

Disciplining the Women in Medieval Kerala :
A Study of Maṅṅāpēṭi and Pulapēṭi

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Disciplining the Women in Medieval Kerala : A Study of Maṅṅāpēṭi and Pulapēṭi

Shiji K. P. and V. V. Haridas

The society in medieval Kerala was stratified, held its own tradition, culture and rituals. The indigenous practices like *Mārgam* (old custom), *Maryāda* (obligation) and *Ācāram* (established custom) had taken care of the rule of law. The absolute subjection of people to their age-old customs and traditions resulted in the recognition of customs as laws. Thus, customs were institutionalised by continuous observances. The people of medieval Kerala followed *Chāturvarṇya* (four *varṇas* i.e. Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra) ideals of the medieval Indian social system. The social status and hierarchy of every caste was specifically delineated which were bound on them.

Peculiar customs and practices observed in medieval Kerala, particularly related to high caste groups to maintain moral code. *Smārttavicāram*, *Maṅṅāpēṭi*, *Pulapēṭi* and *Paṛapēṭi* are the foremost regulatory mechanisms of women based on the concept of chastity.¹ These regulatory measures are directly related to the caste and gender principles of medieval Kerala. Earlier scholars such as Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai argues *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* as customs in favour of low castes against high castes.² This paper attempts to make a re-appraisal of the customs called *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*, which in fact acted against the outcastes in medieval Kerala. The process of disciplining the Nāyar women through *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* was also taken up in this paper. How the concept of chastity was utilised in the medieval period to curtail the freedom of Nāyar women also is an important aspect of the study.

Foreign and Indigenous Accounts on *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*

According to indigenous tradition of Kerala, the womanhood represented as to be gentle, polite, self-sacrificing, sexually passive and monogamous. There was a belief that the status and position of a woman enhances basically with the proper maintenance of chastity. Chastity was not dependent upon class, caste and social status. It was the sole responsibility of women to maintain chastity.³ *Smārttavīcāram* was a trial of Nampūtiri women for adultery from late medieval period to the early 20th century.⁴ The punishment for such an offence was excommunication. The women thus punished became outcastes in that particular social system.

Nāyar women were forced to practice customs like *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*. However, it was not based on any Brahmanical texts that such customs were practiced.⁵ In fact, values prescribed by Brahmin tradition are amended in the case of sexual relation between Brahmin men and Nāyar women. The practice of *Sambandham* (a form of marriage among matrilineal castes) was prominent feature of Nāyar society.⁶ The Nāyar women had concubinage relation with many Nāyar, Nampūtiri and other high caste men. Thus, the application of the concept of chastity in the case of Nāyar women is intriguing.

The foreign travellers visited Kerala in medieval period, refer about *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*. Duarte Barbosa, the Portuguese traveller who visited Malabar in 16th century, is the first to mention *Maṅṅāpēṭi*.⁷ Sheik Zainuddin, the indigenous scholar who wrote in Arabic, also refer to this practice.⁸ The foreigners mention this as the most abominable and unbelievable custom of the Kerala Hindus. This custom had varied names in different places. In South Travancore it was called as *Pulapēṭi* or *Parapēṭi*.⁹ The details of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* are also varied in the foreign accounts.

Barbosa elaborated that on certain days of a year, an outcaste man could throw a stone or twig at a woman or touch her. In most of the cases there was no witness. But the women herself revealed the truth and ran away with the outcaste who polluted her. If she

