by singing the story. Most of the money that is received from home is paddy and rice. Vannan, Malayan, Anjoottan, Munnottam, Maavilaan, Koppalan, Velan, Chinkathan, Kalanaadi, Paravan, Nalikeyvar, are the Theyyam castes. Among them, the Kalanadis are castes who perform Theyyam in Wayanad district, Paravan, Pampatan and the old Tulunadu areas like Udupi and Krishnapuram in north Kerala.

**‘Van Nagaranghalilum kadalkadannum Kalasham chavittunna Muthappan’(2024) - Dr. Rajesh Komath** : Muthappan is the most popular concept of God in the universe. The sound Muthappa means old man (Karanavar). Muthappa is a form of ritual that preserves the past of life. Theyyam artists are practicing Akathuvekkal rituals. Muthappan theyyam Kaliyattam takes place in the North Malabar region. This Theyyam is played in Podikkalam and Madappura. Those who belong to the Thiyya community are the main Karma of the Muthappan. Toddy and Rak is Manamuthappa's favorite drink. Bow and arrow are weapons. The masculine spirit of hunting and warfare can be seen in Muthappan. Dried fish and Panamkal are all the favorite dishes of the Muthappan in the ritual. Today Muthappan Madappura are being built in the big cities of India such as Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai.

## **CHAPTER - 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

## **METHODOLOGY**

Research is an attempt to know new things, facts, history, rituals, culture, information etc in a scientific manner. Methodology is the logic of scientific investigation. Methodology provides the design of research.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The study is to understand the caste and historical background of Daivathar theyyam in Andaloor kavu. The Daivathar theyyam in Andaloor kavu is an important part of local culture and tradition. There is limited understanding of its history and how caste affects its performance. This study aims to explore the history and caste dynamics of Daivathar theyyam and Andaloor kavu to gain a deeper understanding of its significance.

### **OBJECTIVE**

#### **General Objective**

- To analyse the caste and historical background of Daivathar Theyyam in Andaloor kavu

#### **Specific Objectives**

1. Trace out the history and legends surrounding theyyam in Andaloor Kavu.
2. To examine the practice of 'Marumakkathayam' Daivathar Theyyam In Andaloor Kavu'.
3. To find the role of different castes related to Theyyam in Andaloor Kavu.

4. To examine the food and religious practices of Theyyam artists in Andaloor Kavvu.

## **THEORETICAL DEFINITION**

**Caste:** A type of social hierarchy where an individual's social status is determined at birth and remains unchangeable. It is recognized as one of the hereditary social divisions within Hinduism.

**Daivathar theyyam:** Daivathar is a deity venerated in Kolathunadu, located in North Kerala. The rituals for this theyyam are conducted in places like Andaloor kavu, Kappad, Mavilakav, Patuvilaikav, and Palotkav (Azhikode). It is believed that the four deities worshipped in the temples of Andalur, Kappad, Maavilai, and Patuvilai are siblings.

**Andaloor kavu:** Andaloor kavu is a historic temple situated in the North Malabar area of Kerala. It can be found in the Dharmadam village of Thalassery. The temple is linked to numerous legends and is thought to have been established by sage Parasurama.

## **OPERATIONALIZATION OF CONCEPT**

**Caste :** In my study caste refers to the caste of the Daivathar theyyam artistes and those associated with the theyyam in various capacities .

**Daivathar theyyam :** Daivathar Theyyam is the traditional art form of Andaloor kavu. Daivathar Theyyam represents lord Rama.

**Andaloor kavu :** Andaloor kavu is a temple in Dharmadam village in Thalassery taluk, Kannur in the north malabar region of Kerala.



## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

**WHO** : Participants included local historians, experts in theyyam performance, temple committee members, scholars and locals

**WHAT** : Data was collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with key respondents and from secondary sources.

**WHERE** : Data collection occurred in Andaloor kavu and Dharmadam village .

**HOW** : Data was collected through note-taking and audio recordings were made with the consent of the research participants.

### **SAMPLE**

The respondents included one Theyyam performer, 3 hereditary members of the Andaloor Temple committee, 3 non-hereditary members of the temple committee and 2 Local Historians.

