Chapter V
Politics and Kinship in the Unity of the Swaroopam

The focus of this chapter is on the exterior and interior that got constituted --the boundaries that got marked-- both, in the inter-Swaroopam activities and in those interactions which had functions in a Swaroopam when conceived as a closed unit. The manner in which the Swaroopam as an identity defined its interior and exterior, vis-à-vis other Swaroopams as well as within itself through subdivisions, is shown to be a complex one, particularly when Swaroopams are engaged in the act of dathetukkal (literally this term means adoption\(^1\)). The complexity is such that in this act, the unity and coherence of the concept of the Swaroopam, and the continuum between swaroopams in terms of kinship are found to be problematic. The patterns of the exterior and the interior between Swaroopams and within them, as traced from the interaction and co-action of the Swaroopams as in the dathetukkal, are different from those found in the kinship relations and in the multiple-muppu vaazhcha.

Dathetukkal as a cultural-political practice had always been an interaction between any two well-defined units and their respective exteriors and interiors were mutually exclusive. That is, by definition, they were to be different entities, particularly in terms of relations of kinship. In the history of dathetukkal, different Swaroopams and thaivazhies identified as one in particular instances of co-action appeared as separate when they come together in the space of interaction. There were several differing sets of combinations of Swaroopams during the period under consideration and the specific combinations of the Swaroopams that interacted and co-acted differed over time. The specific patterns and the combination of the Swaroopams/thaivazhies involved in the act of dathetukkal not only
differed over time, but also did not correspond with those observed in both the kinship-based differentiation/union and the multiple-
muppu vaazhcha. The interaction between Swaroopams or between a Swaroopam and any other kinship-unit shows the way Swaroopam identities got perpetuated without recourse to any essential referential relation to a model involving an "exterior" and "interior" defined in terms of kinship or swaroopam. Just as in the multiple-
muppu vaazhcha, what gets affirmed as real and primary, is the concept of the Swaroopam. But then, an instance of problematizing the coherence of the interior of Swaroopam itself could be found in the act of dathetukkal.

An aspect that made dathetukkal a unique phenomenon in Swaroopams was that, the majority of the muppus and ilayathus who succeeded as muppus in the Swaoopams were adopted; this had been so till the first quarter of the eighteenth century. The known continuous-evidences on dathetukkal that took place between 1620\(^2\) and 1729 show that of the six Threppappur muppus four (67%) were adopted either from Vellarappalli or Kolathenadu.\(^3\) Similarly, of the twelve Chiravay muppus seven (58%) were adopted from Vellarappalli, Kolathenadu and Puka thaivazhi.\(^4\) Then, in the case of Deshinganadu between 1607 and 1730’s all the muppus except one were adopted.\(^5\) These figures are self-evident as far as the incidence of dathetukkal and the centrality of this phenomenon in the muppu vaazhcha of Swaroopams are concerned.

In multiple-muppu vaazhcha the kinship-based inter-
Swaroopam unity was never given importance, rather it was the differences between the Swaroopams as political entities that had primacy and visibility. In this way this chapter also reconsiders the kinship-based interpretation of the lineage, called into question in the second chapter. Dathetukkal, when analyzed, reveals the
interface between *swaroopam* and *Swaroopam*, the manner in which both the identities become, at times, one and the modalities by which they were separated. Moreover, this act had wider implications as it also redefined and reordered the inter-subjective/individual relations among those included in the *kuuru-mura* as it could result in a shift in the existing *kuuru-mura*. This shift directly affects the specificity of the existing or the potential multiple-*muppu vaazhcha*; that is, *dathetukkal* affected the political relations within and between *Swaroopams*. Although the subjectivity of the actors involved in *dathetukkal* had been grounded more firmly on *Swaroopam* than in *swaroopam*, there were instances when this coherence of *Swaroopam* and *swaroopam* were overlooked. Such instances also exemplify exteriorization of a part of the interior of the *Swaroopam*; that is, the *thaivazhi* of a *Swaroopam* was sometimes posited as another unit or *Swaroopam* and interacted in *dathetukkal*. This introduces another complexity involved in the analysis of *Swaroopam*.

As noted in the second chapter, the *kuuru-mura* ordering was confined to a small section within the kinship-bound interiority of the *swaroopam*. That is the kinship-based universality and continuity of the interior of a *swaroopam* was ruptured from within and the kinship network delimited with the help of the *kuuru-mura* schemata. This small coverage within a wide kinship network shows the presence of structures that went beyond kinship unity in the process of delimitation that was inherent in the serialization of the *kuuru-mura*. The occurrence of frequent *dathetukkal* in the *Swaroopams* also testifies to the fact of the small coverage within the greater kinship network and the alteration of kinship hierarchy and *kuuru-mura*. Despite the increasing instances of *dathetukkal* the coverage of the *kuuru-mura* was restricted to a small fraction of the kinship-network. It is not only that the coverage remained at the
same level, also the frequency of *dathetukkal* remained high despite the possibility of multiple-*muppu vaazhcha*. If the lack of successors to *muppu vaazhcha* had been severe, then either the coverage of the *kuuru-mura* could have been extended to include other members into it or instead of *dathetukkal* multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* could have been opted. Instead we find that *dathetukkal* had been frequent during the period under consideration. That is, *dathetukkal* had something more to do in the *muppu vaazhcha* over and above the task of overcoming the lack of successors. When such a *dathetukkal* takes place, human agents get a chance to intervene and alter/shift the *kuuru-mura* and the way it functioned in the successions to *muppu* positions. That is, instead of the pre-given *kuuru-mura* determining the serialization of individuals, the human agency becomes decisive in determining it. The interface between “structure” and “active agency” can be deciphered in such acts of *dathetukkal*. All these added to the significance of *dathetukkal* in *Swaroopams*, and it compels the analyst to accept the complexity that was immanent in the perpetuation of the *Swaroopam*.

When two *Swaroopams*, say, S1 and S2 have relations with exactly the same set of other actors (for example, the family/*Swaroopam* of the adoptee), even if S1 and S2 have no mutual relations, it can be said that there exists a structural equivalence between them. Thus there could be a structural equivalence between two *Swaroopams* or *swaroopams* when they have common *Swaroopam/swaroopams* or any other unit from where they adopt. When they together change the unit of the adoptee from one to another, it can be stated that, the structural equivalence between them is maintained. The inter-*Swaroopam* relationships (both differential and integral relations among *Swaroopams*) constituted through such acts of *dathetukkal* will be problematized in the
following section to see if there was any structural equivalence among *Swaroopams* which had a bearing on the *muppu vaazhcha* of Swaroopams.

There was a persistent tendency to maintain the structural equivalence among Threppappur, Chiravay, Deshinganadu and Kunnummel *Swaroopams*. It should be said that in the history of *dathetukkal*, there were several instances in which a *Swaroopams* was defined independently of the others; and their inter-action took place within a clearly defined outside. Further, such equivalence was consciously maintained among these *Swaroopams*, this was one of the instances of their shared responsibility and obligation. There were several instances of instability, to which we will return later, in the equivalence concomitant with schisms between *Swaroopams*. How this normalized practice of *dathetukkal* became integral in the contest between the *Swaroopams* and the modalities by which this practice was implicated as a part of the strategy to transform the practice of *dathetukkal* itself, are taken up towards the end of this chapter. That is how *dathetukkal* became functional in a broader strategy in which the practice itself got metamorphosed. Further, it will be shown that how *dathetukkal* was innovated in the process of erasing the discontinuity and continuity between *Swaroopams* involved in multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* and *dathetukkal*. This will bring to light how the late-medieval *dathetukkal* got metamorphosed as adoption by the beginning of kingdom-period, that is, by the mid-seventeenth century.

**Dathetukkal is not mere adoption**

In this section the act of *dathetukkal* will be analyzed in grater detail to bring out its complexity, by differentiating this act from adoptive practices. Such a differentiation is made because, it has been a normal practice to translate *dathetukkal* as adoption, and this
translation led to a metaphorical reduction of the complexities of *dathetukkal* into some monolithic kinship framework in which the term adoption has a definite place and significance. That is to say, adoption has been conceived in history books as something rare that takes place only when the lack of successors occurs. The lexical meaning of the word to “adopt” is “to take up from someone else and use as one’s own, as a phrase, practice, or creed”, or “to take into one’s family or as one’s child by legal means”. And the term adoption means “the legal act whereby an adult person takes a minor into the relation of a child” or “the acceptance of a word unchanged in form from a foreign language”, or “the receiving into a clan or tribe of one from outside, and treating him as one of the same blood” etc.⁶

The following observations can be made on the basis of the lexical definitions of the word adoption. There is a transposition of someone or something, be it a person or a word, from a given unit to another. These units are conceived through the difference between an outside and an inside-- foreign/someone-else’s and one’s own/of the same-blood, etc. Further, their identities as different unities are well bounded especially when transposition takes place. The difference between the one and the other, or the same and the foreign, is the necessary precondition for the act of adoption or only under such a condition does the need to situate one as an adoptee and the other as an adopter emerge. They converge in the act of transposition while retaining their separate positional identities as adopter and adoptee. Such a separation of identities is what makes one an adoptee/adopter.

First, if the precondition is not satisfied as in the case of transpositions that took place between *swaroopam* and its *thaivazhi*, then *dathetukkal* cannot be treated as an adoptive practice in any analysis. That is, there is no way in which a *swaroopam* and its
thaivazhi can be separated as two distinct unities having separate identities, together they constitute a whole and its part. In spite of such unity, if they position themselves as adopter and adoptee, then either they should be considered as independent of any unifying relationship, especially kinship. It can also be said that there takes place a repositioning within “one’s own” unit and no transposition from one to the other as it occurs in the case of adoption. Alternatively, the precondition for adoption need not be prevalent in dathetukkal.