refused to run away with that man, her relatives would kill her to save their honour. In certain cases, she requested for help to the outcaste man to sell her to foreigners.¹⁰ This description shows that there was no need of a touch by an out-caste man for pollution. At the same time Sheik Zainuddin says that, every year there is a certain day, when an out-caste person would enter the sleeping room of a high caste lady or would dare to touch her, she becomes polluted and is forced to run away with him. If not, she would be sold as a slave by the Nāṭuvāl; or she gets converted to Muslim or Christian sects.¹¹ Herman Gundert says that the period of *Pulapēṭi* is in the Malayalam month of Karkkiṭakam corresponding to July-August.¹² M.G.S. Narayanan, M. R. Raghava Varier and Rajan Gurukkal use the term *Maṅṅāpēṭi* (grasp by *Maṅṅān*) and *Pulapīṭi* (grasp by *Pulayan*) to denote the custom.¹³ It is argued that it was a type of 'kidnapping' of high caste women by outcaste men.¹⁴ The description shows that the outcaste men entered in to the room of high caste lady. No accounts mention molestation in the case of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*. Thus, highhandedness from the part of outcaste men not seems to be the reason for the practice. In fact, the origin and development of such a custom seems to be more complex.

Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai made a detailed study of the practice of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*. According to him, this practice originated after 11th century AD as a result of the Cēra-Cōḷa war.¹⁵ To him, prior to 7th century AD or before the coming of Brahmins to Kerala, the society was egalitarian. The Brahmin ideology created a stratified society of castes. He thinks that *Pulapēṭi* was a privilege granted to low castes after the origin of caste system and it was a way to increase the number of slaves in Kerala.¹⁶ No evidences related to the origin and development of this custom in medieval Kerala is found. Elamkulam explains about a pleasant atmosphere of *Pulapēṭi* practiced in medieval Kerala. The Nāṭuvāli declared a particular date of *Pēṭi*. That day may be related to the festivals or other rituals of outcastes. During that time the outcastes like *Maṅṅān*, *Pulayan* and *Paṇayan* attain super natural power and kidnap the ladies of

high castes.¹⁷ It is probable that the oral tradition on this custom may have created fear among Nāyar women. It is argued that *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* were not actually practiced as a custom in medieval Kerala.¹⁸ But this argument is not convincing as we have evidence to it in the account of Duarte Barbosa, in *Tuhafat-ul-Mujahiddin* and also in the inscription of Vīra Kerala Varma abolishing this practice in Travancore. It is also argued that it was only an attempt to create an atmosphere of fear among Nāyar women. He considers it a ploy by the eldest male members of *Taravāṭu* (the matrilineal joint family of the Nāyars) making use of the outcaste servants, and also a technique to punish particular outcaste men who incurred their displeasure.¹⁹

Disciplining the women

Nāyar society practiced matrilineal form of inheritance in Kerala. However, in practice the society was not matriarchal. Nāyar women had no right to partition the property, exchange the land, sale the profits from the property and so on. This type of economic transactions was controlled by *Kāraṇavar* (senior most male member of the *Taravāṭu* in the maternal line). The young ladies were under the strict control of *Kāraṇavar* and *Kāraṇavatti* (senior most female member of the *Taravāṭu*). They were the kingpins of *Taravāṭu*, especially in matters of young ladies including their *Sambandham*, child birth, divorce etc. *Kāraṇavar* and *Kāraṇavatti* decided the *Sambandham* of their female family members with appropriate Nāyar or high caste men. They decided the number of *Sambandham*, it is time and continuance of the relationship.²⁰ The senior male members of the Nāyar family made use of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* as a disciplinary mechanism to suppress the daring Nāyar ladies on the pretext of custom. So, the atmosphere of obedience was maintained in the Nāyar family by these customs.

The tradition related to *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* may have created a fear psychosis among the Nāyar women in medieval period. They

