

A CASE STUDY ON KALARIPAYATTU AS THE MOTHER OF MARTIAL ARTS

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A CASE STUDY ON KALARIPAYATTU AS THE MOTHER OF MARTIAL ARTS

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Contents

Preface		i
Chapter One	: Introduction	01-05
Chapter Two	: Kalaripayattu as the Mother of Martial Arts	06-22
Chapter Three	: Conclusion	23-27
Works cited		28

Declaration

We hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "A Case Study on Kalaripayattu" as the Mother of Martial Arts" is a record of the research work carried out by us at the Department of English, All Saints' College, under the guidance of Dr Sonya J Nair, Assistant Professor, Department of English and submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor Arts, First Degree Programme in English Language and Literature under the CBCS System.

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Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "A Case Study on Kalaripayattu" as the Mother of Martial arts" is a record of studies carried out by Mary Lincy G, Megha Suresh, Merin M, Nanditha A.S, Niranjana Vinod Pillai, at the Department of English, All Saints' College under my guidance and submitted to the University of Kerala in partial fulfillment of the Degree of Bachelor of Arts, First Degree Programme in English Language and Literature



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Preface

Kalaripayattu (kalari) is India's ancient indigenous martial, meditational and medicinal tradition that evolved alongside Ayurveda and Yoga originating from Kerala in South India. It is a complete system of body oriented therapy with an emphasis on the expansion and development of the senses. Kalari gives as a framework for understanding how we exist in the world and provides with practical guidelines to harmonize ourselves with our changing linear and outer environments. The arenas and the forms are multidimensional, in cooperating concepts of power and focus allowing us to feel a close connection to our ancestral animal and warrior lineages.

Chapter One provides a brief overview of history of Kalari, its contribution to different sectors of development in modern era, also giving an overview of kalari as a primary source of Indian martial arts and Kalari in Kerala.

A comprehensive study of the title given to this given to this project forms the subject of chapter Two, giving a detailed report on the importance of Kalaripayattu, the treatment offers, the origin of the martial art form and its development and spread across the globe.

Chapter Three sums up the arguments of the preceding chapter by reiterating the impact on the movies and women, also the effect and cultural tourism.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Existence of Martial arts in India can be proved by the mention of martial arts in the Vedas. According to ancient folklore, Parasurama who was an avatar of Lord Vishnu is believed to be the founder of martial arts in India. Kalaripayattu, which is the most popular amongst many martial arts in India, is believed to have been founded by Parasurama. Kalaripayattu is believed to be the oldest form of martial arts in India. The word Kalaripayattu is a combination of two words, 'Kalari' and 'Payattu' which means training ground and fight. During the peak of its popularity, kalaripayattu was used as a code of combat by the South Indian dynasties. Kalaripayattu reach its zenith during the hundred years of war between the Cholas, Pandyas and Cheras. The constant fighting between princely states helped the fighters in refining the act into martial art form. Many martial arts in India have been forgotten due to neglect and lack of proper documentation of their existence but Kalaripayattu has stood the test of time. The act gained dominance during the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries and was incorporated into many religions as well. It was customary in Kerala to have all children above the age of seven to obtain training in Kalaripayattu. Martial arts in India were a code of like for many. During the British occupation, martial arts in India suffered major setbacks. The British had underestimated the love of martial arts in India and Kalaripayattu was secretly practised and kept alive during the colonial occupation of India by the British. Thus one of the main martial arts of India survived the dark time where curbs where imposed on its practices. Kalaripayattu is now

practised widely across Kerala, fringes of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and also in Sri Lanka. Kalaripayattu is also a source of living for many in Kerala as performances are now conducted for tourists. Kalaripayattu has stood the test of time unlike many other martial arts in India and is still being practised in Southern India

The primary source of Indian martial arts in Sangam literature. The Akananuru and Purananuru describe the use of spears, swords, shields, bows and silambam in Sangam era. The word kalari appears in the Puram (verses 225,237,245,356) and Akam (verses 34, 231,293) to describe both a battlefield and combat arena. Each warrior in the Sangam era received regular military training target practice, horse and elephant riding. The warriors and soldiers in military service were called Chekavar. They specialized in one or more of the important weapons of the period including the spear(vel), sword(val), shield(kedaham) and bow and arrow(vil ambu). The combat techniques of the sangam period were the earliest precursors of the Kalaripayattu. Elements from the yoga tradition as well as finger movements in natadances were incorporated into the fighting arts. Some of the choreographed sparring in Kalripayattu can be applied to dance and Kathakali. Dancers who knew Kalaripayattu were believed to be markedly better than other performers. Regional variants are classified according to geographical location in Kerala; there are the Northern style from the Malabar region in northern Kerala and the Southern style from southern Kerala, Northern Kalaripayattu (Vadakkan Kalari) and Southern Kalaripayattu (Thekkan Kalari). Both systems make use of internal and external concepts. There are different traditions in Kalaripayattu and various methods were practised in different parts of Kerala. Typically, all Keralites, men and women alike (particularly those of the Hindu community) would undergo mandatory training in Kalaripayattu beginning at the age of seven or nine. Development and mastery of Kalaripayattu comes from

