Chapter VII

Temples and Royalty

The origin and development of temples in Kerala during the early medieval period are attributed to the growth of Brahman settlements, agrarian localities and the Tamil bhakti movement.\(^1\) It is also said that the base of the bhakti movement in south India was the temple.\(^2\) The number and power of the temples increased in Kerala during the early medieval period. The temples developed into virtual states which had their own territorial jurisdiction in what is known as sanketam.\(^3\) The sanketam came to its own in the period after the end of the Perumal era. This Chapter studies the important temples in the kingdom of Kōlīkkōtu which were related to the Zamorin, locality chiefs and local magnates. The patterns of patronage and reciprocation in this complex network of relationship by which both the parties stood to gain is hoped to bring out.

The interdependence of the temples on the one side and the king, locality chiefs and local magnates on the other in medieval Kerala is an interesting aspect. The Zamorin frequently visited the temples not merely for worship. In addition to the spiritual aspect, the royal procession of the Zamorin to the temples was of social, economic, ideological and political importance. There are many accounts of the Zamorin’s visit to temples as a “guest” (virinnamittu). In one instance, the Zamorin proceeded to Pariyarattu (Pariharapuram) temple on Tulām 19, KE 916.


(October 20, AD 1740). He received 1000 *panams* from the *dēvasvam* as *virinnamītāt tu paṇam*. All persons of Pariyārattu *Janam* were to have met the Zamorin on that occasion. After receiving the amount of money the Zamorin gave a *kuriya* royal letter to that effect to the *Janam* and Palāncēri Nampūtiri, who was the *Samudāya Maniṣam*.4 The Zamorin collected *virinnamītāt tu paṇam* from the locality chiefs and local magnates during his royal processions.5 It implies that the temple was also treated in a way similar to that of the locality chief or local magnate as a source of revenue. We have already noted that the functionaries of temples acted also as royal functionaries.6 The temple functionaries gave presents to the Zamorin when he visited Calicut in KE 854 (AD 1679) which that will be seen later in this Chapter. There are many instances of the involvement of royal functionaries in the affairs of the temples as well. Thus the reciprocity of the temples and the royalty is evident.

The Zamorin assigned whole *cērikkals* (royal estates) to various royal temples for the daily rituals as well as festivities, for instance, to the deity of Ampiḷjikkunnattu. In KE 842 Minam (February 27-March 28, AD 1667), land from Kāḷaṭi *dēṣam* was assigned for *pūja* expenses of that temple by the *Talaccennavar* in addition to the lands assigned by the Zamorin.7 Canter Visscher, the Dutch missionary of 18th century, writes that “Estates are invariably attached to the pagodas from which they derive considerable revenues and their wealth is increased by the offerings and alms of the faithful”.8 In KE 700 (AD 1525) a part of the revenue from Kāḷaṭi *etavaka cērikkal* was assigned for various temple

6 See above, Chapter IV.
expenses like garlands and lamps at Álāmkoṭṭu Bhagavati Kāvu, Aṣṭami yāvelī (in the month of Kumbham) and pūja at Trikkanṭiyūr temple, pūjas and vilaku (lighting the lamp) at Kurumpilāvil Antimākālan temple, Vāvu patakāram (in the month of Makaram) at Trikkanāpuram, Tiruvātira yāvelī at Tripānṭhōṭu, Aṣṭamirōhīṇī pūja and other pūjas at Tirunāvāya temple, pūja and ūttu at Ceriya Tirunāvāya. A reference is found in the Granthavari to the amount that has to be given to the Ayyappan temple at Camravattam from Pallāppantal Erāvanār Trittallūr cērikkal in KE 700. The kings and members of his family offered an amount of money to the deity whenever they visited temples. They also made offerings to the deities in absentia during festive occasions in the temples as well as special days like the birthday of the king and other princes. Offerings were made in the form of money or paddy from the cērikkals to various temples. For instance, to the deity of Tripānṭhōṭu for Śāṅkabhīṣekam, deity of Tirunāvāya for vilaku, Kurumpa Bhagavati for garlands, deity of Tiruvēgappūra for Śīvarātri vilaku and pūja, to the deity of Karimpūḷa for Tirumilāvilaku, Bhagavati pūja at Panamamkuricci and Marutayūr. The royal temples, the temples of locality chiefs and local magnates and the Brahmanical temples had their own sources of revenue but on special occasions like renovation etc. they sought the economic support of the Zamorin. At the same time, for the Zamorin the royal temples were a source of revenue. Thus their interdependence in economic terms is found in the kingdom of Kōlikkōṭu.

---

9 Ceriya Tirunāvāya is on the southern bank of Pēṟār, standing opposite to Tirunāvāya Viṣṇu temple. KG, Vol. 21, copy of the same document in Vol. 29.

10 Ibid., Vol. 21.

11 Ibid., Vol. 41.
It is said that during AD 1750s the Eralppatu renovated the Perumanam (Peruvanam) temple.\textsuperscript{12} Cakdrasandesa refers to the Zamorin as the builder of the famous Perumanam temple. It is said that he became famous by this pious action, in the same way as Kuru who built the Kurukṣētra.\textsuperscript{13} The Brahmans of Panniyūr approached the Zamorin for economic and other help for the renovation of Varāhamūrtti temple at Panniyūr in KE 898 (AD 1723). The Zamorin supported the temple renovation by money and materials. The contemporary account of a Nampūtiri in the Veḷḷa family gives details of it.\textsuperscript{14} This, in fact, was of great importance for the Zamorin. We derive from the account a picture of the predominance of the King in ritual affairs. For the renovation of the Panniyūr temple, revenue was collected from different persons (\textit{vari eluti}) in addition to the royal help. The temple priests of various temples received the Zamorin in most of his temple visits. The observation of Nicholas B. Dirks, made in the context of Pudukkottai, that “the king is in an a priori sense first devotee and first to be honoured in any state temple”,\textsuperscript{15} is apt in the case of the Zamorin.

Another point to be noted is that a conquest of the territory not necessarily changed the control of a temple in that area. But the Zamorin was keen to have control over the temple. \textit{Vaṭakkumnāthan Dēvasvam Granthavari} gives us a clue in this regard. Triśūr Vaṭakkumnāthan temple was under the Rāja of Cochin. When the Zamorin captured this area he was keen to control the temple affairs. He won a few Brahmans of Triśūr Grāmam to his side and with their consent captured the \textit{Sankētam} by force on Dhanu 15, KE 933 (December 26, AD 1757). After getting reinforcement Cochin tried to get the control of the \textit{Sankētam} and

\textsuperscript{12} K.P. Padmanabha Menon, \textit{Koccirājyaścaritram}, p. 475.
\textsuperscript{14} N.M. Nampoothiry, Ed., \textit{Veḷḷayute Caritram}, pp. 33-38; see also above, Chapter VI.
\textsuperscript{15} Nicholas B. Dirks, \textit{The Hollow Crown}, p. 288.
had a fight inside the Sankētam area. But Cochin failed to the men of Kōljikkōtu. It is also to be noted that since there was battle (vetiyum patayum) in the temple Sankētam, Cochin Rāja presented an elephant to the temple as prāyaścitta (atonement). But the Zamorin refused to do so. And when a few Brahmans resorted to Paṭṭini (fasting as a form of protest) the Zamorin prevented them from doing so by using force.16

According to the Peruvanam temple Granthavari the Zamorin had the position of Akakkōyma at the Peruvanam (Perumanam) temple. The Zamorin conquered the area in KE 931 (AD 1756) and held it up to KE 938 (AD 1763). The three cērikkals assigned for the pūja were supervised by the Kōvil Nampi appointed by the Zamorin.17 The above incidents are examples of the change in temple authority due to the change of political masters. But it is clear that the capture of an area not necessarily changed the temple authority. A letter of the Cochin Rāja to the Dutch Governor General at Batavia in KE 921 (AD 1746) says that Triprayār temple belonged to them. The royal family of Cochin managed the temple affairs even when the House of Netiṭiyirippu conquered the area. It shows that after the conquest of the area also, in the case of the temple, status quo was maintained. The letter continues that in recent times it ceased to be their temple, due to the work of the temple authorities. Cochin Rāja says that the management of the above temple gave no income but only incurred expenses. Even then that temple could not be given up since it was closely related to his ancestors.18 In the above instance even after the capture of the area Cochin Rāja continued to control the temple matters. But gradually the Zamorin gained full authority over the

16 Padmanabha Menon, Kocciirājacaritram, pp. 475-76.


18 V.K.R. Menon, Ed., Letters from Cochin Rajas to Batavia, Letter IV, p. 11. This is a typical case where the kings gained social capital at the expenses of financial resources.
temple. The Zamorin won the local magnates of Cochin Rāja to his side and through them the control of the temple as indicated in the letter of the Cochin Rāja to the Dutch Governor General at Batavia in AD 1746.\textsuperscript{19} The Zamorin gained the confidence of the temple authorities gradually and won them over to his side.