had enjoyed the right to visit temples and attend festivals in that time. But when a woman travel outside, she should be accompanied by a man like Nāyar soldier, or at least a boy above three-years of age depending on the financial position of each *Taravāṭu*.²¹ In fact, the social system, in multiple ways, restricted the movements of women. Elamkulam argues that the *Nāṭuvāḷi* announced a particular date for *Pēṭi* in every year.²² However, this view is at best a hypothesis as there is no evidence for such a declaration by any *Nāṭuvāḷi* in Kerala.²³ *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* gained wide popularity as oral tradition. The fear psychosis of such a social ostracism had sinister effects on Nāyar women of productive ages. Thus, their space restricted within the compound of *Taravāṭu* itself. The punishments related to this *Pēṭi* are of unalterable in nature in the medieval period. A Nāyar woman was excommunicated without trial from the community in case a *Pulayan* or *Maṅṅān* touched her. The only options left for her was to run away with that outcaste man or convert to Islam Christianity or lead an ascetic life.²⁴ The relatives generally opted the honour killing if she preferred not to leave the family after such a pollution.²⁵ The fear of execution or a life of outcaste compelled the Nāyar women to be concerned of purity.

The women were vulnerable to *Pēṭi* only after evening. The companionship of at least a three-year-old boy protected her from *Pēṭi*, and safeguarded her purity.²⁶ This custom openly announces that if a woman was accompanied by a male 'representative', she would be immuned to any sort of 'pollution'. This upholds men as protector of women from all sorts of hazards.

The social regulations restricted the free movement of low caste people in medieval Kerala. They were even prohibited to see, approach and touch an upper caste man. The custom called *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* were practiced during a period when pollution to any high caste person by low castes or outcastes were met with severe punishment. Thus, the possibility of any such act voluntarily from the side of an outcaste man was generally

truncated.²⁷ On the other hand, aristocratic family head, or chieftain occasionally would have instigated his outcaste servant to touch the disobedient woman of his *Taravāṭu*. Hence the woman was punished on the pretext of custom itself.

Seclusion of outcastes

According to tradition all outcaste men have the right to pollute Nāyar ladies by this medieval custom. But a few outcastes like *Maṅṅān*, *Pulayan* and *Parayan* had particularly created fear psychosis to the Nāyar women. The Brahminic ideology of seclusion of outcastes from the Varṇa society seems to be detrimental in such practices. The outcastes were identified with sorcery and witchcraft, such as *Oṭividya*, *Kūṭōtram* and *Mantravādam*. A social stigma may have formed upon particular outcastes by such practices.²⁸ The elite class would have taken advantage of the situation by utilising the service of the outcastes as practitioners of sorcery to settle their scores with the opponents. In fact, such practices would have enabled the outcastes to take advantage of the situation against their immediate oppressor and even the estranged masters. Fear was considered as a major regulatory mechanism in the entire period of Kerala history. The practice of sorcery and witchcraft by the outcastes created fear among the high castes which was exploited to control their women.

The account of Barbosa shows that, even in the absence of any witness to the incident woman voluntarily informed it and ran away with the outcaste man.²⁹ It may be either due to the fear of the custom or in a bid to save the life from execution. The woman considered it as her responsibility to ensure the caste purity of her *Taravāṭu* and so suffered the pain of excommunication in silence. Another possibility is the elopement of woman with her outcaste lover taking advantage of the custom. Thus, it may be either a sacrifice of her life for the honour of her family or a selfish act to fulfil her desire. But evidence is scanty to ascertain the reason

behind the actual practice of this custom. Some ballads mention the marriage of upper caste women by low caste men, but of course not in the context of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*.³⁰ The caste rules prescribed and practiced in medieval Kerala denied any possibility of lower or outcaste men marrying upper caste women. Thus, the reappraisal of the custom of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* will throw light on the implications of this practice.

Elamkulam suggested another possibility that the Nāyar woman herself created the circumstances for this custom to live with her outcaste lover.³¹ To him, during that time, it was tough to touch a Nāyar woman by a *Pulayan* or *Maṅṅān*, as she was under strict vigilance of Nāyar militia.³² But this argument holds no water, as all upper castes were not in highest glory during that period. So, unlike the aristocratic women, the ladies belonging to poor families were not protected by militia, but were only accompanied by a small boy or maids. The social status of Nāyars and outcastes were in the extremes. Thus, it is argued that the possibility of love relation between upper caste women and lower caste men seems to be unusual if not improbable in those social circumstances.³³ According to Hindu law, the exogamous marriage was strictly prohibited. The medieval texts on caste rules and customs like *Śankarasmṛiti*³⁴ and *Vyavahāra Māla*³⁵ preach against inter caste marriage. But the prescription against such *Varṇaśaṅkara* implies such occurrences in medieval Kerala.

