**Chapter IX**

*Māmākam* and *Taippūyam*: A Ceremonial Statement of Political Hegemony

*Māmākam* was a grand festival celebrated once in twelve years on the banks of Pērār at Tirunāvāya. It seems to have begun as a temple festival, sharing characteristics of similar festivals held at Haridvār, Prayāg, Ujjain, Nāsik and Kumbhakōṇam. In the case of *Māmākam*, it acquired economic and political importance. This made the right to preside over the festival a coveted position over which the chieftains of medieval Malabar fought. By the time we get documents, it was the Zamorin of Köḷiḳkōṭu who had this exclusive right, which he guarded very zealously. How exactly the Zamorins came to acquire this privilege is not clear. According to *Kēralōṭpatti* tradition, which there is no reason to disbelieve, the Zamorin forcibly took over the privilege from the Rāja of Vaḷḷuvanāṭu.¹ In any case, by the time we get detailed information, the Zamorin had the authority to preside over the festival. The Zamorin stood in state on a dais raised for the purpose and suicidal squads of other chieftains known as *cāvēr*² sought to reach the dais with a view to retrieving the right by killing him. These soldiers promptly died a heroic death, never able to reach the dais.

*Māmākam* attracted the early scholars who wrote on the Zamorins or Malabar. Alexander Hamilton³ has given an account of the *Māmākam* of AD

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³ He writes, “Many strange Customs were observed in this Country [Kōḷiḳkōṭu] in former Times, and some very odd ones are still continued. It was an ancient Custom for the *Samorin* to reign but twelve Years, and no longer. If he died before his Term was expired, it saved him a troublesom Ceremony of cutting his own Throat, on a publick Scaffold erected for that Purpose. He first made a Feast for all his Nobility and Gentry, who are very numerous. After the Feast, he saluted his Guests, and went on the Scaffold, and very decently cut his own Throat in the View of the Assembly, and his Body was, a little While after, burned with great
1695. It was based on hearsay and, as a result, it is very fanciful. William Logan has referred to a few palm leaf documents in the Kölijkkoțan Granthavari and has given a description of the Māmākam of AD 1683. He has also given details of the cāvēr who died there. Based on the accounts of Alexander Hamilton and the writings of William Logan, Sir James Frazer considered it as an act of regicide recurring every twelve years. What we see in common in the writings of all these foreign scholars is the emphasis on the acts of cāvēr, the suicide squads, during the Māmākam festival. Due to the exaggerated emphasis laid on cāvēr, the other details of the festival and the role of royalty in it were not adequately considered there.

Indigenous scholarship, as in the case of K.P. Padmanabha Menon, too followed the theory of regicide. Following the foreign scholars, he considered that the Zamorins may have sacrificed themselves at the end of the term of office during the early period and later he offered the opportunity to take his throne to

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Pomp and Ceremony, and the Grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that Custom was a religious or a civil Ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside.

And a new Custom is followed by the modern Samorins, that a Jubilee is proclaimed throughout his Dominions, at the End of twelve Years, and a Tent is pitched for him in a spacious Plain, and a great Feast is celebrated for ten or twelve Days with Mirth and Jollity, Guns firing Night and Day, so at the End of the Feast any four of the Guests that have a Mind to gain a Crown by a desperate Action, in fighting their Way through 30 or 40000 of his Guards, and kill the Samorin in his Tent, he that kills him, succeeds him in his Empire.

In Anno 1695 one of those Jubilees happened, and the Tent pitched near Pennany, a Sea-port of his, about fifteen Leagues to the Southward of Calecut. There were but three Men that would venture on that desperate Action, who fell in, with Sword and Target, among the Guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the Desperados had a Nephew of fifteen or sixteen Years of Age, that kept close by his Uncle in the Attack on the Guards, and, when he saw him fall, the Youth got through the Guards into the Tent, and made a Stroke at his Majesty’s Head, and had certainly dispatched him, if a large Brass Lamp which was burning over his Head, had not marred the Blow; but, before he could make another, he was killed by the Guards; and, I believe, the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that Time along the Coast, and heard the Guns for two or three Days and Nights successively. Alexander Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies, Vol. I, pp. 306-08.

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anybody who was good enough to kill him fighting through his guards.⁶ K.V. Krishna Ayyar, the historian of the Zamorins, has written extensively on Māmākam.⁷ His writings are based mainly on the documents in the Kōṭīkkōṭan Granthavari and the Kēraḷōṭpatti Kilippāṭṭu.⁸ Typically, he glorifies the past and celebrates the history of his patrons.⁹ He is ambiguous on many points¹⁰ and fails to make a distinction between legend and history.¹¹

There are two exclusive works in Malayalam on Māmākam.¹² Neither is informed by any historical method. While Sreekanda Poduval repeats the traditional accounts following Hamilton, Raja’s interest is in the glorification of his own family. There are a few other works, which refer to Māmākam. Vadakkumkur Rajarajavarma Raja in his multi-volume history of Sanskrit literature in Kerala writes on Māmākam.¹³ Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai gives reference to Māmākam and māmaka cāvēr.¹⁴ N.M. Nampoothiry, who has done work on the Zamorins, gives a description of the Māmākam of AD 1683 using the

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¹³ Vadakkumkur Rajarajavarma Raja, KSSC; Vol. II, pp. 359-61.
document from the *Kōlikkōṭan Granthavari*. K.N. Ganesh also refers to *Māmākam*. He considers the festival as predominantly political in nature and a festival of feudal lords.\(^5\)

In spite of the existence of such a wealth of literature, our knowledge has not grown far beyond what Hamilton and Logan have constructed. There is no clarity of understanding in the existing literature. Aspects other than the performance of the *cāvēr* find hardly any mention there. To correct this imbalance and present whatever is available in the sources are attempted here. We also seek to raise and answer questions related to the role of royalty and the royal functionaries in such a major political-cultural event that used to take place once in twelve years. It is hoped that such a discussion will help in clarifying several issues related to the cultural practices around the court of the Zamorin.

The most important source on *Māmākam* is *Kōlikkōṭan Granthavari*. There are documents, which give details of the *Māmākam* in this collection of documents.\(^7\) Almost all the details of the *Māmākam* celebrated in KE 858 (AD 1683) are available.\(^8\) Another source on *Māmākam* is the *Kēralōtpatti Kilippāṭṭu*, which speaks of two *Māmākams*, celebrated in consecutive years, i.e. KE 869 (AD 1694) and KE 870 (AD 1695).\(^9\) A few other literary works also make references to *Māmākam*. *Kōkasandēśa* and *Candrōtsavam*, both *Manipravāḷa* works of the medieval period and *Kōkilasandēśa*, *Bhramarasandēśa* and *Kāmasandēśa*, Sanskrit *kāvya* s, refer to *Māmākam*. The *cāvēr* songs (ballads

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17 *KG*, Vols. 2, 7, 8, 14 & 21.
on *cāvēr*) depict the bravery of *māmāka cāvēr*. They are the only sources, which provide a picture of the *māmāka cāvēr*. Though there are references in *Kōlikkōtan Granthavari* to them in relation to their number and identity, the story from the side of Valluvakkōnātīrī (the chief of Valluvanātu) or Cochin Rāja who sent the *cāvēr* is not available to us as documents from that side have not come down to us. These ballads preserve the folk memory and as such are valuable as a historical source.20 A song in the *Sanghakkali*, a form of entertainment among the Nampūtīrī Brahmins in Kerala, contains reference to *Māmākam* and the Zamorin.21

**Origin of *Māmākam***

Our knowledge of the origin of the *Māmākam* festival is very limited. There is no historical document, which speaks about the origin of *Māmākam* or throws light on the problem. How and when it originated is, however, explained by a few of the earlier scholars. William Logan says that according to the tradition *Māmākam* was instituted in the days of the emperors (Perumāls), that is, according to him prior to Kollam Era. When the last Perumāl set out for Mecca and left the country, the privilege to celebrate it devolved on the Rāja of the locality, where the festival used to take place, that is, on the Valluvanātu alias Āṟāṉōṭṭū Rāja. Logan thinks that the *Māmākam* was celebrated up to AD 12th or 13th century by the Valluvanātu ruler and then the Zamorin became its protector.22 K.V. Krishna Ayyar says that about a century after the conquest of Polanātu the Zamorin became the protector of the *Māmākam*, i.e. about AD 1200.23 Elamkulam P.N.