the tradition of constantly learning, adapting and improving the techniques by observing what techniques are practical and effective. The knowledge and experience gained by the practitioners is improved upon by subsequent masters who utilize keen observation, research of various techniques and variations to update the knowledge. The adaptability of Kalaripayattu is largely due. A Kalari practitioner might encounter a new method of attack from an enemy combatant which the kalari practitioner would need to learn how to anticipate, adapt to neutralize. This is especially seen in the Southern style of Kalaripayattu, which is believed to have been adapted and modified during wars with Tamil kingdoms to counter martial arts like Silambam which was the main martial art form practiced by Tamil soldiers at the time. Kalaripayattu is ultimately taught not just as a martial art, but as a way of life that epitomizes respect, compassion and duty over all else.

Kalaripayattu is the indigenous martial art of Kerala and is known to be in practice for more than five hundred years. It has been preserved for many centuries following the tradition of guru-sisya parampara. Kalaripayattu is a wholistic art that only knows how to hurt the other but also knows how to heal. This unique combination makes it a complete science and hence it is regarded as the mother of all martial arts. The contribution made by Kalaripayattu on different arenas including tourism is noteworthy. Despite being an ancient martial art Kalaripayattu is not recognised as the other martial arts. Hence it is crucial to examine the relevance of Kalaripayattu in a modern era.

The whole study is discussed in three chapters. The first chapter is the introductory one and deals with the various aspects of the study such as objectives, hypothesis, methodology, scope and scheme of the study and review of literature.

Chapter two gives an overview on Kalaripayattu and discusses many important aspects including the history, Vadakanpattu, Marmachiklsa, impact on tourism etc. Chapter three is the conclusion.

Kalaripayattu is an exhilarating method of keeping a man fit and at the same time offering a way of defending himself against an aggressor (John, 2011). Zarilli (1994) stated that the origin of martial art is as old as the origin of mankind. He concluded that the resource scarcity and protection from the predators are the basis of self-defence. In order to ensure the adequate supply of resources, the living organism had to fight or defend to protect from the threats to life. So it has been identified that in order to ensure the basic security needs, 'defence' has been practised. Whenever it became an essentiality of life and when practised in an organised manner, it is collectively referred to as martial arts. Later, this has been used as a conflict redressal mechanism among human kind.

Indian martial arts have influenced various other Asian martial arts, particularly within the Indian cultural sphere of south East Asia. The notable examples are Indo-Malay Silat, Burmese Naban and Bando, Filipino, Escrima and Kali, Indochinese Kickboxing, Karate and Sumo from Japan, Muay Lao from Laos Tomoi from Malaysia, Pradal Serey from Cambodia (Kidangil, 2002).

The word Kalari comes from the Sanskrit word 'Khaloorika' which means training ground. In Malayalam the word kalari means where Kalaripayattu is practised. Kalaripayattu is pronounced as combination of two words 'kalari' and 'payattu'. Kalari means gymnasium and payattu means duel. In ancient times, disputes between Indian nobles were settled by the outcome of Kalaripayattu tournament. According to Zarilli this argument is justified by Chinese scholar and

diplomat Huang Tsang's documents which narrates various weapons used used by the Indians. It is also acknowledged that the Chinese and Japanese martial arts are clearly linked to the Indian martial arts through Bodhi dharma an Indian Buddhist monk from Tamil Nadu who visited Shaol monastery in China, initiating, spreading and teaching the then form of Kalaripayattu which lead to the creation of Shaolin Boxing a special set of exercises, with the emphasis on eighteen hands of Buddha and Kung fu and Karate of today by refining some modifications. Besides that the eighteen hands were believed to be derived from the eighteen adavukal of Kalaripayattu (Vasudeva, 2000). Kerala is known for its varied martial arts, importantly Kalaripayattu, Parisa lkali, Valeru, Kunderu and Njaninmel kali. The Parisa kali and Velakanni is mainly practised in Northern Malabar and in Travancore. Kalaripayattu has evolved into three distinct styles consisting of northern style, southern styles and central style. In all the three styles, the art is mainly composed of four branches of combat technique. These are unarmed training, training with sticks of various lengths, training with a range of deadly weapons, and finally training to strike at vital points (Zarilli, 1994). The mythological references about the origin of the state mentions that the land of Kerala was created by Parasurama in search of a peaceful place for meditation by throwing his battle axe into the sea from the waters. It is also argued that the administration of the area was also progressed with the Vedic school and established sixty four Kalari throughout this region. These Kalaris were entrusted to various warriors with all secrets of divine warfare and practicing tacties. In the course of time, this practice became Kalaripayattu (Kurup and Vijayakumar, 1997). Though historians are not fully supportive of the legendary stories, empirical and recorded evidence indicates that the origin of this martial art form is in South India.