**CHAPTER - 4**  
**DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The chapter focuses on analyzing and interpreting data collected from a field study on the caste and historical background of Daivathar theyyam in Andaloor Kavu. It emphasizes the importance of a thorough understanding of the topic and systematic data analysis, which enhances the effectiveness of the research results. Through qualitative research methods, notably interviews with locals, theyyam artists, and members of the temple committee, the study seeks to uncover the unique features and cultural heritage associated with Daivathar theyyam, a prominent aspect of North Kerala's socio-cultural identity. The process of data analysis and interpretation entails full, in-depth knowledge of the topic and systematic operation to analyse the data with the outcome of the data. The data analysis process involved transcribing the interviews, categorizing information, and identifying emerging themes and patterns. The findings reveal not only insights into the caste and historical context of Daivathar theyyam but also connect these empirical results to existing research literature. By applying sociological perspectives, the analysis aims to provide a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and historical influences that shape the tradition and cultural practices surrounding Daivathar theyyam in Andaloor. Ultimately, the chapter aims to shed light on the rich cultural tapestry that characterizes the region. I am able to understand the caste and historical background of Daivathar theyyam and the cultural and tradition of Andaloor which I will address in the below details

### **History and legends surrounding Daivathar Theyyam in Andaloor kavu**

The Andaloor Kavu temple is steeped in rich history and legends, primarily passed down through oral tradition. In exploring these narratives, many respondents referenced mythological tales related to the Ramayana, underscoring the cultural significance of Daivathar Theyyam within the temple's heritage. Despite the deep-rooted connections to these stories, there is a notable lack of specific accounts directly tied to Andaloor Kavu, and many participants couldn't

pinpoint the temple's exact age or history, as no precise records have been maintained. It is believed that historical accounts might have been inscribed on a special type of leaf called *Chempola*, but these documents have since been lost and left untranslated, obscuring their content. Historically, the temple served the spiritual needs of eight families from the Thiyya community, comprising four main families—Panoli, Thattaliyath, Chandrampath, and Valappil—and their wives' households. Currently, only three of these families remain actively involved: Panoli, Thattaliyath, and Valappil, with designated roles in preserving the traditions of Daivathar Theyyam. The main deity worshipped at the temple is known as Andaloor Nayanarum Chekavan, symbolizing the duality of king and soldier. While some Theyyam rituals are connected to Ramayana lore, the lack of documented evidence complicates definitive interpretations. Additionally, the temple reflects a significant cultural transition from Shaivism to Vaishnavism that occurred with the arrival of Aryan-Dravidian influences, further enriching its historical tapestry.

## **Oral history of Daivathar theyyam**

Andalur Kavu is a significant place of worship primarily associated with the Thiyya community. The main deity is Daivathar, a figure believed to embody the spirit of a hero who courageously fought for the country. The title "Daivathar," which translates to "divine hero," "yodavu", emphasizes this notion of valor. Within the context of Andalur Kavu, two prominent historical figures are highlighted: Andaloor Daivathar Thottam (Theyyam song) Nayanar and Chekavan. Therefore, most people believed that the term Nayanar was a caste name, similar to Nambiar Nair. But that is not the case. Their influence dates back to the 16th and 17th centuries. The term "Nayanar" originally referred to an official rank in the Kolathiri kingdom, akin to a modern-day Tahsildar, responsible for local governance and tax collection. This suggests that a Nayanar was indeed present in the region, reinforcing historical ties to the local leadership. A Nayanar is a position that is responsible for all public works in an area, as well as collecting taxes. Just as the title of that officer is Tahsildar today, the title of that officer was Nayanar back then. Such Nayanars had been doing their work in many parts of the Kolathiri dynasty. The expression

"Andaloor Nayanar" heard or heard used in Thottam songs clearly shows that there was a Nayanar in Andaloor too. Therefore, there is no need for further proof that there was a Nayanar in Andalur. The idols of the temple, particularly Daivathar and Ankakaran, serve as symbols of protection linked to these figures. There is also a mythological connection suggesting that Daivathar descends from Lord Rama, while Ankakaran is thought to be linked to Lakshmana. This idea was popularized by Chandu Nambiar, a Sanskrit scholar, who lived in Thalassery, happened to see the festival in Andaloor Kavu and he wrote a work that combined Sanskrit and Malayalam. That work was known as the book "Andaloor Mahatmyam". who wrote "Andaloor Mahatmyam" after witnessing the festival at Andaloor Kavu. In his work, he integrates the mythological heritage of the deities with local cultural narratives, asserting their legendary lineage and further embedding them into the community's beliefs."