What happened after the Zamorin gained control over Triśśūr Vatākkumnāthan temple is recorded in the Devasvam Granthavari. The Zamorin resolved upon installing Pātāykkara Nampūtiri as Yoγīyaṭīrī. Cochin Rāja protested against this and issued writs to various chiefs, Brahmans and others concerned prohibiting them from taking part in the ceremony. In spite of these vehement protests, the Zamorin had his nominee installed as Yoγīyaṭīrī in KE 936 (AD 1761). After two years, Cochin Rāja drove out the Zamorin from the area with the assistance of the kingdom of Travancore. Cochin Rāja consulted with the (two) Tirumumpans of Mathams and Yoγam to cancel the appointment of Pātāykkara Nampūtiri. On Makaram 9, KE 938 (January 18, AD 1763) Pātāykkara Nampūtiri was removed from the post of Yoγīyaṭīrī and was expelled from the kingdom of Cochin. The property and privileges of the Brahmans of Triśśūr Grāmam, who supported the Zamorin was forfeited and handed over to the dēvasvam.\textsuperscript{20}

There were a large number of temples in the kingdom of Kōljikkōṭu. A few of the more important temples are sought to study here individually. For the sake of convenience we can classify the temples in the kingdom of Kōljikkōṭu as 1) the temples under or patronised by the royalty, that is, the “royal temples”, 2) the temples within the kingdom of Kōljikkōṭu patronised by the locality chiefs or local

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{20} Padmanabha Menon, Koccirājyaṭartram, p. 487; see also, Idem, History of Kerala, Vol. IV, p. 86.
magnates and 3) Brahmanical temples, the affairs of which were influenced by the Zamorin or the locality chiefs or local magnates.

Royal temples

The Zamorin had twelve \textit{paradēvatas} (family deities). They were Tiruvaḷayanāṭtamma, Vēṭṭakkarumakan, Vātilkāppār, Cammarkoṭṭattu (Camravaṭṭattu) Ayyappan, Kūṟumpilāvil Antimahākāḷan, Trikkōvil Kunnattu Ayyappan, Tiruvēgappāra Iraṇṇiyuṭṭayān, Malamēlkāvil Ayyappan, Mēḷūrtīlalaiyān, Pāṃpukāṭṭu kāvil Ayyappan, Pokkārattu Ayyappan and Iṭakkalippurattu Ayyappan.\textsuperscript{21} An important feature that is found in the case of the family deities of the Zamorin is the domination of “minor” and “folk” deities. No “major” deity of the so-called Hindu pantheon is found in the list. Six Ayyappans of different temples are found in the list, i.e., Ayyappan constitutes half of the family deities. Vēṭṭakkarumakan\textsuperscript{22} is also considered to be a folk variant of Ayyappan. The more or less complete absence of the dominant Brahmanical deities is intriguing when we place it against the royal temples of major deities found in the kingdom.

At the same time, there were a large number of such temples in the kingdom, \textit{āgamaic} in character, which can be described as “royal temples”. Most of the prominent temples in the kingdom of Koḷiḷkoṭu belonged to this category. They can be classified further as: a) the temples of ancient origin which were later appropriated by the Zamorin and b) the temples of contemporary origin which developed into prominence due to the patronage of the Zamorin. The Tirunāvāya

\textsuperscript{21} KG, Vol. unnumbered (B). It is interesting that none of them is an \textit{āgamaic} deity of the Purānic Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava description.

\textsuperscript{22} The name Vēṭṭakkarumakan is uniformly found in the documents of the early period in the Granthavari. The present form is Vēṭṭakkorumakan, which seems to be a result of overcorrection by the people.
temple belongs to the former category. There are claims about Kurumpa Bhagavati temple; but it did not enjoy a status comparable to that of Tirunāvāya.

Temple of Tirunāvāya

The Viṣṇu temple of Tirunāvāya is situated on the northern bank of Pērār. It was of ancient origin and one of the 108 Tirupatis of Āḻvārs, the Vaiṣṇava saints, praised in their works. Of the Vaiṣṇava saints, Tirumangai Āḻvār and Nammāḻvār have sung the praise of this temple. In fact Tirunāvāya was part of the pilgrimage circuit of Vaiṣṇava devotees and, therefore, had gained considerable prestige even in the age of the Perumāls. Various literary works speak about this temple. Kōkasandesāṃ gives a laudatory account of the temple. Bhramarasandēśa has a few ślokas in praise of the deity of Tirunāvāya. Kōkilasandēśa and Mātridatta’s Kāmasandēśa also refer to the temple.

During the Perumāḷ period itself it was an important temple. It was on the banks of Pērār at Tirunāvāya Māmākam and Taippūyam were celebrated, both once in twelve years. This immense capital could be utilized by the ruler who had control over the region. According to Kēralōtpatti, Cēramān Perumāḷ partitioned Kerala and Tirunāvāya was given to the Valluvakkōṇātiri. The Zamorin conquered Tirunāvāya from Valluvakkōṇātiri and gained the right to preside over

---

24 Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, Ed., Kōkasandesām, I: 24-25, pp. 41-42.
28 See below, Chapter IX.
Māmākam. Tirunāvāya temple acquired much importance in this political fight. The control of this ancient temple gave the Zamorin the much-sought legitimacy. It became a bone of contention between the Zamorin and the Vāḷḷuvakkōṅātiri for centuries. Later it acquired economic, ideological and political importance. During the Taippūyam of KE 809 (AD 1634) the House of Āṟañṉōṭtu (Vāḷḷuvakkōṅātiri family) damaged “the lamp of the temple and the sources of temple revenue” (vilakkum cilavum). The Zamorin swore not to enter the temple until the damage was repaired.31

On Dhanu 26, KE 853 (December 25, AD 1678) the Zamorin gave a royal letter to Tinayāncēri Ilayatu, granting revenue sources from Perumuṇṭamukku cērikkal, Parappūr dēśam and Kūṭalūr for performing āṭṭu at Tirunāvāya Vatākkēkkara. It was in addition to the revenue sources already granted for the āṭṭu from Kaṭavacceri cērikkal, Narippāṟampā and Cunaṅnāṭu cērikkal. It was instructed that Tinayāncēri Ilayatu had to bear the expense of the āṭṭu from the revenue of the cērikkal, and duly submit the account of the income and expenditure to the royal treasury.32 We have reference to various dānas in the temple of Tirunāvāya.33

In fact, the temple of Tirunāvāya was so significant in the polity of the Zamorins that a discussion of it has to be linked with details of the Māmākam and Taippūyam and other rituals which were linked with that temple. Māmākam is believed to be originated as the temple festival. In reply to queries of Col. Colin

30 Ibid., pp. 199-201.
32 Ibid, Vol. 3.
Mackenzie about the family history of the Zamorin the following account is found on *Māmākam* and Tirunāvāya temple in the *Granthavari*.

In Kerala there is the temple of Viṣṇu consecrated by nine sages (*Nāvayogīs*) on the northern bank of river Niḍa, also known as Praṭīcī and Pērār and celebrated from legendary times. This temple at Tirunāvāya is graced by the presence of Lord Viṣṇu. The *Māmākam* is a grand festival during the 28 days of the month of Māgha, when the Jupiter will be in Leo. According to the *Purāṇas* the sacred water (*tīrtha*) of Ganges etc. will be present in the river Niḍa during the above stated month of Māgha. The Zamorin, the great king of our royal house (*śvarūpam*) along with the four junior princes, prime ministers, commanders, the great Brahmins and all the people go to Tirunāvāya for the protection and celebration of that festival. There they reside in the palaces constructed near the temple of Viṣṇu. Along with all the above said people and royal insignia celebrate jointly the festival of Viṣṇu, the river and the splendour of our *śvarūpam*.34

The presence of the ancient temple of Tirunāvāya made it a sacred centre and the Zamorin used the festival at that place to get legitimacy for his power. All the resources of the Zamorin were made use for the celebration of *Māmākam*. People and resources were mobilised to Tirunāvāya. Elaborate arrangements related to it were made at Tirunāvāya. The following are details of certain arrangements related to the *Māmākam* of KE 858 (AD 1683) made at Tirunāvāya.

A royal letter of the Zamorin directed Taṭakkal Iremma Menon, a royal functionary of *cerikkal* lands including Vellappanāṭṭukara and Ālipāṟṟampa, to bring *pānti* (a collection of bamboos), implements, lamps, etc. to Tirunāvāya. It also instructed him to send 1500 *paras* of rice from Vellappanāṭṭukara as a part of the *pāṭṭam* for the year of KE 858 (AD 1682-83) to Tirunāvāya.35

Temporary ‘palaces’ were constructed at Vākayūr, i.e., the western part of the temple at Tirunāvāya, for the *Māmākam*. In KE 858 (AD 1683), 8382½ *pañams* were given from the royal treasury for the work. The work included the construction of *Kōvilakams* of the Zamorin and princes, *māṭam* to Cattirars and

the construction of bars and pillars for the platform of the Münnâmkûr Nampiyâtiri. More than 1300 men worked for the construction of above structures for many days. A royal letter was sent to Úrâli Köntî and Ñârakkal Cënnan to bring Úrâli Nâyars for the construction work “as in earlier times”. The wood which were sawed and got ready for construction as well as timber for firewood were brought from Álûr, Kûtalûr and Cempalânñâtu to Vâkayûr by boat. Köttûr Paṭanâyar and his lôkar (militiamen) were paid 987 pânamû for the protection of palaces. Pûnti and bathing pavilion were also protected. Elephants were used in this work. Kârattûla Noṭṭan painted nine domes. Four kâlus (scaffolds) were built by the Muslims. Vailâle Paṭannôṭacakca Nâyar managed the kâlavâra (storeroom). Royal functionaries involved in the construction of palaces at Vâkayûr were paid mûsappätî (monthly salary) for their services. Royal letters were sent to lôkar of Polanâṭu and Payyanâṭukara janam to participate in the Mâmâkâm. The doorkeepers were brought from Kîlûr to Tirunâvâya in procession for the Mâmâkâm.