Chapter 2

Kalaripayatu as the Mother of Martial Arts

The growing interest of visitors in genuine cultural experience brings along considerable opportunities but also complex challenge for tourism. The sector needs to adopt and strengthen policies and governance models that benefit all stakeholders, while preserving and further promoting the widest possible range of cultural assets and expressions.

UNWTO provides supports to its members in building and strengthening cultural tourism, policy framework, strategies and product development in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the principles laid out in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. Activities undertaken by UNWTO in the field of culture and tourism stem from the very definition of cultural tourism, which is defined as: “A type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to set a distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions”. In the broadest sense, Cultural Resource Management (CRM) is the vocation and practice of managing cultural resources, such as the arts and heritage. It incorporates Cultural Heritage Management which is concerned with traditional and historical culture

The 'Kalaripayattu' is a scientific heritage of Kerala and it inherits the technology of the body through which self-defence and behaviour develops in the right manner. Kalaripayattu is the martial art form of Kerala after a long set back during the colonial rule. This treasure inherited by the present day society, can be utilized for the development of Heritage Tourism in India. In Malayalam Kalari means 'open space' and 'payattu' means to exercise in 'arms practice'. Kalaripayattu means to become trained, accustomed and to practice.

'Kalari' demonstration during festivals and district wise competitions add to the glory of this martial art. "Kalaripayattu" which has won its fame and glory all over the world is the oldest forms of indigenous art which has encapsulated Kerala's cultural and historical heritage. The Kalari legacy is well taught as a scientific system of physical cultural training to the modern sport man.

The capitalization of cultural heritage both in tangible and intangible is the core of cultural tourism development. At this juncture, the mutual benefit derived by tourism as well as culture in showcasing its variety through product development, conservation and management are of great significance. Culture is one such segment which supplies different consumable(tangible and intangible) products to the tourism industry, and even now, it is sold as an 'all peoples product'. Tourism industry itself assumed that the tourists are highly interested in cultural specification of the destination. Hence, the capitalization of cultural heritage both in tangible and intangible is the core of cultural tourism development. In this juncture, the mutual benefit derived by tourism as well as culture in showcasing its variety through product development, conservation and management are of great significance.

Owing to the close links between Kalaripayattu martial art and the dance forms of Kerala like Theyyam, Kathakali, and so on, Kalaripayattu is an integral part of cultural heritage of the state. Kalaripayattu, which is widely practiced even today in Kerala, is believed to be a manifestation of culture and history of Kerala. According to Kunhimoosa, noted Kalaripayattu practitioner from Vatakara, 'Kalaripayattu has got immense potential in the domain of cultural tourism as Kalaripayattu is an intangible manifestation of Kerala culture and heritage.

Tourists also come to Kerala for 'Kalari Chikitsa' which is meant for orthopaedic problems, sports injuries and neurological ailments. The 'Kalari Chikitsa' is capable of healing any kind of bone fractures which are not in the category; of special intervention such as fractures of skull etc. There is also kalari chikitsa for post-operative rehabilitation. Many Kalari Ayurveda and Research centres in Kerala function as a special treatment hospital which attracts tourists; both domestic and foreign. Kalari Marma therapies are time honoured.

Many foreign tourists advised the girls to practise Kalaripayattu as a means of self-defence and protection. That is why it is considered as a means of bodymind intellect integration. All the interviewed tourists admitted they got the fullest degree of happiness or satisfaction from Kalaripayattu. This is because of the innumerable advantages attributed to this technique of self-defence. The Kalaripayattu is considered as a system of health and physical fitness for students. Spiritual health, mental health and emotional health can be achieved through the practice of Kalaripayattu

Kalaripayattu training is the best self-defence training for all people. In order to make the body fit, continuous training is important, and at the same time, pre- and

post-application of various medicines for a period of time is also part of this gymnasium. This medicinal application became a practice called Kalarichikitsa. The profile and application are varied, and most of these tactics and techniques are orally transmitted by generations. Moreover, the application of medicine also varies according to style of Kalaripayattu practiced. For example, northern and central style claims that they have base knowledge on Ayurveda medicine while southern style is more attached to Siddha medical system. Though experts have different opinion about the origin of Kalarichikitsa, it has been believed that this treatment form combines the Shalya tantra division of Ayurveda, Yoga, Vastu Sastra and Tantra Sastra.

Irrespective of the basis of origin and application style, Kalarichikitsa is gaining its popularity and is considered as one of the alternative medicinal segment widely practised among local communities of South India in different forms and names. Kalaripayattu-related medical and physical practise incorporates a complete way of living in harmony and balance, within the self and in relation to the outside world. In other words, this harmony and balance is achieved through physical effort, meditation and character building exercises and requirements. Byju Gurukkal, the president of Kalaripayattu Federation of India says, 'Kalarichikitsa and Kalaripayattu are inseparable as both aim to build fitness and wellnesses.

