CHAPTER 3

ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE
RESEARCH ON TARA

3.1. BASIC PROFILE

The cases are taken from two panchayaths (villages) and one town; Chittur Town, Mathur Panchayath and Alathur Panchayath of Palakkad district (Figure. 3.1). They are situated in Western Ghats gap, as seen in Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.1. Map of Palakkad
3.1.1 Case 1. Chittur Tara-Nayar

Local information mentioned that the word Chittur was derived from the word Chirru ooru (small town)\textsuperscript{72} and Chita ooru (prosperous city)\textsuperscript{73}. The area of tara-Nayar cover wards 10, 7 and 8 of Chittur-Tattamangalam Municipality (see Figure 3.3. Map1). Chittur has been territory of Palakkad Rajah and object of occupations for investments of many rulers, such as Zamorin of Calicut, Waluvanad, Cochin, Pandyan and Chola. William Logan and Achutyan Menon noted 917-918 AD as the possible period when disputes

\textsuperscript{72} Interview with informant Mr. N Ravi Shanker (local inhabitants and author)

\textsuperscript{73} Interview with informant Mr. T. Sankappa (member of representative of Naluveetil Menon in Chittur)
over invested land surrounding Palakkad gap that connect Tamil Nadu and Kerala by various powers took place. The situation of this gap and position of these places are seen in Figure 3.2.

Traditional account about Chittur is signified by legend of the victory of Bhagavaty, a local deity acknowledged in all traditional villages in Kerala, who defended the territory from the Tamil king, Kongan. The Bhagavaty, or in the case of Chittur is called Chittur Amma, had been believed to reside in Chittur Bhagavaty temple or kavu, side by side with another Bhagavaty temple - Pazhayanur temple. Both temples are considered to be “sisters”. It was said that Chittur Bhagavaty and Pazhayanur Bhagavaty themselves are two among “7 sisters temple”, along with Phutussery Kavu, Manapullly Kavu and other three temples within Palakkad district. The seven temples are bound by common festivals, Konganpada which take place in different days during February-March, or Kumbham Masam according to local Malayalam calendar. There are two sections of taras in tara-Nayar of Chittur, namely Padinjaretara (western tara) and Kizhaketara (eastern tara)

Chittur tara-Nayar comprises of maternal joint families (taravad) and some of them have special roles which as a whole constitute the traditional social organization of the Chittur tara-Nayar. They are:

i) Chambath taravad as descendant of the utayvar or local ruler.

ii) Thachath, Ambath, Porayath and yezhuvath taravad as four alliances of taravads addressed as Nalu Veetil Menon (or the four menon’s house) who act as managers.

iii) Achurath and Vaddchery taravads, believed to be minister.

iv) Sree Kandeth taravad who maintained kalari.
v) Varavoor family who used to be the descendant of vellichapad or local Nayar priest.

The cases taken for this research are: Chambath, Ambath, Unnikandath and Thachath taravad

Figure 3.3 Map of Case Studies in Alathur and Chittur
3.1.2 Case 2 Puthiankam tara-Nayar.

Puthiankam tara-Nayar is situated in the administrative territory of Thripallur and Puthiankam wards, Alathur Panchayath, Alathur Taluk, and Palakkad District (Figure 3.3 Map2). The term Puthiankam is derived from the word puthian or puthen which means ‘new’ and ankam which means ‘battle’. Indeed, historically, it came under the rule of Samuthiri Raja, Parsi raja, Tipu Sultan and lastly British of Madras presidency. But traditionally Kavalapara Mooppil Nayar was the land holder of current Puthiankam area. Legend says that the Bhagavaty of Puthiankam was brought by the native people, the Vadukka community, but due to inconvenience the Bhagavaty traveled to different localities surrounding the place, searching for convenience, before residing in the current place, Shree Puthukulangara Bhagavaty temple Alathur Taluk. Initially It shifted to Vettaikorumakkan Temple at Puthiankam amsam within the territory of the tara-Nayar, later to Wanoor amsam and lastly to Kattisery amsam. Because of this legend these three amsams are bound by common festival (Velakooraidal), yet currently the festivals only involve Puthiankam and Kattisery. The part of land itself had been traditionally owned by ancient major Nayar chieftain, Kalavara Mooppil family. There is one quarter of tara in this place, namely Puthiankam tara-Nayar, but branches of families living in the tara are spread in adjacent areas. The cases taken are Thekke Anavangoth, Vadakka Anavangoth. Kottil and Methil Meleketttil taravads.

3.1.3 Case 3 Mathur tara Nayar

Mathur tara-Nayar is defined as ward 13 and 14 under Mathur Panchayath, Alathur Taluk, Palakkad district (Figure 3.3 Map 3). There is no clear historical narrative considering Mathur tara-nayar. Their legend is

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74 Interview with informant, Mr. Chandran (president of Sree Phutukulangara Bhagavaty temple)
75 Discussion with Mr. Balakhrisna Iyer and Mr. C Chandran, September 2009
based on the story of Kali Bhagavaty which is said to shift from her initial place, at Kizhaketara presently part of ward 15 and 8 by Patattil taravad from Padinjaretara quarter. It made both taras share common name for their Bhagavaty temple, namely Kalikavu. There are two sections of taras in this place, namely Padinjaretara (western tara) and Nattutara (middle tara).

Some of the taravads have specific position in the tara. Patattil taravad has been said to initiate the construction of Kalikavu. Kurupath taravad and Kalikavu Puthen veedu has been in charge of the performance of pava koothu (traditional shadow puppet) in their annual festival, Koothabisekham. The cases of taravads taken are: Patattil taravad, Kurupath taravad, Kalikavu Puthen veedu, and Moothedath taravad.

These cases are scrutinized using Questionnaire and Interview Form with items of enquiry detailed in Appendix 1.

3.2 MATRILINEAL KINSHIP AS ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEME OF HABITATION

3.2.1 Mother Goddess and Concept of Bhagavaty Kavu

All villages have social, spiritual community reference and legend which is centered in the character of a mother goddess, Bhagavaty. Bhagavaty is generally narrated as the agent who installed the community in a place, as a protector or as a travelling goddess who bless the places she resided or passed on. This legend coincided the three cases signified that the Nayar families had been migrants that take the place or over-layered the earlier native people. Therefore the figure of Bhagavaty seems to appear as a personified concept of protector and place making. The idea of place making is typically by legend narrated as plantain umbrella in the case of Kalikavu.
Inclination to narrate Bhagavaty as travelling to one community to another community articulated stages of evolution and displacement of settlement from one place to another place, of one place after another place, or from one scale to larger scale. It appears in stories of traveling Goddess that finally resided in the case of Pazhayanur in Chittur, Phutukulangara in Puthiankam and Kalikavu in Mathur; and divine heroine that protect the place in Chittur Kavu. The path over temples and artifacts hailed during festivals articulate these structural evolutions of the villages. The idea of traveling goddess coincided with the migratory nature of families which is traditionally preserved in the trait that a family would be bound to temple of origin and temple of locality where they stay, and this bound is celebrated annually in every festival.