Three days before the Mâmâkâm of KE 858 the Zamorin proceeded to Tirunâvâya from Ponnâni Vâlîke Kôvilâkâm accompanied by musical ensemble. After bathing in the river Përâr, the Zamorin proceeded to the temple of Tirunâvâya and worshipped the deity. When he left the temple eight mortars were fired from Vâkayûr. The Zamorin resided in the Brahman house of Kalpakaccëri at Tirunâvâya for the next two days. On the previous day of Mâmâkâm the Zamorin proceeded on foot accompanied with the royal insignia to Tirunâvâya temple through the eastern gôpûra. Conch was blown and the Zamorin paid obeisance to the deity. He received tîrtha (consecrated water) and prasâda (blessed flowers and sandal paste) from the chief priest of the temple and presented two pânamû to him as daksîna. He also gave two pânamû as daksîna to the assistant priest of the temple. He presented a vestment of nine mulams to the deity and a cloth for flag. He gave 16 pânamû to Kalpakaccëri Ilayatu for pûja and
three *panams* to *Paṭiṇñāreppāṭṭu Pīṣāraṭi* for offering a garland of lotus. He paid obeisance to Bhagavati and came out of the temple complex through the eastern gateway and with musical ensemble proceeded to the western *gōpura* of the temple and further to Vākayūr *Kōvilakam*.

On the second day of the festival the Zamorin accompanied with all the royal insignia proceeded on the back of the elephant from Vākayūr *Kōvilakam* to the western *gōpura* of Tirunāvāya temple via Kūriyāl. He dismounted from the elephant and entered the temple and worshipped the deity. After that the procession returned to Vākayūr *Kōvilakam*. During the first 19 days of the festival the Zamorin worshipped the deity in this way. On the 20th day of the festival the Zamorin decked with royal jewellery and with all the royal insignia and the escort of Cāttirars of Nenmini and soldiers bearing silver and gold inlaid shields proceeded to the temple of Tirunāvāya, via Kūriyāl on the back of the elephant adorned with gold trappings. At the western *gōpura*, he dismounted from the elephant and conch was blown. The Zamorin paid obeisance to the deity and returned to the western *gōpura*. After the conch was blown, muskets and mortars were fired. He mounted on elephant’s back and proceeded back to Vākayūr. It is not clear that in the remaining ten days of the festival whether the Zamorin proceeded up to the temple to worship the deity. However, he had paid obeisance to the deity when he stood in state at Maṇittara, a platform on the western part of the temple.

The above account makes it clear that the temple of Tirunāvāya was the centre of all ceremonies related to the festival of *Māmākam*. It was similar in the case of *Taippūyam* also. On the previous day of *Taippūyam* the Zamorin proceeded to worship the deity and received *tūrttha* and *prasāda*. He gave *dakṣiṇas* to the priests and made ritual offerings. He resided that day at Vākayūr
Kövilakam. The Zamorin bathed from the river Perár and had his dinner from the Kövilakam and slept that night there.\textsuperscript{36}

Why the Zamorin gave so much importance to Tirunāvāya temple is a problem that can be raised here. The answer lies in the importance of that place as socio-economic and political centre in addition to its sacredness. The areas on both banks of Perár are fertile cultivable lands. The trade facilitated by the river in the days of less advanced transport facilities need not to be emphasised. The proximity to Ponnāni, an important port in the kingdom of Kōljikkōtu, adds to its importance. The struggle between the Zamorin and the Valluvakkōnātiri had given it a strategic importance also. One who controlled Tirunāvāya also became the protector of Māmākam who is considered to be the overlord of entire Kerala. We have a reference of the Zamorin taking the title of Kunnalakkōn on the opening day of Māmākam in a 15\textsuperscript{th} century Sandēśa kāvya called Kōkasandēśam.\textsuperscript{37} The fight between the Zamorin and Valluvakkōnātiri seems to be not only for the protectorship of Māmākam but also for the ownership of the temple of Tirunāvāya. It is already noted that Valluvakkōnātiri damaged the lamp and sources of the temple in AD 1634 during the time of Taippūyam. Thus no wonder that this temple occupied much importance during the medieval period.

\textbf{Kurumpa Bhagavati temple at Koṭuṇnallūr}

Modern Koṭuṇnallūr is identified as Mahōdayapuram, the capital city of the Perumāḷs (AD c. 800-1124). The town is known more as a sacred centre, with temples dedicated to Kāḷi, Śiva and Viṣṇu, of which the first is by far the most important.\textsuperscript{38} Medieval poems such as Kōkasandēśam, Śukasandēśa, and

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid., Vols. 7, 13 & 14.

Kökilasandësa have several verses on Kuṟumpa Bhagavati or the Kāli temple. Kāli is a non-Brahmanical deity in a fierce form, pleased by animal sacrifice. At the same time, attempts to link her with Purānic mythology and cosmology are made in these texts, which are of great significance. In the period following the break-up of the Cēra kingdom, the Bhagavati temple, with its non-Brahman forms of worship and animal sacrifice, came into prominence. The martial character of the body of Nāyars who managed the temple and its Bharani festival as well as the pilgrims who went there is interesting.

In KE 845 (AD 1670) the Zamorin was residing at Koṭuṇnallūr Tiruvāṇcakkūḷam and leading the war operations against the Dutch and Cochin. It is from Koṭuṇnallūr the Zamorin went to Tirunāvāya for attending Taippūyam of KE 845. After the Taippūyam the Dutch attack on Koṭuṇnallūr is reported. The Zamorin proceeded to Koṭuṇnallūr and resided at the house of Velutta Nampiyār, which is in the northern part of Tiruvāṇcakkūḷam temple. That was the time of Bharani festival in the Kuṟumpa Bhagavati temple. The lōkar (militiamen) of the Zamorin have gone to see the festival without their arms. Due to its spying the Dutch attacked the Tiruvāṇcakkūḷam temple at that night. In the fight that ensued many were died on both sides. Later the Dutch retreated to their fort at Koṭuṇnallūr. Thus it is evident that Cochin and the Dutch challenged the authority of the Zamorin over Koṭuṇnallūr and it was not always under the Zamorin.


40 Ibid.
An *uttavālapakkal* (the ceremony of investing with the sword) was held at Koṭūṇnallūr in KE 837 (AD 1662). The investiture ceremony of the Ėrāḷppāṭu was held at Koṭūṇnallūr on Vṛiścikam 5, KE 844 (November 4, AD 1668). After the investiture he proceeded with music ensemble to the Bhagavati temple and worshipped the deity. *Bharapi vēla* (festival of the temple) was celebrated in the month of Minam.

b) Temples of contemporary origin

Many temples came into existence or prominence under the Zamorins. The Bhagavati temples at Varakkal, Puttūr, Tiruvalayanāṭu and Trikkāvu, the Taḷi temple of Śiva at Calicut, Gōvindapuram temple, Vēṭṭakkurumakan temple at Pilāṭṭikkulaṇṇara (Bilāṭṭikkulam), Ayyappan temple at Camravaṭṭam, Vaikuṇṭhapurattu temple at Ponnāni, Vairanellūr temple, Karimpūḷa temple, etc. belong to this category. A few of these temples are taken up here to discuss their relationship with the royalty.

**Taḷi temple at Calicut**

The Taḷi temple at Calicut came into prominence during the period of the Zamorin. The main deity of the temple is Śiva with the subordinate deities such as Viṣṇu, Gaṇapati, Ayyappan and Bhagavati. The term *taḷi* originally denoted any rock-cut or structural temple; but it is now applied only to Śiva temples. Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai says that *taḷi* may be a corruption of the Sanskrit word *sthali* which has the meaning of the *sthala dēvata.* The Zamorin captured

---


Calicut from Pörjätiri, the ruler of Polanāṭu, and gained control over the temple of Taḷi. The tradition preserved in Kēralōṭpati mentions that after the conquest of Polanāṭu the construction of Calicut town was going on. Some men were brought from Parappanāṭu for the construction work. Under the instruction of the Zamorin Maṅnāṭṭacan (an important royal functionary) made use of them to kill the sixty Nampis (the men who were the ārāḷas or temple trustees) of the Taḷi temple. And thus new men were appointed instead of the Nampis as ārāḷas. Mānāvēda invokes the deity of Taḷi in the prelude of Bhārata Campu.