Large numbers of people are travelling to different parts of the world in search of certain specific health services of certain ethnic communities. Studies show that most of the health tourism programmes are focusing mainly on pampering and wellness. Pampering involves giving experience that makes them feel good: services such as massages, herbal wraps, and exfoliating scrubs. Wellness makes healthy people stay fit both physically and mentally.

It is also noted that travel for health purpose has emerged as one of the means of income generation, especially foreign exchange earnings and is a well sought-after product under tourism programmes of many nations. India is a recent entrant into this segment. Health and medical tourism is the one of the growing segments of tourism in India. It includes traditional medicinal practices like yoga, meditation, acupuncture and neurotherapy, herbal healing and Ayurveda and few practices of Kalarichikitsa along with allopathic and other systems of medicine. According to Moideen Koya Gurukkal of Shafi Dava Khana (SDK) of Kanhangad, Kalaripayattu is a healing system not based on Ayurveda and Sidha, and it is much older than Ayurveda. He maintained the Kalari-Marmachikilsa system of medical practices originated 10,000 years back; however Ayurveda is only a 5000-year old practice. Kunhimoosa Gurukkal of Vatakara maintained that the most of the Kalarichikilsa practices are from Ayurveda, and there is a give and a take relationship between these two.

There are numerous provisions available under traditional medicinal practices to make the people stay fit both physically and mentally. So the importance of traditional medicine is gaining popularity across the world. The coexistence of herbal and procedure-based medicinal practice in Kalarichikilsa could attract general as well as medical tourists. The soundness of this segment of medicinal practice gained market value among few in these days. The possibility of recognizing Kalarichikilsa as an alternative medicine under wellness tourism cannot be undermined. Most of the tourists visiting India opt for three forms of treatment: wellness, rehabilitation and surgeries. As medical tourism is growing, Kalarichikilsa can also be marketed as an alternative medicinal practice for medical tourists. Many tourists visit for medical treatment as it is cheaper and effective. In the profile of health or wellness tourism in

main stream, medicinal practices are widely referred both theoretically as well as practically.

The origin and science behind marma date back many hundreds of years. It is first mentioned in the classical scriptures which came from two sources of traditional legends:

The Ayurvedic legend of Susruta Maharshi and the Sidha legend of Agastya.

The marma science has a very significant role to play in Kalaripayattu training and is taught alongside Verumkai Prayogam or unarmed combat after the students have been sufficiently coached in Angathari or armed combat. It is after the student have been trained in fighting with all forms of weapon that he/she is initiated into the moves and stances of unarmed combat. When Marmavidya or knowledge of the marmas is taught, the as an insists that it should be used only as of the last option for defeating the opponent. Marma in Sanskrit means “hidden or secret”. In Malayalam literature the term is used to indicate “the most important or vital factor”. Marma points also known as the vital energy points are the junctions where two or more tissues overlap(different muscles, tendons, ligaments, veins etc).These points access to the body’s vital energy. Healers and martial artists used their knowledge of such point to heal or harm respectively. This energy is known as ‘Prana’ in India. Marma are the vital areas of the body. The Sanskrit phrase, ‘Marayate Iti Marmani’, also means death or serious damage to body or health after infliction to the point of their situation. Hence these areas are called Marma. In siddha system of medicine they are called Varma.

In ancient times, in the earlier days of Kalaripayattu, students would frequently suffer injuries due to impact to the marma points. As a way to counter this,

a branch of Ayurvedic medicine was developed that sought to treat marma specific injuries which eventually came to be known as Marma Treatment or Kalari Treatment.

Under Ayurvedic medicine, it is believed that the five elements of the world have a huge impact on a person's health. Marma points are specific anatomical locations in your body through which the energy of these elements is believed to flow. Marma points therapy is the practice of stimulating these spots through gentle massage therapy. Marma points are said to contain the three Doshas:

Vata (air and space)

Kapha (earth and water)

Pitta (fire and water)

These doshas are believed to be linked to your physical and emotional well-being.

Like traditional Chinese acupuncture, Ayurvedic medicine believes that stimulation of the marma points can improve your physical and mental health.

It's also believed that injury to the marma points can result in negative health effects in the body and in some cases, further injury and even death. It's said that there are 107 marma points(described by Shusrutha Samhitha) in various locations around the human body:

11 marma points in your limbs

26 marma points in your trunk

37 marma points in your head and neck region

33 marma points located elsewhere in our body

In Tamil traditions 108 marma points are enumerated, and in Kalari tradition of Kerala 365 Marma points are in practice. Major Marma points correspond to seven Chaka's or energy centres of the body, while minor points radiate out long the trunk and limbs. The points cover both the front and back of the body, including 22 on the lower extremities, 12 on the chest and stomach, 14 on the back, and 37 on the head and neck. The mind is considered as the 108th Marma. Each has its own name based on their anatomical position. The human body needs shobdhana (revitalisation) in order to perform its function normally and efficiently. In Ayurveda system, especially in Kerala, Marma massage is performed as a routine in preventive medicine.