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Kunjan Pillai says that a reference to the attack of the Zamorin on Valluvanātu is found in Unniccirutevi caritam, a work composed by about AD 1300 and that the Zamorin may have become the protector of Māmākam by that period.24 N.M. Nampoothiry says that it is not certain when the Māmākam was instituted and he thinks that by AD 1400 the Zamorin should have begun to celebrate the Māmākam.25

Divergent views are expressed on how Māmākam originated. K.V. Krishna Ayyar says that “Mamakam was at first conducted by the Namputiris, it came to be celebrated under the aegis of the Tamil rulers of Tiruvanchikkulam. How and when they became its protectors we can only guess”.26 Sreekanda Poduval says that it was the annual ‘mahāmaham’ festival celebrated in the Cōla capital that formed the model for the celebration of Māmākam in Kerala.27 K.M. Panikkar says that Māmākam was one of the great national festivals of Kerala. Originally it was a national assembly for the election of an emperor for all Kerala. He says that in its later days, the Zamorin assumed the control of this festival, though the traditional form of an imperial election was still kept up.28 Krishna Chaitanya says that Māmākam probably originated as a Buddhist festival. Later it was transformed into a Hindu celebration centred round the worship of the flagstaff of Indra (Indra-dhwaja pūjā). Later still, holding this festival at its traditional site on the bank of the Bhāratappuḷa at Tirunāvaya and presiding over it became a privilege of imperial power.29 P.C.M. Raja says that Māmākam originated mainly

24 Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, Caritrattinte Poorśottalattil, pp. 144-46.
26 K.V. Krishna Ayyar, ZC, p. 92.
27 A.V. Sreekanda Poduval, Māmākkaṃ Nāṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟṟ-redux.
as a religious ceremony and that many physical aspects gradually began to develop around it. He says that for the Zamorins it gave an opportunity to show their grandeur.\textsuperscript{30}

Except for the \textit{Kēraḷōtpatti} tradition, there is no other references to the origin of \textit{Māmākam}. The tradition is that Cēramān Perumāl instituted the festival after consulting the Brahmans, and since the twelve-year tenure of the Perumāls, the kings of Kerala, was started when the Jupiter was in Cancer, the festival also was celebrated in such years. Valļuvakkōnātiri was made the protector of the festival.\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Kēraḷōtpatti} speaks also about the conquest of Tirunāvāya by the Zamorin and his usurpation of the protectorship of \textit{Māmākam}.\textsuperscript{32} The earliest source, which speaks about \textit{Māmākam}, is \textit{Kōkasandēśam}, a \textit{Manipravāla} work of about AD 1400. The poem speaks about the \textit{Māmākam} celebrated by the Zamorin on the banks of Pērār.\textsuperscript{33} In the present state of our knowledge we are not in a position to say anything definite on the origin of \textit{Māmākam}.

About the etymology of \textit{Māmākam} also there are different views. William Logan says that \textit{Māmākam} means \textit{mahāmakham}, i.e. great sacrifice.\textsuperscript{34} K.P. Padmanabha Menon also holds the same view.\textsuperscript{35} The views of both Krishna Ayyar

\textsuperscript{29} Krishna Chaitanya, \textit{A History of Malayalam Literature}, New Delhi, 1971, p. 148.
\textsuperscript{30} P.C.M. Raja, \textit{Māmāskavum Sāmūṭiriyum}, p. 58.
\textsuperscript{32} Hermann Gundert, Ed., \textit{Op. Cit.}, pp. 200-01. A curious reference found in the Netiyirippu version of the \textit{Kēraḷōtpatti} is that “since the sword is presented [by the Perumāl to the Zamorin] to win and shield [to Valļuvakkōnātiri] to protect, even today there should not be any fight with the Valļuvakkōnātiri”. \textit{Ibid.}, p.191. It is interesting to place the above statement against the detailed account of how the Zamorin defeated Valļuvakkōnātiri and captured Tirunāvāya and appropriated the right of celebrating \textit{Māmākam}. \textit{Ibid.}, pp.199-201.
and Vadakkumkur Raja rajavarma Raja are ambiguous. They say that the word *Māmākam* originated from *mahāmagham* and *māghamagham*. T.K. Joseph says that *mahāmāgha magham* became *Māmākam*. Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai says that *māghamakam* gradually became *Māmākam* and *māmānkanm*. The more probable derivation of *Māmākam* is from *māghamakam*, the *makam* asterism in the month of Māgha, the day on which the thirty days festival came to an end.

The term *Māmākam* is used in *Kōjikkōṭan Granthavari*. In *Bhramarasandesśa* and *Kāmasandesśa*, both Sanskrit works, and *Kōkasandesśam* and *Candrotsavam*, both Manipravālam works, the festival was called as *Māghotsava*. In *Kōkasandesśam* it is also called as *māmāka vēta*. In *Kēralōtpatti Kilippāṭṭu*, a work of about AD 18th century, the terms *Māmākam*, *māghotsavam* (also *māghamahōtsavam*) and *māmānkanm* were used. The ballads

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38 Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, *Samskarathinre Nājąkkakkallukai*, p. 128.
39 *Tāippūyam* is also derived its name in the same way. It was celebrated on the asterism of *Pūyam* in the Tamil month of Tai.
44 Idem, Ed., *Candrotsavam*, I: 50, p. 34.
on cāver use the terms both *Māmākam* and *māmānkam*.47 In a *Sanghakkali* song the term *māmānkam* is used.48 Though we see terms like *Māghōtsava, Māmākam* and *māmānkam*, the frequently used term was *Māmākam* during the early period. *Māmānkam* is the most popular usage at present.

Though it is presented as a festival celebrated once in twelve years, even this is not beyond dispute. Krishna Ayyar thinks that *Māmākam* was celebrated when Jupiter was in Leo. He says that “some of the Zamorins even celebrated it in two successive years not only when Jupiter was in Leo but also when he was in Crab”.49 The document in *Kōlīkkōtan Granthavari* dated Kanni 15, KE 986 (AD 1810) says that the *Māmākam* was celebrated when the Jupiter was in Leo.50 But this is not in conformity with the actual evidence of instances mentioned elsewhere in the *Granthavari*. The reference to the earliest *Māmākam* in the *Granthavari* was of KE 786 (AD 1611) when Jupiter was in Cancer.51 There is a reference to the *Māmākam* of KE 834 (AD 1659) which was suspended on account of war with Cochin and the death of the Zamorin. Even in that year the position of Jupiter was in Cancer.52 In KE 858 (AD 1683) when the *Māmākam* was celebrated the position of Jupiter was in Cancer.53 There are references to the *Māmākams* of KE 882 (AD1607), KE 894 (AD1719) and KE 906 (AD 1731).54

47 See above, Note 20.
From the available documents it is evident that only in KE 835 (AD 1660) Māmākam was celebrated when Jupiter was in Leo. It is explicitly stated that this is because in the previous year, when Jupiter was in Cancer, the Zamorin was not in a position to celebrate it due to the war. Thus it is clear that Māmākam was generally celebrated when Jupiter was in Cancer and only in special cases that it was celebrated when Jupiter stood in Leo. There is no Granthavari evidence to the Zamorin celebrating Māmākam in successive years.55

A few details found in Kölikkōtan Granthavari regarding the Māmākam are taken up here for discussion. The earliest reference to a Māmākam in these documents is to the one celebrated in KE 786 (AD 1611).56 The document speaks of the amount paid to Kurumpurānāṭṭu Tūvanāṭṭu Māṭampu Uṇittiri (250 paṇams), Kurumpurānāṭṭu Mēlkołaccēri Mutirakkāla Uṇittiri (150 paṇams), Kurumpurānāṭṭu Svarūpam Paḷiikkare Nāyār (150 paṇams), “as on previous occasions”. The total amount paid was 550 paṇams. A royal letter was sent to Putiyēṭṭu Uṇṇikriṣṇa Piṣāraṭi asking him to send the amount that was due from Vaḷayanāṭṭu dēvasvam as pāṭṭam (rent for the land). Royal letters of approval to receive the amount assigned to them were sent to all the above persons. As already noted there is a reference that the Māmākam due in KE 834 (AD 1659) could not be celebrated due to the war and the death of the Zamorin. Thus it was celebrated in the next year i.e., KE 835 (AD 1660).57

55 Kerālōppati Kilippāṭṭu speaks of the Zamorin celebrating Māmākam in successive years. Since it is a panegyric, the historicity of the event is doubtful.
56 KG, Vol. 2.
57 Ibid., Vols. 7 & 14.
There is a detailed account of the Māmākam of KE 858 (AD 1683) in the Granthavari. In fact, this is one of the most detailed accounts found in the Granthavari.

Preparations for the festival

1) Cutting of bamboos for construction of shed etc.:

A royal letter was sent to Taṟakkal Iremma Mēnōn, a royal functionary of cērikkals which included Veḷḷappanāṭṭukara and Āliparāmpa, on Kanni 3, KE 858 (September 4, AD 1682). The Zamorin was residing then at Ponṇāni Trikkāvil Kōvilakam. The royal letter directed him to cut the bamboos from Āliparāmpa cērikkal to bring pāṇṭi, and also bring the implements, lamps, etc. to Tirunāvāya. It also instructed him to send 1500 paras (para is a measure which is approximately 15 litres) of rice from Veḷḷappanāṭṭukara as a part of the pattam for the year KE 858 (AD 1682-83) to Tirunāvāya. Erayāncēri Pāṭṭar carried this royal letter.