Secondly, if the Swaroopams were primarily linked in terms of kinship relations that defined a total inside consisting of the four Swaroopams, then the dathetukkal between the Swaroopams would be an anachronism. This is so mainly because dathetukkal takes place when there is no kinship relation between the adopter and the adoptee, and the act of adoption establishes the kinship relation between the person adopted and the receiving Swaroopam. But in spite of the existing kinship linkages, if dathetukkal takes place, then one can say that the “one” and “the other” are not defined in terms of kinship. Alternatively, it can be said that there was no such kinship tie among Swaroopams that can be comprehended as a fixed-total unit as in the existing historical accounts, so that dathetukkal between the Swaroopams could take place. It can also be said that Swaroopam entities were primarily defined in terms of self-reference rather than in terms of any other criterion like kinship.

Presence of a “lack” or the “absence” of a word or a person within any defined space, be it linguistic space or a space defined in terms of family, clan, blood, swaroopam etc., is the necessary condition for the above mentioned transposition. It should be remembered that this “lack” becomes perceptible only when there is a clear-cut separation between an inside and an outside or only
when a clear exteriority and interiority is conceived. But the historical fact is that there were several instances of *dathetukkal* that took place even when there was no such “lack” or “absence”.

Thirdly, if the adoptee has not much of a role or function in the space into which he/she had been transposed but had roles only within the space of origin, as in the case of *Swaroopams*, then also the appropriateness of the term adoption would become questionable. This is so especially because, in this instance, there is lack or absence to be overcome. That is, there was no condition of lack or absence in the *swaroopam* that demanded adoption; rather the transposition took place not because of the lack or absence, but something else. This complicates the term adoption and compels one to see the complexity of the term *dathetukkal* which involved all the above mentioned hypothetical situations. *Dathetukkal* as an act does not seem to satisfy the preconditions for adoption nor is its context similar to that of adoption.

Although the person or the object transposed is critical in the attempt to overcome the perceived “lack”, he/it is conceived of as passive, often a child or a word. Thus the adoptee as a unit includes not merely the person who was adopted but also those who, from the side of the child who gets adopted, participate in the act of transposition. The adopter is active, but once the transposing takes place, the adopted, may be with a time lag, becomes active as he fills the absence or lack. But when two *Swaroopams* come together in *dathetukkal* without any passive body, then the situation is different from that of adoption. There were situations in which elderly persons or bearers of important positions in *muppu vaazhcha* got exchanged between two *Swaroopams* as adoptee. In these cases both the adoptee and adopter were active and there was no transposition of
the person adopted without separating him/her from the other, then also the conventional term "adoption" would be inappropriate.

Once the convergence of one and the other occurs or once the transposition takes place, as in the case of the adoption, then it is followed by a separation of the person adopted from his/her unit of origin and, then onwards, the passive adoptee becomes active to the extent that he can be the adopter of the Swaroopam into which he was received. Once the transposition takes place the individual is cut off from the unit of origin, "renamed" and placed in the kuuru-mura order of the receiving unit. But when dathetukkal takes place without such a transposition, once again, the act of dathetukkal has to be understood in its own terms.

Fourthly, if dathetukkal takes place not by retaining their differential identity as adopter and adoptee, but with an intention and expectation to become more integral than they are, then also the act cannot be considered as similar to adoption. For example, when a Swaroopam adopts a person from another Swaroopam to erase any dispute between them and to realign their mutual relations, a mutual transposition between the Swaroopams without having any positioning of adoptees in the muppu vaazhcha of the receiving Swaroopam occurs.

Finally, when some one is transposed to a Swaroopam where there are sufficient number of members in the kuuru-mura for successions, then the phenomena of dathetukkal becomes overtly political as it reorders the existing inter-subjective relations among the members. Such a dathetukkal seems to be a part of a history dissimilar from the generally known history of adoption and thus it demands a re-problematization wherein translation of the word as adoption becomes objectionable. These are the conditions that compel us to study this phenomenon with all its complexity.
Though the practice can be differentially schematized, for the present purpose dathetukkals can be broadly distinguished into four types in terms of the units entities that converge in the act of dathetukkal:

(1) where more than two Swaroopams converge in the roles of either adopter or adoptee (a kind of tripartite dathetukkal),

(2) a kind of mutual-dathetukkal or mutual transposing between two Swaroopams wherein both the Swaroopams assume the roles of adopter and adoptee,

(3) within a Swaroopam, dathetukkal takes place between the swaroopam and its thaivazhi, that is there is a pattern of intra-Swaroopam mutual-dathetukkal and

(4) dathetukkal from families which were geographically distant and having relation with the Swaroopam of the adopter primarily as the family of adoptee.

Now it should be recalled that the difference between the same and the other or clearly differentiated and defined unit of origin of the adoptee and the receiving unit is the precondition under which adoption can take place. Then the basic units thus defined have ontological existence in the sense that at least the mutual relations gets founded on the basis of ontological recognition of each other, particularly at the moment of the transposition. The above schema brings out the nature of the units that pose themselves as adopter and adoptee and also the complexity involved in the nature of dathetukkal.

The exterior and the interior of the Swaroopams

Let us examine the historical details of the four types of dathetukkal that were schematized above. Neither the meaning of dathetukkal nor the historical conditions that led to it is the focus of the analysis. The attempt is primarily to view once again the
phenomenon itself as a new object of study, to trace the patterns in this practice, and to situate it in the inter-Swaroopam relations and muppu vaazhcha. Generally when two Swaroopams were involved in dathetukkal as adopter and adoptee, they were necessarily two entities independent of each other in terms of territoriality, family unity or kinship. The adoptee cannot be within the kuuru-mura order of the adopter's Swaroopam prior to the dathetukkal; if it were so, then, the dathetukkal itself would not have taken place. However, in the Swaroopam organization two Swaroopams engage in the act of dathetukkal by positing themselves as either adopter or adoptee. There was such dathetukkal of a male and a female member of Threppappur to Chiravay in 1574-75 and the adoptees were renamed and assigned positions in the kuuru-mura order within the latter.9 The adoptees were given koikkals (residences) in Chiravay and they were made Chirava Swaroopathine utayathaaka or persons having rights in Chiravay. That is, even though Threppappur and Chiravay were inter-netted within the kinship unity, in this instance, the kinship-unity was left unrecognized, if not undermined. This means that in defining the boundary between the Swaroopams, kinship had only a limited role.

Politics rather than kinship: The initial differential positioning, and its momentary erasure at the moment of dathetukkal, was embedded in relations other than kinship. In other words, they remained united in the kinship ties and yet formed relations of difference in dathetukkal, which itself was a part of kinship-based relational activities. It was a relation of difference in which the respective exterior and interior of the Swaroopams were taken as well defined. Such dathetukkal reaffirm the difference in terms of Swaroopam. Their separateness got reaffirmed at the moment of their convergence in the act of dathetukkal, this reaffirmation was not only as a
precondition for dathetukkal but it was also a condition that was to be maintained even after the dathetukkal in the future as well. Dathetukkal was critical in the inter-Swaroopam relations over and above its function in both the receiving Swaroopam and the Swaroopam of origin. These two Swaroopams were apparently independent and thus the need for dathetukkal from one to the other. Irrespective of the possibility of multiple-muppu vaazhcha that could combine them, dathetukkal was a prerequisite for a person to be the member of the “other” Swaroopam. This brings out the differential relation that was possible between the Swaroopams and at the same time illustrates the mutually accepted norms that governed their interactions.

Four years after this, there was yet another act of dathetukkal in 1579 wherein two male members from Threppappur were transposed to Chiravay. This repeated act of dathetukkal from Threppappur to Chiravay, shows that inter-Swaroopam dathetukkal was not a unique instance in the co-existence of Swaroopams. Such events also show that even though swaroopams are indistinguishable within the kinship bondage, as adopter and adoptee, Swaroopams could define their separate identities in the roles of the adoptee and the adopter. Although dathetukkal was the prerequisite for a member in the kuuru-mura of a Swaroopam to be considered as a member in another Swaroopam, this was not always so. For example, there were instances of the Chiravay muppu becoming multiple-muppu without sparking-off the issue of dathetukkal.

Independent of the alliance between the swaroopams that were constructed through kinship, there was another stratum wherein differential and integral relations among them were possible. That is, another stratum of personal-bonds was fabricated in dathetukkal, and the adoptee’s position in the Swaroopam was expressed in terms
of the kuuru-mura. This means dathetukkal was an event, which could not be reduced to the kinship idiom although kinship terminology was employed to refer to the relation between the adopter and adoptee.\textsuperscript{13} To reiterate, in dathetukkal elements of kinship terminology may be used to place the adoptee in the receiving Swaroopam,\textsuperscript{14} but it was primarily into the Swaroopam that the adoptee was transposed. Even though swaroopams were inter-related, as Swaroopams, they maintained differential relation with one another, and thus the need for transposing individual members from one to the other. If the S(s)waroopams were branches of a "kinship tree", then there would not have emerged any need for dathetukkal between them. Kinship ties between the Swaroopams did not pre-empt dathetukkal, these facts show that the kinship ties were not emblematic of the inter-Swaroopam relations. The primacy of the identity of each of the Swaroopams was getting reaffirmed as they were differentiated into independent unities in the process of dathetukkal. The inter-Swaroopam relations that got affirmed in the act of dathetukkal did not exactly correspond with the kinship relations.

