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GLOSSARY

[Terms included in this glossary follow the Malayalam usage, except when Tamil or Sanskrit terms require their original form]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>acāra</td>
<td>ritual system, or prescribed manner of performing a ritual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amma</td>
<td>mother; a reverential term that is used for any person of the female sex,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>for mother goddesses, for mother ocean, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anubhava</td>
<td>experience, experiential knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arayan</td>
<td>a Hindu fishing caste (also called Nułayan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āṣṭa viṣam</td>
<td>eight poisonous elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>āṣṭadikpālakas</td>
<td>regents of the eight cardinal points according to Indian religious tradition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asurās</td>
<td>demonic creatures in Hindu mythologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ayurveda</td>
<td>an Indian system of medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhadrakāli</td>
<td>one of the village goddesses linked to Śakti wordship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhagavathy</td>
<td>local name for Kāli or Bhadrakāli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhūvam</td>
<td>expression of characteristic emotional state or sentiment by bodily gestures or by words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bija mantram</td>
<td>seed syllable of a mantra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cakram</td>
<td>a wheel, or a circle; the circles of energy centres of the body in Tantrism; another term for yantram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ceythan</td>
<td>satan, evil spirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chākara</td>
<td>phenomenon of mud banks that gets formed along the coastal sea of Kerala during Monsoon season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chavittundayakam</td>
<td>a Christian form of dance drama popular in the coastal regions of central Kerala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
chelāji  expert fisherman; crew leader at a fishing operation
chēluparachil  ritual evaluation of a fishing operation by the crew members
chemmeen  shrimps; [also name of a popular novel in Malayalam]
Chetti  a Hindu subcaste
chevunta  customary share of fish due to members of nāvier group; also called nāviapadi
chira kākkal  period of mourning at the death of a family member
Chōnavan  a Muslim, as referred to by Mukkuvar
Cintāthira Māta  Our Lady of Sea Voyage; corrupt form of Sindhu-Yatra-Māta
compiria sabha  a confraternity or pious association of lay persons in a Catholic parish
dēvi, dēvatā  a goddess, a female deity; divine feminine
Dhivara  generic term, meaning fisherman, used for all Hindu fishing castes
dikku, diṣa  direction; used for the four cardinal directions and the four secondary directions
eilamidal  collective singing of traditional occupational songs during fishing operations, especially for kampavala (also called āmpayidal elsewhere)
eilass  amulet used in mantravādam; metal casket enclosing mantram written on a metal foil or paper, worn by person on the body for good fortune or to ward off evil (also called thakidu)
ekkila adikal  ritual beating of fishing net with twigs of erikklu, to ward off evil
Ishavar  a traditional untouchable caste (also called thiyar)
gānamēla  concert
gopuram  tower, church tower
grāmam  village
gūdōpadravam  harm or trouble by evil spirits
japam  repetitive chanting of prayers or mantras
jāti  
a class, genus, or species, but used generally to refer to a caste or subcaste of people; an endogamous caste group

Jāti Talaiyan  
traditional caste head-man of the Paravas of the Coromandel coast of Tamil Nadu

kachān  
collection net used by nāvier to collect chevunta

kadal  
sea, ocean; also used for the breakers

Kadalamma  
mother ocean; ocean deity

kadālāna  
sea elephant; local name for whale shark; also called euphemistically vāliya meen (big fish), chellapiḷḷa (dear little one), etc.