The female divinity concept is basically conceptualized in a different scale of habitation as navel and spatially as landmark of the tara (Figure 3.4). Within tara the navel is temple (kavu) with Bhagavaty as the venerated deity. It has spiritual sphere called tattakam. The Kavu are located generally in the middle or in the north or east portion of the settlement. It is composed generally of sacred groove, platform and tree, and nearby ponds. In this way Bhagavaty Kavu and taravads constitute the sacred landscape.

Within the taravad compound ancestral house (taravad) female is the central figure of the compound. Within the taravad the centre is an ancestral chamber (mahcu ara) where the idol of Mahcu Bhagavaty, relic of ancestor, and family goddess are kept. The location could be seen in Figure 3.5. In front of mahcu ara is courtyard (nadumittam) and platform (talam) where rituals inside taravad are conducted. The importance of Mahcu is obvious where in the event of demolition of ancestral house, the Mahcu Bhagavaty is occasionally preserved and reestablished as a small family shrine. The concept of sacred grooves is also articulated in putting sacred
plants (tulasi tara) in the eastern portion of house, occasionally in keeping sacred tree (prathistan)’ within the taravad building and in attaching a stem of paddy (nira) on the door of prayer chamber (poojamuri) of the house.

Tara-Nayars in Mathur, Padinjaretara and Natuttara have the same name for their Bhagavaty temples, Kalikavu, with that of the neighboring tara-Nayar, Kizhaketara. It suggests that all these taras used to be bound as one unit of habitation. The legend of shifted Bhagavaty might imply that the centre of settlement had shifted several times following patterns of migrations or power concentration, economically or politically. These chains of travel binding all taras also imply that several taras might have been in bound by power or corporate needs. Spiritually the network or sphere which is expressed by the passage of Bhagavaty traveling is called tattakam. Tattakam could be as big as a tara, or more.

Figure 3.4 Chittur Kavu in Chittur (left) and Kalikavu in Mathur (right)
3.2.2 Land Reconsolidation

Legend and local oral histories demonstrate that tara-Nayars have been also a result of series of power reconsolidation. Presumably the land had been owned by original natives but had been gradually transferred to or occupied by new inhabitants who had been more powerful families. New society came, resided and replaced the earlier layers of society. The most powerful settlers became the elite after taking over the location from the lower community, and hailed as community or settlement leader. The less powerful earlier settler and the new comers became the subsidiary community.

The narrative of Bhagavaty could be seen as metaphor of reconsolidation processes of settlement. Chambath in Chittur and Kalavara Moppil in Alathur might have been the major owner or jenmis (birth-right owner of the land) sharing tenure (kannam) with the other Nayars families. The majority of land of Puthiankam yet had been owned by major chieftain of the locality, the Bhagavaty had been believed to be installed by the earlier
aborigine community, the Vadukka. The relationship between Chambath and the origin of Chittur had been preserved by the fact that Chittur amma idol as settlement venerated deity is kept on weekly basis in the Chambath house every Friday and Tuesday. However the existence of Pazhayanaur temple indicates possible reference to earlier settler than current Nayar society. The land of Padinjaretara had been initially owned by a major Nambuthiri family Poomuly Manna in Mathur but their Bhagavaty had been believed to be taken from the adjacent tara, Kizhaketara which was said to be transferred from Kizhaketara which was of lower caste. Currently even the Kizhaketara had no cultural relation with Padinjaretara although both taras share common name for their temple, Kalikavu Bhagavaty.

Changes have been also taking places presently. Most of the taravads claimed that they are 350 years old. Local elders think their ancestors lived at this place’ for approximately 4-5 generations. With regards to building, all buildings are 100-300 years old constructions, which mean they have been built or reconstructed between 18th - 20th centuries AD. The depth of family (4-5 generations) signifies that until the recent 3 generations, marriage was arranged. The evolution also showed that the controlling body has been transformed in a way that control of taravad has been gradually reduced from clan to nuclear family. The lack of institutional power of taravad gave way to segmentation and partitions.

3.2.3 Communal Character of Settlement

In principle matrilineal kinship posited land always as belonging to female member of family and male as estate manager. However, various cultural restrictions for female and limited access of male into property ensured that neither female nor male took absolute control of the property, and therefore kept land as communal property. Each family also has its traditional particular role in festivals which consequently weave them with the
other houses. This established a network of houses that as a whole constituted settlement unit (tara), with links that are extendable conceptually to the larger sphere such as (desham).

However the present situations indicate higher degree of factional characters. The three cases indicate that residence after marriage is gradually shifting from matrilocal to patrilocal. Traditionally, after marriage the groom stay in wife’s taravad (uxirilocal or matrilocal) or his mother’s taravad (duo-local) and practice visits his wife’s taravad. In Mathur and Puthiankam the patrilocal patterns dominate. In Chittur matrilocal dominate. Presently many taravads let wife follow her husband in to his taravad (virilocal). The husband established a new residence on a piece of land of his property and brought the wife into his house. However it does not necessarily change the inheritance system from matrilineal to patrilineal. As a consequence, new taravads could appear in the tara. The new taravad is named after wife taravad as in the case of Kalikavu Puthen Veedu and Eravamayattil in Mathur and inhabited by wife family in the case of Moothedath taravad living in Kurupath taravad in Mathur.

Matrilineal kinship defines the role of Karanavar who is generally mother’s brother. Some karanavar are female (taravad amma or karanavati). Its sphere of power is clan. Currently the role of karanavar has declined. It appeared as a symbolic concept and gradually has been replaced by father of a nuclear family. Its sphere of power is therefore nuclear families. The partitioning like in Patattil taravad and Anavangoth taravad coincided with the fact that the role of karanavar has been replaced by husband of the female member of the taravad. Moreover, the significant decrease of family members staying in taravad from 5 or 6 nuclear families to only 1 nuclear family indicate implausibility of taravad tradition to sustain its tradition as a community and a corporate.
The remnant of British influence and royal traditions probably has triggered individual life introduced through Western education and reference for more urban Modern life. In Chittur and Puthiankam professional based works had come about since around 1930 in Mathur village, 1956 in Puthiankam, and 1970’s in Chittur. Shifts toward Makkatayam kinship are highest in Puthiankam and least in Mathur village.

Therefore it could be concluded that the understanding of community of matrilineal kinship is community of clan or taravad which operated as caste based upholding the tara Nayar as the leading community over other tara. The democratic sense as generally interpreted by many authors is practically attached to the need of clan and caste, not to individual. Therefore practically it is feudatory.

### 3.2.4 Network of Houses and their role

The three cases present tara as concept of settlement, demonstrating a network of house compounds. The network conceptualizes functional and symbolic relationships among houses inside and outside its territory. The network is established by:

i) History or legend of families or community and their ancestor with regards to the emergence of the settlement of place and their roles in settlement.

ii) Network of temples inside the tara and with temples outside.