The Zamorin received letter of request (from Taṟakkal Iremma Mēnōn) to send bullets, gunpowder and musketeers to bring pāṇṭi. Kāmpuṟattu Ilayatu was

58 Ibid., Vol. 2.
59 From other documents it is known that Taṟakkal Iremma Mēnōn was a royal functionary in charge of the following cērikkals: Cunannāṭṭu, Veḷḷappanāṭṭukara, Āliparāmpa, Maṇḍalūr, Kāḷati, Ponṇāni Vālke and Ariyūr. Ibid., Vol. 3.
60 Another document in the Granthavari gives the account of the bamboos cut for pāṇṭi and the production of lamps etc. from Āliparāmpa cērikkal. The total expenditure was 845 panams and 7 vicams. Ibid., Vol. 2.
61 Krishna Ayyar says about the Māmākam preparations, “First, a letter was ‘written to Pandy’, a reminiscence of Chera days, when the relations between them and the Pandyas were very intimate”. Krishna Ayyar, ZC, p. 106. It seems that he has misled by the term pāṇṭi for Pāṇḍyas. It is probable that this error was due to a literal reading of a poem known as Kēṟaḻippatti Kilippāṭṭu that “pāṇṭikkēṟuṇāyaccīṟanantaram
vēṟuṇna kōvilakam pāṇṭikkāyutan”, K.C. Manavikraman Raja, Ed., Kēṟaḻippatti Kilippāṭṭu, p. 54. Pāṇṭi is a collection of bamboos brought to Tirunāvāya for construction works which is clear from the Granthavari.
sent with 250 *panams* and royal letters to Matilakattu Könti Mēnōn and Pulikkilū Iṭṭi Unikkumara Mēnōn to send two baskets of gunpowder and the required bullets and the musketeers for the above task.\(^{62}\) Piṭikappurattu Iṭṭi Unṇirāma Mēnōn, the royal superintendent, was also sent along with Kāmpurattu Iḷayatu for recording the expenditure. 179 persons under Pulikkilū Iṭṭi Unikkumara Mēnōn worked for six days (Vṛisčikam 20 to 25 i.e., November 20 to 25) and they were paid 99 *panams*. Twenty-two persons under Matilakattu Iṭṭirārappa Mēnōn also worked for six days. (The royal letter was addressed to Matilakattu Könti Mēnōn). In addition to this many others had worked. The details of the expenditure are found in the document. The total expenditure incurred was 239 *panams* and one *vīcam*.

2) Cutting of the tree for the construction of temporary *Kōvilakams* at Vākayūr:

A *pāḷā* tree (scientific name, *Alstonia scholaris*), which is described as “the tree sacred to the asterism”, (*nālmarām*) was ceremonially cut from Māṅkoḷaṇṇara in Kāḷaṭi *cērikkal* with some rituals on Tulām 11, KE 858 (October 12, AD 1682). This seems to be the inaugural ceremony of cutting the trees. Fifteen *panams* were given to Ceriyanattu Iḷayatu from Eranattu Munnamkur Nampiyāṭiri’s treasury. Lamp, paddy, rice, coconut and plantain were arranged for the ritual. *Muhūrta daksīṇa* (*daksīṇa* for finding out the auspicious occasion) to the royal astrologer and *daksīṇas* to the carpenter and blacksmith were presented.

3) The cloths bought for making flags and pennons:

During Tulām 11 to Dhanu 5, KE 858 (October 12-December 4, AD 1682) the cloths of different colours were bought for making flags and pennons. The details of the cloths bought is given in the document. The amount paid for the cloths to Tunnāran Cakravartti (royal tailor) was 144 *panams*. About 197 *panams*\(^{62}\) this indicates that Matilakattu Könti Mēnōn and Pulikkilū Iṭṭi Unikkumara Mēnōn were the chiefs of musketeers. They are also found in the list of shield bearers in *Māmākam*.

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were paid to the persons who were in charge of flags and pennons during Māmākam.

4) Construction of the Kōvilakams of the Zamorin and Münnālppātu at Vākayūr:

Ceriyanattu Ilāyatu was appointed for the supervision of the construction of the temporary ‘palace’ at Vākayūr. Kalattil Iṭṭikkaranākara Mēnōn sent Panamukkil Teyyan and two superintendents of Kālati cērikkal and Ėranāṭṭu Münnāmkkūr Nampiyāṭiri sent Vaṭakkumpāṭṭu Iṭṭīrī Mēnōn for the maintenance of the accounts of the work. 8382½ panams were given from the royal treasury of Münnāmkkūr Nampiyāṭiri for the construction work. A royal letter was issued to Urāli Kānṇōḷi Kēḷu Nāyār for transporting rice in a boat without having to pay the tolls at Ĉāliyār. This amount, i.e., 182 panams, was adjusted against what was due to him for the work rendered in connection with the construction. About 198 carpenters worked under Maṛayaṅcēri Noṭṭan Ąśārī for forty days (about 7793 taccu, a taccu means a workday) constructing of Kōvilakams, māṭam to Ĉāṭṭirars and the construction of bars and pillars for the platform of the Münnāmkkūr Nampiyāṭiri. The carpenters painted pictures in 41 planks. The picture of Gōpurattumkāvu Bhadrakāḷi, the deity, was also painted. The total amount paid to the carpenters were 2645 panams 2½ vicams. 105 persons worked under Vēṭṭūvan Paṇṭārakkaṇṇakkan (the total workdays were 2637) and they were paid about 768 panams. 948 persons who worked for the construction of palace in various capacities were paid 235¾ panams. Many others were also involved in this construction work. These details, regarding the expenses involved in constructing

63 Kalattil Iṭṭikkaranākara Mēnōn may be the chief royal ‘superintendent’, who has drafted the royal order to Vallattavaii Kuṇṇī Kurikkal in KE 846.

64 Nampoothiry says that tolls were not collected for the articles brought in the boat to Tirunāvāyā for the Māmākam. N.M. Nampoothiry, SCK, p. 101. This is not the case. From the document it is clear only that the amount which was due to 60 persons who worked under Urāli Kānṇōḷi Nāyār was 1125 panams 6 vicams. The tolls exempted in the Ĉāliyār river, 182 panams were deducted from the amount and he was only paid 943 panams and 6 vicams.
temporary sheds and residences for the Zamorin, are a fair indication of the elaborate nature of the festival as well as the seriousness with which it was approached by the entire establishment of the kingdom.

To cut the tree (nālmaram) as already noted, and for installing the pillar and for the puja, dakṣinas were given. Offerings were made to the deities like Kurumpilāvil Antimākāḷan, deity of Tirunāvāya, deity of Vākayūr Taḷi, Ālānṇāṭṭu Bhagavati and Camrakoṭṭattu Ayyappan. The wood was sawed and the timber was brought from Ālūr, Kūṭalūr and Cempalaṅṅāṭṭu to Vākayūr by boat. Köṭṭūr Paṭanāyār and his lōkar (militiamen) were paid 987 paṇams for the protection of Kōvilakams. Four persons under Koteppattu Kunnaccan protected the pānti and a few other persons protected the bathing pavilion. Mahouts were also paid. Kārattūḷa Noṭṭān painted nine domes. Four kalus (scaffolds)⁶⁵ were built by the Muslims. Vailāḷa Paṟaṇṅōṭṭacca Nāyar managed the kalavara (storeroom). Māṅṅāṭṭur Kōru (the blacksmith) repaired the damaged sword of the Ėraṇāṭṭu Mūṅṅāṃkūr Nampiyāṭṭiri. There is a list of royal functionaries who got māsappati (monthly salary) for their services in the construction of Kōvilakams at Vākayūr. A hierarchy can be reconstructed among these royal functionaries on the basis of the amount received by each.

⁶⁵ Kaḷu seems to be a sharpened pole fixed on the ground to impale those disturb the general peace. Kēralōṭṭappū Kilippāṭṭu says that during the Māṃkām of AD 1695 a culprit was punished by impalement (sulagramerri). Manavikraman Raja, Ed., Kēralōṭṭappū Kilippāṭṭu, p. 118.
Hierarchy of royal functionaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Royal functionaries who got salary for their services in the construction work</th>
<th>Amount paid per mensem in panam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pāra Mādhava Nampi</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Čeriyaṉattu Ilayatu</td>
<td>52 ½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vaṭakkumpāṭṭu Iṭṭīrī Mēnōn</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unikkāṭṭu Kēlappa Mēnōn</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tolukkāṭṭu Iṭṭi Uṇṇīrī Mēnōn</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tolukkāṭṭu Uṇiccirukanṭha Mēnōn</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Panamati Teyyan Mēnōn</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Koṇnaccēri Paṇṇacca Mēnōn</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tiruttimēl Vāsu Nampi</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total amount spent for all these pieces of work was 6701 panams and 8½ vīcams. Money was also spent on rice and other commodities. Thus the total expenditure for the construction of Kōvilakams was 8449 panams and 5 vīcams. A royal letter dated Vriścikam 5, KE 858 (November 5, AD 1682) was sent to Ürali Könti and Ārakkal Cēnnan to bring Ürali Nāyars by Vriścikam 15 (November 15) for the construction work of Vākayūr Kōvilakam, “as in earlier times”. Fifty panams were also sent to them along with the royal letter.