The Granthavari gives graphic details of the temple complex of Taḷi. The following shrines are included in it. Trivikramapuram (Viṣṇu) temple, Vaṭṭakkum tēvārattil Gaṇapati,PUTiya tēvāram, Bhagavati aṇa, Vāliya Matilakam (the big walled enclosure), Tekkum tēvāram, Taḷiyil Gaṇapati, Tēvārattil Gaṇapati, Vāṭil Māṭam (Bhagavati), Cēriya Matilakattu Tēvar, Vēṇmāṭattil Tēvar and Ayyappan. The Kōvilakam of the Zamorin was on the northwestern part of Taḷi. The Zamorin visited the temple of Taḷi on various occasions, which is elaborately recorded. In fact, the details of the procession to the temple show the seriousness with which the Zamorin had taken the temple. It was a major occasion for the king to come to terms with those sections of society who would be related to the temple. To take one instance, on Dhanu 29, KE 854 (December 28, AD 1678) the Zamorin proceeded with music ensemble to the temple of Taḷi. He proceeded to the western gōpura of Taḷi through the short gateway and the music ensemble by the royal musicians stopped. The cloth produced and brought by Kōvil Tirutti Kāraṇavar was received and spread on the ground by Accanmār and Piṣāraṭis of Taḷi. The Zamorin proceeded through Koṭṭiyampalam on this cloth with music ensemble by

46 KG, Vol. 1.
the temple musicians to the northern part of Valiya Matilakam. He did not enter the temple due to the pollution caused by the contact with Naykkanmār. Thus he proceeded to the Valiya Velikkal (the big stone platform meant for ritual offerings) of Ceriya Matilakam through the cloth spread on the ground.47

A similar procession of the Zamorin to the temple of Taḷi had on Cinnam 31, KE 915 (September 1, AD 1740).48 The Zamorin this time entered Valiya Matilakam and proceeded through the cloth spread on the ground accompanied with the music ensemble by the temple musicians. He worshipped the deity of Trivikramapuram and offered a silk cloth. He received tīṟttha and prasāda and presented four panams as daksīṇa to the chief priest Arīkkōṭu Nampūtiri and two panams to the assistant priest. From there he went to the sub-shrines in the temple complex viz. Vaṭakkum tēvāram Gaṇapati temple, Putiya tēvāram temple and southern Bhagavati aṭa. He offered two panams as daksīṇa in each of these temples and received tīṟttha and prasāda. Then he proceeded to Valiya Matilakam. Here he worshipped Śiva, the main deity of the temple and offered a silk cloth. He received tīṟttha and prasāda and gave four panams as daksīṇa to the chief priest Vaṭavūr Nampūtiri and two panams to the assistant priest. When he was worshipping the deity conch was blown and mortars and muskets were fired. Then he went to the sub-shrines viz. Tekkum tēvāram Bhagavati temple, Taḷi Gaṇapati temple. Veṇmāṭṭatil temple and Ayyappan temple. He has received tīṟttha and prasāda from these shrines and presented daksinas. It is found that a deity of Taḷi is called Trivikramapuram tēvar (Viśṇu). Trivikramapuram means the city of Vikrama. Mānavikrama is one of the names of the Zamorin and it seems that he has sought a sort of legitimacy through the naming of the temple.

47 Ibid., Vol. 2.
48 Ibid., Vol. 1.

228
The following were the functionaries of Tați temple in the 17th century AD.⁴⁹ Vațavur Nampūtiri (the chief priest of Valiya Matilakam), Putukkuți Nampūtiri (the assistant priest of Valiya Matilakam), Maniyančeri Nampūtiri and Mūttamana Nampūtiri (both priests of Tekkum tēvāram), Arikkottu Emprān (chief priest of Trivikramapuram),⁵⁰ Māṭṭuvāye Nampūtiri, Tirumāṇnalattu Nampūtiri (both assistant priests of Trivikramapuram), (Ko)ṭumaṅal Cempakaccēri Nampūtiri (priest of Bhagavati ara), priests of Veṇmāṭattil tēvar (in KE 916 it was Ālaṅcēri Nampūtiri),⁵¹ Vaṭakkum tēvāram and Putiya tēvāram, Paṭṭatiri (Taḷiyil vāyikkunna Paṭṭatiri),⁵² Vāriyars who used to clean Valiya Matilakam, Pērūr Nampūtiri (taḷi tamutarikkunna),⁵³ the accountants were Kalattil Ittikkarunakara Menon, Valilattu Kannan Menon, Kōtuṅ Kōru Mēnōn and Kāṭṭupāṟṟamattu Cāttu Mēnōn. There was a Potuvāl⁵⁴ in the temple whose name is not given in the Granthavari. The sweepers in the gōpuras were Karumāṇṟṟamattu Aval (Western gōpura) and Vāḷappalli Aval (Eastern gōpura). Accountants in the ūṭtu (feeding house) were Vaṭakkattu Teyyan Mēnōn, Koḷaṅṅoṭṭu...Mēnōn, Kunnattu Kōmu Mēnōn. The cooks were Marutattu Ilayatu, ...maṇṇa Paṅikkar, Pāṟṟappuṟattu Ilayatu, Mācēri Ilayatu, Kammili Ilayatu and Nemmini Ilayatu. Pāṟṟappuṟattu Ilayatu was in charge of the ūṭtu (ūṭtu tamutarikkunna). Muṭṭikappuṟattu Konna

⁴⁹ Ibid., Vols. 1 & 2.

⁵⁰ Emprān or Emprāntiri is at present a caste name of Canarese Brahmans in Kerala. But in the medieval period the term Emprān was used in the sense of a priest. The names of the Emprāns of Tați temple clearly show that they were Kerala Brahmans or Nampūtiris. Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., Vol. 1.

⁵² The Bhāṭṭas were appointed in the temples for reciting Mahābhārata during the Perumāḷ period itself. The institution of Mahābhārata Bhāṭṭa was familiar to the other South Indian temples also. M.G.S. Narayanan, PK, pp. 190-91.

⁵³ The term tamutarikkuka seems to be used in the Granthavari for supervising or in charge.

⁵⁴ During the Perumāḷ period Potuvāl, literally meaning public servant, was the officer who assisted the Parāṭṭai (Pariṣad) – a temple committee of the Brahmans. M.G.S. Narayanan, PK, pp. 109-111.
Piṣāraṭi was the food server in the uttu. On Makaram 17, KE 854 (January 15, KE 1679) the temple functionaries, including those of Taḷi temple, gave carkkarattaṭṭu to the Zamorin equivalent to two paṇams each. This may be due to the precedent. Thus through this system of gifts a world of dependence is created.

The attention of foreign travellers has also fallen on this temple. Pyrard of Laval gives the following description of the temple of Taḷi:

About five hundred paces from the palace and the enclosure of the king’s residence [the Zamorin’s Kōvilakam at Calicut] is the great Pagode or temple of the king (though he hath also a small one in his palace): that is the principal of all the many temples in the country. Inside is the figure of the idol which is placed in the inmost part of the temple, has the head of a man, but exceeding hideous and frightful, of the same fashion as we are wont to figure devils. I have observed this temple and Pagode of the king at leisure. It is all covered in, the walls lined on the inside with bright and polished copper, and with doors of the same. Before the entrance there is a large porch and a close, like a churchyard, well secluded and near the gate of the temple; next there is a little pond for bathing place, where they bathe, and at the door on the inside are some burnt ashes of the dead, as at the other pagodes. Proceeding further, one meets a copper figure in the form of a cow, and that is only seen through a grill; further on is another figure, of which I have spoken, which is of gold, enriched with precious stones. The whole temple is of itself very dark, but there are a great number of lamps burning within, which makes it quite clear. The Gentile Nairs on their way to the king fail not all to go in and worship this idol; albeit they tarry not long over their prayers. This idol, too, I could only see through bars, for none is allowed to enter there unless he be of their religion, caste, and quality.

An aspect of the relationship between the royalty and the temple is found in Rēvati Paṭṭattānam, where the temple provided the arena for the disputations held in the annual assembly of scholars at Taḷi temple. The title Bhaṭṭa was conferred on those who proved their mettle in learned debates held at the temple. In

---

55 KG, Vol. 2.
56 Ibid.
58 For details see below, Chapter VIII.
Kōlīkkōṭan Granthavari we have detailed account of the Paṭṭattānam of KE 854 (AD 1679).\textsuperscript{59} The royalty made the temple as a centre of scholarship. A two-way process of enhancing the prestige of temple of Taḷi by the scholarly assembly of Paṭṭattānam and utilising the fame of the temple to conduct a scholarly assembly is involved here. But in the last count it was the royalty reaped the harvest. In fact, the Rēvati Paṭṭattānam was an occasion for the royalty to boast of its patronage to scholarship, another means through which it sought legitimacy.

Bhagavati temple at Tiruvalayanāṭu

The Bhagavati of Tiruvalayanāṭu Kāvu was the family deity (Paradēvata) of the Zamorin. There is a tradition that the Zamorin fought against Pōrḷāṭiri, the ruler of Polanāṭu around the city of Calicut, for about 48 years. Even then the Zamorin could not defeat Pōrḷāṭiri. Then the Zamorin went to Śrī Pōrkolli (sic) and worshipped the Bhagavati for about six months. The Bhagavati appeared before the Zamorin. He besought her to help him win the war and asked her to go along with him to his kingdom. She blessed accordingly and disappeared in the door panel. Thus thinking that Bhagavati is present in the door, the Zamorin removed the door and carried it with him. The Zamorin carried paḷḷimāṛāṭi, which is believed to be this door panel, wherever he proceeded.\textsuperscript{60} This Bhagavati is believed to be Tiruvalayanāṭamma. The Zamorin usually proceeded to the temple after his investiture. On Kanni 1, KE 916,\textsuperscript{61} (September 2, AD 1740) Mānāvikrama Zamorin proceeded to Tiruvalayanāṭu Kāvu on the day after his arrival at Calicut. The royal procession started from the Zamorin’s Kōvilakam at Calicut. After the rituals the Zamorin dressed up and proceeded in litter. Paṭṭāḷi

\textsuperscript{59} KG, Vol. 2.