Ayurvedic medicine proposes marma point's therapy as a method of changing or improving your biochemistry. It is believed to release stagnant energy and stimulate your internal organs, hormones, and other chemicals to help meet the needs of your body. Marma point's therapy is done by gently stimulating the marma points around your body through massage therapy. Generally, this is performed by a trained massage therapist who has experience with ayurvedic medicine. These massage therapists have extensive knowledge of the locations and functions of the various marma points. The therapist isolates marma points and tones them by increasing blood flow to affected part of the neuro-muscular junction. They also aim to tone the surrounding muscles. Aromatic massage oils, sometimes infused with herbs, are typically used to increase the benefits of the massage.

Ayurvedic physicians, all over India learnt the importance of this art and hired kalari masters in hospitals to teach. Soon Marma-point training became mandatory for surgeons, who worked around specific points to prevent risk to life.

Today Marma-point massage is still a respected component of Ayurvedic healing. Alongside the physical therapy of marma treatment there developed a life philosophy. The idea is that it should not matter how long you might live, what is important is how long you can remain healthy. Taking care of the marma points is a way of prolonging healthy living for as long as possible.

Too much hard work and the wrong kind of routines can have a negative effect on the well-being of the marma points and cause imbalances within the body. Marma treatment can solve these problems and result in the body being empowered and re-energised.

The basic purposes of Marma includes; removing block in energy channels called shrotas, pacifying vata dosha(air and space elements), bringing it to its normal path- especially vyana vata, (a subdosha which controls the autonomic nervous system) creating physical, mental and emotional flexibility. Because of ama (toxins) and because of vata, human beings after 35 or 40 years of age become rigid and this happens to animals and plants as well. As vata increases in body, it leads to degeneration.

Marma is beneficial for many conditions such as muscular and joint pain, frozen joints, glandular tissues, general aging problems, anxiety and depression, low energy and fatigue, breaking through limited belief systems, confusion, memory loss, mental focus etc. To name a few diseases in which Marma chikitsa is highly appreciated in giving cure are paralysis, sciatic pain, tremors, trigeminal neuralgia, urinary incontinence, diabetic neuropathy, carpal tunnel syndrome etc. The marma massage is approximately of 60-90 minutes of duration, followed by steam bath or warm shower. Marma massage is really useful to help improve or maintain a healthy

balance. Thus healing through Marma abhayangam affects the chakras, physical health and doshas. The purpose of Marma abhayangam is to stimulate the various body organs and systems. Here, Kalari master is the spiritual Guru, counsellor and physiotherapist all rolled into one. Marma Chikitsa (therapeutic treatment) is an offshoot of Kalaripayattu; Kerala's martial art.

Blazing guns, knockout pinches and knee kicks-all of these have come to embrace today's black leather generation, typically in the entertainment industry. Parallel to this magnetic gore, the world has also witnessed the evolution of a savage-free art; the martial arts. In Kerala, which can be deemed as one of India's most progressive states, martial arts, particularly Kalaripayattu occupies a central place in the lives of the common folk as a key to unlocking the gems of the being.

The oldest reference to this martial art is found in the Rig-Veda and Atharvaveda. In Rig-Veda it is mentioned that lord Indra defeated the daemon Vritasura using one of the marmam techniques of Kalari. This technique is taught only to the promising and level headed person, to prevent its misuse. (For Indian movie fans, this technique is used in the famous Indian movie INDIAN of Kamal Hassan by the aged but still energetic hero who fights against corruption).

Being one of the oldest martial art forms in the world dating back to the 6th century, Kalaripayattu is emerging in a new avatar as a popular fitness and wellness activity. It uniquely combines defence techniques, dance, yoga and healing systems. It boosts both physical and mental fitness and body flexibility and functioning.

Martial arts are often contributed to 8-E Asian Countries namely China, Japan and Korea. Only few people know that the idea of martial art originated in the Indian Subcontinent. Kalaripayattu, the ancient martial art of South India is based on the

science of yoga for its forms and exercises and its medical treatments are based on the science of Ayurveda. It is practiced in Kerala and parts of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka as well as North Eastern Sri Lanka and Malayalee community of Malaysia. Kalaripayattu is marked by the high flying acrobatics, fluid movement's ad weaponry. The practice of kalarippayattu is said to originate from the Dhanur Veda an ancient Indian text. It encompassed all the traditional fighting arts. The explicit concern in Dhanur Veda texts is not with battlefield strategies, bit rather with training in martial techniques.

Kalari indigenous to Kerala was created by the warrior saint Parashurama, an incarnation of lord Vishnu. Kalari, as the martial art, combined the basic principles of psychology with the purpose of developing the whole person. It is said that Parashurama saved and reclaimed Kerala, he settled Kerala from the retreat of the sea. He established 108 Shivalayams, 108 Durgalayams and 5 Sastha Kshetrams. The Siva and Vasishanava temples were established in the midlands while the Devi Sastha Kshetrams were established in hilly terrains at Kulathupizha, Aryankavu, Achan Kovil, Sabarimala and Erumeli. He introduced martial arts (Kalaripayattu) to protect the temple from the evil. Parashurama was another great teacher of kalari. He single-handedly slaughtered armies because of his phenomenal martial art capabilities. He taught one school which flowed from the North of Malabar and Agastya Muni's school came from the south.