5) Royal letters to the Akampati janam:

Royal letters were sent to the Akampati janam (escorting militia). The following is the royal letter sent to the lōkar (militiamen) of Polanāṭu.

“To the Akampati janam.

The māmāka talppūyam is on Makaram 5, KE 858 (January 3, AD 1683). For that the militiamen have to reach Tirunāvāya as before. Māṃnāṭṭu Uṇṇīrāman and Tinayaṅceēri will be sent to bring the militiamen for the Māmākam. Hence a few of the militiamen have to reach Tirunāvāya by Makaram 3 (January 1, AD 1683) itself and all the others, certainly on the day of Māmākani’. The lōkar of Polanāṭu...
comprises *Kilakkum purattu lōkar* and *Vaṭakkum purattu lōkar*.\footnote{It is evident from a document of KE 1031 (AD 1856). \textit{KG}, Vol. 49.} The royal letter sent to *Payyanāṭṭukara janam* and *Nālillappāṭi Anantiravar* was as follows.

“To *Payyanāṭṭukara janam* and *Nālillappāṭi Anantiravar*.

The *māmākah tālpūyam* is on Makaram 5, KE 858. For that a few of the militiamen have to reach at Tirunāvāya as in early times. For *Māmākam* the entire militiamen have to reach. Vāleyūr Uṇnirāriccan was sent with instructions to bring the *janam* (militia). Hence they have to reach certainly [for *Māmākam*] as in early days”. This letter was sent to them through Vāleyūr Uṇnirāricca Ēṛāṭi.

6) Shields inlaid with gold and silver:

Chiefs who gave *akampāti* (escort) to the Zamorin in his procession held about 20 shields. Natuvakkāṭṭu Ēṛāṭi, Palakakkōṭṭu Paṅikkar, Matilakattu Könti Mēnōn, Uṇikkāṭṭu Paṅna Paṅikkar, Tēnaḷi Kūṟuppū, Kūṟupattu Uṇṇekka Nāyar, Kaitamana Kumarrappu Mēnōn and Pulikkīḷū Iṭṭī Uṇikkumāra Mēnōn were among the shield bearers. There is a lacuna in the document and hence the list is incomplete. Among these Matilakattu Könti Mēnōn and Pulikkīḷū Iṭṭī Uṇikkumara Mēnōn were the chiefs of musketeers,\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}, Vol. 2, see above. Note 62.} as we have already noted, and we can assume that others were also chiefs of defined group of soldiers.

7) Transportation of royal jewellery, gold trappings of the elephant and royal insignia:

A large quantity of royal jewellery, gold trappings and other royal insignia were brought to Vākayūr from Ponnāṇi Trikkāvil *Kōvilakam* (for *Māmākam*) on Dhanu 26, KE 858 (December 25, AD 1682). The list of articles is found in the \textit{Granthavart}.\footnote{\textit{KG}, Vol. 2.}
8) Construction of ships and *kampam*:

Seven ships were constructed for the engagement (*kappal kalaham*, mock fight) between one big ship and six small ships during the 27th to 29th days of *Māmākam*. The total expenditure for the construction of seven ships was 308 *panams*. 1239 *panams* paid to Muslim ship-builders and *Ceṭṭis* for *kampam* and the fireworks in the ships. The details of the work in the southern bank of the river like construction of the platform for Ėrāḷppāṭu and Tirumanaccēri Nampūtiri and *Kōvilakams* for them, are not found in the *Granthavari*.

The details of the ceremonies during thirty days of the *Māmākam* of KE 858 are as follows.

After the above preparations for the *Māmākam*, the Zamorin proceeded to Tirunāvāya from Ponnāṇi Vāḷke *Kōvilakam* on Makaram 2, KE 858 (December 31, AD 1682) accompanied by *Kāḷuṭollikal* (Muslim musicians) who played musical instruments. After bathing in the river, the Zamorin proceeded to the temple and worshipped the deity. When he proceeded to Kalpakaccēri (at Tirunāvāya) eight mortars were fired from Vākayūr. He resided there on Makaram 2 and 3 (December 31, AD 1682 and January 1, 1683). On Makaram 4 the Zamorin had *tēvāram* (worship of Bhagavati), *vayarāṭṭu* (a ritual waving of a creeper), bath and food. Then the idol of Bhagavati was carried in procession to the southern room of Kalpakaccēri and placed between two lamps. At the central courtyard a lighted lamp was kept ceremonially along with a *para* filled with paddy. Musical instruments were played marking the beginning of the procession (*puṟappāṭu kōṭṭuka*). Nandāvanattil Nampī dressed and adorned the Zamorin with

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royal jewellery. The Zamorin proceeded to the southern hall, where the Bhagavati idol was placed. He sat on a wooden seat facing east, worshipped the Bhagavati with flowers and adorned his forehead with the sacred ash, which was consecrated by the priest. Conch was blown and mortars were fired. The Zamorin proceeded on foot accompanied by the royal insignia that included ālavaṭṭam (fans frilled with peacock feathers), veṇcāmaram (flywhisks), four meḷukuvāṭṭams (parasols on staves) and four talas (pennons) to Tirunāvāya temple by the eastern gōpura. Conch was blown and the Zamorin paid obeisance to the deity (Lord Krisṇa). He received tīrṭha (consecrated water) and prasāda (blessed flowers and sandal paste) from the mēlsānti (the chief priest of the temple) and presented two paṇams to him as dakṣiṇa. He also gave two paṇams as dakṣiṇa to kilṣānti (the assistant priest). He presented a vestment of nine mulams (length of a forearm, a mulam is approximately 40 cms) to the deity and a cloth for flag. He gave 16 paṇams to Kalpakaccēri Ilayatu for pūja and three paṇams to Patiṇṇāreppāṭṭu Piṣārati for offering a garland of lotus. He paid obeisance to the Bhagavati and came out of the temple complex through the eastern gateway and with music ensemble proceeded to the western gōpura of the temple. Since he was too unwell to bathe for a second time, he proceeded in a palanquin (pallakku) carried by Āriyappunnakal to Vākayūr Kövilakam, through the pathway. The Nāykkannār carried the litter (pallittantu) in front of the procession. When the procession reached the Kövilakam the conch was blown and the music ensemble stopped. The Pentiyanmār (maidservants) waved lighted wicks and pots of vermilion water before the Zamorin. There was no paraniṟṟappu (a para filled with paddy and a nārāyam filled with rice) kept at the Kövilakam when the procession reached there.

The highly ceremonial and stylized character of the arrival of the Zamorin for the Māmākam, as described above, brings out the interesting aspect of it. It was not just a temple festival, which the king wanted to participate in for religious
purposes alone, the show of pageantry, which was an inevitable aspect of the rituals pertaining to royalty, begins here. It is seen throughout the course of the festival, too. We shall return to this theme later; but it is significant to note that the *Māmākam* had more than a religious aspect about it.

The Zamorin, after morning ablutions, *tēvāram* and *vayarāṭṭu* on Makaram 5 (January 3, AD 1683) went to the dressing room. Nandāvanattil Nampi dressed and adorned him with royal jewellery and *tirumutippattam* (a band of cloth tied on the forehead, i.e., a diadem). Then the Zamorin presented Tamme Mūtta Panikkar with a cloth and turban. The elephant adorned with gold trappings was tied inside the bars and pennons were tied near the bars.

Lit golden lamps, decorated by Nandavanattil Nampi, were placed on the platform below the *Manittara*. Paddy, rice, beaten rice, plantain and coconut were also arranged here for rituals. Those who constructed the *Kōvilakam* had arranged this. Bhagavati idol was carried in procession to the southern part of dressing room and placed between two lamps. The Zamorin presented daksinas to Nāykkānmar and other musicians. He sat on a wooden seat facing east and worshipped the Bhagavatī with flowers. The priest made offerings to the Gaṇapati. He gave eleven *panams* as *muhūrtta daksina* to Valūvanāṭṭu Paṭṭar and four *panams* to Ālūr Kaṇikaḷ (astrologer). The Zamorin presented five *panams* to Cēnnamaṇṇalattu Nampūtiri who presented him with consecrated ash. Then a coconut was broken with a knife, and conch was blown to mark the auspicious occasion. With two long


72 Presenting the turban is usually an investiture ceremony. Zamorin presented the turban to the chiefs on their investiture. Presenting ‘the sword and the robe’ is another such ceremony. Here Zamorin presented Tamme Mūtta Panikkar cloth and turban. For the details of the investiture ceremonies, see above, Chapter IV.