## **Buddhist influence**

The Andalur Kavu Deity is notable for its mirror-like shape, which is believed to have significance linked to local history and cultural influences. Inside the kavu, a figure known as the Vagapoonkula, the symbol of the Kolathiri king, can be found alongside a representation of torture, though this form remains unnamed. The presence of a mirror deity and related concepts might have been introduced to the region through Buddhist influence. The people of Dharmadam referred to Buddhists as Siddhas, a term that reflects their cultural interactions. In 1956, a Buddhist statue was discovered in Dharmadam, but its fate is unclear due to road development. Similar relics, such as a stone-carved Buddhist statue from Coolikulam, also vanished during renovation efforts, indicating a significant Buddhist heritage in the area. However, this influence faced decline during the Hindu Renaissance, with remnants of Buddhism persisting until the 20th century. Those who identified as Siddhas, although not strictly Buddhists, embodied aspects of this heritage. They were known for carrying mirrors, which symbolically allowed individuals to see themselves, conveying the message that divinity resides within them. Today, such practices and figures have largely disappeared from Kerala, marking a cultural transformation. The mirror



enshrined in the Andaloor Kavu may not be a conventional mirror, and the lack of worship or recognition around it suggests the Thiyya community was born out of a notable revolutionary change in the local religious landscape. Some people were unwilling to answer questions about Buddhism. Not only that, but when asked about it, he mostly kept to himself, not saying anything. They mostly told stories based on the Ramayana. Very little information is available about Buddhism. However, local historians and Andalur locals have also provided very important information.

## **Marumakkathayam**

Marumakkathayam is a system of inheritance and succession traditionally practiced in the state of Kerala. “Marumakkathayam” comes from the Malayalam word “*Marumakkal*” which means sister’s children. Marumakkathayam is a traditional system of inheritance practiced in Kerala, where property and caste occupations are passed down through the maternal line, specifically benefiting a person's sister's children. The Thiyya community, which follows this matrilineal system, refers to their extended or joint family as Tharavadu, which is also the name for their homes. Andaloor Kavu is a significant temple for the Thiyya community, associated with four main families: Panoli, Thattaliyath, Chandrampath, and Valappil. Each family has specific roles and connections, such as the Kuraghal, Thottathil, Muliyl, and Kandoth families, which represent the wives' Tharavadu. However, today only three Tharavadu—Panoli, Thattaliyath, and Valappil—are prevalent, each linked to specific initiatory roles in the community. The Daivathar Theyyam, a ritual performed at Andaloor Kavu, is done by the Marumakkathayam tradition, with specific rights to oversee the ceremony held by members of the Thattaliyath and Chandrampath families. The Peruvannan, a title within the Vannan caste, leads these rituals, emphasizing the deep-rooted customs and responsibilities that govern the community's spiritual practices. Despite being a matrilineal society, the community’s perception of women's roles is somewhat limited, as traditionally only Vannathi women participate in key rituals, such as caring for the goddess’s garments. Nevertheless, the Marumakkathayam tradition continues to be upheld by the current generation.

## **Different castes in relation to the Andaloor Kavu**

Andaloor Kavu is a vibrant community where all castes and religions coexist harmoniously, each with its own rights and contributions, especially during the festival season. Carpenters, known for their association with Vishwakarma, provide new wooden spoons for the village, while the goldsmith plays a critical role in preparing the golden crown, or Thirumudi, for the Daivathar Theyyam, which is cleansed and polished with care. The blacksmith contributes by supplying weapons and metals to the temple, ensuring everything is ready for the festivities. The village observes a period of austerity from the 1st to the 7th of Kumbham, abstaining from fish, meat, and alcohol, with meals consisting solely of vegetarian fare. Once the festival concludes on the seventh day, the Mugayans and the Muslim community come together to break their fast, highlighting the significant role of the Muslim community within Andaloor Kavu. They have a designated area to observe the festival, reflecting their importance within the community. The celebration begins with the Adiyara ceremony, traditionally observed by the Harijans. Previously, members of the Pulaya community were not permitted to enter Andaloor Kavu; however, change has allowed their participation, marking the start of the festivities. The festival showcases the diversity of its people, with Theyyam performers from various castes and artisans from the Malaya community responsible for the instruments and decorations, ensuring a rich tapestry of cultural expression.