In medieval Kerala, the *jāti* regulations were not the creation of rulers like *Nāṭuvāli*. The formal order for conducting *Smārttavīcāram* was announced by the ruler, but the outcome of the trial was nothing to do with the ruler as it was entirely managed by the community leaders.³⁶ There was no evidence regarding the royal proclamation of a particular date for the practice of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* by the ruler.

Elamkulam argued that the freedom of adultery was permitted once in a year.³⁷ But this argument is in contravention to the social system of that period. During that time adultery was considered as

a serious offence which resulted in severe punishment. It seems that the custom called *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* existed not to promote adultery, but to prohibit adultery and ensure the chastity of Nāyar women. However, it is relevant in this context to reappraise the concept of chastity among Nāyar women. The practice of *Sambandham* makes polygamy an accepted norm. Thus, monogamy is not a necessary norm of chastity in the case of Nāyar woman. Here the concept of pollution and purity gained more emphasis. The male dominated ideology of caste always forbade and condemned the *pratilōma* type of marriage, which may be true in the case of medieval Kerala as well. In a matrilineal inheritance system, the elder male members ensured the purity of their successors. They were proud of begetting progeny from upper caste men, but frightened on any possibility of adulteration by lower or outcaste men. *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* seems to be the institutionalisation of the fear of *Varnaśankara* by the elite males.

The heinous part of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* was the award of punishment without trial. Thus, at the very moment of such occurrence they ran away from the *dēśam* due to the fear of execution. The woman involved in this solely bore the brunt of social ostracism. In most of the cases external agency did not implement the punishment but accepted themselves by the victims.

K. N. Ganesh analyse *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* based on the class theory of Marx. To him, the Nāyars and Pulayars were two distinct classes and their existed the possibility of class struggle between these two groups. He says that, in a traditional society, the class struggle is visible through the customs and beliefs and the violation of traditional *Maryādas*. He says that the low castes expressed their discontent against high castes through the customs of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*.³⁸ But in medieval Kerala history, we have not found any evidences of conflict between outcastes and upper castes. Purity and pollution practice seem to be abided by the people of Kerala. The outcastes not dared to challenge their impurity and they kept

away from the public sphere. They perceived untouchability and unapproachability as a result of their actions in previous life. In that social context class struggle seems to be a distant dream. M.G.S. Narayanan refutes the view of K.N. Ganesh. To him, during medieval period no one imposed customs and traditions on people, but themselves accepted it.³⁹ However, this argument of people voluntarily following customs and traditions in medieval period is contentious. The circumstances in which people became so subservient is only a matter of conjecture. They were not conscious of class exploitation and simply considered it as their fate. It is argued that they were not bothered about the freedom from that social system.⁴⁰ However, such over simplification of customs and practices in medieval period can be challenged. Brahminic ideology works in a social and political system, where power is used in visible or invisible manner upon the common people by the elite.

Re-appraisal of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*

In the case of *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*, adultery was not practiced like *Aṭukkaḷadōśam*. According to medieval travel accounts even pollution by personal contact was not required for excommunication in the case of these customs. In some cases, *Pulayan* or *Maṅṅān* had seen the Nāyar women from a distance and howled out 'Seen! Seen!' which resulted in the excommunication of the latter.⁴¹ A native account of 16th century mentions that in some cases, a *Pulayan* or *Maṅṅān* threw a stone or twig at a woman of higher caste or touched her.⁴² In any of these cases women were not allowed to stay back in her house. So, it was a case beyond chastity. It seems that it was a toll of gender discrimination devised by the aristocratic class to restrict the freedom of their women. The concept of purity and pollution is utilised for this.