The specific combinations of Swaroopams that came to be related as the adopter and the adoptee\textsuperscript{15} varied with respect to the context in which the dathetukkal took place. The nature of dathetukkal itself varied without there being any corresponding changes in either the kinship ties or the nature of the muppu-vaazhcha. One can identify different strata of inter-Swaroopam relations in each of these practices and each stratum differed from others, although not necessarily, in terms of the specific combination of the Swaroopams that were involved in each of them. The strata enjoyed mutual independence, thereby engendering a situation in which the active subjects, who were involved in muppu vaazhcha,
had a space to alter situations in a stratum without influencing others. Thus the practice of *dathetukkal* had the potential to be implicated in strategies and exercise of power without undermining or being in conflict with inter-*Swaroopam* relations in other strata.

Even when different *Swaroopams* converged around the multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* of any individual *muppu*, there were occasions of *dathetukkal* between these *Swaroopams*; members belonging to the *kuuru-mura* of one *Swaroopam* were transposed into another one as a result of the *dathetukkal*. This argument could now be elaborated and extended. The *dathetukkal* of 1574-75, mentioned above, had taken place even though Chiravay and Threppappur were combined in the multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* of Udaya Marthanda Varma. This event also shows that the combinations of *Swaroopams* that converged in the multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* were not necessarily the same ones that came together in the *dathetukkal*. At the time of *dathetukkal* in question, Threppappur and Deshinganadu were under the dual-*muppu vaazhcha*, and the *muppu* had already de-succeeded from Chiravay. Under such conditions he would have superiority, due to the age factor, compared to the then *muppu* of Chiravay. Further, the kinship-unity was stronger between Threppappur and Chiravay at that time.\(^{16}\) Thus in spite of the unity among *Swaroopams* in the system of multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* and kinship, *dathetukkal* had to be conducted to include members from Threppappur in to the *kuuru-mura* of the Chiravay *Swaroopam*. Once again, it shows that the unity of *Swaroopams* in multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* did not imply that the composition of *Swaroopams* in this unity was same in every instance of inter-*swaroopam* interactions and co-actions. Unity in the multiple-*muppu vaazhcha* of two *Swaroopams* did not preempt acts of *dathetukkal* between them,
rather, in spite of this such acts were necessary for their independent co-existence.

From the above discussion it can also be seen that even when the multiple-muppu vaazhcha and kinship simultaneously combined several Swaroopams, mobility of individual members from the kuuru-mura of one Swaroopam to another one had to be accompanied by performance of political rituals that acknowledge the differentiation between the Swaroopams and their boundaries. The specific exterior and interior of each of the Swaroopams were differentially defined in each of the strata made up of kinship, dathetukkal, and multiple-muppu vaazhcha. As shifts in the kuuru-mura order could be affected by dathetukkal, performance of it had to be a conscious and intentional act. Therefore, the transposition had to primarily recognize the boundaries between the Swaroopams and not so much the unity of the swaroopams and the coalitions that take place in multiple-muppu vaazhcha. One of the implications of this is that, neither the multiplicity in muppu vaazhcha nor the kinship ties between the swaroopams directly influenced the primary identity of the Swaroopam as it is evidenced by the instances of dathetukkal.

The anachronism here is that, if these Swaroopams had been primarily unified in terms of a “ruling family” or as “branches” of a “dynasty” as it is commonly believed, why did dathetukkal at all between Threppappur and Chiravay or from Kunnimmel to Threppappur and vice versa. The exterior and interior of the Swaroopams were defined not only in terms of kinship or family network and in terms of the form of multiplicity in muppu vaazhcha, but in terms of other factors such as those involved in the dathetukkal. In the practice of dathetukkal, Swaroopams had to define their mutual differentiation by positioning, as either the adopter or the adoptee, and in this they primarily identify themselves
in terms of the Swaroopam. For a better understanding, another inter-Swaroopam-dathetukkal that took place in 1623 can also be looked into. With the help of this event, it will be shown that the dathetukkal was not an act that can be situated either within the kinship idiom or within the historical framework that employs the “stem”, “branch” metaphor or any other unifying term, as it was embedded in more overt political processes of the Swaroopams.

The dathetukkal between Kunnummel Swaroopam and Threppappur/Chiravay in the year 1623 reveals another dimension of the political borderlines between the Swaroopams. The Dathetukkal from Kunnummel to Threppappur involved the muppu of Kunnummel as the adoptee and the muppu of Chiravay as the adopter. But in the dathetukkal from Threppappur to Kunnummel, the adopter was the muppu of the latter Swaroopam and the adoptees were the muppu of Chiravay and two junior male members along with the three senior-most members of the female kuuru-mura of Threppappur. All the members who were adopted in the mutual-dathetukkal were active, as against the “passive-adoptee” as in the previous examples or in the adoptive practice in general, all of them had higher place and position in the kuuru-mura order and they were active in the organization of their own Swaroopams.

Dathetukkal of the senior members is also another instance of inter-Swaroopam dathetukkal, but with more complexity and specificity. The former dathetukkals, which were mentioned above, were instances of inter-Swaroopam transposition whereby a person got transposed from one Swaroopam into another one, that is there was a unidirectional movement of members from one kuuru-mura or Swaroopam into another. But unlike this, the dathetukkals under consideration, shows simultaneous transposition from one Swaroopam to the other and vice versa can take place. There is bi-
directional transposition of the *swaroopikal*, that is, it was a mutual-
dathetukkal between two *Swaroopams*.

In the earlier examples, members included in the *kuuru-mura* of
Threppappur were transposed into Chiravay, that is, there were only
two *Swaroopams* involved in them. But in the *dathetukkal* of 1623,
there were three *Swaroopams*. Two of them--Threppappur and
Chiravay-- were united as one in their roles of both adopter and
adoptee while Kunnummel was all alone in its roles of both adopter
and adoptee.

Another interesting peculiarity of this mutual-transposition is
that, the adoptees were not placed in the *kuuru-mura* of the
*Swaroopams* into which they were received, nor they were offered any
positions in the *muppu vaazhcha* in the *Swaroopam* into which each
parties got adopted. The new relations of the adopted with the
adopters were not defined; rather they were referred to in terms of
their position in the *Swaroopam* of origin alone. They were posited
into some kind of protective fold of the *Swaroopams* of the adopters
as they were specified only as *Swaroopathine utayathaaka*. Moreover,
there was no allotment of any *koikkals* to the adoptees. In the earlier
instances of *dathetukkal*, cited above, the adopted were physically
transposed into the adopter's *Swaroopam*, they were given *koikkals*,
implicated into the *kuuru-mura* whereby they became part of the
*Swaroopam* and also that they could become *muppu*. There was no
such transposition, as we have defined, of the adopted from one
*Swaroopam* to the other, it was only a symbolic transposition which
had "meaning" and significance without the adoptees physical
presence or functions in *vaazhcha*. This *dathetukkal* may be seen as
a practice that illustrated the reciprocity between the *Swaroopams* in
question, perhaps as a symbolic exchange of assurance for their co-
existence.
The blurred boundaries: Although members of Chiravay were also involved in the *dathetukkal*, the *muppu* of Kunnummel was adopted only into the Threppappur *Swaroopam*. The senior-most adopter was the *muppu* of the Chiravay *Swaroopam*; nevertheless the adoptees from Kunnummel were not received into this *Swaroopam*. No male member of the Threppappur *Swaroopam*’s *kuuru-mura* (especially the *muppu*, *ilayathu* etc.) was involved in the *dathetukkal*; only the female members of the matrilocal, mareilinial and matriarchal family at Attingal and the male members of Chiravay. This shows that the involvement of Chiravay *muppu* in the event was not primarily on behalf of the Chiravay *Swaroopam*, but on behalf of some other unity. There was no amalgamation of Threppappur and Chiravay *Swaroopams* because Chiravay did not figure as a receiving *Swaroopam*. These factors clearly brings out the complexities involved in the maintenance of inter-*Swaroopam* differentiation.

Even when the Chiravay *muppu* was the initiator of the *dathetukkal*, this *Swaroopam* did not enter into the picture directly. The *dathetukkal* was conducted between Threppappur and Kunnummel and not between Chiravay and Kunnummel, although the main adopter and initiator of this *dathetukkal* was the Chiravay *muppu*; this is another question that stems when we analyze this particular mutual-*dathetukkal*. Yet another question that crops up in this context is, how the Chiravay *muppu* could be the initiator in the act of *dathetukkal* between Threppappur and Kunnummel, especially when there was another *muppu* for Threppappur.

While the Chiravay *muppu* took such a position in Threppappur, Unnikerala Varma was the Threppappur *muppu*. Given the importance of the *dathetukkal* in the inter-*Swaroopam* relations, how could the Chiravay *muppu* instead of the Threppappur *muppu*, act the roles proper to the former? A continuum between the *muppu*
position of the Chiravay Swaroopam and his place in the Threppappur swaroopam can be seen. The Threppappur muppu (Unnikerala Varma) did not even get referred to in the document that depicts the dathetukkal. In one stratum of relations the inter-Swaroopam differentiation is maintained, at the same time one begins to see the existence of unity between the Swaroopams forming a different stratum. This unity is achieved neither on the basis of the Swaroopam as an identity nor in terms of multiple-muppu vaazhcha, but in terms of dathetukkal.