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handled silver lamps in front and two long handled iron lamps at the back and also the other royal insignia and Bhagavati idol he proceeded to the Manittara. He stood on the big platform below the Manittara and then mounted it. He held the sword and stood there facing the east, saluting the deity and shaking the sword. The shield-bearers stood on both sides of the Zamorin and shook their shields inlaid with gold and silver. Paḷlimārīti (the sacred window panel) was placed along the eastern wall of the dressing room. After the Zamorin stood there in state, the Ėralppāṭu and Tirumanaccēri Nampūtiri stood in state on the southern bank of the river, about a kilometre away from where the Zamorin stood. Then three volleys each were fired ceremonially from both sides. The Zamorin held his sword, saluted to the east and proceeded to the Kövilakam in a litter. After the royal jewellery was removed, he was to have bathed in the pool at the western side of the Kövilakam. But since it was not in a state of repair, he proceeded to the river in the south and bathed from the eastern side of the bathing pavilion and went to Kalpakaccēri. He had his food there and by evening he proceeded to Vākayūr Kövilakam.

The Zamorin had his ablutions and daily prayers on the next morning, i.e., Makaram 6 (January 4). Vayarāṭṭu was performed. Mortar was fired twice. The musical ensemble marked the beginning of his procession. The mortar was fired for the third time. After the conch was blown he wore his ceremonial dress (tirumey kuppāyam) and hat (tirumuṭi toppi) from the royal room and proceeded in litter from the elephant pavilion accompanied by musket salutes, musical ensemble and all the royal insignia. He proceeded through the pathway to the east, via Kūriyāḷ (the pipal or Ficus religiosa tree near the western gate of the temple) to the bathing pavilion in the river. Conch was blown and he stepped down from the litter and proceeded to the upper pavilion. There he sat down on a Cinappitham (probably a Chinese stool) facing north. Musical ensemble from the lower pavilion stopped and he proceeded to the royal room. A conch was blown and the royal
ornaments were removed. The Zamorin had his food after bath. In the evening (when the shadow of a person measured about seven feet in the afternoon) two volleys of mortars were fired. At the time of the third volley he was decked with the jewellery and sandal paste. Conch was blown. Accompanied by a Brahman, who may be one of the priests or servants, with all the royal insignia, Bhagavati idol, Pallimārāṭī and musical ensemble, he treded the black and white carpet which was specially spread and was to have mounted the elephant. Since the Zamorin was not well he could not mount on the elephant’s back this time. Hence he proceeded in the palanquin carried by the Āriyappunnaṇakāḷ. The procession moved via Kūrīyāl to the western gōpura of Tirunāvāya temple. He was to have dismounted elephant’s back and proceeded to the temple to worship the deity. He was to have mounted the elephant’s back again accompanied by ilayamritukāran (the royal betel leaf-supplier) from the western gōpura to Vākayūr Kövilakam. When the procession reached the elephant pavilion, he was to have dismounted the elephant. After the conch was blown, he proceeded to the royal room in the palace. The maidservants waved lighted wicks and pots of vermilion water. The ceremonies on the first 19 days were a monotonous repetition of this.73

On the 20th day, after the Zamorin’s bath and food from the bathing pavilion at Vākayūr, two volleys of mortars were fired. When the elephant adorned with gold trappings reached the lower pavilion, the Zamorin, decked in royal jewellery, mounted the elephant, after the conch was blown. The bodyguards of the Zamorin and Vayyanāṭṭu Nampaṭi escorted him. Muskets and mortars were fired. With all the royal insignia, which included Pallimārāṭī and Bhagavati idol, and escorted by the Cāttirars of Nenmini, and soldiers bearing silver and gold inlaid shields, he proceeded to the temple of Tirunāvāya, via Kūrīyāl. At the western gōpura, he dismounted from the elephant and conch was blown. [The

73 Except on Makaram 5 (January 3) all the other 18 days the ceremonies were a repetition to that of Makaram 6 (January 4).
Zamorin paid obeisance to the deity and returned to the western gopura. After the conch was blown, muskets and mortars were fired. He mounted the elephant and proceeded to west through the pathway along with the musical ensemble. After reaching the elephant pavilion at Vākayūr, the Zamorin stepped down from the elephant's back after the muskets and mortars were fired. He proceeded to the royal room in the palace and then the musical instruments were stopped. The maidservants waved the lighted wick and the pot of vermilion water. On the morning of the 20th day, those who constructed the palaces hoisted 15 flags at different points. The flags were located at the following spots: the bathing pavilion, Kūriyāl, Accan tara and in the western border of the pathway a flag each, two in the middle of the pathway, two each at the bars, one each in the north and south of the Manittara and one each on the three sides of the bars.

The retinue to the Zamorin from the 20th day onwards is as follows: On the first day (i.e., the 20th day of the festival) the bodyguards of the Zamorin consisted of the ‘Thirty Thousand’ and Vayyanāṭṭu Nampaṭi, on the second day Kaṭannamaṇṇa Eḻaya Vakayil Vaḷḷōti, on the third day Neṭuvirippil Mūṭta Ėṟāṭi, on the fourth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭta Kōvīl, on the fifth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭta Vēṭṭam Unai, on the sixth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the seventh day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the eighth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the ninth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the tenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the eleventh day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the twelfth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the thirteenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the fourteenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the fifteenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the sixteenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the seventeenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the eighteenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the nineteenth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl, on the twentieth day Vēṭṭam Unai Mūṭṭṭa Kōvīl.

74 The palm leaves are damaged and there is a lacuna in the document. Since not much difference in details of the ceremonies are found in the Māmākams of KE 858 and KE 906 we used here the description of the latter quoted by Krishna Ayyar to fill the gaps. I could not lay my hands on this document. The parts reproduced of the Māmākam of KE 906 are given in the square brackets. Krishna Ayyar, ZC, Notes, pp. 108-117.

75 Katannamaṇṇa family was one of the four branches of the Āraṇṭtu Svarūpam, the seniormost member of which was the chief of Vāḷḷuvaṉāṭu. It is intriguing that a junior member of that house should be the bodyguard of the Zamorin, who was the sworn enemy of the house of Āraṇṭtu, that too in the Māmākam, which was supposed to have been the ceremonial expression of the feud between the two royal houses. Will it mean that, in spite of the rituals, the strained relationship did not go to the level of vendetta? Otherwise, the presence of a member of Katannamaṇṇa family at the head of the Zamorin's bodyguards is unthinkable. We see the chief of the same house who attended the funeral ceremony of the Zamorin in KE 841. KG, Vol. 14, copies of the same document in Vols. 7 & 13. In an early period (KE 774) we see a chief of Vāḷḷuvaṉāṭu attending Taippūyang and receiving Ṣṭappāṇam. Ibid., Vol. 7, copy of the same document in Vol. 13. It is interesting to compare this with the way in which Vēṭṭam Uṭṭaya Mūṭṭa Kōvīl stood to the Zamorin. The chief of Vēṭṭam participates in the Māmākam of KE 858 in a big way, but the Zamorin declares that he is at loggerheads! Similarly, in an earlier period (KE 825), he takes part in the investiture of the chief of Vēṭṭam, when they were at loggerheads. Ibid., Vol. 14, copies of the same document in Vols. 7 & 13.
on the fourth day Etatturmāṭṭu Nampiyāṭiri, on the fifth day Ėranāṭṭu Mūnmākūr Nampiyāṭiri, on the sixth day Ėranāṭṭu Ḭḷamākūr Nampiyāṭiri, on the seventh day the ‘Ten Thousand’, Kōljikkōṭṭu Talaccenna Nāyar and Ėranāṭṭu Mēnōn.

In the evening of the eighth day (i.e., the 27th day of the festival), on the asterism of Puṇartam, the Zamorin, after bath and food from Vākayūr, got dressed up. He was adorned with royal jewellery and tirumūṭippattam. The nine pennons were tied on both sides of the bars, and the elephant adorned with gold trappings was tied inside the bars. [At the southern part of Nilapāṭu ṭara (the platform), which is below the Manittara, the four decorated golden lamps and those brought from inside the bars were placed along with paranirappu and offerings to Gaṇapati]. The Bhagavati idol was placed between two lamps in the southern part of the dressing room. Here the Zamorin sat on a wooden seat facing east and presented daksīnas. He presented eleven pāṇams to Valļuvavāṇāṭṭu Paṭṭar and four pāṇams to Ālūr Kaṇikal. The Zamorin worshipped the Bhagavati with flowers and adorned himself with the sacred ash consecrated by Cennamaṇṇalaṭṭu Nampūṭiri, for which the Zamorin presented five pāṇams as daksīna. He broke a coconut [with the knife placed before him. The conch was blown; muskets and mortars were fired. Along with the four long handled lamps and all the royal insignia including the royal sword and shield, the Bhagavati idol and musical ensemble he proceeded to the Manittara. He saluted to the east and stood in state on the Manittara, shaking his sword. The muskets and mortars were fired. On the southern bank the Ėṟāḷppāṭu too stood in state and muskets were fired from there as well. Then six small ships were engaged in a mock fight with a big ship (in the river). Two kampams raised and kampa firing followed. After that the Zamorin

76 The Zamorin stood in state at Manittara is specifically mentioned in the documents. But another larger platform below the Manittara is called as Nilapāṭu ṭara or Nilattara. It seems that Manittara was built over Nilapāṭu ṭara. Usually the scholars take nilapāṭu nilkkuka for standing in state.
held his sword and saluted to the south. The conch was blown and he proceeded to the Kövilakam. Pallimārāti was placed on the side of the wall of the dressing room. [The Zamorin reached the first floor of the Kövilakam in litter. Then the conch was blown and the musical ensemble was stopped. The pennons, decorated lamps, paranirappu and the offerings to Gaṇapati are not to be removed from there.