## **The food and religious practices**

The food and religious practices associated with the Andaloor Kavu festival are distinct and significant for the community in Dharmadam Panchayat. The participants in the Theyyam performances, along with the entire village, adhere to special dietary customs during this time. The residents predominantly consume a vegetarian diet and partake in a traditional meal that features roasted paddy transformed into malar. During the festival, these malar cakes are often

mixed with sugar, coconut, and banana, creating a unique treat enjoyed by all. Additionally, those involved in the Theyyam performances tend to eat lighter meals. Throughout the festival, the community collectively abstains from alcohol and other intoxicants, reflecting their adherence to their cultural and religious values.

**CHAPTER - 5**

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents the findings and conclusions of a study exploring the caste and historical background of Daivathar Theyyam at Andaloor Kavu, a temple situated in Dharmadam Grama Panchayat, Thalassery Taluk, Kannur District, Kerala. This region boasts diverse cultural practices, with Daivathar Theyyam being a distinctive aspect of its heritage. Through a qualitative approach, the research gathered insights from interviews with Theyyam artists, temple committee members, locals, and historians. The study revealed that Daivathar Theyyam has deep historical roots in the region. The character "Andaloor Daivathar" commemorates a historical figure renowned for bravery and heroism. Two prominent figures in Andaloor Kavu's lore are Andaloor Nayanar and Chekavan, whose existence dates back to the 16th and 17th centuries. The title "Nayanar" historically denoted a high-ranking official in the Kolathiri king's administration, responsible for public works and tax collection. This title underscores the historical significance of the Nayanar in the region. The narrative also connects these figures to a mythological lineage, suggesting that Daivathar descends from Lord Rama and Agakkaran from Lakshmana. It is a divine ancestry. This belief was popularized by Chandu Nambiar, Sanskrit scholar who documented the festival's significance, intertwining local history with broader mythological themes in "Andaloor Mahatmyam,". His writings further solidified the identity of Andaloor as a significant cultural and religious site associated with the legends of Ramayana. Ultimately, the findings highlight the rich historical tapestry of Daivathar Theyyam, emphasizing the need for preservation and promotion of this invaluable cultural practice. Not only that, as part of the Aryanization, Athirala Theyyam is also considered as Seetha. Not only that, the Ilam Karuvan and Poothadi are also depicted as Bali and Sugreeva, other characters from the Ramayana. All of this could be considered as the result of the influence of a work of a Sanskrit scholar named Chandu Nambiar and the change that came as part of the Hinduization movement.

The research highlights the significance of Marumakkathayam, or matrilineal system, particularly within the Thiyya community, where property and social status are inherited through the female line. The Andaloor Kavu temple is managed by eight families from the Thiyya

community, which include four main families—Panoli, Thattaliyath, Chandrampath, and Valappil—and their respective wives' families. The rise to a prominent position known as "Ariyittu Vazhthal" is reserved for these families and lasts for the duration of one's life. Among these families, only three are currently recognized along with their wives' families: Panoli, Thattaliyath, and Valappil. Specific familial connections are maintained, such as Kuraghal being associated with Panoli, Chandrampath with Thattaliyath, and Thottathil with Valappil. Notably, only the Thattaliyath and Chandrampath families have the privilege of maintaining the hair or crown of Daivathar Theyyam, a revered figure in Andaloor Kavu, performed within the context of Marumakkathayam. The role of the Peruvannan, who dons the golden hair of Theyyam, is filled by members of the Tharavad family, namely Moothakoor and Ilayakoor, with the Ilayakoor Tharavad serving as the Thayyarkulam of Andalur, and the Moothakoor Tharavad as the Kuttiyadan of Pinarayi. The individual responsible for placing the Thirumudi in the temple, known as the Vannan, receives this ritualistic position from the Ulloor Thantri, who designates the status of Peruvannan within the Vannan community. In contrast to Andaloor Kavu, other temples are overseen by local rulers, such as the Kottayam Thampuran and Chirakkal Thampuran, who play a critical role in the governance of the region, known as Kolathunadu, which is bordered by Chandragiripuzha to the west and Wayanad to the east. The Kottayam and Pazhasi Thampurans share responsibilities over 52 parts of Kolathu land, ensuring that all temples under their jurisdiction are managed accordingly, while the Chirakkal Thampuran governs the remaining areas. Thus, the appointment of Peruvannan in temples is contingent upon the approval of these regional kings.