It should be recalled that Threppappur and Chiravay were not combined in any form of multiple-muppu vaazhcha at that time, moreover, Threppappur and Deshinganadu were combined by the muppu vaazhcha of Unnikerala Varma. That is, by virtue of being the muppu of Threppappur alone, one could not position himself as the adopter of the Swaroopam (it is not known whether there was any such fixed role-obligation). Even though Threppappur and Deshinganadu shared a kuuru-mura order, as it is evident from the multiple-muppu vaazhcha of Unnikerala Varma, there could be situations in which such continuity between the Swaroopams does not appear. The combination of positions/agents involved in this dathetukkal was defined by principles other than those that legitimized one as the muppu or as the senior-most in the kuuru-mura. That could be the reason why Unnikerala Varma did not appear as representing Threppappur although he was its muppu. What privileged the Chiravay muppu to act as the adopter of Threppappur is not clearly decipherable. At the same time it can be said that the relation between the Chiravay muppu and the female members of Attingal gave shape to the composition of members in this dathetukkal, nothing more can be said about the cause or historical condition for the specificity.
Whatever be the historical condition of this specificity, one implication is that even when multiple-
\textit{muppu vaazhcha} combined two \textit{Swaroopams}, there were roles—the kind of roles found in \textit{dathetukkal}—which were distinguishable from the roles that were strictly and solely attached to particular \textit{muppu} positions.\textsuperscript{21} There were certain matters of \textit{Swaroopam} for which its own \textit{muppu} was a prerequisite, at the same time there could be other conjunctures in which this is not required. This suggests that there was a differentiation between Threppappur and Chiravay although they were combined as adoptees, that is, they were not the combined receivers of adoptees from Kunnummel. As adoptees they were combined but as the receiving-\textit{Swaroopam}, Threppappur is differentiated from Chiravay. The distinction between Threppappur and Chiravay as two \textit{Swaroopams} was maintained even within this stratum, moreover differentiation between \textit{swaroopam} and \textit{Swaroopam} could also be identified in this \textit{dathetukkal}. To complicate the mater, in 1630 there was another \textit{dathetukkal} between Vellarappalli family in Cochin and Threppappur, in which Unnikerala Varma took a very active role.\textsuperscript{22} In the case of \textit{dathetukkal} from Kunnummel to Threppappur only one adopter was there, namely the \textit{muppu} of Chiravay, but when Threppappur becomes the adoptee then there were several members as adoptees from both Chiravay and Threppappur. These complexities involved in the \textit{dathetukkal} is reflexive of the minute distinctions that were characteristic of inter-Swaroopam relations.

When certain results of the above analysis are conflated, it can be seen that multiple-\textit{muppu vaazhcha} combined Threppappur and Deshinganadu more frequently, whereas in the acts of \textit{dathetukkal} more frequent combination is Chiravay and Threppappur. Further, there is no correspondence between the combination of \textit{Swaroopams}
that appear in the kinship network and those who appear in the practice of dathetukkal. Even when the three swaroopams, Deshinganadu, Chiravay and Threppappur, are found to be combined as a totality within the kinship network, in the practice of dathetukkal this unity is not recognized by them as primary.

Now the question is, if there was variation in the specific composition of the Swaroopams across each stratum and if several such strata were active, then did such variations in the composition of the Swaroopams result instability and imbalances in the inter-Swaroopam relations? Different intersecting boundaries could be deciphered at the level of the specific combinations of the Swaroopams that appeared in each of the strata and within each of the combinations. This is so as each of the Swaroopams retained their respective boundaries differentially within each of the strata. Therefore, criterion involved in the determination of boundaries might have been quite supple, sensitive to TimeSpace and complex. How did this differential structuration that took place in each of the stratum perpetuated the primacy of Swaroopam identity in the interactions counter-actions and co-actions between Swaroopams?

Though the question raised above can not be taken up here, still one thing could be stated. There was no permanent meta-unity that made the variable combinations of Swaroopam stationary. No tendency could be deciphered which made any one combination common to all the strata that are discussed so far. Swaroopams were combined variously on different grounds, this made possible formation of several strata consisting of unities and differences. The “initial” decision to be outside any combination was endogenous to the Swaroopam, whatever be the consequences that it may effect. However, once a Swaroopam decides to be part of a combination then it is already in the active inter-Swaroopam co-existence. The
heterogeneity in the possible combinations of Swaroopams that constitute different stratum could be one of the factors that made possible relatively autonomous co-existence of several Swaroopams without effecting any meta-unity among them. Both the relations of difference and union were conceived and articulated as normal. The intricate ways in which manifold forms of power operate in the inter-Swaroopam and intra-Swaroopam organizations can be elaborated by examining another instance of dathetukkal. When appearance of a specific combination of Swaroopams was disapproved by any one or more of the four Swaroopams, then that specific combination gets problematized and structural equivalence gets destabilized.

Dathetukkal could be strategic moves reconstitutive of the inter-Swaroopam relations and structural equivalence among them. These moves are born out of the willful intentions of active agents who acted within the structural possibility that continued from the past and are perpetuated by some actors of the present. Theoretically speaking, strategic moves and problematisation did not emerge not so much from the opposition between the agency and the structure but something that surfaces in the inter-subjectivity of the agents which at the same accept “what is given” and invent “what has to become as something given”.

**Differentiation of Swaroopam from within**

One year prior to the above mutual-dathetukkal between Kunnummel and Threppappur/Chiravay, there was another one between Threppappur and Chiravay on the one hand and Pokam, a thaivazhi of the Threppappur, on the other, in the year 1622. A thaivazhi by definition is a branch of the swaroopam such that they ought to have close kinship relation, as they are already consanguine descent group. Thus thaivazhi is said to be “in” swaroopam and in principle, the S(s)waroopam contains thaivazhi. When dathetukkal
took place between a Swaroopam and its thaivazhi (mutual-dathetuukkal), they were separated as the adopter and the adoptee as if there was no kinship binding between them. Such a differentiation can be grounded only in a stratum outside the unity achieved by consanguinity or kinship relationship, or when it is dormant/sidelined. This mutual-dathetuukkal also problematise the definition of thaivazhi in terms of swaroopam and its condition of “being contained” by S(s)waroopam. The very fact that there occurred a political need for mutual-dathetuukkal itself is an attestation that there was a realm in which the existence of kinship unity and the position of thaivazhy as a part of the Swaroopam did not matter.

Even if kinship-based unity existed it was not sufficient to prove the notion that Swaroopam was the total and the thaivazhi its part. Alternatively, dathetuukkal could (or had to) take place in spite of the existent kinship unity, this also indicates that there was relative autonomy to the thaivazhi in its relation with the Swaroopam. Kinship unity did not necessarily ensure the political unity of the Swaroopams, if it were so, need for intra- and inter-Swaroopam dathetuukkal would not have emerged. These observations suggest the need for alternative conceptualization of thaivazhi, as they contradict the existing conceptualization of thaivazhi and its relation to swaroopam or family. This dathetuukkal achieved the unity that kinship ties could not effect. The kinship based description of the relation between Swaroopam and thaivazhi or definition of these two as “original family”/muula-kutumbam and “descent group” or the “centre” and “satellites” or “total” and “part” is not possible.

Another event in the history of dathetuukkal is the one that took place between Swaroopam and thaivazhi in 1679, this dathetuukkal was from Puka-thaivazhi to the Threppappur/Chiravay and later the adopted became muppu of Chiravay in 1684. This substantiates the
above argument further and highlights its incidence. We have seen in
the above section that dathetukkal took place between Swaroopams
which were said to be linked in terms of kinship and in a particular
power relation. Now, it can be said that even for a member of a
thaivazhi to become the muppu of its own muulakutumbam or
Swaroopam, dathetukkal was essential. Without this act a member of
the thaivazhi was treated as a kin as well as a member of
Chiravay/Threppappur. But he was not considered as a legitimate
successor to the muppu position, as he would only be an outsider to
the kuuru-mura order of the Swaroopam till the dathetukkal was
performed. In other words, only dathetukkal introduces even the
senior most of a thaivazhi into the kuuru-mura of its Swaroopam. To
repeat, the existing kinship based characterization of the relation
between Swaroopam and thaivazhi cannot explain this dathetukkal,
or within such an ethnographic analytic-framework such
dathetukkal may be treated as an “exception”, if not as an
anachronism. Such characterization and the fact that they could
relate each other as two self-similar identities assume away the
possibility of a differential relation between thaivazhi and Swaroopam
in political field. Analysis of this dathetukkal also help us to
formulate a hypothesis that thaivazhi might have had the possibility
to grow as a Swaroopam. The relation between kinship and politics
and the very notion of kinship itself need to be re-problematized by
the anthropologists/ethnographers in the light of the observed
complexity in the non-relation between Swaroopams and also
between Swaroopam and its thaivazhi. Given the complexity involved
in the relation between a Swaroopam and its thaivazhi and the
political implication of dathetukkal, let us return to the political
aspects of dathetukkal by returning to the event of dathetukkal in the
year 1622.
Equality between center of the total and part of the total: This dathetukkal from Puka-thaivazhi to Threppappur/Chiravay and vice versa reveals, more than anything else, that there was a conjecture in which the Swaroopam and its thaivazhi had to engage in mutual-dathetukkal, in spite of other kinds of active bonds between them. This brings out how a kinship bond between the Swaroopam and its thaivazhi remains exogenous to dathetukkal and also the interstice between them even within the kinship idiom itself. This dathetukkal is at the same time intra-Swaroopam and also intra-family one. Earlier we have seen intra-family inter-Swaroopam adoption but here it is at the same time intra-family and intra-Swaroopam dathetukkal. Here we see a differentiated relation between the Swaroopam and thaivazhi, although they recognize the unity of the Swaroopam and thaivazhi.