On the day of Pūyam asterism (i.e., the 28th day of the festival) morning, after ablutions he dressed] and adorned himself with royal jewellery. The Zamorin proceeded to Manittara with all the royal insignia, Bhagavati idol and musical ensemble. Holding the sword he bowed to the east and stood on Manittara shaking his sword. Two volleys were fired from the northern bank. After that the Ėrālppāṭu stood in state on the southern bank and two volleys were fired from there also. Holding the sword the Zamorin saluted to the east again and proceeded to the Kövilakam after the conch was blown.

After bath and food by evening [the Zamorin proceeded to the dressing room, dressed up and was adorned with royal jewellery. After the conch was blown he proceeded to the Manittara and reaching below it received the sword and saluted to the east and stood in state shaking the sword. After a volley fired from there, Ėrālppāṭu stood in state on the southern bank and two volleys were fired]. The Veṭṭam Uṭaya Mūtta Kövil, holding his sword, stood on the platform of the Kuriyāl facing east, which he had got refurbished for the purpose. [After the guns were fired from both banks and fireworks from ship and kampa firing, the Zamorin holding the sword saluted to the east. Conch was blown and the Zamorin proceeded on foot to the Kövilakam. After reaching the royal room conch was blown and the musical ensemble was stopped.

In the morning of Āyilyam day, (i.e., 29th day of the festival) the Zamorin after his ablutions proceeded] to the dressing room and got properly dressed and
adorned. Conch was blown and he proceeded to Manittara. Reaching below it he received the sword saluted and stood in state shaking the sword. The muskets were fired from the northern bank. [Then on southern bank the Ėrālppātu stood in state and guns were fired from both sides. The Zamorin received his sword and saluted. The conch was blown and the Zamorin proceeded to the Kövilakam in litter. Reaching the royal room the conch was blown and musical ensemble was stopped. After bath and food he proceeded by evening to Manittara. Reaching below Manittara the Zamorin saluted] and a volley was fired. Then the Ėrālppātu Mūnāmkkūr Nampiyātiri stood facing west on the platform of Kūriyāl, which was cleaned by his men. Then muskets were fired from both banks. After the show of fireworks from the ship and the kampa fireworks, the Zamorin held his sword and saluted [to the east. Conch was blown and the Zamorin proceeded to the Kövilakam on foot. Reaching the first floor conch was blown and the musical ensemble was stopped. The maidservants waved lighted wicks and pot of vermilion in front of the Zamorin.

On the day of Makam (i.e., 30th and the last day of the festival), the Zamorin after morning ablutions, tēvāram and vayarattu proceeded to the dressing room. After adornment, conch was blown and he proceeded to Manittara. Reaching below it the Zamorin received his sword and saluted to the east and stood in state on Manittara shaking his sword. After a volley was fired from the northern bank, the Ėrālppātu stood in state on the southern bank and two volleys were fired. Then the Ėranāṭṭu Iḷamkkūr Nampiyātiri stepped down the platform and prostrated. Then he proceeded with Tirumanaccēri Nampūtiri in litters to Kūriyāl after crossing the river. From the eastern boundary of the pathway, they stepped down from the respective litters and prostrated to the west and proceeded through the pathway. They mounted the platform (Kalittara, the platform of Tamme Paṇīkkar), below the Manittara, saluted and prostrated there. After getting the
consent of the Zamorin to mount the *Mapitta* or *Mamttara*, the *Erāłppāṭu* mounted it, stood on the right side of the Zamorin and Tirumanaccēri Nampūtiri stood just behind the *Erāłppāṭu*. After that the Maṅṇāṭṭaccaṇ and Tinayaṅcēri Ḥayatu welcomed the *lōkar* who were assembled at *Accan tara* and was to have brought them to Vākayūr accompanied by the musical ensemble]. The entire company was supposed to go to Vākayūr; but since the relationship with the Rāja of Veṭṭam was strained for the time being, that did not happen.\(^77\) Thus, crossing the river to the south the Zamorin proceeded to Ponnāṇi Trikkāvil *Kōvilakam* with musical ensemble. After muskets were fired he went inside the palace, and the maidservants waved lighted wicks and pot of vermilion water in front of him. Then the musical ensemble was stopped, and he proceeded to bathe.

*Cāvēr*, the suicide squads of medieval Kerala, came and died fighting with the guards of the Zamorin during *Māmākam*. In fact, they have been romanticised so much in the popular imagination of Kerala that the *māmākam* is remembered for their altruistic suicide more than anything else. They were the men of Rāja of Valḷuvanāṭu and/or Rāja of Cochin.\(^78\) The details of *cāvēr* slain during the *Māmākam* of KE 858 are given in the *Granthavari* as follows: “The number of *cāvēr* who came and died on the day of *māmāka taippūyam*, before the Zamorin stood in state in the platform, was five. The number of *cāvēr* under Vattamanna Kaṇṭṭar Mēnōn who came and died in the early morning, of the day after the elephant was adorned with gold trappings (i.e., 21\(^{st}\) day of *Māmākam*), was eighteen. The number of *cāvēr* who came and died under Candrattil Paṅikkar on the next day (i.e., 22\(^{nd}\) day of *Māmākam*) was eleven. The number of *cāvēr* who

\(^77\) There is a lacuna in the document in the *Granthavari*. Since there is a difference in details in the two documents, we cannot reproduce it by using the document of KE 906. In KE 906 after *Māmākam* the Zamorin proceeded to Ayyamkulam, which was in the territory of Veṭṭam and in KE 858, it is probable that since the Zamorin was unhappy with the chief of Veṭṭam, instead of entering his territory and going to Ayyamkulam, he should have proceeded to Ponnāṇi Trikkāvil *Kōvilakam* as was the case in the *Taippūyam* of KE 809.

\(^78\) See above, Note 2.
came and died under Veṭṭe Panikkar on the third day (third day from Kaṇṭar Mēnōn and his followers died; i.e., 23rd day of Māmākam) was twelve. The number of cāver who came to Vākayūr and died on fourth day (i.e., 24th day of Māmākam) was four. The number of cāver who was arrested from the place of Kaḷattīl Iṭṭikkarunākara Mēnōn and brought tied to Vākayūr and put to sword was one”.79 [“The number of Chavers arrested on the day of the sacrifice when all the persons together made the obeisance below Vakkayur (sic) at the time when the Zamorin was taking his stand, and left tied to the bars, and who were afterwards brought to Vakkayur and after the ceremony was over and the Zamorin had returned to the palace were put to the sword 4. Total 55”].80

The accounts of the amount paid to the musicians during the Māmākam are found in the Granthavari. They were paid on Makaram 8, KE 858 (January 6, AD 1683) from Vākayūr. The total amount that includes the offerings to the deities was 262 paṇams. They were also presented with ūḷam ennappanam (money paid for supplying oil by turns) on Makaram 10 (January 8, total amount 145 paṇams) and Makaram 16 (January 14, total amount 186 paṇams) from Vākayūr and on Kumbham 6 (February 2, total amount 81 paṇams) from Ponnāṇi Vālke Trikkāvil Kövilakam. They were also paid with kutippaṇam (probably an allowance for their daily maintenance or the subsistence of those who were left behind at home) in Makaram KE 858 (January 28-February 26, AD 1683) from Vākayūr Kövilakam. The maidservants were also paid, with kutilku paṇam (an amount to their household, probably the same as kutippaṇam) on Makaram 8 (January 6) from Vākayūr Kövilakam.

79 Ibid., Vol. 2.
80 The palm leaf in the Granthavari is damaged and there is a lacuna in the document. The portion quoted in the square brackets is reconstructed from William Logan, Malabar, Vol. I, p. 169. This is quoted incompletly and erroneously in N.M. Namppoorthy, SCK, p. 96.
The procession of the doorkeepers was brought from Kilur to Tirunavaya for the Māmākam. They were paid on Kumbham 5 (February 1) at Vākayūr Kövilakam. The Muslims, in charge of fireworks during the Māmākam, were paid on Kumbham 13, KE 858 (February 9, AD 1683) from Ponnāni Trikkāvil Kövilakam (total amount 234½ paṇams). The kāłutolikal (the Muslim musicians) were also paid on that occasion (total amount 68 paṇams).

The Granthavari contains a detailed account of the Vilakku ("Lamp festival") celebrated in the year KE 857 at Tirunavaya. The Kēralōtpatti Kilippāṭṭu gives details of the Māmākam of KE 869 (AD 1694), which was celebrated when the Jupiter was in Cancer. It is stated that in KE 870 also the same Zamorin, i.e. Bharānī Tirunāl Zamorin celebrated Māmākam, when the Jupiter was in Leo. A Nampūṭiri of a certain Kāṭaṅcēri house composed this poem. Many of the details in the poem on Māmākam are corroborated by the description in the Granthavari.