Taravad means clan to the extent of recognized ancestress (Gough, 1966). Name of the joint family house and their location in tara is outlined in Table 3.1. :
Table 3.1. Social-Spatial Organization of Tara

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative jurisdiction</th>
<th>Desham</th>
<th>Tara</th>
<th>Description of Boundary</th>
<th>List of Taravad (Clan)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chittur-Tamayyilam</td>
<td></td>
<td>Padinjata</td>
<td>Padinjata is bordered by Vadakkatara in the western side, Brahmin compound (Agraharam) at the northern side, Kizhaketara at the eastern side and major national highway and Thekegrama at the southern side.</td>
<td>1. two prime taravad s (Ambath and Thacath) 2. Chambath (Mannadiar-Nayar taravad) as king 3. other taravads (Sreekandath, Unikandath, Varavoor, Beemath, Achurath, Mecheeri, Kozhisseri) 4. taragas (Erat and Todhiamarath and Mannadiar tara)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittur Town (wards 10, 7, and 8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kizhaketara</td>
<td>Kizhaketara is bordered by Padinjaretara tara in the western side, Lankeswaram at the northern side, and national highway, the eastern side and Thekegrama at the southern side.</td>
<td>1. two prime taravad (Porayath and Yezhuvath) 2. Other taravad (Charubala, Telekath, Chithedath, Vakeel, Moothedath, Neelachadath, Rekinjath)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alathur Panchayath (Thripallur, Puthiankam wards)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Puthiankam</td>
<td>Puthiankam is bordered by Perumkulam Brahmin village in the western side, Thripallur junctions and national highway at the northern side, and major national highway, Pulloor in the eastern side and Malakulam village at the southern side.</td>
<td>Thekke Anavangoth Vedakke Anavangoth Methil Melekkettil Kottil Elan Kottil Tazhakett Kanjirangat Pathiyill Ambat taravad Chadayat Taravad Charalath</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within Nayar community itself there are many sub-divisions which initially signify their roles in the community. This role did not exist anymore in practice. In the three cases there are divisions of Nayar with surname like Mannadiars and the Nayars. The Mannadiar community are not from Kerala, but from Kangyam Tamil Nadu, but they apply marumakattayam and have no difference in ritual practiced by the Nayars. None of the respondents specifies which Nayars, except in Mathur village where all Nayars admit themselves as Sudra Nayars. Unnikandath from Chittur and Chemankkatt from Mathur admit themselves as Kiriattil Nayars which are the most advanced Nayars category.

Some taravads have a sphere of influence that covers the sphere of settlements. In Chittur, Mahcu of Chittur Amma associate with the Chambath family and Patattil with Mathur Puthiankam is the case of taking-over of land of Vadukka community by Nayar community. The Mannadiars taravads, had more clear roles in setting up the temple and established the historical importance which was articulated in annual festival. In Kizhakethara Chittur the Sreekandath and Porayath house preserve palm leaf documents (ola), in Padinjaretara Mathur the Chembottil family also preserves ola about traditional medicines. They are placed inside the mahcu of the house.

These distributed clans and families are generally bound by regular annual family gathering and village annual festival (Konganpada in Chittur, Velakooraidal in Puthiankam and Koothabisegham in Mathur) and general celebration (Chaluedal and Onam) or specific (Mandala Pooja, Ammaasi Karuthavavu, Poornami and Ashtamangalam. Some families also established associations. Chambath Durga Association is set up by Chambath Balakhrisnan Valia Mannadiar in 1957. Ambath trustee was established for maintaining taravad. These emphasize the fact that the real defining social organization is taravad not tara. Taravad has more defined traits than tara.
Previously each tara or community had been a secluded community separated by distant pollution. Presently distinction between ancient family and new family is not very much obvious and the immediate space outside the core area of tara-Nayar could be filled in by other community mixed with branches of the core taravad. The composition could be seen in the distributions of community in Figure 3.7-9 where the concentration of Muslim and Ezhava community always appear in the edge of tara. The inclusion of these communities in annual festival, particularly Ezhava signify that they have also roots in this network.

3.2.5 Movement of female

Being the property holder, the movement of female conceptually has fundamental impact in the expansion, extension and contraction of taravad. The branching out of taravad is generally triggered by the movement of married lady of a taravad, tavazhi. It happened in a way that a tazavhi is sent to the empty plots within the property to build new taravad. Metthil melekettil taravad has several nalukettu in different plots, among which only one nalukettu in the oldest plot is what is called taravad.

Present condition where female (tavazhi of a taravad) shift to their husband taravad without changing pattern of matrilineal inheritance evolve another trend of branching out of family where new taravad could emerge inside another taravad or in particular tara which did not belong to their origin. It happened in the case of Eravamanattil and Kalikavu Puthen veedu from Trichur region that are found among tara-Nayar in Mathur.
3.2.6 Extent of influence of Taravad with regards to Ancestral Sanctuary

Branching out or detachment of clan relation due to marriage relation, and migration make an ancestral house (taravad) could associate or affiliate with taravads in tara outside its original place. Chembottil taravad from Mathur village also exist in Palanchatanur village, Mootedath taravad is found in Chittur and Mathur. Some taravads acknowledge these relationship, such as the Kalattil taravad in Kizhaketara and the Kalattil taravad Padinjaretara in Mathur. But the Athiarath taravad in Kizhaketara and Padinjaretara in Mathur do not acknowledge it. Chambath used to share ancestral property with Vadacherry, but later it stoods as different taravad within Chittur.

Clan like Patattil, Chengath, and Chambath have wider clan organization that is spread in several deshams nearby within Palakkad district. They are distinguished by the surname of Mannadiar. They claim themselves to originate from Kangyam, a region in Tamil Nadu. However this intersectional organization, does not necessarily maintain cohesive networks among settlements. It may demonstrate remnants of the vanishing corporate bound, where all these families once used to be bound by common interest and common migrant origin.

Taravads could also have properties inside or outside the tara. Porayath and Kalikavu Puthen Veedu have land property inside the tara. Moothedath has property in Thechengath regions, Thachat in Thattamangalam. The property outside tara are mainly household property which are personally owned. Only Kurupath, Porayath, Thachat in Chittur and Moothedath in Mathur had ancestral property outside the tara. Some major family claimed to bring along other community to serve them and put them up within their ancestral land territory, like:
• Chambath in Chittur brought serf called taraga, of which some of them such as Todhimarath and Eraat have later become landlords.

• Kurupath in Mathur brought with them artisan community who have been grouped as Viswakarma community within tara-Nayar.

• Patattil brought other Velalla Mannadiar clan to Mathur, such as Chengath, Pariankath and Harijan taravads

• Moothedath in Mathur have a community who take care of the property: Thashrak community or colony.