In the document the unit entity, Puka thaivazhi, appears in the roles of both the adopter and adoptee were treated as different from the Swaroopam and it was referred only as thaivazhi; thus there was continuity in their mutual relation in general as Swaroopam and thaivazhi. Nevertheless, at the moment of the dathetukkal they mutually treat the other as an equal entity. Swaroopam was not treated as a whole but it was decomposed and one of the Swaroopam's assumed parts is disassociated and then the thus achieved units were placed as the Swaroopam and the thaivazhi. The swaroopam and its thaivazhi come in mutual relation as two equivalent counter-partners of an exchange or as two teams at the beginning of a game. The thaivazhi was treated, more or less, as another Swaroopam. They reciprocate each other by exchanging their most distinguished positions as adoptees.

It is clear by now that the thaivazhi was not merely contained within the unity of either Swaroopam or in any overarching kinship
binding of swaroopam, the idea of total and parts cannot be applied here. Even if it is treated so, the lines that mark the exterior and interior of both the total and parts remain severely complex and it resists any straightforward application of any monolithic concepts. Not only that the practice of dathetukkal unified different Swaroopams but also it integrated units within a S(s)waroopam, perhaps other factors that unified them was inactive. The kinship relations that posit thaivazhi's status as part of the domain of the Swaroopam did integrate them, but it did not unify part into the whole exhaustively, there were spaces in which they were no more total and part, but two independent entities. The Swaroopam had no all-pervasive influence on the thaivazhi, it did not invade the autonomous space in which the thaivazhi could act as a unit in itself. That is why Pokam-thaivazhi reciprocated as an “equivalent-other party” vis-à-vis the united Threppappur/Chiravay. In other words, there was hierarchy between them at certain sites, but in the act of dathetukkal or when the need for such an act emerge, such asymmetries in their power relation had no influence on relative positioning of the Swaroopam and thaivazhi.

Few specificities of this dathetukkal can be mentioned before the details of the political contents and implications of the dathetukkal between a Swaroopam and its thaivazhi is analyzed. The dathetukkal took place under the auspices of the muppu of Chiravay and Poka-thaivazhi. There were four adoptees from Threppappur/Chiravay who got linked to the Poka, and this link was assumed to prevail during the bad and good times/deeds; these adoptees also gained right for the dead body and death rituals. The muppu and his younger brother of the Chiravay Swaroopam and two female members of Attingal were the adoptees into the thaivazhi. The adopters of the Poka-thaivazhy were the senior and junior muppu of the thaivazhi but only one
member that is, the *muppu* alone, was the adoptee from Poka-thaivazhy. Further they were introduced only into the Threppappur *Swaroopam* not into the Threppappur, at the same time the adopters belonged to the Chiravay *Swaroopam*. In the case of the Threppappur/Chiravay combine when it was in the role of the adoptee there were four members, two members each from the *Swaroopams*. Whereas, when it became the adopters, there were only two male members of Chiravay *Swaroopam*, the members of the Threppappur or the female members of the Attingal family (on behalf of Threppappur) had not taken the roles of the adopters. In the case of Poka-thaivazhi when it was the adopter there were two members while when it was the adoptee there was only the *muppu* as the adoptee. These specificities of differing combinations of the adoptees and adopters is quite complex indicative of the inadequacy of the conceptual apparatus existing in the historical explanations. This along with the political dimension of the *dathetukkal* forces us to analyze a mutual agreement that immediately followed this *dathetukkal*.

**Political Script:** The “mutual agreement” between them elucidates the political underpinnings involved in this *dathetukkal*. The mutual agreement was between Kerala Varma, the *muppu* of the Poka-thaivazhi and Ravi Varma the Chiravay *muppu*, they mutually exchanged the document of treaty. Veera Kerala Varma agreed not to see or enter into alliance with the Kunnummel without the knowledge of Ravi Varma, his elder brother; he also agreed not to align with those who do so. In return,

Ravi Varma agreed not to make peace with the Ilayidattu family without Veera Kerala Varma, nor side with the latter’s nephews (junior prices) and those of his own family and molest him. Both mutually agreed not to dishonor the *ardhapranadhishthana*... The kind of guarantee that they exchanged with each other is a clear expression of the bond that had been absent, at least till the
The significance of this treaty can be seen in the mutual-agreement between them, its documentation in written form and the mutual exchange of the documents. Although in the dathetukkal several members were involved as adopter and adoptee, this agreement was strictly between the muppus of the Swaroopam and the thaivazhi. This overtly articulated treaty also shows the kind of power relation between the Swaroopam and thaivazhi, a kind of power relation in which they could exercise authority mutually in a more or less equivalent manner. One broad observation that can be made is that while dathetukkal that had bearing on politics involved a group activity, the overtly political matters like the one mentioned above that involved both inter-Swaroopam relations and intra-Swaroopam relations could take place under the leadership and auspices of the muppu alone. The muppus could represent their respective Swaroopams and thaivazhi.

In the dathetukkal Threppappur and Chiravay presents themselves as a combine in distinction to their thaivazhi, When it comes to the exchange of written agreement about the relations that they should maintain with Kunnummel and between them, Threppappur was not referred at all. Still it can be safely assumed that the Threppappur/Chiravay combine was represented by the Chiravay muppu as the amelioration of the discord between the Kunnummel and the combine took place within another year, which culminated in the dathetukkal of 1623. The integrity of the combine continued to exist throughout the period under consideration. It should be remembered that along with these events the rift between Deshinganadu and Threppappur was also continuing and that there was also a tendency among Threppappur and Chiravay to come under multiple-muppu vaazhcha more frequently. It should also be said that there was also a tendency in the Poka-thaivazhi to
disassociate itself from the Chiravay/Threppappur combine. This
dissociation should not be viewed as a complete cessation of the
thaivazhi from the combine or the muulakutumbam.\textsuperscript{30}

Both of them were facing their own unique contingency;
Threppappur/Chiravay combine had problems with the Kunnummel
Swaroopam, similarly Poka-thaivazhi was finding difficulties from
within. What exactly was the internal dissent that the muppu of
Poka-thaivazhi faced, is not clear from the document. What was
common was that both of them had similar relation of discord with
the Kunnummel Swaroopam at that time, and the discord was
affecting more intensely in the relation between the combine and
Kunnummel. The historical situation was that a structural
equivalence had to be fabricated through the aid of this “mutual
agreement” between Threppappur/Chiravay and Poka-thaivazhi.

It was stated above that the relationship that existed between
the Threppappur/Chiravay combine and the thaivazhi in the
dathetukkal had been as two equal counter-parts involved in a
contract or a game. But this proposition cannot be true in the case of
the treaty. There had been an overt statement that the Chiravay
muppu had superiority over the muppu of Poka-thaivazhi, their
relationship was well specified in terms of age. The technology of
hierarchically ordering individuals and their positing in the hierarchy
of positions (including muppu), that were involved in Swaroopam
organization, in terms of age had been observed while discussing the
kuuru-mura schemata in the second chapter. In terms of age, muppu
of Chiravay was superior to the muppu of Poka-thaivazhi. This aspect
of their mutual relation is invoked into the treaty thus there takes
place a hierarchy between the Chiravay muppu and the muppu of
Poka-thaivazhi. This seniority/superiority between them had already
been re-affirmed in the mutual-dathetukkal between the Swaroopam
and *thaivazhi*. That is, Chiravay *Swaroopam* appears to be at a higher level of authority and speech due to the inter-personal relation between the two *muppus*, through the projection of the Chiravay *muppu* as the “elder” to the *muppu* of the *thaivazhi*.

What was the need for an overt agreement/treaty between the *Swaroopam* and its *thaivazhi*? This question is pertinent because there already existed an age-based hierarchy between the two *muppus*. Further, the mutual-obligations had to be written (*mozhi­olay* was made) and they were exchanged so that both the parties could possess the copies. Why such a complicated and systematic practice, if the relation between the two *muppus* were structured in terms of age based hierarchy within the same *kuuru-mura*. Was it not a custom, as commonly believe, that a *thaivazhi-muppu* had to obey what the *Swaroopam-muppu* demands? If this is so, why should Ravi Varma had to get consent from Kerala Varma, who was only junior to him, before negotiating with Kunnummel for reconciliation; and reciprocally, any why attempts of reconciliation between the *thaivazhi* and Kunnummel had to be conducted only with the knowledge of the former? It also points to a possibility that they belonged to two different *kuuru-muras*. If this is so, once again, the received view of the relation between *Swaroopam* and *thaivazhi* need to be rephrased; in general, the relation between *thaivazhi* and *muulakutumbam* need to be re-conceptualized in the light of such complexities (not complications). Another question is that, if *thaivazhi* was one of the parts of the *Swaroopam*, why there had to be measures like treaty and *dathetukkal* at all, as if without these acts of adoption and the subsequent treaty the structural equivalence might not have been realized. Was the unity between *Swaroopam* and its *thaivazhi* a matter of negotiation between the respective *muppus*; and alternatively, was it something that had been
decided solely by the *Swaroopam muppu*? Was the relation between Kunnummel *Swaroopam* and Poka-*thaivazhi* independent of combined opinion of Threppappur/Chiravay? These questions are formulated to indicate the intricate ways in which power relations worked between them. It also alludes to the non-linear, non-fixed and non-localized ways in which the technologies of power operated, which made possible the co-existence of different *Swaroopams*.