The Zamorin has himself written on Māmākam in a later period. It was in reply to queries of Colonel Colin Mackenzie about the family history of the Zamorins.

The answer to the queries on Māmākam and cāvéris is as follows. In Kerala there is the temple of Viṣṇu consecrated by nine sages (Navayōgikāḥ) on the northern bank of the river Neya, also known as Pratīci and Pērār and celebrated from legendary times. This temple at Tirunavaya 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 Neya during the above stated month of Māgha. The Zamorin, the great king of our royal house (svarūpam), along with the four junior princes, prime ministers, commanders, the great Brahmans and all the people go to Tirunavaya for the protection and celebration of that festival. There they reside in the palaces constructed near the

81 A lunar eclipse occurred on this day. Swamikannu Pillai, An Indian Ephemeris AD 700 to AD 1799, Vol. VI, p. 168.

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 *svarūpa*.

During the 28 days in the month of Māgha the Zamorin observed the following procedure: Royal procession and standing in state, feast to all the people to make them happy, daily bath in the river, worshipping Lord Viṣṇu and receiving the blessings of the Brahmans. During this *Māmākam* festivities all the kings of Malayālam (Kerala) sent gifts.... After the *Māmākam* in the above said 28 days in the month of Māgha, the great king of our *svarūpa*, after prostrating Lord Viṣṇu, the sacred river and the great Brahmans, returns to his quarters at Calicut along with all the people.  

As in the case of the origin of *Māmākam*, in relation to the last *Māmākam* also, there are divergent views. Logan writes that last *Māmākam* was held in AD 1743. Logan, *Malabar*, Vol. I, p. 165. K.P. Padmanabha Menon and P.K.S. Raja also held the same view. Krishna Ayyar says that the last *Māmākam* was in AD 1755, a few others also more or less supported this view. Later Ayyar changed his view that in AD 1766 also *Māmākam* was celebrated. P.C.M. Raja’s view on the last *Māmākam* is ambiguous. Elamkulam thinks that due to the attack of Haider Ali, *Māmākam* in AD 1766 may not have been celebrated and only the preparations may have been completed. N.M. Nampoothiry says that in AD 1766 *Māmākam* was celebrated.

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83 *KG*, Vol. 53; see above, Chapter VIII; see also, N.M. Nampoothiry, *SCK*, pp. 24-26.


90 He says that it is difficult to accept the view that *Māmākam* was held in AD 1766, and if it was celebrated it may be only a few rituals related to it. P.C.M. Raja, *Māmākavum Samiitiriyum*, pp. 31-32. He elsewhere says, “since the attack of Haider Ali was only in May [sic] 1766 the view of Krishna Ayyar that the *Māmākam* in 1766 was somehow celebrated can be accepted”. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
He points out the account of a Nampūtiri in the Vella family and the document in Kōlīkkōtan Granthavari to substantiate his view.\textsuperscript{92}

The following things can be said about Māmākam from the above discussion. The Zamorin started preparations for Māmākam four months before its commencement. The royalty, royal functionaries, locality chiefs, local magnates and militiamen were all mobilised for the preparations for and conduct of this grand festival. Various professional groups like carpenters, blacksmiths, tailors, masons, astrologers, weavers, ship-builders, pyrotechnicians, oilmongers, etc. were required for the preparation works. How the royal machinery functioned is evident from the details of Māmākam of KE 858. The service of the local magnates was obligatory, as the royal letter reminded them to “do as in early days”. By the passage of time the number of people incorporated in to the festival should have increased.

The grand festival also promoted the social and cultural interaction. The people attended it from different parts of the kingdom made it an elaborate social gathering. Consequently merchandise and trade should have accelerated. Many entertainments and art forms like Krisnanāṭṭam, Rāmanāṭṭam, Kūṭṭ, Pāthakam and Kūtiyāṭṭam were said to have performed during this period.\textsuperscript{93}

The festival was noted for the show of military power, royal splendour and pageantry and the observance of rituals. The presence of militiamen throughout the ceremonies and especially during the first day and 20\textsuperscript{th} to 30\textsuperscript{th} days is

\textsuperscript{91} Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, Caritrattn̄e Paścāttalattī, Notes, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{92} N.M. Nampoothiry, SCK, p. 99; Idem, Ed., Veḷḷjavēye Caritram, pp. 56, 58; KG, Vol. 8. Kōlīkkōtan Granthavari gives the date of KE 941 among the years in which Māmākam was celebrated. KE 963 is also written but striken off.

\textsuperscript{93} K.C. Manavikraman Raja, Ed., Kēralōṭpati Kūṭippāṭṭu, p. 111.
noticeable. Muskets and mortars were fired on all these days. The mock fight between ships was also martial in nature. The cāvēr who died fighting during Māmākam added the element of a blood feud to the whole festival. In addition to Zamorins's daily rituals like tēvāram and vayarāṭṭu, he took bath in the river, which is believed to be graced by the water of Ganges during the festival, and pay obeisance to the deity of Tirunāvāya. The Bhagavati idol, long-handled lamp and pallimāṟāṭṭi were carried always in front of the procession of the Zamorin. This suggests the ritualistic-symbolism. Blowing of conch and music ensemble also suggest the same thing.

The musical ensemble, royal insignia including flywhisks, flags, pennons, elephant adorned with gold trappings, royal jewellery adorned by the Zamorin, etc. declare the royal splendour, demonstrating the pageantry typical of the times. The Zamorin paid obeisance to the deity daily, while the junior princes, locality chiefs, local magnates, retinue of the Zamorin and militiamen paid him their obeisance. Though the Zamorin does not claim divine status, he sought the divine blessings and legitimisation of his political status by these ceremonies.

It may not be out of place to describe Māmākam as a "state" festival. It was very much political in nature. It was an occasion for the exhibition of royal prowess and pageantry to the subjects. It was also an occasion of strengthening the relationship between the king and the locality chiefs, local magnates and the royal functionaries. The ties with them were made stronger, as they all were present during the occasion. They had many obligations as well as privileges. A huge amount of money was spent for the festival. The festival was used to enhance the prowess and splendour of the kingship. This becomes all the more relevant in the region around Tirunāvāya, as that territory was contested between the Vaḻuvakkōṅāṭiri and the Zamorin, militarily to begin with and at least ritually in
later times. Thus the military character of the festival would demonstrate to those whom it may have concerned that the Zamorin was a worthier master for them. This would also explain in part why such a pompous festival, which legitimated the royalty in such a huge manner, was celebrated not in the capital city of Calicut, but in Tirunāvāya, proximate to the “second capital” of Ponnāni.

That the Māmākam was an expression of political hegemony could be supported by the fact that when the Zamorins lost their overlordship in AD 1766 first to Mysorean rulers and then to the British, they were not in a position to celebrate it. From AD 1792 the Zamorin was no more than a big landlord under the British, hardly capable of celebrating the festival “as in earlier times”; nor was it politically necessary for him to celebrate it any more. But he performed all the courtly rituals and also had the processions.

Taippūyam

The Zamorin also celebrated Taippūyam on the banks of Pērār at Tirunāvāya. It was celebrated in the month of Tai or Makaram on Pūyam asterism, once in twelve years, when Jupiter was in Gemini. The name of the festival is derived from the asterism and month of its celebration. The ceremonies of Taippūyam are a replication of those on the first day of Māmākam, i.e., Māmāka Taippūyam. But many of the details of the festival are not known. K.V. Krishna Ayyar says that Taippūyam was celebrated in the previous year of Māmākam. Thus it is obvious that he considers it as a festival held once in twelve years. On

94 Though the Kēralotpattī Kilippūṭu speaks about the cāvēr generally in positive terms, there is one statement which is not exactly complimentary. It puts into the mound of the people a question the why so many of the cāvēr of Ḍaranṭṭu should die, as a matter of ritual – just two would be enough. For, even if a hundred thousand fight and die, that would not cause any vacillation in the minds of the Zamorin. Ibid., p. 93.

the other hand N.M. Nampoothiry says that it was an annual festival.\textsuperscript{97} He says that the Taippūyam of the year, which immediately preceded the Māmākam, was celebrated in a grand way.\textsuperscript{98} All the documents available on Taippūyam in Kölikkōtan Granthavari show that it was celebrated when the Jupiter was in Gemini that is once in twelve years.\textsuperscript{99} There is no evidence to show Taippūyam as an annual festival. Thus, in the present state of knowledge it would appear that Krishna Ayyar was right in observing that it was celebrated once in twelve years, in the year preceding Māmākam.

Here are the details of the festival and the role of royalty in it are examined. All the documents available on Taippūyam in Kölikkōtan Granthavari, which is the sole source on it, are made use of here. The details of six Taippūyams from KE 774 (AD 1599) to KE 905 (AD 1730) are available.\textsuperscript{100} They were held in the following years: KE 774 (AD 1599),\textsuperscript{101} 809 (AD 1634),\textsuperscript{102} 821 (AD 1646),\textsuperscript{103} 845 (AD 1670),\textsuperscript{104} 857 (AD 1682)\textsuperscript{105} and 905 (AD 1730).\textsuperscript{106} Some of the documents in

\textsuperscript{96} Idem, ZC, p. 105.