Parashuram's method used all kinds of weapons – hand weapons, throwing weapons, various kinds of weapons- but Agastya Muni's martial art grew without any weapons, it was all hand. Parashurama and the sage Agastya are regarded as the founders of Kalaripayattu, the oldest martial art in the world. Parashurama was a

master in the art of weaponry, as taught to him lord Shiva. As such, he developed Northern Kalaripayattu or Vadakkal Kalari, with more emphasis on weapons than striking and grappling. Southern Kalaripayattu was developed by the sage Agastya and focuses more on weaponless combat. The Northern style is also known as Vadakkal Kalari and is generally regarded as the “original” form of Kalaripayattu. This system places more emphasis on physical flexibility exercises and strength training rooted in the slogan *Meyy kanavanam*, meaning, “Make the body an eye”. These exercises are done individually, as well as in combinations. After that *meypayattu* (a concept similar to *kata* in Karate) is taught. These are a combination of flexibility exercises with offensive and defensive techniques are taught very much later. Traditionally the number of *meypayattu* may differ as per the teaching methods of the Guru. Training is done in four stages. At first the student learns *meypayattu*, stick fighting is taught, followed by *Kolthari* (practice with wooden weapons), *Angathari* (practice with metal weapons) and finally *Verum Kai* (barehanded combat) generally, the majority of Kalaris (schools that teach *kalaripayattu*) start training with weapons within 3-6 months. Some Kalaris only allow one weapon to be learned per year. After long stick and small stick fighting, iron weapons are introduced. Training begins with the dagger, sword and then the spear. Not all modern schools use specialized weapons. Traditionally, bows and arrows were commonly used in Kerala and students were trained in these techniques, but are rarely taught today.

Kalaripayattu has three forms, which are distinguished by their attacking and defensive patterns. They are *Arappa Kayy*, *Pilla Thangi* and *Vatten Thiripp*.

The Southern-Style is also known as *Thekkan Kalari*. The origin of *Thekkan Kalari* is a subject of much debate and controversy. It may have been altered from

the Northern Style of Kalaripayattu to fight combatants trained in Silambam from Tamil Nadu during various wars and skirmishes with Tamil Kingdoms. It is essentially style that combines elements from Kalaripayattu and Silambam. Other sources suggest that martial arts such as Varma Kalai, Adi Thadi and Adi Murai may also have influenced the Southern style. The Southern Style is less commonly practised in Kerala compared to the Northern Style. It is predominantly practiced in some regions of the southern- most parts of Kerala, particularly in areas near Kanyakumari. While many of the exercises of the Southern Style are identical to the Northern Style, it places heavy emphasis on hand to hand combat and hard impact techniques, and places less emphasis on weapons and combinations. It starts with training in Chuvadus: a system of various combinations of fighting techniques similar to Muay Thai and shadow boxing. Immediately after that, sparring with a partner is introduced as part of the training. These pre-determined techniques are repeatedly trained. After a basic proficiency in unarmed combat is established, weapons training begin with a small stick. Small trick training is usually done with two combatants, armed with a stick or dagger. These are primarily defensive techniques. Fighting techniques with two combatants having the same weapons include sparring with long stick, sword etc. During the duration of this training, the refining of un-armed combat also progresses. As the student gains more experience, a small amount of knowledge pertaining to the Marma points is also taught to the students if deemed appropriate by the Gurukkal.

The eighteen techniques(pathinetdtaavukal) in Kalari includes; Othiram, Mottapayatu, Thattu, Vattavali, Paricha Thattu, Annakaranam, Kuntham Kuthu, Thottivali, Thadavu, Thikku, Chattukayattam, Marmakkayu, Marithadavu, Akashapoythu, Kunnapada, Nilampada, Thoosikaram, Thunipoythu. The various

movements in kalari are based on animal movements. Several poses are named after animals. Long ago, animal fighting styles were inherited by pre-historic man which was a system of survival. Hence it is generally believed to have developed the jungles when hunters observed the fighting techniques of various animals.

There are eight Kalaripayattu animal postures – Ashta vadivu:

Gaja Vadivu - Elephant posture: ‘Gaja’ means Elephant, ‘Vadivu means’ posture. It is said that assuming this ‘Stance’ will endow the body with the strength of an elephant. The first part of the pose is to be used the same way as described in ‘Round leg step (Vattakal Chuvadu)’

Ashwa Vadivu - Horse posture: ‘Ashwa’ means horse and in this stance the positioning and movements resembling which is the horse is adopted. The position assumed in this stance resembles that of the straight leg step.

Simha Vadivu - Lion posture: ‘Simha’ means lion. The fierceness of an attacking lion is envisaged in the application of this posture(stance).