The social structure of medieval Kerala places the *Maṅṅān*, *Pulayan* and *Parayan* as servile group of outcastes far below the upper castes. They never challenged their masters and generally remained loyal.

In such a social condition how far the outcastes might have enjoyed such a custom to touch the Nāyar women is highly debatable as the existing social system deprived the outcastes of any social space. It may be due to external compulsion if at all they practiced it. It is argued that the Kāraṇavar of Nāyar *Taravāṭu* compelled his outcaste servants to do that.⁴³ In fact the Kāraṇavar made use of this custom to discipline the audacious ladies in his family, who disobeyed him. Here the outcaste men and high caste women became the victims of existing social customs. Caste differences and gender inequality acted as a weapon to regulate certain groups of society. The power of patriarchy and caste system acted as a tool against the outcastes and women in medieval Kerala society.

Even in a matrilineal Nāyar *Taravāṭu*, males dominated the family structure. The mobility of women was regulated by the elder male member of the family. The space of women confined within the wall of *Taravāṭu*. But a few references related to *Maṇṇāpēṭi* shows that she was threatened within this limited space itself.⁴⁴ If any outcaste man touch high caste woman by entering the house, the family members of the latter supported the former. In fact, *Maṇṇāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* were not accidental incidents, but a well-planned conspiracy to discipline the women.

The daring attempt to abolish *Maṇṇāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* was made by Vīra Kerala Varma in 1696 AD. In Kalkulam inscription the King orders that *Pulapēṭi* and *Maṇṇāpēṭi* shall not be practiced in the territory lying from the west of *Tovāḷa*, to the east of *Kannēri* and between the mountain range and the sea. If, in transgression of this order, *Pulapēṭi* and *Maṇṇāpēṭi* practiced, the very embryo in the womb of the *Pulayan* and *Maṇṇān* shall be extracted and slain. It is also ordered that if the *Pulapēṭi* and *Maṇṇāpēṭi* occurred to the woman, the pollution shall be considered as removed if the woman bathe in a tank.⁴⁵ This stone inscription was placed at the northern entrance of *Keṇṭappāṭaivīṭu*. But most of the Nāyar *Taravāṭus* were not ready to accept the order, as they were bound to traditional customs and

rituals, which they considered more sacrosanct than the royal proclamation. This royal order protects the upper castes. Here cruel punishments are prescribed to *Maṅṅān*, *Pulayan* and *Paṛayan*. The entire family of the outcaste would be killed if anyone practiced *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi*. This punishment itself is directed against women. Here the victim was outcaste woman, who had no involvement in this practice. It indicates that the proclamation of Kerala Varma protects only the interests of upper caste people in the society.⁴⁶

Even after the royal proclamation *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* were practiced in Kerala by Nāyar families. *Putuvapāṭṭu* depicts the story of the courageous ruler of Kottayam called Kerala Varma who stopped the custom *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* on Kollam Era 871 *Makaram* 25 (23 January, 1696).⁴⁷ But his daring attitude led to his assassination by nobles with the consent of Umayamma Rani.⁴⁸

The present study makes it evident that *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* was one of the regulatory mechanisms to discipline the women of Nāyar community by the patriarchal society. They tried to ensure the purity of their women by restricting their mobility and free will with this custom. The public space was fully restricted to Nāyar women by this custom. Their free movements and independent actions were controlled by a fear psychosis of social ostracism. Thus, *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* can be considered as a disciplinary mechanism, to curtail the freedom of Nāyar women within a matrilineal community. This custom also used as a tool to alienate the outcastes from the rest of the society.

Notes

¹ *Maṅṅāpēṭi* and *Pulapēṭi* literally means fear of the *Pulayas* and fear of *Maṅṅāns*. It refers to a popular belief prevalent in some parts of Kerala roughly till the middle of the 20th century, that men of the outcastes like *Maṅṅān*, *Paṛayan* and *Pulayan* could approach young women of the Nāyar caste and pollute them on a particular day.