The festival at Andalur Kavu is a vibrant celebration that involves multiple castes, each with unique roles and responsibilities. Key communities participating include the Thiyya, Vannan, Malaya, Pulaya (or Harijan), Velan, and Muslims. The festival emphasizes the rights of each caste, with notable contributions from various artisans. For instance, carpenters provide new wooden spoons for the village, while goldsmiths play a crucial role in cleaning and polishing the golden crown, known as Thirumudi, used in the celebration. The blacksmith also contributes by supplying weapons and metals for the temple's needs. The festival period is marked by a week of austerity from the 1st to the 7th of Kumbham, during which the community refrains from

consuming fish, meat, or alcohol, focusing solely on a vegetarian diet. Once the festival concludes on the seventh day, the Mugayans and the Muslim community visit various households to break the fast, reflecting the important role the Muslim community plays in the festivities, including a designated viewing area for them at the event. A significant moment in the festival is the *Kavil Kayaral* ceremony performed by the Harijans, which signifies the official start of the celebration. Historically, members of the Pulaya community were barred from entering the Kavu; however, they now participate fully, marking a progressive change. The Deivatar Theyyam, associated with the Peruvannar caste, along with other ceremonial figures from the Munnuttaan caste, further enriched the festival's traditions. Additionally, instruments and decorations are crafted by members of the Malay community, highlighting the collaborative spirit of the festival.

Andaloor Kavu is notable for its unique food and religious practices, especially highlighted during the Andaloor festival. The performers of Theyyam at Andaloor Kavu adhere to specific dietary customs that also reflect the broader culinary traditions of the entire Dharmadam Panchayat. During the festival, the community engages in a special tradition of roasting paddy to create a dish called malar. This roasted paddy is then combined with sugar, coconut, and banana to make a festive treat. The performers of Theyyam, along with the villagers, embrace a vegetarian diet and opt for light meals during this period. Notably, the consumption of alcohol and other intoxicants is prohibited by the community during the festival, emphasizing their commitment to the cultural and religious significance of the occasion. The main reason why this type of food arrived in the land of Dharmadam is the influence of Buddhism. Various influences of Buddhism are also seen in the deity at Andaloor Kavu. The Andaloor Kavu Deity is notable for its mirror-like shape, which is believed to have significance linked to local history and cultural influences. Inside the kavu, a figure known as the Vagapoonkula, the symbol of the Kolathiri king, can be found alongside a representation of torture, though this form remains unnamed. The presence of a mirror deity and related concepts might have been introduced to the region through Buddhist influence. Dharmadam referred to Buddhists as Siddhas, a term that reflects their cultural interactions. In 1956, a Buddhist statue was discovered in Dharmadam, but its fate is unclear due to road development. Similar relics, such as a stone-carved Buddhist statue

from Coolikulam, also vanished during renovation efforts, indicating a significant Buddhist heritage in the area. However, this influence faced decline during the Hindu Renaissance, with remnants of Buddhism persisting until the 20th century. Those who identified as Siddhas, although not strictly Buddhists, embodied aspects of this heritage. They were known for carrying mirrors, which symbolically allowed individuals to see themselves, conveying the message that divinity resides within them. Today, such practices and figures have largely disappeared from Kerala, marking a cultural transformation. Buddhism declined as a result of the Aryanization of Andaloor kavu. What I realized from this research was that those associated with the temple did not provide information on questions about Buddhism. From the deity at Andalur Kavu to the food of the festival, the influence of Buddhism is increasingly evident. Not only that, it was understood that it was being replaced as part of Hinduization. The influence of Buddhism was well documented by the local historians and other historians.



## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research has examined the complex dynamics of Daivathar Theyyam in Andaloor Kavu, illuminating its caste and historical contexts. The investigation reveals the intricate relationship between social, cultural, and historical elements that have influenced the tradition. The results of this study illustrate the importance of Daivathar Theyyam as a cultural practice that embodies the history and customs of the area. The research emphasizes the need to safeguard and promote intangible cultural heritage practices like Daivathar Theyyam.

The festival plays a crucial role in the community's identity, characterized by distinctive culinary and religious traditions. The participation of various castes and communities highlights the festival's inclusive and diverse character. Additionally, the Marumakkathayam tradition represents a vital element of cultural practice. The outcomes of this study offer important insights into the cultural and historical relevance of Daivathar Theyyam in Andaloor Kavu. This research stresses the necessity of preserving and advocating for cultural heritage practices such as Daivathar Theyyam, which are integral to the identity and traditions of the region.