\textsuperscript{61} Incidentally it is the New Year day of Kollam Era in the kingdom of Kōlīkkōṭu.
Accanmār (temple functionaries) kept all the paraphernalia at the northern gōpura to welcome the Zamorin. He was received with rice in a silver pot and platter along with a lamp. Vāṭṭōli Mūssatu sprinkled rice on the Zamorin after he dismounted the litter. The Zamorin worshipped the Bhagavati idol and made offerings to the deity and received prasāda. When the Zamorin was worshipping the Kṣetrapālān in the northern part, the oracle began his prophesies and hence he went to south and sat on the west of Pāṭṭupura. The oracle blessed him.⁶²

The following were the functionaries of the temple in KE 854 Makaram (December 30, AD 1678-January 27, AD 1679): Pērūr Namputiri (Valiya pāṭtam Poltti, another Pērūr Nampūtiri was Kaliyakam Cērikkal Poltti), Tekkeppāṭṭu Iṭṭi Unṇirāmā Piṣāraṭi (verumpāṭṭam Poltti) and the accountants Kaḷattil Iṭṭikkarunākara Mēṇōn, Pārkkal Iṭṭirārappa Mēṇōn, Kōṭūr Kōru Mēṇōn, Māṅkāvil Karuṇākara Mēṇōn, Puttillattu Rārappa Mēṇōn and Kāṭṭupāṟampattu Ĉāttu Mēṇōn.⁶³ On all the ritual ceremonies the Zamorin is seen making an offering to the deity of Tiruvalayanāṭu. From a later document we come to know that the following were the families connected to the temple; Naṭuvilkkaṇṭi Mūssatu, Kōḷipāṟampattu Mūssatu and Vaṭṭōli Mūssatu.⁶⁴ A document of the temple program chart (caṭṭavanī) was prepared in KE 1013 (AD 1828). It was prepared after discussing with Vaṭṭamōḷi Mūssatu, Kōḷipāṟampattu Mūssatu, Naṭuvileppāṭṭu Mūssatu, Pāṭṭamāḷi Mēṇōns and the priests like Narippaṭṭa Bhaṭṭatirippāṭṭu, Pulāntōḷ Mūssatu and Pāḷiyyōṭṭu Bhaṭṭatirippāṭṭu. It is stated in the document that the Zamorin ordered the temple authorities to function as per the caṭṭavanī from then onwards.⁶⁵ The deity of Tiruvalayanāṭu Kāvu was carried to

---

⁶² KG, Vol. 1.
⁶³ Ibid., Vol. 2.
⁶⁴ Ibid., Vol. 38.
⁶⁵ Ibid.

232
the Kōvilakam (nammuṭe akattuvitta elunnalliccu) for pāṭṭu in KE 928 Vṛṣṭikām (November 12-December 11, AD 1752). The Zamorin sent a royal letter to Kutiravaṭṭattu Nāyār, a local magnate, asking for 350 paṇams for the pāṭṭu. An important ritual offering in the temple was the sacrifice of goat and pāṭṭu (āṭuvaṭṭum pāṭṭum).

The Italian traveller of AD 16th century Ludovico di Varthema gives the following account of Tiruvaḷayanāṭu temple and the festival.

Near to Calicut there is a temple [of Srivalayanad] in the midst of a tank, that is in the midst of a pond of water: which temple is made in antique style with two rows of columns like San Giovanni in Fonte at Rome. In the middle of that temple there is an altar, made of stone, where sacrifices are performed. And between each of the columns of the lower circle there stand some little ships made of stone, which are two paces long, and are full of a certain oil, which is called enna [oil]. Around the margin of the said tank there is an immense number of trees all of one kind, on which trees there are lights so numerous that it would be impossible to count them. And in like manner around the said temple there are oil lights in the greatest abundance. When the 25th day of the month of December arrives, all the people for fifteen days' journey around, that is to say, the Naeri and Brahmins, come to this sacrifice [the Navaratra festival]. And before performing the said sacrifice, they all wash in the said tank. Then the principal Brahmins of the king mount astride of the little vessels above mentioned where the oil is, and all these people come to the said Brahmins, who anoint the head of each of them with that oil, and then they perform the sacrifice on that altar before mentioned. At the end of one side of this altar there is a very large Sathanas [idol], which they all go to worship, and then each returns on his way. At this session the land is free and frank for three days, that is, they cannot exercise vengeance one against another. In truth, I never saw so many people together at one time, excepting when I was at Mecca.

66 Ibid., Vol. 63.

67 It is believed that human sacrifice was performed in this temple. I owe this information to Dr. D.D. Nampoothiry from a personal communication. However, the evidences available in the Granthavari do not support it.

68 R.C. Temple, Ed., The Itinerary of Ludovico di Varthema of Bologna from 1502 to 1508, p. 70.
After the investiture ceremony the Zamorin usually proceeded to the royal temples including Varakkal temple. There is a record of the Zamorin’s visit to the temple on Kanni 2, KE 916 (September 3, AD 1740). Mañakkāṭṭu Mūttatu welcomed the Zamorin with lamp, rice in a platter and sprinkling the rice. We have reference to the sources of revenue of the temple. A *panam* each was collected for a coconut tree from the area around the temple. Most of the people from whom the amount was collected were Muslims. A *panam* each was collected by the temple for *ara* (warehouse?) and *pura* (shop? house) from Putiyānāṭi at Calicut in KE 760. Paddy was collected as *pūṭam* from the dēvasvam lands. In KE 760 a royal letter of the Zamorin was given to Varakkal *janam*, Kōyma, Pāṭṭamāḷī and the superintendent to collect a *panam* each for *ara* and *pura* (warehouses and shops), *katalōṭṭu paṇam* (a tax on fishermen? or overseas trader?). We have another reference to, “*katalōṭṭu paṇam* 34, *mukkōr kāḷca paṇam* 19”, the amount collected as *vari* (donation/tax?) and the rent for land. A reference to the collection of *pūṭṭapaṇam* in KE 758 Cinnam (August 1-31, AD 1583) onwards was also found in the *Granthavari*. Thus it is evident that the royalty controlled and was involved in the affairs of this temple not just for purposes of religion. At least in the case of the Varakkal temple, it is obvious that his interests included revenue from non-conventional sources such as overseas trade, fishing and the like.

---

There were various festivities at Varakkal temple all the year round, which include ᪐ōnam pūja in Cinnam, Mahānāvami pūja in Kanni, Vāvu pūja in Tulām, Namaskāram and Kārttika in Vṛścikam, Sankrānti pūja, Pūrāṇa in Miṇam, Makam pūja. Utram pūja, Āṟṟtu kalasam, Viṣu pūja in Meḻam, Nīra in Karkkiṭakam and Tripputtāri pūja.73

Gōvindapuram temple

The following were the temple functionaries of Gōvindapuram in KE 854 (AD 1679); Kōvindapurattu Gōpa Piṣāraṭi, Kūriyil Uṇḍirāman, Kaṭakaccēri Bharatan and Puttūr Uṇḍirāman. The following were at the Pāṭṭumatham of Gōvindapuram: Pāra Nāṟāṇa Nampi,74 Mūttakūṟṟil Māṟāyar, Ilayakūṟṟil Māṟāyar, Ėṟṉāttu Māṟāyar, Vaṭakkumkūṟṟil Māṟāyar, Kaṇṭattil Cankaran and tēvāram pāṭunnaval (the singer of hymns).75

Mānavikrama Zamorin had a royal procession to Gōvindapuram temple on Kanni 1, KE 916 (September 2, AD 1740). The temple priest (Emprān) welcomed him with rice in a platter and lamp and by sprinkling rice on his head.76 Paraphernalia was kept at the western part of the Vāliya Velikkal (the stone platform in the temple for offering rituals). He proceeded to the sōpāna of the temple through the carpet brought by the Pāṭṭāḷi (Pāṭṭamāḷi) of Gōvindapuram and spread on the ground by the Piṣāraṭi of Gōvindapuram. He worshipped the deity and made offerings. Mortars and muskets were fired. He received tṛṭṭha and

73 Ibid.
74 Pāra Namps are one of the important royal functionaries. See above, Chapter V.
75 KG. Vol. 2.
76 Ibid., Vol. 1.
prasāda and presented daksīnas to the priests. At the western gōpura of the temple he mounted the litter and returned to the Kōvilakam at Calicut.