3.2.7 Network of Kavu

The migration traditions made each taravad generally refer to two kavus, one is in the local tara and the other to the kavu in their original land. The state of kavu of locality and origin create over-layering internal organizations of the taravad that connect it with tara where they live and external bound of taravad to its origin. Many families remember do not keep family history but still could locate the kavu to which they observe adimakavu bound. This implies that kavu of a territory bind not only people of the territory but also any community who stay far away but submit attendance to kavu.

The correlation between migration origin and admikavu shows 60% accuracy and that the origin of these Nayar families had been surrounding Palakkad (Ayilur, Kavilpadu, Yakkara, Puthussery, Nilambur, Nenmara, Kanyadi, Chittur, Alathur and Matur as outlined in Table 3.2. Occasionally the inhabitants acknowledge similar kavu for local and origin, which indicates
that they are native of the places. The farthest is the Mannadiar clan from Trichur, Kangyam Tamil Nadu.

### Table 3.2 Correlation between Adimakavu and Migration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Taravad</th>
<th>Migration</th>
<th>adimakavu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chambath</td>
<td>Kangyam, Tamil nadu</td>
<td>Chittur Amma, Chittur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patattil</td>
<td>Migrant from Kangyam</td>
<td>Thayankavu, Tenkurissi, in general and Kottukolungara kanyadi kavu, palakkad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambath</td>
<td>Migrant from Ayilur village, Nenmara</td>
<td>Ailur Kalari Narayanan Moorthi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thachth</td>
<td>Migrant from Yakkara Palakkad</td>
<td>Manapullilly Kavu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurupath</td>
<td>Original, but other information also mentioned Ongalur</td>
<td>Ongalur, Kadamparambath Bhagavaty, Pattambi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalikavu</td>
<td>Puthen Vedu, Trichur</td>
<td>Kodugalur Bhagavaty temple, Trichur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sreekandath</td>
<td>original family</td>
<td>Chittur Amma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yezhuvath</td>
<td>Kavilpadu</td>
<td>Kurumba Bhagavaty temple, within territory of Kodungalur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methil</td>
<td>Nilambur</td>
<td>Pallasena Meenkolati temple Bhagavaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unikandath</td>
<td>original, native</td>
<td>Kalki Kulangara kavu (Malampuzha), Emoor Bhagavaty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadakke</td>
<td>original, native</td>
<td>Kannadi Kotukulangara Bhagavaty. Family visit annually on Friday and Tuesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anavanghot</td>
<td>original, native</td>
<td>Kothukulangara Bhagavaty, Kanyadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thekke</td>
<td>original, native</td>
<td>Manapullilly kavu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anavanghot</td>
<td>original, native</td>
<td>Kallekulangara, emoor Bhagavaty temple Palakkad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kottil</td>
<td>original, native</td>
<td>Chittur Kavu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.3 ASSEMBLY OF HIERARCHY OF TARA, TATTAKAM AND TARAVAD

The Habitat Analysis attributing analysis of Control Hierarchies in habitat configuration as attached in Appendix 3, show that traditionally and
presently a tara-Nayar settlement constituted network of houses which are organized primarily by means of social-spiritual affiliation or tattakam, community and environmental confinement or tara, and secondarily by political organization of desham. The organization of this network could be territorial as in the case of desham, and tara. It can be non-territorial in the case of family or clan branches in different places. Tattakam is territorial for the case of community living surrounding the kavu and non-territorial for the case of adimakavu. The network could be outlined as Figure 3.6.

Figure 3.6 Diagram of Assembly of Hierarchy of Habitation in taravada-tara-tattakam-desham

C_d 1 = taravad
C_d 2 = house-hold of other community
C_d'1 = taravad outside territory that associate with correlated taravad by reference to kavu (adimakavu) or kinship association
C_c 1 = tara-nayar
C_c 1' = tattakam with sphere that coincides with tara
C_c 1a' = tattakam that include other taras from different regions within desham
C_c 1b' = tattakam that include other taras from different regions outside desham
C_a = congregation of desham
C_b = sphere of desham
C_b' = inter-tara organization
Notes: C = Configuration
Tara (Cc1, Cc2, and Cc3) is a controlled territory under controlling agents of assembly of male elder; C1 is tara of the Nayar community (taranayar). It appeared that initially tara is more a configuration established by congregations of house without rigid centre managed by nattukutam (assembly of male-head) who often assembled in kavu or under a banyan tree with platform. Later temple or kavu was established; broader scope of community had been included, but with certain social leveling which did not guarantee democratic characters as mostly described by previous authors. The assembly has been centered and governed by temple community, and kavu is transformed into temple.

Tattakam (Cc’1, Cc’2, Cc’3, Cc’1a, Cc’) is a spiritual sphere that could be at minimum as wide as the tara-Nayar (Cc1/ Cc’1) and or cover larger space than tara to include more than one tara which share common temple (Cb’=Cc’1a; Ca’=Cc’1b). It can be territorial when it coincides with certain spatial organization like tara (Cc1/ Cc’1). It can be non territorial when it relates to discrete relations between houses and the corresponding kavu (adimakavu), or the families and its branches outside the territory (Cd1- Cd’1). However it is to conclude that the overall distributions and over-layering of tattakams signify that about 95% of taravad refer to origins that are situated within Palakkad district. This made Palakkad as a solid cultural geography (Ca) of the whole network of taravad and taras within its territory. Tattakam bond is observable through festival, and common names for the temple.

Beyond tara (Cc) there had been larger social-spatial organization other than desham or amsam (Cb) which is currently parallel with the modern authority of panchayath (village) or municipality. The relation between current administrative organizations with organization of deshams and tattakam is still recognized by the native people.
Taravad compound (Cd1) is the most cohesive elementary assemblage of social and spatial structure within tara. It centers spatially in the ancestral house or taravad which constitutes the axis mundi of the clan, symbol of law and customs, and corporate body of the maternal joint family estate. House is called veedu. Veedu that consist Mahcu Ara is the taravad building (Ce1). Taravad is the house of female and tavazhi (direct matrilineal lineage). Male would traditionally reside in Pattayapura where treasury and grain stock is kept. Traditionally the visiting husbands would visit the taravad where the wife as tavazhi of the taravad resides and temporarily stay. Presently the male would bring their wife into their pattayapura and each lineage is allotted veedu or ara in taravad.

In general taravad is singular and specific for a particular tara. But cases shows that some taravad also show relationship with other taravads in different localities marked by common name or member of larger clan affiliations to which they are attached and thus established a higher level of clan organization. It indicates that in both level of house compound and settlement there are over-layering social organizations of space and clan (Cd1-Cd’1).