The fact that there emerged a need for written-mutual agreement to achieve structural equivalence between the *Swaroopam*-combine and its *thaivazhi* reveals beyond doubt that there were spaces where *thaivazhi* exercised its will independent of the former, and take sides freely irrespective of whether its *Swaroopam muppu* agree to it or not --particularly in political matters like the inter-*Swaroopam* relations. It can also be equally probable that the *muulakutumbam-thaivazhi* relation had been breaking its foundation of kinship, particularly in this particular instance, along with attempts of reconciliation. Otherwise, there was no need for such mechanisms of alliance between them. It can also be hypothesized that, had the treaty and the *dathetukkal* were not accomplished, the Poka-*thaivazhi* might have allied with the Kunnummel as a normal course of action. And inversely, Threppappur might have aligned with any one opposed to the *thaivazhi-muppu*.

The Poka-*thaivazhi* could have aligned with Kunnummel *Swaroopam* without the consent of the *Swaroopam* to which it belonged, that is why the treaty took place. But after the treaty, it was not to enter into any relationship with Kunnummel and cause adverse effects on Threppappur/Chiravay. It is also probable that *thaivazhi-muppu* was not to enter into the domain of Threppappur/Chiravay *Swaroopam* excluding *thaivazhi*’s own
autonomous space. Where as the Swaroopam muppu could have entered into an alliance with any fraction which was at the same time within the space of thaivazhi and opposed to the thaivazhi-muppu. That is why in the agreement between the combine and puka-thaivazhi there was a special clause about the interior of the thaivazhi and a guarantee of non-intervention from the muppu of the Swaroopam combine. In the guarantee issued by the Poka-thaivazhi there is no mention of non-interference into the space of the combine. This was the relative superiority that the Swaroopam muppu as elder had over the thaivazhi-muppu. This kind of minute and complex distinctions of authority operated in the relationship between the Swaroopam and thaivazhi, even when they acted as equivalent counter-parts in the political matters as exemplified by the particular dathetukkal and the written-mutual agreement of treaty.

One of the possible principles operated in the Swaroopam organization was that there were several acts that a thaivazhi could conduct irrespective of what its Swaroopam think about it. The Swaroopam was not to intervene into these fields of activities of the thaivazhi and any intervention had to be preceded by mutual consent. That is, there were spaces created in the relation between Swaroopam and thaivazhi in which the latter could act autonomously, provided that it did not alter or contradict the persistent practices and systems of Swaroopam organization. While Swaroopam had relative advantages due to the hierarchy, there were occasions when it's engagements with the latter was conditional and negotiation-bound. This should not be red as a limitation of the Swaroopam, rather as a shared principle between them. The authority relation between the Swaroopam and thaivazhi shows a non-generalized exchange of forces and an irreducibility of power to
the Swaroopam-muppu or any other single location in the Swaroopam. There were discontinuities within the flow of authority between Swaroopam and thavazhi as seen in the above instance of dathetukkal and mutual-agreement.

Within such a possibility of autonomous space, there might have been another possibility, that is, this thavazhi might have been transforming or was getting metamorphosed into a Swaroopam. At the instance of dathetukkal and the mutual-agreement, the asymmetries/hierarchies between the Swaroopam and its thavazhi were problematized as the form of thavazhi had been showing the signs of transformation towards something similar to that of a Swaroopam. The alterations and shifts in the equivalence and hierarchy were both parts of the nature of the relation between Swaroopam/swaroopam and its thavazhies; this need not be treated as an exception, especially in the political relation among the Swaroopams, swaroopams and thavazhies. This is so especially because while Poka-thavazhi was all alone as a unit there was co-action between Threppappur and Chiravay. Thus even when the situation was prone to the process of domination and subjection by the combine (this combine was in many ways more powerful than the thavazhi), the thavazhi could act as an independent unit and express its interests and aims as an equal to a super-ordinate body like the Swaroopam.

The unity that persisted through kinship and other relations between the Swaroopam and the thavazhi were not sufficient to encounter the contingency they commonly or individually but concomitantly faced. This necessitated dathetukkal and “written-mutual agreement” to align and integrate Threppappur/Chiravay and Poka-thavazhi in their venture to isolate another Swaroopam namely Kunnummel. Through the dathetukkal and mutual
agreement the structural equivalence between Threppappur/Chiravay and Poka-thaivazhi was stabilized. There took place a generalization of particular interests of the Swaroopam-combine and made possible the co-action of the Swaroopams and thaivazhi in the strategy against their common opponent, namely Kunnummel. In this the thaivazhi also gained as it could ameliorate its internal dissents. The terrain of politics is quite evident. The treaty that followed the dathetukkal and the dathetukkal itself can be viewed as the strategic operations embedded in both the inter/intra-Swaroopam relations. The strategic moves were conducted primarily to prevent any structural realignment between the Swaroopam-combine and the thaivazhi that was anticipated to favor Kunnummel. The dathetukkal between Kunnummel and Threppappur/Chiravay should now be recalled.

**Political realignment through dathetukkal:** After an year of the mutual agreement and dathetukkal between the Poka-thaivazhi and the Threppappur/Chiravay, the dathetukkal between Kunnummel and the latter took place and it marked the culmination of the discord between the combine and Kunnummel. It shows that the discord between the combine and Kunnummel got resolved by that time and they collectively reinstated positive alignment between them through dathetukkal. However, Poka-thaivazhi did not figure in the dathetukkal between the combine and Kunnummel. Separate dathetukkal between Poka-thaivazhi and Kunnummel might not have been required because as far as Kunnummel was concerned it was sufficient to realign with the Swaroopam and not with its thaivazhi. For Poka-thaivazhi, this dathetukkal itself might have been sufficient to be in alliance with the newly achieved structural equivalence with Kunnummel. Perhaps, it can be said that dathetukkal defined the alignments between the Swaroopams as well as within the
Swaroopams. The mutual-adoptions of distinguished positions between Swaroopams and between the Swaroopam and its thaivazhi were immanent in the formalization and re-formalization of unities and differences that were particular to Swaroopam organization. It was also immanent in the definition of the exterior of the Swaroopams and fractions interior to the Swaroopam.

Although there were realignments among the Swaroopams due to the dathetukkal, the primacy of the Swaroopam identity was retained. Even when the muppu and ilayathu or a given set of members of the Swaroopams were transposed to another one, as observed earlier, they were not introduced into the kuuru-mura of the receiving Swaroopam. They were not directly implicated into the kinship network, although the adopter-adoptee relation was phrased using kinship terminology. To be precise, such adoptees were never placed in the kuuru-mura schemata. If they had any such position, for instance, when the Chiravay muppu was transposed into Kunnummel, he would have become the muppu of that Swaroopam, because he was elder to the Kunnummel-muppu. Whenever dathetukkal took place with the intention to fill any kuuru-mura order, then their relation with each of the adopters in the order was well defined.31 But in the mutual-dathetukkal (both inter-Swaroopam and between Swaroopam and thaivazhi) of the distinguished positions, as they were not included in the kuuru-mura order, realignment took place in terms of Swaroopam itself or the interaction was between the identities having their own exterior and interior, be it Swaroopam or thaivazhi. Thus such dathetukkal did not cause any shift in the kuuru-mura schemata. The unity of the Swaroopam is highlighted not to establish that kinship relations were absent, but to emphasize the primacy of the Swaroopam identity and to demonstrate the limited role that kinship relation had.
in determining the inter-Swaroopam unity or intra-Swaroopam coherence.

The dathetukkal also took place when there were lack of successors\textsuperscript{32} or shortage of members in the kuuru-mura.\textsuperscript{33} Lack of successors need not mean that there was a shortage to succeed to the muppu position, but it could also take place due to several other ritual needs; for example, adoptee may be required to perform death rituals in lieu of the muppu (one year long deeksha) etc.\textsuperscript{34} In this type of dathetukkal, kinship factor was pertinent. Another pattern that could be observed is that, whenever dathetukkal took place to fill kuuru-mura then the adoptees were never from any of the Swaroopams that we have mentioned so far. They were generally from far away places like Vellarappalli family in Cochin and also from Kolathunaadu in northern part of Kerala. There had never been any mutual-dathetukkal between any of the Swaroopams under consideration and these families of Cochin and Kolathunaadu.

Some other question that this type of dathetukkal brings forth can be briefly posed as follows. It was seen that nothing prohibits multiple-muppu vaazhcha and therefore lack of male members should not be considered as an exigency. Given this, when lack of successors was felt, multiple-muppu vaazhcha could have been taken up as against the choice of dathetukkal. Further, in spite of the provision for dathetukkal even from it’s own thaivazhi and other neighboring Swaroopams, why the adoptees were chosen from such far away places like Kolathunaadu and Cochin is not clear. This question is important especially because dathetukkal was integrated into the perpetuation of the structural equivalence among the Swaroopams. It was usual in the matrilineal/matrifocal societies to adopt female members and their sons would be considered as the legitimate successors to distinguished positions. The adoption of
male members along with *multiple-muppu vaazhcha* introduces additional complexity into the historical analysis, thus it remains as a problem to be examined. Any re-examination of such peculiarities of *dathetukkal* would enhance understanding of the ordering system of the *kuuru-mura* as well as lineage systems prevailed in Swaroopams and their *muppu vaazhcha*.