² Elamkulam P. N. Kunjan Pillai, *Annathe Keralam* (Mal), p. 114.

³ Parakkal Gauri Amma, 'Sthreekalum Pathivrathyavum' (Mal), *Lakshmi Bai*, Vol. 18, 1934 October, p. 146.

- ⁴ Parameswaran Moosath, *Śaṅkarasmṛti*, 1905, Kottayam, 2017, pp. 132-137; P. Bhaskaranunni, *Smārttavīcāram*, Kottayam, 2009, pp. 148-209.
- ⁵ The significant texts of Brahmanical ideology in medieval Kerala are *Kēraḷōlpatti*, *Śaṅkarasmṛti* and *Vyavahāramāla*. These texts do not speak of these customs. Even in medieval chronicles called *Granthavaris* these customs are not recorded.
- ⁶ *Sambandham* was a form of marriage practiced by high caste Hindus till middle of the 20th century in Kerala. The matrilineal family of high castes including Nāyars opted this form of marriage. In this form of marriage, the lady married a man of higher caste particularly Brahman. But the children born in this relationship had no property right of his father. Generally, in this form of marriage the women opted polyandry.
- ⁷ "In certain months of the year they do their utmost to touch some *Nayre* woman by night as secretly as they can, and this only for the sake of doing evil. They go by in order to get into the houses of the *Nayres* to touch women, and during these months the women guard themselves carefully, and if they touch any woman, even though none have seen it, and there may be no witnesses, yet she declares it at once, crying out, and she will stay no longer in her house that her caste may not be destroyed; in general she flees to the house of some other low caste folk, and hides herself, that her kinsfolk may not slay her; and that thence she may help herself and be sold to foreigners, which is off times done. And the manner of touching is this, even though no words are exchanged, they throw something at her, a stone or stick, and if it touches her she is touched and ruined. These people are also great sorcerers and thieves; they are a very evil race". M. L. Dames, ed., *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Vol. II, New Delhi, 1989, pp. 68-69.
- ⁸ "If a woman of a higher caste, on certain particular nights of the year, happens to be hit with a stone or something else from the hands of a man of inferior caste and she was not at that time accompanied by any man, she will be turned out of her caste. In such circumstances, she has no alternative other than embracing Islam, Christianity or become a yogi. Otherwise she will be sold by the local ruler". S. M. H. Nainar, ed., *Tuhafat-ul-Mujahiddin*, Kolalampur, Reprint 2009, pp. 43-44.
- ⁹ S. Achuthawarrier, *Kerala Samskaram* (Mal), Trivandrum, 2003, p. 139.
- ¹⁰ M. L. Dames, ed., *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Vol. II, pp. 68-69.
- ¹¹ S. M. H. Nainar, *Tuhafat-ul-Mujahiddin*, pp. 43-44.
- ¹² Gundert says that during the month of Karkkitakam high caste women may lose caste, if a slave happens to throw a stone at them after sunset. Hermann Gundert, *Malayalam English Dictionary*, (1872), Kottayam, 2013, p. 632.
- ¹³ M.G.S. Narayanan, *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p. 3; Raghava Varier and Rajan Gurukkal, *Keralacharithram*, Vol. II, Sukapuram, 2012, p. 155.