\textsuperscript{97} N.M. Nampoothiry, SCK, pp. 97-99.

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., p. 14.

\textsuperscript{99} Taippūyam was celebrated during the following years: KE 774 (AD 1599), KE 809 (AD 1634), KE 821 (AD 1646), KE 845 (AD 1670) and KE 857 (AD 1682). The position of Jupiter specifically stated in the document itself as Gemini. KE 833 (AD 1658) is also stated as the year of Taippūyam, and the position of Jupiter was at Gemini. Due to political chaos it was not celebrated.

\textsuperscript{100} The reference to Taippūyam which was not celebrated due to political chaos in KE 833 (AD 1658) is not included in it.


\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., Vol. 7, copy of the same document in Vol. 13.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid., Vol. 7, copies of the same document in Vols. 13 & 14.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., Vol. 7, copy of the same document in Vol. 14.

\textsuperscript{105} Ibid., Vol. 14.

\textsuperscript{106} The Taippūyam document of KE 905 from the Granthavari is quoted in K.C. Manavikraman Raja, Ed., Kēralōtpatti Kilippāṭṭu, Glossary, pp. v-vii. I have not able to lay my hands on this document.
the Granthavari spell it as taippuyam or salppuyam, obviously an attempt at overcorrection. Since the details of all the festivals are similar, with minor variations, we have collated them to narrate the festival. The following is our reconstruction of Taippuyam.

Before proceeding to Vākayūr for Taippuyam the Zamorin went through a few rituals, paid the musicians, presented dakṣiṇas to the priest and various functionaries. The Zamorin made offerings to different deities. The procession of the Zamorin started from various places depending on where he was then residing. The procession was with all the royal insignia including music ensemble and fireworks.

On the previous day of Taippuyam the Zamorin proceeded to the temple of Tirunāvāya. He worshipped the deity and received tūrtha (consecrated water) and prasāda. He gave dakṣiṇas to the priests and made ritual offerings. He resided that day at Vākayūr Kövilakam. The Zamorin bathed in the river Pērār and had his dinner from the Kövilakam and slept that night there. Four hundred earthenware lamps (sarakam), which were brought from Kālāti cērikkal, were lighted around the Kövilakam and in the Manittara at Vākayūr. The militiamen of Payyanāṭṭukara and Polanāṭu and the palace guards of the Zamorin (akattuṭṭu pariṣa) guarded the palace. Sometimes cāvoor (suicide squads of Vaḷḷuvakkōṇātiri or Cochin Rāja) came and died fighting.


108 Royal letters were sent to them in advance to this effect as is seen in KE 845. KG, Vol. 7, copy of the same document in Vol. 14.

109 The document of Taippuyam in KE 809 says that “no cāvoor came and died” in that night. Ibid., Vol. 7, copy of the same document in Vol. 13. It implies that usually cāvoor came and died on the occasion. See also above, Note 2.
On the day of *Taippūyam* the Zamorin after morning ablutions, *tēvāram* and *vayarāṭṭu* took bath. He was adorned with sandal paste, royal jewellery that was usually used during *Mūmākam* and was dressed up in the ceremonial dress, including *tirumūṭippaṭṭam*. At the royal room (*pālliyaṭṭa*) four golden lamps and two *paras* filled with paddy and rice each, which were brought from Kālaṭi *cēṛikkal*, were kept. Bhagavati idol was placed in between the lamps. Coconut, plantain and beaten rice were kept there in two plantain leaves. The Zamorin sat on the black and white carpet brought from Kālaṭi *cēṛikkal* and presented *dakṣiṇas*. The royal sword and shield were placed in front. Then the Zamorin bowed the Bhagavati. He broke a coconut with a knife. The conch was blown and the musical instruments were played to mark the beginning of the procession. Mortars and muskets were fired. The Zamorin presented the robe and turban to Tamme Mūṭṭa Paṇikkār. Then the Zamorin held and shook his sword and circumambulated the Bhagavati idol placed in the royal room. He went out following the Bhagavati idol.

The Zamorin proceeded to *Maṇittara* with four long handled lamps and all other royal insignia. The four golden lamps, *paranirappu* (a *para* filled with paddy and a *nāṛiyam* filled with rice) and in two plantain leaves pieces of coconut, beaten rice and plantains were kept at *Maṇittara*. The Zamorin, who reached below the *Maṇittara*, saluted and prostrated the deity of Tirunāvāya to the east. He circumambulated the *Maṇittara*, mounted it and stood in state there. The Bhagavati idol was placed at *Maṇittara*. All the royal insignia was brought to the platform and the musicians stood on two rows there and played musical instruments. In addition to *Maṇittara* there were three more platforms below it. One was *Nilapāṭṭutara*, another of Tamme Mūṭṭa Paṇikkār, where he used to display his fencing skills (*Kāḷittara*) and below that another platform, where the musketeers...
stood and fired in order. When the Zamorin was standing in state cāvēr used to come and died fighting.\textsuperscript{110}

The Zamorin stood on state on the northern bank of the river. In the meanwhile Ėranāṭṭu Ḭālāmkūr Nampiyāṭīri and Tirumanaccēri Nampāṭīri stood in state on the southern bank of the river. Three volleys of mortars each were fired from both banks. Ėranāṭṭu Ḭālāmkūr Nampiyāṭīri and Tirumanaccēri Nampāṭīri crossed the river and proceeded to the northern bank in different litters. They saluted and prostrated (probably the deity of Tirunāvāya) at the eastern end of the pathway, then near Kūriyāl and also at the middle and western end of the pathway. Then they prostrated at the platform of Tamme Mūṭṭa Paṇīkkar (Kaḷittārap), which is below the Manittārap. They mounted Manittārap after the Zamorin gave the consent, saluted the Zamorin and stood on his right side paying respect. The litters were placed in the southern side of the platform. The elephant adorned with gold trappings was tied facing east in the northern part inside the bars. Pallimāṛāṭi was kept on the southern veranda of the dressing room. Ėranāṭṭu Mūṇnāmkūr Nampiyāṭīri, Ėṭattūrṇāṭṭu Nampiyāṭīri, Neṭuvirīppiḷ Mūṭṭa Ėṛṭī and other princes stood below the Manittārap on the right side. Before that Maṇnāṭṭaccan and Tinayāncēri Ḭāḷayatu along with music ensemble went to Accantārap, where the militiamen were assembled,\textsuperscript{111} to bring them to Manittārap. All of them came to the Manittārap and paid joint obeisance. Then the music ensemble was stopped. The Ėrāḷppāṭu saluted and stepped down.\textsuperscript{112} He crossed the river and reached the southern bank of the river. The mortars and muskets were fired and conch was

\textsuperscript{110} In KE 845 two cāvēr came to the field below Manittārap and in this one died fighting and other fled instead of dying. KG, Vol. 7, copy of the same document in Vol. 14; see below, App. V. In KE 821 a cāvēr came and died fighting when the Zamorin was returning from Manittārap, after he stood in state. Ibid., Vol. 7, copies of the same document in Vols. 13 & 14.

\textsuperscript{111} In KE 809 the Ḭāḷkarasembled at Accan tārap (the platform of Maṇnāṭṭaccan) for joint obeisance that was common for all the Taippiyam and, particularly to talk the matter of conflict with the locality chief of Veṭṭam (Veṭṭam Utaya Mūṭṭa Kōvīl). Ibid., Vol. 7, copy of the same document in Vol. 13.
blown. The Zamorin saluted holding his sword, stepped down from Manittara and proceeded in litter through the pathway to the west. He proceeded to Tripraṅṭu temple worshipped and made offerings to the deity. He presented daksīṇas to the priests. Then he proceeded to Ayyamkulām and resided there.\textsuperscript{113}

The above narrative shows that the festival of Taippūyam was a replication of the first day of Māmākam. It has to be noted that Taippūyam was a one day festival while Māmākam was of thirty days. Taippūyam was not a grand festival as that of Māmākam, which is indicated by the duration itself. Taippūyam was a moderate rehearsal of the gala festival called Māmākam to be held in the next year. It is plausible that Taippūyam was celebrated as a preparation for Māmākam, which require vast resources and coordination of thousands of people what we can call as the “state machinery”. Thus Taippūyam can be considered as a rehearsal of the drama than the drama itself.

\textsuperscript{112} Whether Tirumanaccēri Nampūthiri accompanied the Ėṟṟḻppātu on his return is not known, as the entire documents are silent regarding it.

\textsuperscript{113} When the Zamorin was at loggerheads with Vēṭṭam Uṭṭa Mūṭta Kōvil the former did not proceeded to Tripraṅṭu, which was in the territory of the latter. Instead the Zamorin crossed the river to the south and proceeded to his Kōvilakam or the house of a local magnate.