**Dathetukkal, strategy and shift in the kuuru-mura**

Even when there were sufficient successors and members in the *kuuru-mura*, *dathetukkal* of a different type, so far not mentioned, had taken place from Vellarappalli (in Cochin) to Threppappur in 1630. Two young adoptees were given specific positions in the Threppappur family by placing them in relationships with each of the adopters using kinship terminology. There were two adoptees and eight adopters including the Chiravay *muppu*, his *ilayathus* and other Threppappur female members. The long list of the adopters itself shows that there were enough members in the *kuuru-mura*. In spite of their existence, these two adoptees were introduced into Threppappur and its *kuuru-mura*. After a year, in 1631, another *dathetukkal* took place from the same Vellarappalli family, in which yet another member was transposed from the same family. That is, in addition to the two adoptees, there was a new one who got transposed and in turn placed as the “elder” to the two adoptees of the previous *dathetukkal*. He was placed as uncle to the already existed members in the *kuuru-mura*, thereby a shift in the *kuuru-mura* taking place. Interestingly enough, not only that there was sufficient number of successors but also that this newly introduced member was to succeed to higher-positions earlier than the other two adoptees. This adoptee was also placed over and above those who were in the *kuuru-mura*. Due to such placement there took place a shift in the *kuuru-mura* --as against change in it. Such shift, due
to the super-positioning of the new adoptee over the existent members, definitely altered the relations between the members of the \textit{kuuru-mura} as they were further distanced from their anticipated positions. It might have created a new relationship between the adoptees and those who were already there in the \textit{kuuru-mura} order. As the newly introduced superseded them in the \textit{kuuru-mura} order, they got placed at lower positions than what would have been their position had the \textit{dathetukkal} did not take place or such super-positioning did not happen. This is the basis to infer that this particular sequence of \textit{dathetukkal} was purposive and it was aimed at a shift in the existent \textit{kuuru-mura} order so that the adopters can determine the successor. The age-based determination gets undermined and concomitantly such determinability got functionalised to overcome the precise-determinacy/restrains of \textit{kuuru-mura} schemata.

The political dimension of such \textit{dathetukkal} and consequent shifts in the \textit{kuuru-mura} can be analyzed further by returning to the two-consecutive-\textit{dathetukkals} from Vellarappalli family of Cochin in the years 1630 and 1631. If the purposive shift in the \textit{kuuru-mura} was because the adoptee of the second \textit{dathetukkal} was elder to the two adoptees of the previous \textit{dathetukkal}, then the question is why he was not adopted in the previous \textit{dathetukkal} itself. If he was not the "elder", then why such a super-positioning had to be done; whatever be the reason, what is clear from these events is that there was a conscious "choice" to shift the \textit{kuuru-mura} order. This choice suggests to the political field in which such \textit{dathetukkal} took place and the political dimension of such acts. Thus manipulation of \textit{kuuru-mura} through \textit{dathetukkal} can be seen as a political strategy that enabled one to go beyond the determinability of the \textit{kuuru-mura} in the matters of succession to the positions of prominence and
consequence. It also brings forth how the legitimacy of the kuuru-mura was getting part of a strategy in which the sanctity of it was functionalised. Therefore, one can say that the kuuru-mura schema was primary even when there was attempts to shift it. The determinacy was by-passed not by ignoring the kuuru-mura but by functionalising the sanctity of the kuuru-mura and dathetukkal. The truth of the kuuru-mura began to be functionalised with a view to overcome the prevalent system of succession that this ordering effected. Theoretically this is an instance of structuration of a kind where the free agents and structures interact and reconstitute both the structure and the agent. The foundation of the determinability and fixity of kuuru-mura was the biological factor of age and birth-time. When through dathetukkal and placement of the adoptees in the order of hierarchy of positions was accomplished, the determinate character of the schemata would be lost. Given such a condition of purposive shifting of the kuuru-mura, it can no more be considered as a schema that determined the distribution of individual swaroopikal across various positions solely in terms of the criterion of age. But it was only instrumental in legitimizing the purposive choice of the swaroopikal and their redistribution across positions of consequence according to the intention and will of the existing muppu and the adopters.

Another aspect worth noting here is that Unnikeral Varma, who was the muppu of Threppappur, entered into the picture of this consecutive-dathetukkal. But at the same time, although the dathetukkal took place in Threppappur, he was not mentioned as the adopter, rather his role was confined to the decision making process in which other female members of the Vellarappalli family were also present. In that way he was identifying with the Vellarappalli and displaying his closer affinity with this family rather than
Threppappur. It should be noted that he was also an adoptee from the same family who became multiple-muppu of both Threppappur and Deshinganadu. Here we begin to see differentiation of a muppu in terms of whether he was an adoptee or not. In the intra-Swaroopam or inter-Swaroopam dathetukkal, in spite of the fact that Unnikerala Varma was the Threppappur muppu (between 1620-1650), he did not assume any roles. Where as, in this dathetukkal, although he was not the adopter, he played an important role by mediating between the adopters and the family or origin of the adoptees. He played this role in this dathetukkal because the adopters were from the Vellarappalli family to which he himself belonged before he was transposed into Deshinganadu. In the document that refers to the consecutive dathetukkal, the adoptee was specified in relation to Unnikerala Varma and the adoptees of the 1630 adoption. Generally the adoptees were referred in terms of the kinship relation that they were to have with the Swaroopam into which they were transposed. Therefore, even if one had been transposed through dathetukkal from one family to another Swaroopam/family and he became the muppu of that Swaroopam or Swaroopams-as in this case- his pre-dathu family history was never de-linked as generally believed. The “choice” involved in this dathetukkal and purposive shifting of the kuuru-mura shows the political realm that linked up the Vellarappalli (due to Unnikerala Varma’s relation with those in the Threppappur/Chiravay) family with Deshinganadu, Threppappur and Chiravay Swaroopams. This might have been an attempt to reconcile conflicts between Threppappur and Deshinganadu.

**Site of difference:** Dathetukkal could also destabilize the structural equivalence among Swaroopams. The maintenance of structural equivalence among the Swaroopams had added importance because
of the prevalence of multiple-muppu vaazhcha. The Swaroopams, as a norm, were to engage in dathetukkal only without creating disagreement from other Swaroopams with whom they had structural equivalence. This was an observed norm among Threppappur, Deshinganadu, Chiravay and Kunnummel. The question that can be raised now is the following: which Swaroopam was to be concerned about the disagreement of others that had bearing upon the equivalence and whose disagreements were to be warded off? There might have been conclusive answers to this question at specific instances, but they were not static across time or space and this peculiarity opened up space for tension between the Swaroopams. Whether the instability in the structural equivalence was the reason for a particular way of dathetukkal or vice versa cannot be specified. This instability was closely related to the deviations from the usual practice of collectively negotiated dathetukkal,43 that is, by taking care of the disagreements of other Swaroopams. There were several instances of structural instabilities between Swaroopams on account of un-negotiated dathetukkal and strategic functionalisation of dathetukkal, especially during the turn of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century.

There was a dathetukkal in 1672 that led to disagreement between the muppu of Attingal family and the Chiravay, on the one hand, and the Poka-thaivazhi on the other hand.44 The Threppappur muppu, Adithya Varma, along with the Attingal family members wanted to conduct dathetukkal from Vellarappalli. This muppu was the one who was adopted in the dathetukkal of 1630 from the same family45 and he suggested his nephew Rama Koil Pandala as the successor, while the muppu of Poka thaivazhi proposed that Rama Varma of his family should be the adoptee. This disagreement was
however, amicably solved, but *dathetukkal* continued to create instabilities in the structural equivalence between *Swaroopams*.

**Dathetukkal becomes adoption:** A *dathetukkal* took place when there was no successor in Deshinganadu and therefore a male member was transposed from Kayamkulam (a region north of Deshinganadu) during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. This was not agreeable to the *muppu* of Chiravay, Marthanda Varma. Had this *dathetukkal* not take place, the Chiravay *muppu* would have become the dual-*muppu* of Chiravay and Deshinganadu. Perhaps this can be the reason for the squabble between Deshinganadu and Chiravay. Their disagreement engendered violent reactions from the Chiravay side against both Kayamkulam and also Deshinganadu. The latter combine also retaliated in the same manner. The structural equivalence between Deshinganadu and Threppappur/Chiravay got destabilized as and when the new unit namely Kayamkulam was introduced into their relationship. Here the inter-*Swaroopam* differentiatial relation got problematized before and after the *dathetukkal*. The Deshinganadu *Swaroopam* should have consulted the Chiravay *muppu* and received his consensus before the *dathetukkal* from Kayamkulam; thereby there took place a breach in the followed norm of negotiated-*dathetukkal*. The fact that Deshinganadu did not consider the potential disagreement of the Chiravay *muppu* itself shows that there had been an attempt to de-link Deshinganadu from the system of multiple-*muppu vaazhcha*.

Thus the precondition of this *dathetukkal* itself shows that there had been political-interstice between Deshinganadu and Chiravay/Threppappur. The non-negotiated *dathetukkal* furthered the already existed crevice. On account of this unusual *dathetukkal*, another un-experimented reactive-practice of recurring violent encounter between Chiravay and Deshinganadu begun. That is, the
process was not to correct the failures involved in that particular dathetukkal but to functionalise the failure of the non-negotiated dathetukkal with a view to achieve certain definite ends. Here dathetukkal was no more the result of structural dis-equilibrium, as in the above mentioned moment, but a legitimating reason for the use of violent reactions. The reason given for the war launched by Marthanda Varma was the non-negotiated dathetukkal ventured by Deshinganadu and the reason given to fight against Kayamkulam was that they allied with Deshinganadu. This shows how far-reaching the consequences that any instability in structural equivalence due to dathetukkal could effect. The lost possibility of the contemporary Chiravay muppu to succeed to the Deshinganadu muppu position due to dathetukkal itself become instrumental in the strategy that resulted in violence on the members of another Swaroopam and problematised the idea of co-existence of Swaroopam itself. That is dathetukkal was at the same time a site of strategic operations as well as its cause resulting in violence.