Vēṭṭakkarumakan Kāvu at Pilāttikkulāṅnara (Bilāttikkulām)

Vēṭṭakkarumakan was an important deity of the Zamorin, included among the paradēvatas. Mānavikrama Zamorin proceeded to Vēṭṭakkarumakan Kāvu on Kanni 2, KE 916 (September 3, AD 1740). The Emprān (priest) welcomed him with a lamp and rice in a platter and sprinkled rice on him. The chief priest of the temple during this period was Kōnṇāṭu Nampūtiri.77

Bhagavati temple at Puttūr

Mānavikrama Zamorin visited the Bhagavati temple at Puttūr on Kanni 20, KE 916 (September 21, AD 1740). Nandāvanattil Nampī78 received the Zamorin with lamp and rice in a platter. He sprinkled rice on the Zamorin.79

Trikkāvil Bhagavati temple (Trikkāvu) at Ponnāni

With the expansion of the kingdom of Kōlīkkōṭu to the south the Zamorin began to reside most of the time at Ponnāni Trikkāvil Kōvilakam. Ponnāni became the second capital of the Zamorin. The river port of Ponnāni is important in the trade of Kōlīkkōṭu. It is near to Tirunāvāya, which is in many ways important for the Zamorin. Thus in and around Ponnāni was a large network of palaces and temples of the Zamorin viz. Trikkāvil Kōvilakam, Trikkāvil temple,

77 Ibid.

78 Nandāvanattil Nampi is also a functionary of the Zamorin. He used to deck and adorn the Zamorin for the ceremonies.

79 Ibid.
Vaikuṇṭhapurattu temple, Vairanellur Kövilakam, Vairanellur temple, etc. The Zamorin’s patronage of the temple of Trikkāvu made it one of the prominent temples in the kingdom of Kōljikkōtu. The temple is about a kilometre to the southeast of the port of Ponnāni. Trikkāvil Kövilakam of the Zamorin was immediately to the south of the temple. Karunāṭṭu Emprān was the assistant priest of the temple. Puram festival in the month of Mīnam and Kārttiṅa festival in Vṛisīcikam are two important festivals of the temple. There are elaborate accounts of the expenditure and details of these festivals in the palace chronicles of the Zamorin. This is evidence enough of the role and interest of royalty in the affairs of the temple. In addition to it Vēṭṭakkarumakan pāṭṭu was also performed there. An Adhikāri of Tiruvalayanāṭu, a royal functionary, was present during the Vēṭṭakkarumakan pāṭṭu held at Ponnāni Trikkāvu in KE 851 (AD 1676). It is clear that he was in a managerial position as he is seen ritually terminating the festivities by putting down the decorations (kūra valikkuka).

The idol of the deity (Bhagavati) was carried in procession to Trikkāvil Kövilakam during the Puram festival. The Zamorin offered a silk cloth to the deity. Sixteen cīṭa pānams were annually assigned for this from the cērikkal. The Bhagavati idol was carried in procession also to Tirumanacceri Kotta; the house of Tirumanaccēri Nampūṭiri, a locality chief. The Polṭṭis and Accanmār (royal functionaries) met and saluted Tirumanaccēri Nampūṭiri. He had to pay them 16 pānams (eight each for Polṭṭis and Accanmār). It is stated in the document that without getting this amount of money permission should not be given to carry

---

80 Ibid., Vol. 7.
82 The idol carried in procession is not the original image consecrated in the temple, but a miniature of the image in metal used for this specific purpose.
back the deity. During the Pūram festival the Talaccennavar [of Ponnāni], an important royal functionary, kept paddy in a para, rice, coconut, plantain, etc. as ritual offering to the Bhagavati on her ceremonial procession reaching in front of his house. A Talaccennavar received rice, oil, etc. for the Pūram and Kārttika festivals of Trikkāvu. Thus it is clear that the presence of royalty and royal functionaries is very much felt in the affairs of Trikkāvu. This temple seems to have originated and developed during the period of the Zamorin. It did not have much to boast of its ancient heritage. However, the presence and patronage of the royalty made it a prominent temple in the kingdom. Adjacent to the Bhagavati temple in the north located Vaikunṭhapurattu temple. The temple was partially damaged during the Mysorean rule. The documents in the Granthavari show that the renovation of the temple was conducted under the supervision of the Zamorin in a later period.

Guruvāyūr temple

Guruvāyūr is one of the major centres of pilgrimage in South India, arguably the most important in Kerala. It is a Viṣṇu temple. However, the antiquity of this temple does not go very long back in time. It is not included in the pilgrimage circuit of the Tamil Vaisṇava tradition; nor is it sung about by the Tamil Bhakti saints. The temple has not yielded early inscriptions. It is in the Kōkasandesam, a work of early 15th century, we get the earliest reference to this temple, when it had already become well established. The region of Guruvāyūr

---


84 Ibid., Vol. 13.

85 Ibid.

86 This was in KE 1037 (AD 1861-62). Ibid., Vol. 61.

87 Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, Ed., Kōkasandesam, I: 34-37, pp. 49-51.
had already become part of the territory of the Zamorin by then. The Zamorin recognised the potentials of this temple and patronised it in a big way, evidence of which is available in many contexts. In fact, the temple came to be recognised as the “property” of the Zamorin at a later period. Even in the period of the present study it is seen that the Zamorin had made elaborate grants to the temple, arranged for the repair and renovation of the structures, making expensive offerings to the deity, etc. The presence of highly placed royal functionaries is found in Guruvāyūr. In fact, one of the legends celebrating the love of the deity to the devotees centres on Maṅnāṭṭaccan, an important functionary of the Zamorin. When Pūntānam Nampūtiri, a poet, on his way to Guruvāyūr was surrounded by way-side robbers, the deity appeared on the scene in the guise of Maṅnāṭṭaccan and saved the devotee. Mānāvēda, a Zamorin, was a devotee of the deity of Guruvāyūr temple. He was the author of Kṛṣṇagītī, which is the text used for the performance of Kṛṣṇanāṭṭam, a Sanskrit theatrical art. There are references to the performance of this art form in the temple, for which the expenses were defrayed from the royal treasury. In fact, a Kṛṣṇanāṭṭam troupe was maintained by the Zamorin.

Guruvāyūr temple developed as a prominent temple during the period of the Zamorin. Kōkasandēśam provides a description of the temple in four ślokas. The first one mentions about the environs of the temple, the second about the towering gōpura by the side of the lake, the third about the flagstaff and the shrine resonating with the musical ensemble and the fourth about the magnificence of lotus flowers offered to the deity by the priest. From the above description it can be inferred that by the time of this work, i.e., about the beginning of AD 15th

---

89 Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, Ed., Kōkasandēśam, I: 34-37, pp. 49-51.
century, the temple was a flourishing one. *Bhramarasandēśa* and an ancient *daṇḍaka* refer to the deity of Guruvāyūr.

There were a number of *Kilētams* (subordinate temples) under Guruvāyūr temple. Krishna Ayyar puts their number at twenty while Sankara Warrier says the number was thirty. Of these *Kilētams*, seven are Śiva temples, nine are Durga temples, three are of Ayyappan, five of Viṣṇu and two his incarnations, one is Gaṇapati temple and three are already extinct. The following temples are included in the *Kilētams*: Śiva temples: Mammiyūr temple, Covvallūr temple, Brahmakuḷam temple, Perunattā temple, Pārampan Talī, Perumanūr temple and Talakkāṭukara temple. Durga temples: Eṭattēttattu kāvu, Tiruvenkiṭam, Marutayūr, Nārāyanan Kuḷāṇnara, Ayyankuḷāṇnara Bhagavati temple, Pulavāyi temple and Ĉettiālukkal temple. Viṣṇu shrines: Śrīkāṇṭhāpuram at Tāmarayūr, Maṇigrāmam temple and Tattamaṇṇalam. Temples of Viṣṇu’s incarnations: Balabhadra temple at Nenmini and Pāṛthasārathi temple at Tiruttiyil. Other shrines: Aṉiṉyūr Ayyappan, Ĉinnakāvu and Kuḷikkātu Trikkōvil (Gaṇapati). The extinct temples: Cempakaśśēri, Ĉeḷḷiyūr and Dēśavarma.

The Dutch attacked the temple of Guruvāyūr in AD 1716. In the course of the attack they stripped the flagstaff with gold covering, looted the treasure kept in the cellar and set fire to the western *gōpura*. It was rebuilt in KE 922 (AD 1747) by Paṇikkavittil İṭṭirāricca Mēnōn *Kāryakkār* as indicated by the inscription on the

---


granite doorframe of the western *gopura*. Another rock inscription in the eastern *gopura* has a *sloka*, which shows that the construction of the *gopura* was over on Makaram 22, KE 1017. A copy of the *sloka* is found in the *Granthavari*. In KE 945 (AD 1770) the Zamorin presented a calf elephant to the deity of the temple. The Zamorin performed *Namaskāram* (feast of the Brahmans and people of other temple-serving castes) and *pratigraham* (gift of money) and *sarvāṇi sadya* (feeding all and sundry) with the amount from the royal treasury. Pārakkāṭṭu Nampūtiri was the chief priest of the temple and Narippaṟa Bhaṭṭatiri was the *Samudāya Maniśam*. An account of the money as offerings during the Guruvāyūr Ėkādaśi on Vriścikam 15, KE 1041 (AD 1865) that was calculated on Dhanu 23 (AD 1866) is found in the *Granthavari*.

**Ayyappan temple at Camravaṭṭam**

Ayyappan of Camravaṭṭam is one of the family deities of the Zamorin. *Kōkilasandēsa*, a Sanskrit *kāvyā* of AD 15th century, refers to the temple. Mānavikrama Zamorin visited the temple on his *koṭṭiceḷunuṇnallatu* to Calicut on Ciṇṭam 25, KE 915 (August 26, AD 1740). He also visited the temple authority Kurriyēri (Kurricēri) Nampūtiri. The Zamorin and the members of the royal family made offerings to the deity on various occasions. The Zamorin often

---

resides at Kurricceri illam. There was a nearby house of Payyāppantál which was also used as a residence by the Zamorin.

There were other royal temples in the kingdom which we have not discussed in this Chapter. There were a few other temples patronised by the Zamorin for a short period, when he captured and controlled a particular area for a short duration like Thriśśūr Vaṭakkumnāṭha temple, Triprayār temple, Perumanam temple, etc. which we have already discussed in this Chapter. This help us to understand the relationship between the royalty and the temples.