- ¹⁴ Raghava Varier and Rajan Gurukkal, *Keralacharithram*, Vol. II, p. 155.
- ¹⁵ Elamkulam P. N. Kunjan Pillai, *Annathe Keralam* (Mal), p. 123.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 116-117.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 113.
- ¹⁸ P. P. Sudhakaran, 'Pulapeti, Puthiyoru Anweshanam' (Mal.), *Kerala Padanangal*, IV, January-March, 1994, p. 385.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*,
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 508.
- ²¹ A.S. Ramanatha Ayyar, ed. *Travancore Archaeological Series (T.A.S)*, Vol. VII, Part II, Trivandrum, 1930, pp. 26-28.
- Elamkulam P. N. Kunjan Pillai, *Annathe Keralam* (Mal), *op.cit.*, p. 113.
- ²³ There were a number of *Nāṭus* and *Nāṭuvāli* in medieval Kerala. Many of them such as Zamorin, Kolattiri, Venatu ruler and Cochin Raja attained the position of independent rulers in late medieval period. V.V. Haridas, *Zamorins and the Political culture of Medieval Kerala*, New Delhi, 2016, pp. 24-25.
- ²⁴ S. M. H Nainar, *Tuhafat-ul-Mujahiddin*, pp. 43-44.
- ²⁵ P. P. Sudhakaran, 'Pulapēti Puthiyoru Anweshanam', p. 509.
- ²⁶ Elamkulam P. N. Kunjan Pillai, *Annathe Keralam* (Mal), *op.cit.*, p. 113.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- ²⁸ P. P. Sudhakaran, 'Pulapeti Puthiyoru Anweshanam', p. 509.
- ²⁹ M. L. Dames, ed. *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Vol. II, pp. 68-69.
- ³⁰ Raghava Varier and Rajan Gurukkal, *Keralacharithram*, Part II, Sukapuram, 2012, p. 158.
- ³¹ Elamkulam P. N. Kunjan Pillai, *Annathe Keralam* (Mal), p. 113.
- ³² *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- ³³ P. P. Sudhakaran, 'Pulapēti Puthiyoru Anweshanam', p. 507
- ³⁴ N. P. Unni, ed. *Śankarasmṛiti*, Torino, 2003, p. 192.
- ³⁵ *Vyavahāramāla*, Manuscript Library, University of Calicut, 1563.
- ³⁶ N.P. Unni, ed. *Śankarasmṛiti*, pp. 260-261.
- ³⁷ Elamkulam P.N. Kunjan Pillai, *Annathe Keralam* (Mal), p. 115.
- ³⁸ K.N. Ganesh, *Keralathinte Innalekal* (Mal.), 1990, Trivandrum, 2011, p. 169.
- ³⁹ M.G.S. Narayanan, *Cultural Symbiosis in Kerala*, *op.cit.*, p. 3.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁴¹ M.L. Dames, ed., *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, Vol. II, pp. 68-69.
- ⁴² S. M. H. Nainar, ed. *Tuhafat-ul-Mujahiddin*, pp. 43-44.
- ⁴³ P. P. Sudhakaran, 'Pulapeti, Puthiyoru Anweshanam', p. 485.
- ⁴⁴ Velayudhan Panikkassery, *Keralam pathinanjum pathinarum noottanduakalil* (Mal), Kottayam, 1963, p. 79.
- ⁴⁵ The relevant portion of Kalkulam inscription are as follows: "The King having been pleased to order that *Pulappēdi* and *Maṅṅāppēdi* shall not be in practice in the territory lying to the west of *Tōvāla*, to the east of *Kaṅṅēri*

and between the mountain range and the sea, the two popular assemblages of Mahājanas met in deliberation and had this order (kalpana) engraved on stone.

If, in transgression of this order, *Pulappēdi* and *Mannāppēdi* should again become prevalent, the very embryo in the womb among the Pulayarn and Mannān shall be extracted and slain. It was also ordered that if (the pollution consequent on) *Pulappēdi* and *Mannāppēdi* should happen to a woman, the pollution shall be considered as removed if the woman bathe (in a tank) and come out⁴⁷.

A. S. Ramanatha Ayyar, ed. *T.A.S.*, Vol. VII, Part II, pp. 28-29.

⁴⁶ M. R. Raghava Varier and Rajan Gurukkal, *Kerala Charithram*, Vol. II, Sukapuram, 2012, p. 157.

⁴⁷ M.R. Raghava Varier, ed. *Kēraḷōlpatti Kilipāṭṭu*, (Mal.), Kottayam, 2016, p. 38.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.