The hierarchy of controlling agents and its sphere of management of habitations in various levels could be mapped as in table 3.3. The role of nattukutam and temple community is practically the same, but festival committee is annually elected as an operational independent body. Each different level of habitation has its own configurations of assembly of male members.
Table 3.3  Hierarchy of controlling agents of settlement and house compound

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Spatial Domain</th>
<th>Controlling Agents</th>
<th>Social/ Economic sphere</th>
<th>Politic/ Administrative sphere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taravad</td>
<td>eldest lady as owner and her brother as manager</td>
<td>karanavar</td>
<td>karanavar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taravad Compound</td>
<td>Karanavar</td>
<td>karanavar</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tara-Nayar</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>natukuttam</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tattakam</td>
<td>temple community/ Festival Committee</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desham</td>
<td>Devaswom</td>
<td>desavazhi/ utayavar/ king</td>
<td>desavazhi/ utayavar//King</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Architect has its own territory and community (PCf) and control over their work, traditionally known as Assari in particular, and Viswakarma in general with other artisan communities also sharing common kavus. They traditionally stood as different community, caste and kin and had their own quarters within the tara. They had their own control upon taravad during the construction. This signifies that artisan including architect has his own control which is detached from kinship and hierarchical structure. Socially they are considered to be lower class, but professionally they are superior. This position is justified by local legends who acknowledge that the Bhagavaty of particular community could be only invoked by the complete existence of the five 5 branches of artisan, which are blacksmith, goldsmith, sculpture, and carpenter, designer\(^{76}\)

\(^{76}\) Interview with local Assari at Mathur Mr. T.K. Radhakrishnan Achari (51 years old) Thekkemuri house, Vadakkumpuram, Alathur
3.4 CONCEPT OF TERITORIAL CONFIGURATION OF TARA – NAYAR

3.4.1 Tara

Physically it is the most cohesively defined territory of indigenous settlement, applicable for various communities in Kerala. Tara-Nayar is the case of tara for the Nayar community. The configuration is marked by elevated land (tara) and gardens, complex of sacred grooves or kavu (temple), and network of maternal joint family compounds (taravad).

Socially, each tara-Nayar represents a Nayar community. Earlier this community would have been accumulated, expanded or transformed through migrations, conquest, and over-layering of the earlier and the new ones. The inhabitants would be bound to the place where they dwelled and the place where they came from. The annual festivals (velas) in general re-enact the history of settlement with regards to role of each family or clan.

Spiritually, each tara represents a community which is spatially represented by sacred grooves (kavu) in their settlement. The spiritual sphere where the inhabitants share common kavu is called tattakam. Traditionally the lower castes could not enter kavu of the higher community. It principally referred to the fact that, as kavu used to be symbol ancestor of community, accessibility was limited for the kin member only. This limitation later developed into a caste-based restriction. Presently kavu or temples are accessible to all communities and therefore constitutes foci of larger inter-settlement organizations.

Sacred grooves practically represent venue of community assembly, and during the festivals it became public space. The basic form is tree with platform (alatara or prathistan) under which idols of god or goddess and Naga are installed. Temple is the concept of sacred groove that had been
gradually established with walled enclosure and shelter for prayers. Therefore temple is also addressed as kavu. Later this sacred groove and ancestor concept developed into the axis mundi of tara with venerated deity of Hindu mother goddess, Bhagavaty.

Conclusively tara refers to definition of settlement unit as collections of maternal joint family house of particular community, whose area and location is more or less definite. Tattakam refers to a spiritual sphere of a Bhagavaty kavu which could be spatially as wide as tara in the case of secluded community, like in Mathur tara-Nayar case or it could embrace wider scope of multi-community settlement when it embraces more than one tara or community, like the case of Chittur and Puthiankam tara-Nayar. The concept of adimakavu, spiritually represents a bond between families and their kavu in their place of origin, which could be beyond the territory of tara where they lived. The sphere could be identified during the festivals through festival procession routes, number of communities involved in the festivals, and the narrative performed in the festivals itself. This dynamic relationship could imply traces of economical value as taras or tattakams were bound to an estate organization and relate to higher social organization under the king of the desham.

3.4.2 Social Hierarchy and Interdependency among Tara

Members of tara belong to a clan of particular caste-community, and live in quarters and have their own temple or kavu. The main economy of tara is paddy-farming and pepper where the management has been run by the taravad. Elements of hunter and collective cultures still prevail in a form of the venerated deity Vana Durga, animal sacrifice and habit of rearing dogs.

Tara-Nayar conceptually can not be seen in complete isolation. They practically constituted corporate units with taras of other communities.
Critical reading from historical sources conclusively shows that the concept of desham was a recurrent pattern and likely stood on a schemata of corporate relationships among taras of various class, clans and professional communities of the earlier society. The structure seemed to have been disrupted as Brahmanism arose and consequently transformed the clan-based society into caste-based. Consequently desham lost its clan-based corporate integrity and turned into administrative color. The remaining traces of this cohesive social organization is still preserved as tattakam, nevertheless it is acknowledged more as cultural schemata and contained within a loose boundary and.

Analysis on territorial control that refers to Table A2.3, A2.4 and A2.5 of Appendix 2 shows that there are various communities surrounding the tara-Nayar with its own characteristic representing professional and community groups. The physical integrity of the unit correlates with how deep rooted the community to the history of the place or location is, and the loose characters hint that they may be result of later development of the process of filling in the spatial gaps in between the established older taras. The defined territories of tara-Nayars and other taras surrounding it could be described in the Figures 3.7 – 3.9. Chittur was part of larger organization of naludesham which had been a dispute between Cochin Raja, Zamorin of Calicut, and Palkkad Raja (Pic 1 at Figure 3.7).
Figure 3.7 Map of approximate area of Chittur and the community grouping

Figure 3.8 Map of approximate area of Puthiankam and the community grouping
Figure 3.9  Map of approximate area of Mathur and the community grouping

Tara-Nayar itself apparently to some limited extent contained elements of other serf-communities and as a whole composed professional division. It appears as multiethnic set with other tara of different communities, such as artisan or Viswakarma, labor Cheruma or Harijan and other communities Ezhava. They perform a corporate unit based on paddy farming. The other community is typically concentrated at the border of tara-Nayar. Distant pollutions applied among different tara limited specially the movement of lower caste community and made their tara secluded in particular spots. The grouping of traditional community can be outlined in Table 3.4 which are derived from territorial control analysis that is referred to in Table A2.3, A2.4 and A2.5 of Appendix 2.
Table 3.4 General Hierarchy of Traditional Community of Kerala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Characters</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brahmin</td>
<td>Iyer/ Pattar: Tamil Brahmin migrants, they run makattayam kinship, live in a neighborhood called agraharam. They participated as tantri or priest for the Bhagavaty kavu in case of Mathur.</td>
<td>Mathur, Puthiankam and Chittur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nambuthiris: Kerala Brahmin and run makattayam kinship, live in a house compound called manna or illam. They participated as tantri or priest for the Bhagavaty kavu in case of Puthiankam</td>
<td>Mathur and Chittur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayar</td>
<td>Vellalla: Nayar who were migrants from Tamil Nadu. It is said that there are 18 Vellalla clans in Kerala migrated from Kangayam. They run marumakattayam kinship, associate with temple tradition, and inclination to develop hierarchical stratification of the taravadi (taravad dweller) and taragas (serf community of taravad).</td>
<td>Mathur and Chittur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nayars: Migrants from surrounding Palakkad; apply trait of marumakattayam kinship, live in a house compound called taravad. Some sub-community of Nayars are Kiriattil, Menon and Sudra Nayars</td>
<td>Mathur, Puthiankam and Chittur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Non Nayar</td>
<td>Ezhava: The three cases show that there is no specific compound arrangement, except in Mathur.</td>
<td>Mathur, and Puthiankam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Muslim: No specific compound arrangement. But generally exist in the fringe of settlement</td>
<td>Mathur, and Puthiankam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Non Nayar</td>
<td>Viswakamma: Professional and artisan class, namely: Kolatara, Kosavantara, kaikolantara.</td>
<td>Mathur, and Chittur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Harijans: Labor community serving community, namely cheruman, vadukka.</td>
<td>Mathur, Puthiankam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.3 Spatial structure of tattakam