Varaaha Vadivu - Wild boar posture: The positioning for varaaha stance is similar to that for cross leg step (Konekaalchuvadu). ‘Varaaham’ means pig or boar and the movements made in. Varaaha stance resembles the movements of a wild pig or boar.

Kukuda Vadivu - Rooster posture: ‘Kukkuda’ means cock. The pose of a cock in fighting is assumed in this stance. The position in single leg step (Ottakaal chuvadu) is assumed here too.

Sarpa Vadivu - Snake posture: ‘Sarpa’ means snake, or serpent. In this stance, movements resembling those made by snake is adopt and hence the name.

Matsya Vadivu - Fish posture: This stance resembles the movements of a fish.

Marjara Vadivu - Cat posture: 'Marjara' means cat, in this stance the movements resemble those of a cat before pouncing on the prey.

Kalaripayattu became more developed in the 9th century and was practiced by warrior clans of Kerala to defend the state and the King. Kalaripayattu reached the pinnacle of glory during the 100-years war between the Chola Cheras and Pandyas in the 11th or 12th century CE. During the medieval period, modern-day Kerala was divided into a number of principalities. Feuds and duels were common at the time and Kalaripayattu was used for warfare and settling disputes. The accounts of that period are described in the vadakkan pattukal, a collection of ballads from Kerala. Kalaripayattu began losing prominence beginning with the European invasions of Kerala. Kalaripayattu is believed to be brought to chera by Bodhi dharma, a Buddhist monk who lived during the 5th/6th century CE. He is traditionally credited as the transmitter of Chan (Sanskrit: Dhyana) to china and regarded as the Chinese patriarch. According to Chinese legend, he alone began the physical training of the shaolin monks that led to the creation of Shaolin Kung Fu. Bodhi dharma (also known as Daruma in Japan) eventually became the founder of Zen Buddhism and is still widely and beneficially accepted as the father of Asian Martial Arts. Bodhi dharma left his hometown Kanchipuram to go to China in 522AD. While he was at the Shaolin monastery, he noted that the monks were missing physical strength and mental strength for appropriate meditation, besides the monks were weak and frequently attacked by local bandits. Bodhi dharma began to teach Kalaripayattu the physical exercises to the monk's in order to strengthen body and mind and made them able to defend themselves and to increase the levels of prana in their bodies. Prana is the vital

energy present in all life. Also called Chi, Qi, or Ki. So the combination of Kalaripayattu practiced and meditation techniques brought to China from India by Bodhidharma has given him the title ‘Father of Martial Arts’ and India it’s mother. One can find a lot of similarities among the three. The relationship between a teacher and student in Judo and Karate could have its roots in the Guru-Shishya tradition of India. In any martial art, now it is possible to recognise the respiration and ki(or chi) channelling also the Zen philosophy is often in use(especially in Japan Samurais) and many portions are similar to each other. In the Shaolin Temple which was found by an Indian Dhyana master Bhuddabhadra, a fresco can be seen showing Indian ‘dark skinned marks’ teaching the art of ‘bare hand fighting’ to ‘light skinned Chinese marks’. The synergy of art, science and medicine is the engine that propels this martial art form. The focal objective is to develop a sound body and mind. Though the deadliest fighting system in the world – and possibly because it is – this mother of all martial arts is also the most principled, as its teachings were and remain strictly intended for self-defence and healing, a reminder of the fact that with knowledge and strength comes responsibility. To this day, Kalari masters assess whether you are worthy of learning its most lethal techniques based on your character, behaviour and intentions in order to prevent its knowledge and power from being misused. It is claimed that skilled Kalaripayattu warriors can disable or kill their opponents simply by touching the correct marmam (vital point) of the 107 identified and defined by Sushruta, 64 which were classified as lethal if struck properly with a fist or weapon. Nonetheless, the goal of Kalaripayattu is not the acquisition of power through the ability to cure or kill; but rather self-improvement or self-protection, regarded as a reward in and of itself, yet without the belts, awards or alternative forms of

recognition that are bestowed on the other martial arts. It is a supreme example of the human spirit in its purest form.

Today, the practice of Kalaripayattu has become more about how to harness one's body minded powers in order to craft an ideal self than how to prepare for mortal combat. Yet, some of today's greatest masters still expect students to live by its moral code and ascetic dictates, resisting those temptations of modern life corrupt soul, such as drugs, alcohol and excess.

Chapter 3

Conclusion

This study provides an absolute idea of the cultural relevance of Kalaripayattu and its position as the mother of martial arts. The centuries old martial art form is one of the major tourist attractions of Kerala contributing to the economic and cultural prosperity of the state. Kalaripayattu is a mode of cultural practice through which bodies, knowledge's, powers, agency, selves, and identities are constantly repositioned. Each of the Kalaripayattu postures is linked by deeply interwoven social, military, and cultural relationships to the history of Kerala. The intricate knowledge of pressure points on human body and healing techniques that incorporate the knowledge of Ayurveda and Yoga is unique to Kalaripayattu. Students are taught the martial art as a way of living with a sense of compassion, discipline and respect towards the master, fellow students, parents and the community. Particular emphasis is placed on avoiding confrontational situations and using the martial art only as a means of protection when no other alternative is available.