Such intentional practice of dathetukkal shifted the kuuru-mura order and this in turn determined, however partially, the possibility of a person to succeed to the multiple-muppu vaazhcha. It was already seen that the system of multiple-muppu vaazhcha was common to the co-existence of Swaroopams. This system of multiple-muppu vaazhcha presupposes "certain" kind of set customary inter-Swaroopam relations in dathetukkal. The inter-Swaroopam relations not only influenced the dathetukkal, but also the latter influenced the former. This circular relation determined which individual from the kuuru-mura should assume multiple-muppu vaazhcha and it also made the link between dathetukkal and multiple-muppu vaazhcha all the more complex and indeterminate. The determination of the successor was made sensitive to several factors exogenous to the
schemata of *kuuru-mura* with the aid of the system of *kuuru-mura* hierarchisation.

The nature and consequences of *dathetukkal* was sensitive to factors like, from where the adoptees were chosen, when it was conducted, who were the adopters, the contingency that necessitated *dathetukkal*, expectations about multiplicity in *muppu vaazhcha* etc. The manner in which these factors influenced the *dathetukkal* varied significantly from one instance to the other. The *dathetukkal* was quite “amorphous” in the sense that it functioned as a cause, means for unification/differentiation, as a result of alterations in the structural equivalence between *Swaroopams*, as a site for maneuvering inter-*Swaroopam* relationships etc. All these intensified its potential to be implicated in political and symbolic practices and custom-bound maneuvers in manifold ways. The foreground of *dathetukkal* ranged between need of a substitute for performing death rituals, installation or perpetuation of political alliance, to reconciliation of rivalry between *Swaroopams*. When *dathetukkal* becomes a cause or “explained reason” for acts resulting violence, then one can say that failures in observing the norm of negotiated- *dathetukkal* legitimated acts that caused violence and altered the possibility of co-existence of the *Swaroopams*. It should be noted that, not only the norms related to and practice of *dathetukkal* had political functions but its failure also had political functions. Failures in following the norms of *dathetukkal* were functionalised to legitimize the acts of *duraachaaram* (literally it this word means violation of customary rules), of waging war against another *Swaroopam*. To put it briefly, the “truth” involved in the practice of *dathetukkal* and the notion of transposing individuals had become an ideology in the inter-*Swaroopam* disputes.
The repeatable materiality of *dathetukkal* in wide spectrum of sites, strategies and contexts finally got reduced to a monolithic form by transforming *dathetukkal* into adoption. No more the *Swaroopams* could engage in *dathetukkal* since 1748. If any *Swaroopam* faced the problem of lack of successors, then it was to be resolved through *dathetukkal* into the Attingal family. It should be remembered that Attingal family was a matrilocal/matrifocal one. This gave added fixity to this localization of *dathetukkal*/adoption. The autonomy of this family was dislodged and made part of the Thiruvithamkur *raajyam* with such a reformulation of the practice of *dathetukkal*. Alteration of *dathetukkal* and perpetuation of the new rules of adoption were the mutually agreed preconditions between Attingal family and Marthanda Varma, the first Travancore *raaja*, before the alteration of the matrilocality/matrifocality of the Attingal family. The transformation of *dathetukkal* was part of the containment strategy applied on Attingal family by Marthanda Varma. The new condition of *dathetukkal* was that whenever it took place, the adoptee was not to be transposed into any of the *Swaroopam* or any of the *kuuru-mura* but only to the Attingal family. This localized *dathetukkal* to Attingal family.

Further only female members were to be adopted. No more male-*dathetukkal* could be practiced. This guaranteed purposive shifting of *kuuru-mura* impossible. In addition to this the family of origin of the potential adoptees was specified and reduced to Kolathunaadu alone. The range of families and places from where the adoptee could be chosen got reduced to one single family or *naadu* and no more inter-*Swaroopam* or intra-*Swaroopam* *dathetukkal* became impossible. Thus *dathetukkal* had become localized between the fixed family of the adoptee and a single family into which they were to be adopted.
There emerged a located center and gender specification in *dathetukkal*.

The condition of *dathetukkal* also got defined in terms of purpose; it could be conducted solely when lack of successor was anticipated. No more *dathetukkal* could be a means of treaty between the Swaroopams and a means to ameliorate conflicting relations between the Swaroopams. Only the sons of the adopted female members (adopted or not) to Attingal family were to become the *muppu* of the Swaroopam. By the time of such changes the Chiravay *muppu* was said to function as the *muppu* of the Temple and do what had been called *rajiya paripaalanam* as against *muppu vaazhcha*.

Concomitant with the above redefinition of *dathetukkal* as adoption, the number of *kuuru-mura* also got reduced to only one which became common to all the four Swaroopams under consideration—and other regions too—, and it became generally applicable to all the Swaroopams under consideration. The successors to the Travancore kingdom could only be from the Attingal family. As the Swaroopam entity ceased to exist only one *kuuru-mura* was sufficient. In other words, there was a *kuuru-mura* order from which the eldest would succeed as the *Sri. Padmanabha Daasa* and the king of Travancore, and other members would occupy junior positions. Once there was only one general *kuuru-mura* for the single unit of Travancore, as against several Swaroopams, there was no question of multiple-*muppu vaazhcha*. No more the primary unit conceived for succession was Swaroopam but Raajyam.

Travancore *raajyam* contained within it the Swaroopams, and inter-Swaroopam boundaries were hardly recognized in the *raajavaazhcha* (*vaazhcha* by the *raaja*). Since mid-eighteenth century onwards the four Swaroopams together was categorized as Venad/Travancore-*raajyam* till the formation of Kerala in 1956. All
this was a totally new political visibility and yet to become self-evident to the epoch. Therefore, no more there emerged the question of inter-Swaroopam dathetukkal that had been part of the muppu vaazhcha.53 The Swaroopam based dathetukkal had given way to dathetukkal in which the distinctions between the Swaroopam and its thaivazhi and between the Swaroopams were erased. The dathetukkal was a nodal aspect in the co-existence of Swaroopams and multiple-muppu vaazhcha. With the disappearance of the co-existence of Swaroopams and the primacy of Swaroopam itself by mid-eighteenth century, dathetukkal had also metamorphosed as an act that becomes perfectly translatable as adoption. In the beginning of this chapter we stated that dathetukkal cannot be translated as adoption, but this is true only for a period prior to mid-eighteenth century. Since the redefinition of dathetukkal in 1748, it became perfectly translatable as adoption and a matter of kinship.

1The Malayalam word for “adoption” is dathetukkal or dathevakka, Gundert.H, (1872).
2 Documents showing dathetukkal prior to 1620 are also available, but the available information is not sufficient to create continuous series.
8 Although in the following pages the Malayalam word dathetukkal is used, words like adopter and adoptee are retained for easier communication.
9 See; Document.No.VIII, Rajaraja Varma M, (1928).
11 Here a Swaroopam is treated as adoptee in the sense that when someone is adopted from one Swaroopam to the other then, what is given importance is not only the adopted person but the Swaroopam to which he/she belong. Thus we conceive of the adoptee as a Swaroopam.
12 Both Unnikerala Varma of Deshinganadu and Ravi Varma of Chiravay are the best examples for this.
13 The adoptee would be renamed and he would be placed in kinship relation with members of the kuuru-mura.
15 It should be remembered that here adoptee does not mean the person adopted alone but include all those who were involved in the transposing.
See, chapter II of this thesis.  

If kinship is more primary and all encompassing including the Swaroopam identity and still adoption takes place in intra-kinsip structure by partitioning it into two, then kinship structure itself should be redefined for the context.


In the next chapter the muppu-specific roles will be taken up for detailed discussion and therefore it is not taken up for discussion in this chapter.


Another premise for this statement is the differential relation that Unnikerala Varma, the multiple-muppu of Threppappur and Deshinganadu, maintained with Threppappur during the early seventeenth century.

For an example of such destabilization, see, Document H, Rajaraja Varma M, (1930).


Unnikerala Varma was adopted from Vellarappalli family and he became the muppu of both Deshinganadu and Threppappur. For details see, Rajaraja Varma M, (1930:120).


This shows beyond doubt that a new adoptee need not be placed at the tale end of the Kuuru-mura sequence, and also that the adoptee can be placed in a superior position than some of the adopters. One of the adopters involved in this dathetukkal was Ittunni, the new adoptee was placed as the uncle to him.

The difference between change and shift has already been specified.

This was the subject matter of the previous sections of this chapter.

As in the dathetukkal that took place in the year 1630-31.


By this time the Swaroopam organization had been metamorphosing into a kingdom and muppu vaazhcha was giving way for vaazhcha of the raja or king. But it should be pointed out that there was a difference between raja bharanam and raja vaazhcha. In this context recall the distinction, that we have made in the second chapter, between bharanam and vaazhcha.


Then onwards the territory of Travancore was between south of Cochin.

For details see, M.Doc. CC and M.Doc CCI, Velu Pillai.T.K, (1940:appendix). There was an adoptee from Kolathunadu named Kerala Varma, who was the ilamkuur to the ruling king of Travancore in the year 1799. With his demise in the year 1799 there was no body other than this Kerala Varma to succeed, but his succession was challenged and he was send back to Kolathunadu. In fact, the problem of indecisiveness about the legitimate successors had begun to surface by the early eighteenth century itself. The legitimacy or unique determinability of kuuru-mura or this
schemata itself was getting questioned over and again. For example, see, Document. F and Document. E in Rajaraja Varma.M, (1930).