2) Temples patronised by the locality chiefs and local magnates

There were a few temples patronised by the locality chiefs like Veṭṭam Uṭaya Mūṭṭā Kōvil in the kingdom of Kōjjikkōṭu. Trikkanṭiyūr and Tripraṇṇōṭu temples were prominent under Veṭṭam Uṭaya Mūṭṭa Kōvil. The origin of these temples is not clearly known to us. Some temples, such as Tripraṇṇōṭu contain inscriptions from the ninth century while some others came into prominence by 15th century or so.

Trikkanṭiyūr temple

Tradition connects this temple with Eluttaccan, an important poet of medieval Kerala. Ariyikkara was appointed as the priest (Emprān) of Trikkanṭiyūr temple in KE 763 in the month of Mēṭam (March 28-April 27, AD 1588).100 A list of the utensils kept by the priest on Mēṭam 3, KE 763 (March 30, AD 1588) is also found in the Granthavāri.101 The temple was burnt in a fire accident and we see

100 Ibid., Vol. 28.
101 Ibid.
that the copper (probably of the roof) was given for recycle/remould (*urukkan* – lit., to melt) on Dhanu 8, KE 803 (December 7, AD 1627). Persons including Veṭṭam Uṭaya Mūṭṭa Kövil performed the act of atonement to the deity (*uttaram collage*) on certain times. The House of Āraṇṇōṭṭu, Trikkantaṉyūr *janam*, etc. also performed atonement to the deity. When Maṇṇalaśēri Ḭḷayatu was adopted to Vaṇṇēri in KE 854 Makaram (December 30, AD 1678-January 27, AD 1679), the Śrikōvil was constructed by Vaṇṇēri to please the deity (*tēvare epañnuvān*). Maṇṇāṭtaccan, an important functionary of the Zamorin, along with Kuruvāyūr Mūṭṭatu appointed Nāyinnmār of Trikkantaṉyūr temple in KE 763. A large number of documents on *Trikkaṇṭiyūr dēvasvam* are found in *Kōljkkōṭan Granthavari*. These documents prove the role of the Zamorin in the affairs of the above temple.

An instance of commending a person and his nephews to the temple and *taravātu* in the name of the deity is also found. On Makaram 7, KE 865 (January 5, AD 1690) Āṇāyaṛa ṗalli Ukkaṇṭi and his nephews were appointed as functionaries to the Kōṭṭāri temple and *taravātu* in the name of Trikkantaṉyūr deity. He has to meet the expenses and maintenance/work (*pravartti*) of the temple from the lands given as *kāṟalma*.

On Ėṭavam 18, KE 920 (May 16, AD 1745) Iṭṭimanka and her children were adopted to Paṭiṇṇēre Piṣāram and appointed as temple functionaries of Trikkantaṉyūr temple. They were entrusted with *yāvana* (maintenance) for the work.

---

103 KG, Vol. 32.
104 Ibid., Vol. 28.
105 Ibid., Vols. 28 & 32.
106 Ibid.
Etamana, Vaññerî, Maññalaśśeri, etc. gave a letter to this effect. It is stated that they drafted the letter (muri) as no yōgam (temple committee) existed. 

According to tradition Märkanḍēya worshipped Śiva in this temple. This tradition is one of a familiar sort connected with various other temples. However, this temple is of ancient origin. A Tripaṇṇōṭu inscription of Kōta Ravi dated in his 27th regnal year (AD 910) states that the representative of the Perumāḷ and the temple authorities fixed the various items of routine expenditure of the temple. It is obvious that this temple flourished even during the time of Perumāḷs. A stone sculpture of Śiva stands outside the first prākāra (outer wall) in Tripaṇṇōṭu temple. Beside this sculpture is a small group consisting of a human figure embracing Śivalinga and another standing nearby. Kökasandēsām and Kökīlasandesād refer to the deity of Tripaṇṇōṭu temple. It falls in the territory of Veṭṭam Utaya Mūṭṭa Kōvīl. The Zamorin had assigned an amount of money to the Śankhābhīṣēkam of the deity of Tripaṇṇōṭu. 

---

107 Ibid.

108 Märkanḍēya took refuge at the feet of the deity at this temple when he came to know from his parents on his 16th birthday that his life had come to an end on that day as decreed by Śiva. Yama tried to take Märkanḍēya’s life while he was worshipping the deity. Śiva in a fury burned Yama and blessed Märkanḍēya to remain always as sixteen years old. There are many literary works describing the deity of this temple as Mrityuḥjaya, Kālakāla, etc. There is a kavya in Sanskrit on this theme. Veluthat Naryanan Nambudiri says that the author of this kavya, Krisṇallāśuka, was identical with the Vilvamāṇhalattu Svāmīyar of legends and that he hailed from the house of Veḷḷa, a member of this family being known to us from other sources related to the Zamorins. Veluthat Naryanan Nambudiri, Ed., Kālavadhākavyam, Calicut, 1966, Preface, p. v. This temple, known as Śvetāranya and Parakrāda, finds mention as an important Śaivite shrine in Umapati Śivacārtya’s Kuhcitāṅgṭristava. David Smith, The Dance of Śiva, New Delhi, 1998, p. 143. Smith, however, is not aware of this identification.

109 M.G.S. Narayanan, PK, pp. 88, 117.

110 Ibid., p. 205.


113 KG, Vol. 41.

244
3) Brahmanical temples

There were certain temples owned by the Brahmanical groups and patronised by the king, locality chiefs and local magnates in the kingdom of Kōlijikkoṭu. Though these temples were comparatively free of the political control, on certain occasions the temple authorities sought the help of the king or other nodes of power. Varāhamūrtti temple at Panniyūr of the Panniyūrkkūru Brahmans and Dakṣināmūrtti temple at Śukapuram of Covvarakkūru Brahmans are two major temples of this category in the kingdom of Kōlijikkoṭu.

References to various temples in the kingdom of Kōlijikkoṭu are found in the Granthavari. A list of the temples is made from the different documents in the Granthavari. The list is, however, incomplete owing to the nature of the documents.

1. Viṣṇu temple at Tirunāvāya
2. Śrī Kurumpa Bhagavati temple at Koṭuṇhallūr
3. Talī temple at Calicut
   Main shrine: Valīya Matilakam (deity, Śiva)
   Subshrines:
   a) Trivikramapuram (Viṣṇu) temple
   b) Vatakkum tēvāram Gaṇapati temple
   c) Putiya tēvāram
   d) Southern Bhagavati arā
   e) Cerīya Matilakam
   f) Talī Gaṇapati temple
   g) Ayyappan temple
   h) Tekkum tēvāram Bhagavati temple
   i) Venmāṭattil temple
4. Putiya Kōvilakam Śrīkriṣṇa temple
   Subshrines:
   a) Bhagavati temple
   b) Śiva temple
   c) Vēṭtakkarumakan temple
   d) Śrīrāma temple
   e) Guruvāyūr Bhagavan temple
   f) Kumāranellūr Bhagavati temple
   g) Ādityan temple
h) Durga Bhagavati temple

5. Trikkāvil Bhagavati temple (Trikkāvu) at Ponnāni
   Subshrines:
   a) Erannikkal Bhagavati temple
   b) Ayyappan temple
   c) Gaṇapati temple