Spiritually, the Nayar generally established their tattakam with their Bhagavaty kavu. Intermediate class like Ezhavas and Muslims, and the Harijan (Cherumman, Vadukka) traditionally have their own kavu and were traditionally detached from their tattakam. Brahmin settlements were traditionally not part of the tattakam of the Bhagavaty, and its primacy made them also detached from the authority of desham. In case of Mathur
agraharam in Mathur, and Lankeswaram and Thekkegrama in Chittur, the Brahmin community is completely detached from the Tara-Nayar. Currently, spatially the Brahmin quarters share routes, clusters or lanes with tara-Nayars and other communities.

Tattakam does not have fixed physical boundary but reference toward a Bhagavaty Kavu (temple). Tattakam in a place is not a singular sphere, it constitutes overlapping of a number of spiritual spheres of original communities which is centered in their kavu. Within a desham/ amsam there could be several overlapping tattakams units, depending on how many communities existed. The fact that annual festivals of tara-Nayar involve people from other community shows that they are not totally isolated and independent. The communities could be outlined as follow, and he overlaying scheme could be described in Figure 3.10.

i) The tattakam of Chittur tara-Nayar is centered in Chittur Bhagavaty Kavu and Pazhayanur Bhagavaty Kavu. Chittur tara-Nayar is member of seven sisters kavu dispersed in different places in Palakkad.

ii) The Puthiankam tattakam is defined by a hierarchy and series of Puthukualngara Bhagavaty temples, which are:

a. The local Puthukulangara Bhagavaty temples of the Vadukka and Ezhava community. It used to be originally established by the aborigine, the Vaduka people.

b. The Vettaikorumakkan temples which is shared mainly among the Nayar community.

c. The main temple Sree Puthukualngara Bhagavaty temples which is shared with Kattissery desham, and Wanoor desham. The three temples are the main venue for festivals.
d. The other local community kavu in Puthiankam are local temples of the Chetties and Viswakarmas in Cherutara area at western portion; and Maryamma temple mainly attended by Ezhava community in southern portion.

iii) The tattakam of Padinjaretara in Padinjaretara Mathur village is defined by several temples that were established by the Nayars.

a. Main temple is the Kalikavu Bhagavaty with venerated deity as Vana Durga. They became the centre of village and Koothu mandapam (shadow puppet shelter) which is said to be brought from the neighboring Kizhaketara by Patattil family.

b. The other main temples which are basically the family temples are the Shiva-Pulayanoor temples, established by the Chengath family, and Parvaty temple which was established by Poomuly Manna family and currently maintained by the temple community.

c. Other kavus in Mathur that constituted tattak:

i) Manampully kavu mainly attended by Ezhava community

ii) Pazhayan kavu with Tholani Bhagavaty as venerated deity, worshiped by the Harijan community

iii) Kalikavu Bhagavaty Kavu worshiped by the Harijan community

iv) Local temples of the Chetties and Viswakarmas within their clusters

The spiritual sphere of those numbers kavus could be mapped in over layering spiritual sphere as mapped in Figure 3.10.
Figure 3.10  Scheme of tattakam

The festivals are managed by ritual association run by a local community. The routes of festivals as outlined in Figure 3.11 could hint the network by which the tara earns its integrity. In Chittur the committee is traditionally maintained by four most prominent Nayars taravads, namely Nalu Veettil Menon (Porayath, Ambath, Yezhuvath and Thachath). In Mathur and Puthiankam, the association is organized by temple community, and the festival is run by a festival committee whose leadership was regularly renewed by means of elections. There are various festivals in the Calendar in all settlements at different levels with significance, such as:

i) General Festival is Vishu (July/ August, Medam in Malayalam calendar), Onam (September or Chinggam in Malayalam calendar), and Sarasvati Pooja. They are celebrated in tattakam level and performed in temple and house.

ii) Taravads festivals such as Mandala Valakku, Asthamangalam and Mahcu pooja. This is the celebration of ancestral house, specific for each of the taravads and is centered in the courtyard. It is performed in the house.
The festivals in both Chittur and Puhtiankam started in Vetaikorumakkan temple and ended in the main Bhagavaty temple. Vetaikorumakkan, with Vettaikaraman as the venerated deity, associates with
the characters of Shiva pantheon as forest god or god of hunters or Vana Durga (goddess of the forest) which therefore contained the remaining forest living orientation. Only Chittur and Puthiankam, have ponds near their Bhagavaty Kavu but their Vetaikorumakkan do not. This bipolar Vetaikorumakkan and Bhagavaty temple may explain shifts from tribal condition of the hunting traditions into pastoral traditions of the people of the localities.

3.5 SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF TARA-NAYAR

The establishment of settlement is triggered by expansion, migration and regrouping of individual matrilineal joint family. Each tara has at least one village festival which metaphorically signified the birth celebration of the settlement and signified by the celebration of Bhagavaty. The route procession of festivals highlights the scope of territory of the tara. The role of karanavar, natukuttam, elder female member, legend, annual vela festivals, religious trait (Onam, Vishu, Durga pooja, and adimakavu status) are traditional controlling agents that would reenact the sense of place and territory of tara and taravad.