kadalpanni  
sea pig; local name for dolphin

kadalpēdi  
sea-fright

kadappuru  
sea shore

Kājī  
one of the female deities usually associated with Śakti worship

kaṇakkapiḷḷa  
catechist, church office created by Francis Xavier

kaṇiyam  
the skill of computing astronomical configurations in a fishing context [gaṇitham]

kaṇji nercha  
ritual offering of rice porridge

kaṇṇupedal  
evil eye (also referred to as kampēru nokkal)

kaṇa, kaṇunīru  
colouration on the surface of the sea, caused by the presence of plankton and other micro-organisms

kara, karapuram  
the land mass, or the shore

kāṭtu  
wind

kaṭṭumaram  
raft made of four or five logs of soft wood, usually of Albizzia stipulata, yoked together with ropes; traditional fishing craft in Southern Kerala and Tamilnadu

kavaru  
phenomenon of glow in the sea water, visible in the dark
kenkadeviamma: reverential term used for mother ocean (a corrupt form of "Gangā-devi-amma = mother goddess of the sea")

keṭṭu: binding of directions in mantravādam; dikbandhanam

keṭṭu: ridge in the sea, under water, usually a good fishing ground

kōvil: temple, sacred shrine or church

kudumbakkār: people belonging to the elite families, traditionally owners of craft and gear

kudumbam: family, lineage

kurisu ṛṇandu: crab variety having a cross on its back

kūru: tax levied by the Church on the catch of fish; kuthaka

kuṭṭakkāri: women fish traders, distinguished by their baskets or kuṭṭa

kuthaka: tax levied by the Church on the catch of fish (also called maisya kuthaka, kūru, sales tax, mahima, etc.)

kuzhi [Mathal: Christian blessing of the grave on All Souls Day

lakh: one hundred thousand (100,000)

lāṭa guru: wandering medicine man

Mahārāja: Great king

makkaṭ: children; people

makkathāyam: system of inheritance through the male line

manchal: a kind of hammock slung on a pole and carried by four men, two at each end

mantram: sacred formula or mystical verse addressed to a deity in religious ritual; a charm, spell or incantation

mantravādam: the science of magic spells; the practice of mantric rituals

mantravādi: practitioner of mantravadam; an exorcist

māppila: a Muslims community in Kerala
marakkān  Muslim fisherman
marujāti  people of other religions; used by Mukkuvar to refer to Hindus
marumakkathāyam  system of inheritance through the female line
Māta  mother, mother goddess; used for Virgin Mary in the Christian context
meen  fish; also used for stars and planets
melinchi  one appointed to ring the bell in church (from Portuguese meirinha = warden or law officer)
mēthan  Muslim trader
modom  overseer of ecclesiastical matters
mūdavī nercha  ritual dressing up of a statue, especially of Virgin Mary
muṇiyēttu  a ritual art form associated with temples
muni  a sage, saint or ascetic; a category of spirits appearing with terrifying looks
muṇanadathal  ritual purification of a widow after the period of mourning
mūsk  traditional solo singer in churches
muṭṭānkiyidal  ritual veiling of a woman at the death of her husband
nanmai  fruit of mantravādam
nāvichi  nāvier woman
nāvier  the barber group in a fishing village, dependent on the kudumbakkār
neithal tiṇai  the coastal tract, one of the five geographical and cultural zones mentioned in the Sangam poetry
nercha  ritual offering to a deity
nercha pirivu  voluntary contribution by fishermen to the church as a share of their catch
nilāvu  moonlight
Nuḷayan  a Hindu fishing caste (also called Arayan)
patroado patronage; a system of benefice granted by the Holy See to Portugal and Spain, in return for their role in the propagation of faith in new territories during the colonial period

pālameen queen fish

pānampفاقem the currency of ancient Kerala, either of gold or of silver

Paralūka Māta Our Lady of the Assumption

parāṭhi petition, complaint

Paravar a fishing caste mainly engaged in pearl fishing in the Coromandel; (also known as parathavar, Bharathar, etc.)