Moreover, the study highlights the need for more research on the cultural and historical importance of Daivathar Theyyam and similar practices in the area. This could foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of the region's cultural heritage and aid in the preservation and promotion of these distinctive cultural traditions.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Document and Preserve:** Record the festival and its traditions to ensure their preservation for future generations.
- 2. Cultural Exchange:** Organize cultural exchange programs to foster cross-cultural understanding and appreciation.
- 3. Community Involvement:** Encourage community-led initiatives to promote the transmission of Daivathar Theyyam traditions to younger generations.
- 4. Research and Documentation:** Conduct further research and documentation to uncover the cultural and historical significance of Daivathar Theyyam and similar practices.
- 5. Sustainable Tourism:** Develop responsible tourism initiatives to promote the festival and its traditions, ensuring a positive impact on the local community and environment.

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## APPENDIX - 1

- Trae out the history and legends surrounding theyyam in Andaloor kavu.
  1. What is the mythological story behind Andaloor kavu?
  2. Who is the main deity worship in Andaloor kavu?
  3. What is the significance of Theyyam in Andaloor kavu?
  4. How old is the Andaloor kavu?
  5. What are the unique rituals performed in Andaloor kavu?
  6. Is Andaloor kavu associated with any local legends or folktales?
  7. How does Andaloor kavu contribute to the cultural heritage of Kerala?
  8. Are there any historical records about Andaloor kavu?
  9. What is the importance of Andaloor kavu in the local community?
  10. Are there any festivals or celebrations unique to Andaloor kavu?
- To examine the practice of 'Marumakkathayam' Daivathar theyyam in Andaloor kavu?
  11. What is the meaning of matrilineal practice?
  12. How does the matrilineal system influence Daivathar theyyam?
  13. What role do women play in Daivathar theyyam?
  14. How is property inheritance handled in the matrilineal system of Daivathar theyyam?
  15. What are the benefits of the matrilineal system in Daivathar theyyam?
  16. How does the matrilineal system affect family relationships in Daivathar theyyam?
  17. Are there any challenges facing the matrilineal system in Daivathar theyyam?
  18. How is the matrilineal system passed down to future generations in Daivathar theyyam?
  19. What is the significance of the matrilineal system in Daivathar theyyam?

- To find the role of different castes in relation to Theyyam in Andaloor kavu?
20. Which castes perform theyyam in Andaloor kavu?
  21. What is the role of 'Thiyya' caste in Andaloor kavu?
  22. What is the significance of 'Pulaya' caste in theyyam?
  23. Which caste are responsible for Theyyam rituals in Andaloor kavu?
  24. Are there any caste restrictions in Theyyam performance?
- To examine the food and religious practices of Theyyam artists in Andaloor kavu.
25. What is the traditional diet of Theyyam artists?
  26. Do Theyyam artists follow any specific food restrictions .
  27. How do Theyyam artists prepare for rituals and performance?
  28. What are the daily prayer routines of Theyyam artists?
  29. What is the traditional diet of local people at the time of theyyam season?
  30. Relationship between Andaloor kavu and buddhism?