Spatially Tara is compound of houses sprung on paddy field or gardens, without formal dedined boundary. It is elevated from the rice field - ground (Figure 3.12). It has a typical landmark in Bhagavaty temple. In case of Puthiankam and Chittur there are two landmarks namely Bhagavaty temple and Vettaikorumakkan temple. In Puthhiankam, the tattakam of Bhagavaty temple cover 2 deshams, Puthiankam and Kattissery. The tara covers an approximate area of 0.1348 kmsq or 13.5 ha.
Figure 3.12 Schematic section of a tara

There are common characters which indicate that a tara-Nayar is in one way consciously designed, such as:

i) The development of house network following the paddy plot grid

ii) Separate access for their own community

iii) Temple orientation always facing either North or east

iv) There is logic of shutram in the tara level in a way that path line is extended through imaginary line across buildings, therefore on the spot where the crossing occur no construction should hinder, therefore people compensate it as opening, such as door.

v) North, East and Northeast portions always for sacred building or activities.

vi) Open space is basically a spatiotemporal barren land created after harvesting. Roads have been developed from paddy field ridges.

vii) Local people acknowledge three conceptual spatial orientations

- Bhagavaty kavu as navel,
- Vastu geometry as plan orientation
- Geometry of paddy field ridge path network and
- Typology of building and settlement aligned to the road.

The arrangement is illustrated in Figure 3.7-3.9.

The position of kavu is in general situated toward eastern side or northern side. Taravad is the most cohesive unit of community and defense. Territory for taravad compound is physically defined by construction of fence and gate (paddypura). Taravad is in general the sphere of female therefore it constitutes preservation and limit of movement of ladies.

The recurring existence of banyan tree and its platform (prathisthan) indicate venue of assembly a prototype of a worshipping centre. Procession starts in Vetaikorumakkan temple and ends in the Bhagavaty kavu, but it halts for an enormous time and main rites of festival conducted. Banyan tree and prathistan is therefore a main spatial traditional feature of community assembly, but not practically used anymore as assembly. They are mainly used as public space while the venue of assembly is in the temple or house of the respectable member of society, wherein it is accommodated in poorthalam of the house. The assembly traditional/ authority of the tara still exist, especially for the festival. Panchayath is never a venue for traditional discourse.

Until the reign of British, concept of common road was unknown. Path lines were a network that developed from previously path lines of paddy fields. House arrangements within tara-Nayar stand in alignment with road. The quarter is generally more geometrical, as the position is the farthest from the main road. It indicated that the manifestation of tara-Nayar had been initially secluded in the interior and distant from common network.
Figure 3.13 Tara-Nayar settlement unit of Kizhaketara and Padinjare tara, Chittur
Figure 3.14. Tara-Nayar settlement unit in Puthiankam, Alathur
Figure 3.15 Tara-Nayar settlement unit of Nattutara and Padinjaretara sections in Padinjaretara Mathur
Alternatively previous inhabitants cross somebody else plots and consequently evolved crossing pattern across taravad plots. Distant pollutions made road of the tara Nayar accessible only by the same community. Inclination that the back side of taravad faced the main road indicated that the current road in tara that connects various communities has most likely been recent. In Chittur and Puthiankam these internal roads have survived. In Mathur it has disappeared but traceable from the gates that face paddy field particularly in the east direction. This indicated that there used to be common path. In a row, taravads stand 40-150 m to each other measured from gate to gate, approximately, and the buildings stand approximately 10-30 m from one another measured from house to within the compound.

The most basic referred typology of house in tara is pattayapura and nalukettu (Figures 3.13 - 15). The significance of granary is obvious in term of Pattayapura. North east corner is the most auspicious corner and this indicated that the arrangements follow the order prescribed in mainstream Vastushastra.

The public life of tara Nayar has been centered in taravad. Public facility outside the taravad is not common and appeared only as temples or banyan tree. Nevertheless it was only for male-members. Common activities in tara appear as religious functions. Public vveue therefore take form as:

a. inside the taravad: pattayapura, poorthalm of taravad, veranda and near ponds

b. Outside the taravad : shops and banyan tree with prathistan.

Tara-Nayar acknowledges rotational weekly market or chanda at the desham level. In Puthiankam and Chittur market rotation exist and take place on Friday, while in Mathur it is on Wednesday.
3.6 SPATIAL STRUCTURE OF TARAVAD

3.6.1 Orientation of dwelling area

Taravad compound generally stands on flatland, on a garden plot surrounded by trees and paddy fields. The retaining wall of Kalikavu Bhagavaty has an elevation of approximately 50 cm above the paddy field ground which is the approximate height of tara against surrounding paddy-field. The area of taravad is approximately 2 acres with biggest compound belonging to Methil Meleketil taravad (8.2 acres) and Anavangoth (4.8 acres). In Chittur traditionally each taravad used to have about 14 acres. Chambath taravad claimed to own at least 100 acres as it covered almost the whole desham. Sree Kandath and Charubala did not have agriculture land and they only occupy a small tract of land (Table A.6.1.) The application of Vastu orientation is particularly applied for setting orientation and placing buildings and objects within the plots, like taravad and other structures. Currently outside the compound it is unmaintained and bushy.

3.6.2 Component of Taravad

Taravad is more than just a residential structure. Taravad is navel of the clan, and each taravad also established family temples and naga worship. At the taravad level in general there are rightful transitions of ancestral relic from one generation to the next generations. At times this family temple could be community temple. Temple as navel of taravad is very clear in the case of Parvaty temple that stands in between South and North Anavangoth taravad.

Taravad is significant social identifier for its members rather than tara. Historical accounts, festivals and legends about the origin of taravad shows that each taravad have their local narratives which as a whole could hint the structure of wealth and power of the Nayar family, and meanings of
any interrelations and interconnections among families with regards to corporate activities. The numbers in a taravad can be between 15-80 among which 5-6 taravads are generally dominating.

Approximately the taravad housed 70 people in 5-6 households traditionally, but presently there is only one household. Taravads are generally secluded within their own territory but within, each has access to another compound. They are each surrounded by fence, and some of the taravad has paddypura such as Ambath (Figure 3.16., pic. 2), Methil Meleketttil (Figure 3.17., illustration. 3; Figure A.4.2 illustration 9), Vadakka Anavangoth (Figure 3.17., illustration. 1), Moothedath (Figure 3.18., illustration. 2), Kurupath (Figure 3.18., illustration. 4) and Kottil (Figure 3.17, illustration. 4).

Along with nadumittam (courtyard), mahcu ara (ancestral chamber) and talam (sitting platform near nadumittam) at the opposite appear as occasional spatial set for religious functions. There are no symbols related to identity of family on the building. Identity is attached to the venerated deity and Mahcu is the inherited relic within taravad. Half of the respondents can identify the founder which is 300-100 years back. The following Figure 3.4, Figure 3.5 and Figure 3.6 show plans of taravad compound of the 3 cases of taras.

Each taravad has their water source which has been generally a rain fed pond (kolam) and kinar (well). Thekke Anavangoth and Vedakke Anavangoth are two taravads sharing a pond (Figure 3.17., illustration.1). In Chittur the main pond is surrounded and shared by Chambath, Thachath, Unikandath and Varavoortaravad s (see Figure 3.16. illustration 1 and Figure A.4.3). This structure indicated close social relationship among them. As example, Thekke Anavangoth (South Anavangoth) and Vedakke Anavangoth (North Anavangoth) are independent taravads each represented by their own
karanavar, but earlier used to belong to same taravad, Anavangoth. The pond had not only been useful for religious and daily use, but also managing canal for irrigation.

