This thesis is an attempt to study the history of colonial urbanization in Calicut using the concepts of urbanism and spatialisation. The discussion about the city of Calicut begins with the early phase of its history. When we place the name “Kozhikode” under the purview of the science of Onomastics, it throws light on geography, topography and physical conditions of the space, that started figuring in the political and economic history of Kerala only with the advent of the powerful ruling house of Zamorins. In the past, urban space was often intentionally charged with meaning by status and power groups for the purpose of facilitating and perpetuating their control and hegemony over others. The identity of this particular space which emerged as a political capital was determined by a continuous discourse that took place between the state, commerce, religion, institutions, and language, caste and belief systems acclimatizing to the changing historical episodes. The result was the emergence of a medieval urban centre where the socio-political and economic system functioned in the form of an elaborately worked up connection, of what Nigel Thrift conceptualizes as the ‘unblocking space’. The continuous warfare with various indigenous and foreign forces put the city always in strain affecting its resource mobilization. The Mysorean occupation and the weakened state of affairs prompted the commercial groups, who were in want of any patronage for the successful operation of their trade, leave Calicut. This subsequently put down the acceleration of trade activities in the port city and gradually it was switched over to a silent mode in the economic and commercial history of the then Kerala.

But it was only a siesta- another historical episode was opened with the new framework of colonialism and the spatial patterns of the city witnessed new dimensions. The unique features of the colonial port city such as the restriction of the rights of the colonized and the concentration of social, economic and political power on the hands of the non indigenous minority, the superiority of this minority over the colonized in terms of military, technological and economic resources, and the racial, cultural and religious differences between the colonizers and the colonized can be attributed to Calicut to a large extent in the earlier part of its colonization\(^3\). Though the linking of the numerous small pockets of colonial influence to the main economic centre by a network of transport and communication, the authorities divided the city into several blocks and these pathways and roads carried off the colonial ideologies to the distant areas. The homogenous character of each settlements based on the functional classification in the Central Business District, that is, the commercial zone of the Calicut city, according to Burgess model of urban structure\(^4\), was totally transformed into a heterogeneous character where the functional and other classifications were mixed up to form a single zone but the colonial designs always tried to maintain the homogeneous character of a colonial urban space with their pre fabricated models. Though the main administrative zone, the one among the twin nuclei, was concentrated in the centre of the city, the whole town had different power zones surrounding the city. For instance, the elevated portions of West Hill- East Hill area in the northern side of the city served as Cantonment area with various military offices and barracks and accommodated the bungalow of the then Malabar Collectors. Towards its


west, the beach side was restricted to the public since the space was reserved by the English army for rifle shooting and sea-bathing. The District Medical Officer’s Bungalow at Florican hill and the residence of District Judge, situated at the present day Civil Station compound-Both situated on the uphill represented panoptic notion of the power dispensation. The centre of Municipal administration stood in the corner of the Central Business District, near the Portuguese Church and the French Loge. Old Court Complex was situated in the present Taj Road. The main administrative zone in the central part of the city accommodated Huzur Cutchery and the Office of the Malabar Police Superintendent along with a number of colonial institutions. It is an interesting fact that we can’t trace out a particular space to be assigned as European town and a particularly marginalized indigenous space, i.e., the binaries of black town and white town inside the then Calicut city. Rather it was conglomeration of various spaces where the colonial authorities and the native subjects maintained the dominance-dependence relationship. Officially, the physical and spatial policies were designed to accomplish public welfare goals, such as ensuring sound architectural standards and promoting the efficiency and effectiveness of the built environment; a more critical analysis reveals that the policies constituted part of a meticulous and multifarious agenda on the part of the colonial masters to harness and reinforce their grip on the city. In this process, the city of Calicut not only became a capital city where all machineries of administration was carried on, but also accommodated (a) a Cantonment in the northern part of the city; (b) served as an interfluvial town by the construction of Connolly canal connecting the Kallayi and Korapuzha rivers thereby facilitating an unbroken water channel linking other production and distribution centres; (c) a nodal point connecting Wayanad, Mysore and Bangalore
and also (d) acted as the headquarters of many commercial firms along with a number of both European and native industrial establishments. On one side, the electrification and the illumination provided the happiness of light, lively hours and recreation, the other side it increased the working hours of labour in industrial establishments and a wage earning working class and their unions began to emerge in the society. Naturally, it resulted in an increased population, dense plots with dwellings and the crowded streets. The spatial diffusion of the rail, road and other means of communication greatly altered the relative distances between places. It made possible the spatial interactions and the flow of goods, people and information between places and in particular, it also carried the anti colonial ideologies of the leaders of the freedom movement. The habit of savings among the people, especially the indigenous bureaucrats and high wage earning group, contributed to the growth and development of various banking institutions.