6. Bhagavati temple at Varakkal

7. Gövindapuram temple

8. Bhagavati temple at Puttūr

9. Bhagavati temple at Tiruvalayanātu

10. Vēṭṭakkarumakan Kāvu at Bilattikkulam

11. Vēṭṭakkarumakan temple at Veliyāmkuḷanāra

12. Taḷi Vēṭṭakkarumakan Kāvu

13. Vaikunṭhapuram temple at Trikkāvu, Ponnāni

14. Vairanellūr temple at Vairanellūr, Ponnāni

15. Sāmūṭiri Kōvilakam Bhagavati Keṭṭu at Calicut

16. Vēṟṟampilakkal Bhagavati temple at Calicut

17. Bhagavati temple at Parihārapuram (Pariyāram)

18. Cirankara Vēṭṭakkarumakan Kōṭṭam at Cempalanātu

19. Karikkāṭṭu temple

20. Āḷūr temple

21. Kaṇvan Trikkōvil

22. Tiruvilvāmalā temple

23. Muḷamkunnattu Ayyappan Kāvu

24. Triccūr Ayyappan Kāvu

25. Vacanāṭtu Panēṅnattūr Bhagavati temple

26. Uruṇikkāvu Bhagavati temple

27. Vēṭṭakkarumakan temple at Čerakkal

28. Indiyanūr Gaṇapati temple

29. Bhagavati temple at Čerpu

30. Tripurāntakan temple at Neccippaṟṟampattu

31. Venkōṭṭa temple (Bhagavati temple at Kōṭṭakkal)

32. Gaṇapati temple at Talayūr

33. Bhagavati temple at Pandalūr

34. Antimākāḷan temple at Kurumpilāvu

35. Bhagavati temple at Mūkkutala

36. Anandapuram temple at Pantalāyani Kollam

37. Trikkōvil Kunnattu Ayyappan temple

38. Tiruvēḵkappura Śiva temple

39. Tiruvēḵkappura Iraṇṇiyūṭayān

40. Malamēḷ Ayyappan Kāvu

41. Pāmpukāṭṭu Kāvu

42. Pokkārattu Ayyappan temple

43. Īṭakalippurattu Ayyappan temple

44. Bhagavati temple at Rāyirannellūr

45. Pattāyappurakkal Śrīvalayanāṭṭamma temple
46. Kotikkunnattu Bhagavati temple
47. Śrīrāma temple at Karimpula
48. Bhagavati temple at Maratayur
49. Bhagavati temple at Pullānūr
50. Rāmapuram Bhagavati temple at Koṭuvāyūr
51. Tiruvannūr Śiva temple
Subshrines:
   a) Gaṇapati temple
   b) Viṣṇu temple
   c) Ayyappan temple
52. Taḷi temple at Vākayūr
53. Ālattūr temple
54. Veṇnūr Nārāyaṇa temple
55. Kuṇṭita temple
56. Vītāncēri temple
57. Cerukāṭu temple
58. Durvāntirutti Bhagavati temple
59. Ōmantrikkōvil
60. Palṭiṇāmūlimē temple
61. Trikkalanōṭtūr Mēlēṭattu temple
62. Vēṭṭakkarumakan temple at Trikkalanōṭṭūr
63. Antimākāḷan temple at Trikkalayūr
64. Kaṇṭamanāṇalam temple
65. Netunkanṭattil Karikkāli temple
66. Bhagavati temple at Maṇṭūr
67. Annamanāṭu temple
68. Ükaṇṭattu Amma Tiruvaṭi temple
69. Tiruvalakkāvu (Śaṭṭāvu temple)
70. Koṭṭayil Ayyappan temple
71. Kokkōlkkōṭtu temple
72. Tripurāntakaṇ temple at Māṅkāvu
73. Tulisāla Bhagavati temple
74. Tulisālā Krisṇa temple
75. Śrīkrīṣṇa temple at Māṅkāvu
76. Mūṭṭoli temple
77. Kāccāmkuṟiṣśi temple
78. Nenmini temple
79. Netiyirippil Tāṅnikāṭtu temple
80. Subrahmanyaṇ temple at Paṟṟappūr
81. Pāṇṭamanāṇalam temple
82. Kīḷūr Vāṭulkāppavar
83. Vēṭṭakkarumakan temple at Koṭṭakkal
84. Guruvāyūr temple
85. Vanmanāṭu temple
86. Ayyappan temple at Camravaṭṭam
87. Taḷikkunnattu temple
88. Kaññilaśsēri temple
89. Maññil Trikkōvil
90. Ceru Tirunāvāya Śiva temple
91. Vāsudēvapuram temple
92. Bhagavati temple at Tirunāvāya
93. Bhagavati temple at Vitirūr
94. Tripraṇnōṭu temple
95. Māṭattinmēl Bhagavati temple
96. Panamaṇṇa temple
97. Kēralapuram Śiva (Viśvanātha) temple
98. Cerumaṇṇūr temple
99. Ārayil Bhagavati temple
100. Kārāḷ Bhagavati temple
101. Bhagavati temple at Kāṭṭa[kā]mpāḷ
102. Saptamāṭrikkaḷ temple
103. Kārakkka Trikkōvil Ayyappan temple
104. Etekkute Bhṛantan temple
105. Trikkāṇṭiyūr temple
106. Kōṭṭāri temple
107. Nērumkaitakōṭṭa Ayyappan temple
108. Vatakkumnāthan temple at Triśūr
109. Ponmaḷa temple
110. Śāṣṭāvu temple at Āṛṭṭupula
111. Mahādēva temple at Perumanam
112. Māṭattil Ayyappan temple
113. Vēṇñanāṭṭu Bhagavati temple
114. Varāhamūṛtti temple at Panniyūr
115. Daksināmūrtti temple at Sukapuram
116. Triprayār temple
117. Bhagavati temple at Panniyankara

A quantitative analysis of the temples would have provided much more information on the pattern and distribution of the temples. Due to the incomplete nature of our data, such an analysis is not possible. The list of the temples is not complete, in many cases the deity of the temple is not easy to identify and without a detailed survey and micro level study we cannot locate a few of these temples. Thus at present we are not in a position to analyse the above data.
There is a singular instance of the performance of *Purāntan tīra* (ritual dance to propitiate Tripurāntakan). This was performed at Neccippara Tripurāntakan temple on Mīnam 21, KE 895 (March 19, AD 1720). This was an offering of Pāra Cankara Nampi Accan. Pāṇakkāṭaṇ Uṇṇīri performed the *tīra* of Purāntan. During this *tīra* Ēranāṭṭu Nampiyāṭiri, the second in the royal house of the Zamorin, Māncēri Kāraṇavappāṭu, a local magnate, and Pāra Nampi, an important royal functionary of the Zamorin, were present. Tripurāntakan, a fierce form of Śiva, was a deity projected by the Cōḷa Rājarāja I. It is interesting that the royal deity of the Cōḷas was worshipped in the kingdom of Kōlikkōṭu, that also by a form of folk art. The Cōḷa links or affinities of the Zamorin are already suggested by earlier scholars. However, it is hard to find out any meaningful connection in this regard.

**Conclusion**

The importance of the structural temple, which may have always attracted the people, in the society is evident. Duarte Barbosa says that in medieval Malabar only temples and palaces had tiled roofs. The accounts of Canter Visscher make it clear that the temple was one of the beautifully built structures. Not only the

---

114 Ibid., Vol. unnumbered (A).
115 Pāra Nampi was an important royal functionary of the Zamorin. Pāra Cankara Nampi Accan seems to be a senior member of the family of Pāra Nampi.
royal temples and temples of the elite classes existed in medieval Kerala but also the low caste people had their own temples. John Nieuhoff speaks of the temple of fishermen. Alexander Hamilton also noted the family temples of fishermen. About the temples of low “caste” people Canter Visscher says, “They possess temples of their own constructed of dried palm leaves, and if they could afford to build them of stone, they must yet cover them with palm leaves: they have no Brahmins for their priests, but members of their own caste minister the offices of religion”.

An important feature related to the temples of medieval period was ūṭṭu (feeding house/free meal). The ūṭṭu provided free food to the Brahmans. It was one of the factors that ensured the lazy and leisurely life of the Brahmans of medieval Kerala. Lands were assigned to meet its expenses. On Makaram 17, KE 854 (January 15, AD 1679) paddy lands were assigned to meet the expenses of Panniyankara ūṭṭu, which is connected to Panniyankara Bhagavati temple. The Zamorin gave a kuriya royal letter to Tinayaṅcēri Ilayatu, an important royal functionary, to meet the expenses of Tirunāvāya ūṭṭu. The ūṭṭu helped the Zamorin in attaining legitimacy as annadāna (the gift of food) to the Brahmans is a way of fulfilling his vow of protecting them. In addition to the regular ūṭṭu, there seems to be feasts on some special days or month in certain feeding houses like Manṇūr in KE 863 during the month of Vriścikam (November 1-30, AD

120 K. Sivasankaran Nair, Ed. & Trans., Nieuhoff Kaṇṭa Kēṟalām, p. 65.
123 KG, Vol. 3.
124 Ibid.
125 For an interesting study of annadāna at Taṅjavūr in the Nāyaka period, see, V. Narayana Rao, et al., Symbols of Subsistence: Court and State in Nāyaka period Tamilnādu, pp. 67-72, 205-18.
1687). Foreign scholars also noted this feature of the medieval Kerala temples. Canter Visscher, the Dutch missionary of 18th century AD, writes:

Rich pagodas are burdened with a number of Brahmins, perhaps 200 or 300 who must be fed: for so these Malabar priests cunningly contrive to be supported gratis. Besides this, at many of the rajah’s courts are places called marroe [Matham], where food is dispensed to any Brahmin who demands it. There is one good thing about these pagodas, that they furnish provision for many wayfarers of their own religion, who resort to them, rice is never refused. John Nieuhoff also refers to it.

The temples were also the centres of cultural events. Festivals were celebrated in various temples during special days of the temple such as the consecration day of the deity as well as certain auspicious days in common such as Pūram, Śivarātri, Viṣu, Ṭonam, Vāvu (Newmoon and fullmoon days), Sankrānti (the day in which the planets pass from one zodiac to another), etc. A few of the festivals in certain temples are already noted above. Vēṭṭakkarumakan pāṭṭu was performed in many of the kāvus. Āḍāṭṭu (ceremonial bathing of the idol in the river) was a feature of the Bhagavati temples. Kāṭṭu (an art form of story telling) and Kāṭiyattam (Sanskritic theatrical performances) were also performed during the festive occasions. KriṣṪpanāṭṭam was performed at Guruvāyūr temple and other royal temples. The presence of royalty and royal functionaries is found in these festivals. The income and expenditure, the details of rituals etc. are elaborately recorded in the Granthavari.

The evidences furnished in this Chapter mainly came from the palace chronicles of the Zamorin itself is a proof of the involvement of the royalty in temple matters. It goes without too much of a laboured argument that this kind of a

126 KG. Vol. unnumbered (A).
patronage which the Zamorin extended went a long way in legitimizing his authority. As could be seen, this was done at various levels: at the level of instituted practices such as Māmākam and Taippāyam which were pre-existing practices appropriated by the Zamorin; at the level of the Paṭattānām which he began; at the level of patronizing preexisting performing arts such as Kūṭiyāṭṭam and Tīrā and new ones such as Kṛiṣṇanāṭṭam. All these ultimately resulted making statements of power on behalf of the Zamorin.