Figure 3.16 Plans of taravads at Chittur
Figure 3.17 Plans of taravads at Puthiankam
Mathur Tara Nayar
1. Pattatil Taravad
2. Moothedath Taravad
3. Kurupath Taravad
4. Kalikavu Puthen Veedu

T. taravad

Figure 3.18 Plans of taravads at Mathur
Kalari or training facility basically belongs to taravad. It does not always associate with military aspect all the time. This training education later was imbued by religious content. Education centre is the significant feature of kalari, not necessarily self defense. Now, kalari associates more to religious activities than educational. Proper Kalari exist in Chittur. The position of Kalari is concentrated within a taravad in one sector of a tara. The building is more like a single hall house with one end facing western side believed as the sword keeper (Figure 3.19., illustration 1). Annually during Konganpada festival in Chittur, this place is celebrated (Figure 3.19. illustration. 2)

**Figure 3.19. Kalari, Case of Sreekandath Taravad Chittur**

In general there is rarely an empty structure in the compound. Many of the functional buildings are shifted into the house including cowshed (tozhuttu), kulapura (single-hall structure), kalapura (bathing house) near pond, stable and granary. Tozhuttu or cowshed is generally next to house in the south. Many cowsheds are not used and are dilapidated. Functions of storage are in pattayam (rice box), nelara (rice room) and attic. Pattayapura literally meaning granary, is currently utilized as living space. The rigid structure of mud and wood made it adaptable for modern needs. Other permanent buildings which are there within the compound and still function
are aduppu kalam (kitchen), aduppu (hearth), and temporary structure pandal, family temple and including modern house.

Others facilities not mentioned earlier are Naga worship, stable, and cremation ground. Open space is basically an in between space, and not a direct open space. Generally paddy is dried in the talam in front of taravad and is directed toward paddy field of open space.

There are some readable patterns that connect taravads by a geometry that can bind the whole taravads within a tara into a unit of landscape. The geometry operated in landscape is similar to the operation of shutram rules in maintaining design of rooms within taravad (Figure 3.20). Tulasi tara, doors and front yard or courtyard are more or less nodal points of the interconnecting lines (schematic grid representation Figure 3.20). This Constellation of taravads could visualize the difference of the oldest part of the tara, which is more geometrical and the later one which is more organic or practical.
The complex of functional building arrangements shows that the most basic and frequent plot configuration is of rectangular type house (Figure 3.21, picture 1), cowshed and pond. Later the rectangular type house developed into more refined house (pattayapura) with attached kitchen (Figure 3.21, picture 2). Later they build additional family temple (Figure 3.21, picture 3) and established a compound with courtyard house and surrounding houses (Figure 3.21, picture 4). The taravad compound later expanded and made branches, with common temple and pond for their own neighborhood (Figure 3.21, picture 5). The branching out could be disperse and the location of common temple is in the oldest taravad. Families from different clans could stand adjacent to one another and could assemble and share common ponds and temple. The whole configuration could resemble the same assemblage of branches of families of the same clan sharing common amenities (Figure 3.21, picture 6).

**Figure 3.21 Type and morphology of House Compound Arrangement**
3.6.3 Building typology and Construction

Practically there is typical trait of design common and practical for all the twelve cases of ancestral house from three cases of tara –Nayar which could be summarized as follows:

i) The simplest residential structure and mostly found structure are single house ekasala for simple houses and pattayapura for taravad. The typical sections could be seen as Figure 3.17 Granary is a basic concept of form and in general there are three types of house structure constructed in wooden structure and mud:

a. one hall house typology and has been gradually advanced to make Pattayapura prototype,

b. Courtyard house (nalukettu and kuzhikettu), standing on platform (taravazham) and roofed by Mangalore tile roofs. The general type of ancestral house could be used for living, and venue for social-religious activities. If taravads means maternal ancestor house, and veedu means residential building. Courtyard house, and pattayapura are common building types.

c. Stable type design upgradable into house design

ii) The typology could be summarized as outlined in Figure 3.22
iii) Major orientation and placement of architectural feature and structure following Vastu prescription particularly at taravad level.

iv) Open space could be pond or open square, banyan tree and naga or any idol worship in settlement at tara level

The materials commonly used are mud, wood, lime. Building construction and design follow the mainstream of Vastushastra prescription. They have recurrent dimension which also has its traditional prescription Mahcu room is traditionally 2.94 m$^3$ or (4 kol, 2viral). Pattayapura, nelara, pattayam is prescribed to be (7 kol 6 viral) or (28 kol). Kitchen is prescribed to be (2 kol, 18 viral). House of the old age people (Vardigam) is prescribed to be (4 kol, 2 viral). Construction trait that are found in Vasthushastra:

i) Shutram, in which there is an imaginary thread line along which constructions are not allowed and therefore were designed as openings.

ii) Vithivinyasam : Navel – center orientation (Brahmavithi, Devavithi, Manusya Vithi, Piscasa Vithi)
iii) Padavinyasam: each space of mandala (pada) represents gods holding particular offices and role associate with the spatial role. The middle spot or Brahmasthanam is the centre of house.

The diagrammatic models of abstract spatial orientation are based on compass directions, outlined as follow:

i) southwest -north east orientation indicated concept of front’ - ‘rear’;

ii) north-south associated with birth – death;

iii) front – rear, early and later orientation by southwest -north east orientation. It make cowshed to be placed in southwest

iv) the auspicious location is east - west corner and north orientation; and

v) center orientation: Brahmasthanam in the courtyard or front yard

vi) Southwest corner is orientation of everything that begins. In construction, this is the spot where construction begins. Kutiyatikal, from Southwest corner to start erecting the structure. At this spot there would function, conducted to fix first stone or kanimula (Kutiya) and offering to Ganapathy (Bumipuja)

Symbolic Orientation and System for Construction, is outlined as follow:

i) Sacred construction is arudham or wall plate in Kerala because these structures define the shapes of the whole buildings.

ii) Northeast corner as female sphere and mahcu/ mahcu room as symbol of recurring life in a clockwise construction. In north or
east corner, tree symbolization is applied by tulasi tara (sacred plant) in front of house, prathisthan inside house compound or in settlement, and sacred grove (kavu) as foci of settlement. This signify importance if symbolic pro-creation and vital force for the habitation.

iii) Binary opposition in proportion and geometry, rectangle shape. It may reflect rudimentary concept of duality of end and tip of house.

Figure 3.23 Typical Section of Building

The organization of construction works could be explained as outlined:

i) The design and construction were executed by sthapati - takshaka-sutragrahi-vardaki. Sthapati done the plan, and takshaka managed the construction.

ii) The construction is sanctioned by Karanavar

iii) The construction is consecrated by Brahmin Priest (Iyer or Nambuthiri)