## APPENDIX - 2

**FIGURE 1 - ANDALOOR KAVU**



Picture courtesy - Author



**. FIGURE 2 - ANDALOOR KAVU NAGATHARA**



Picture Courtesy - Author



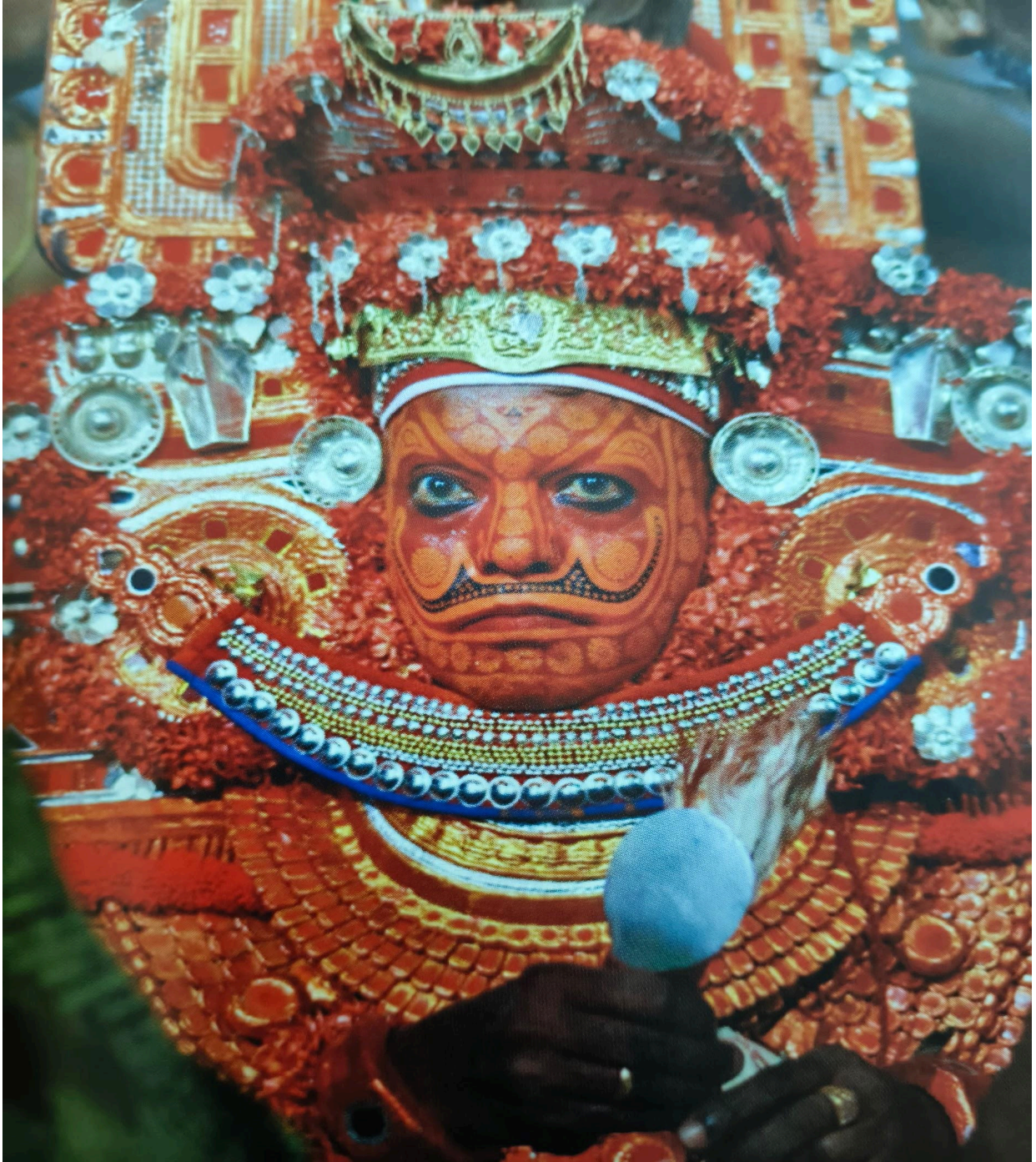
**FIGURE 3 - ANDALOOR KAVU**



Picture Courtesy - Author



**FIGURE 4 - DAIVATHAR THEYYAM**



Picture Courtesy - Andaloor kavu Thira Mahothsavam 2020 smaranika



**FIGURE 5 - ANKAKKARAN**



Picture Courtesy - Andaloor kavu Thira Mahothsavam 2020 smaranika



**FIGURE 6 - BAPPURAN**



Picture Courtesy - Andaloor kavu Thira Mahothsavam 2020 smaranika



**FIGURE 7**

**THUVAKKALI.                      PONMAKAN.                      MALAKKARI**



Picture Courtesy - Andaloor kavu Thira Mahothsavam 2020 smaranika



**FIGURE 8**

**ATHIRALANUM MAKKALUM ( SEETHAYUM MAKKALUM)**



Picture Courtesy - Andaloor kavu Thira Mahothsavam 2020 smaranika



**FIGURE 9 - NAGA BHAGAVATHI AND NAGA BHAGAVAN**



Picture Courtesy - Andaloor kavu Thira Mahothsavam 2020 smaranika



**FIGURE 10 - VETTAKKORUMAKAN**



Picture Courtesy - Author



**FIGURE 11 - ILAMKARUVANUM POOTHADIYUM ( BALI SUGRIV)**



Picture Courtesy - Andaloorkavu Thira Mahotsavam 2020 smaranika