paricapụṭukalī a type of martial art performed by Christians in Kerala

pāru reef under the sea that serves as breeding ground and shelter for fish

peiy demonic spirits; spirit of the dead that is believed to roam around the earth and disturb the living

peiykunfthal cuttlefish

pirusenti leader of a compiria sabha

piśāśu the devil, demon, evil spirit

prasādam gift or blessing from a deity; propitiatory offering to a deity which is later distributed among the devotees

pūchasāpam cat-curse

pūjā ritual ceremony for the worship of a deity

pūjāvidhi ritual prescription for pūjā or mantrādam

pulikkiyar the worker group in fishing, usually dependent on the kudumbakkār

pūrakkalī a ritual art form associated with temples

pradhani headman of the village; a member of the ruling elite

rasa the state of relish or satisfaction resulting from a particular bhāva

rasa theory theory in Indian aesthetics that systematizes rasas and bhāvas
rudrabhāvam: terrific aspect of a person
sabha: an assembly, council or association; devotional association in a Catholic parish (pl. sabhakaṭ)
Śakti: divine power or energy; female deity; the divine feminine
Śaktism: a religious tradition that emphasizes the worship of Śakti
Sāmuthiri: royal title of the erstwhile ruler of Kozhikode (Zamorin, as used in colonial documents)
sangam: an association, a union
Sangam poetry: collection of the literary works of poets belonging to the ancient Tamil Academy or Sangam that existed between 500 BCE and 200 CE
śāntabhāvam: benign aspect of a person
Sāntiyāgappar: Santiago, or St. James the great
śāpam: curse, ill omen
sapram: a portable car or float for taking idols or images in procession at festivals
sapta mātrkaṭ: the group of mother goddesses, seven in number
śatrusamhāram: destruction of one's enemy
Śānaraśam: a traditional untouchable caste
Śiva: a proto-Indian god, later assimilated into the Vedic pantheon and integrated with Rudra-Śiva, finally becoming one of the Trimurthi
Tamiḻakam: name of the ancient Dravidian country, comprising present-day Tamilnadu and Kerala, and also part of Karnataka.
Tantrism: the teaching of the Tantras, the religious texts dealing with the esoteric practices of some Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina sects. In the present context it refers mainly to Śākta Tantras which emphasize Śakti as the female personification of the creative energy of the divine.
tapam irippu: practice of austerity or asceticism for a specified period of time
thakidu: amulet used in mantraṇādām (also called eilas)
tāli  wedding necklace worn by women as symbol of marital status

tāliyāral  breaking of the tāli of a widow at the end of the period of mourning

thattān  goldsmith

thattātheru  street where thattāns (goldsmiths) live

shoppāsi  interpreter, corrupt form of dvibhāsi

thuṟa  fishing village

tiṟai  physical landscape or geographical zone referred to in the Sangam literature, five in number

triśūl  trident; a Hindu religious symbol

ubadesiār  sacristan

udampadi  system of contract labour in traditional fishing

uṭkaḍal  the deep waters, the outer sea (also puramkadal)

Ūramma  protective mother goddess of a village

ūru  village

ūrukūṭam  traditional village assembly of a fishing village

ūruvilakku  system of community sanction prevalent in fishing villages

uisavam  religious festival; a festive occasion

vaidyan  practitioner of Indian system of medicine like ayurveda or siddha

Vairavan  a Dravidian deity, identified as a fierce form of Śiva, propitiated in mātric rituals (also called Bhairavan)

Vātan  a Hindu fishing caste

valarthumakkal  foster children; dependent group of people

valivu  currents in the sea (also called ozhukku)

vallam  canoe, traditionally made of wooden planks, and now increasingly being made of plywood or fibreglass

varathan  a settler from another village
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<tr>
<th>term</th>
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<td><strong>vāraṇa system</strong></td>
<td>traditional Indian system of caste hierarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>vāthiari</strong></td>
<td>teacher; office created by Francis Xavier to teach new converts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>vedi nercha</strong></td>
<td>ritual firing of gun shots in temples by devotees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>vēl</strong></td>
<td>spear or lance; weapon of Murugan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vēlan</strong></td>
<td><em>Murugan</em>, one who bears the <em>vēl</em> (spear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>veṭṭi</strong></td>
<td>silver; generic name used for stars and planets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>vilisāpam</strong></td>
<td>(also <em>nāveṭu</em>) curse of calling; curse of the tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>yantram</strong></td>
<td>diagram of geometrical patterns used as mystical symbol in rituals (also called <em>cakram</em>)</td>
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