Here the very subject matter of the thesis comes under the Foucault’s notion of “governmentality”, by which he argues that the state works through seemingly benevolent institutions in order to gain control of a population that self-disciplines itself. The meaning of governmentality as governing of mentalities---the shaping of the minds of a population through seemingly transparent institutions such as schools, hospitals, prisons, etc. were widely used by the colonial agencies for the dissemination of power, ultimately influenced the social space of Calicut where the governmental technologies of a colonial state such as “methods of examination and evaluation; techniques of notation, numeration, and calculation; accounting procedures; routines for the timing and spacing of activities in specific locations; presentational forms such as tables and graphs; formulas for the organization of work; standardized tactics for the training and implantation of habits;
pedagogic, therapeutic, and punitive techniques of reformulation and cure; architectural forms in which interventions take place (i.e. classrooms and prisons); and professional vocabularies” begun to operate in numerous ways. Consequently the indigenous space of the city very soon got adapted to a new ‘way of living’ of what it may call the “colonial urbanity”. But the coercive nature of governance upon this urban society produced rather negative impact as they not only began to challenge and question the colonial policies but also started demanding for more urban amenities and self governance.

Physically, the colonial city of Calicut was the continuation of the pre colonial urban centre where the remnants of the past urban features got sharpened and renewed in accordance with the changing spatial practices. The spatial process modified the spatial structures and spatial behaviour, thus making the way of life in the Calicut city more urbane. Hence there is continuity in the urban growth of Calicut, where the indigenous populations were very often adapted to the changing situations. The colonial techniques of social engineering was successfully accomplished with the works of missionary community of Basel Mission, but in spite of those missionary activities, the city’s public action agendas contained considerable anti colonial feelings especially with the First World War and gradually it continued to stage the city with many episodes of freedom movement simultaneously with the other centres of anti imperialist struggles. Though the urban style of life continued in par with the physical and economic changes, the ideologies and the way of thinking changed according to the political and social changes that were taking place in the other parts of India during the colonial period. Thus Calicut also

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became a contested space where the discourses on real-and-imagined place often tried to create a negotiable space.

The civic contestations that were registered in the city with the emergence of a new middle class with more radical thinking and ideologies resulted in a tussle with the pro colonial indigenous aristocrats and with the upper middle class. Gradually, the social and the cultural space of the city showed considerable anti-colonial movements. It was the upshot of the emergence of spaces like public halls, public libraries and local clubs where the concept of ‘public sphere’ of Habermas got registered in the city in its rudimentary form and then assumed its strength with the activities of national movement that was in great momentum during that period. When we take Michel de Certeau’s concept of ‘Walking in the city’, Calicut appeared as an open and expansive panorama, ruled by the ideas of the colonizer. But the newly emerged middle class of the indigenous space always criticized them for the fact that they did not see the real urban life in the city and blamed their depiction of the land as counterfeit and phantasmagoric.

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6 Steven Rendall (ed.), *Michael de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life*, (London, 1984). It begins with looking down on the city of New York from the top of the World Trade Centre, and enjoying the pleasures of seeing the city laid out below. He says ‘to be lifted to the summit of the World Trade Centre is to be lifted out of the city’s grasp’. Through this one gets a voyeuristic pleasure by being able to watch the city from a distance. But to understand the everyday life, one must finally fall back into the dark space where crowds move back and forth. So De Certeau prefers, as his title suggests, walking in the city instead of viewing it. He argues that walking in the city has "its own rhetoric" and with people’s limited scope as the move about and write their own course of subjective use of the urban space "the network of these moving, intersecting writings compose and manifold story that has neither author nor spectator". For De Certeau, the pedestrians of a city create it through their walking about, as an objective mass made of subjects which escape any planned or regulated scheme of the city. The pedestrian, while walking in the city, has his own style, which is a sort of language which speaks about the city and takes part in creating its meaning. In walking in the city, the pedestrian gives new meanings to places and streets which are not the same as those originally assigned to them. Pedestrians, for De Certeau, create the meaning of the urban space by applying their imagination on it through the manner in which they move.
The efficacy of the urban landscape as a medium for conveying British ideology did not come about naturally. Rather, it was achieved through concentrated practical and intellectual efforts to persuade, instruct and enforce upon people a new idea about what landscapes and monuments could do and mean in the city. If Landscape is a ‘way of seeing’, this modified way of seeing by the colonizers of Calicut can be identified as imprints on human geography of Calicut.

Finally, analyzing those changes took place on the indigenous space of the city, it can be argued that Calicut’s colonial urban forms were the result of local adaptations to western ideals and were neither purely “Indian” nor purely “Western” creations. Instead, the products of colonial urban restructuring evinced “the irregular, uneven, and the unexpected” through the material juxtapositions of older and newer, local and foreign, elements. Thus the consequence of this negotiation was the production of an indigenous urban space or what can be addressed as “hybrid modernity” to certain extent. In short, the colonial urban space of Calicut was not simply a physical entity; it was also a relational identity, created by interactions across boundaries of tradition and modernity, between the colonized and the colonizer.

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about the city "linking acts and footsteps, opening meanings and directions, these words operate in the name of an emptying-out and wearing a way of their primary role. They become liberated spaces that can be occupied”.