Unlike other parts of India, warriors in Kerala belonged to all castes. Women in Keralite society also underwent training in Kalaripayattu and still do so to this day. Keralite women such as Unniyarcha are mentioned in a collection of ballads from Kerala called Vadakkan Pattukal and are praised for their martial prowess. In contemporary times, Sri Meenakshi Amma, a seventy- three year old gurukkal from vadakara was awarded the Padma shree, India's fourth highest civilian award by the Government of India for her contributions to the preservation of Kalaripayatu. Every year hundred and fifty to hundred and sixty students learn the martial art in her school

Kadathanadan Kalalri Sangam, where she is teaching for more than fifty six years. Kalaripayattu is forcing women to challenge the very boundaries that they have been taught. It is a source of strength, courage, self-defence and empowerment to many women.

The contributions made by the Central Government and the State Government of Kerala have led to the cultural development of Kalaripayattu. The Kalaripayattu association under the sports council of Kerala has introduced Kalaripayattu into the sports sector of state. Indian Kalaripayattu Federation (IKF) established in Nineteen ninety five aims to promote Kalaripayattu and propagate the value. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India recognized Indian Kalari Federation as a National Federation in two thousand and fifteen. Indian Kalari Federation has got association in twenty five states and it conducts state level competitions including National Kalaripayattu championship and National Kalaripayattu Festival.

Kalari is a ritualistic heritage of Kerala. Kalaripayattu has contributed to various dance forms in Kerala. Kalaripayattu has strongly influenced the evolution of the Classical dance -drama Kathakali and Theyyam. Kalari is a martial art more defensive in nature whereas Kathakali is more aesthetic and expressive in nature. Kathakali is considered as a theatre work and is a dance-drama which requires physical fitness and power. Kathakkali's rigorous exercise and preventive health care is based on its own adaptation of Kalaripayttu's system of exercise and massage. In the modern times many Indian choreographers have relied on Kalaripayattu training and use it's vocabulary as an inspiration for their work. The health benefits of Kathakali include flexibility and conscious to the body. Wearing a Kacha is important for breath control and control of bodies energy. Kalaripayattu which is a neutral form

has contributed as such to other performance forms. There are many postures and movements in Kathakali which are recognisable as elements from Kalaripayattu. Every contemporary artist is looking forward to an endless exploration of Kalaripayattu for theatre practice. When a dancer does not know which movement causes strain on what muscle or does not know how much to push the body or indeed is unaware of how to use his or her body while experimenting with a new vocabulary, then injuries are likely. Dances like Bharathanatyam, Mohiniyattam, Ballet all need flexibility attained through Kalaripayattu and uzhichil which take the dancer to perfection. Kalaripayattu recognizes one's own body and energy and therefore understands oneself. This acknowledgement of personal qualities positively affects our attitude towards other people and the world around us and strengthens our character and mind-set. It enhances our self-confidence and helps one to handle difficulties and tensions as well as achieve an oasis of peace of mind. Kalari demands the knowledge of how our entire body works what habits it has acquired over time and what limits our mind has and then figure out where our energy resides which makes the martial form unique. Kalaripayattu with enough training and a sound mind one can become patient enough to learn all that is needed to be a great master. The martial art form has an innate ability that boosts one's focus on a specific thing, learning the true meanings of dedication and determination. Kalaripayattu has been practised on a wide range today. It has caught the youth's imagination largely due to increased awareness and the need to challenge oneself. The myths about Kalari being an aggressive warrior art that can be performed only by experts are being dispelled. The graceful body movements and a mixture of various fitness styles make it popular. Kalari is even featured in popular culture both nationally and internationally. Many Indian movies like 'Ezham Arivu', 'Aromalunni', 'Oru Vadakkan Veeragadha',

'Yodha' etc and international movies like 'The Last Legion', 'The Myth', 'Kenichi: The Mightiest Disciple' etc have featured Kalari as a martial art form.

Apart from being the mother of martial arts or an ancient art form, Kalari is still devoid of global recognition. Even though martial art forms like Kung -Fu, Tae Kwon Do etc is considered to have its origin from Kalaripayattu, Kalari as a martial art form is still unknown to many. Appropriate and effective strategies for safeguarding intangible heritage are possible through cultural resource management. Safeguarding cultural heritage means measures aimed at ensuring viability of the intangible cultural heritage, including the identification, documentation, research, preservation, protection, promotion, enhancement, transmission, particularly through formal and non formal education, as well as the revitalization of the various aspects of such heritage (UNESCO, 2003). Identification through recognition of the commercial potential of the martial art form and its link with fitness, sports and tourism and treating it at par with other cultural forms; Proper and modern documentation to safeguard the sources of information pertaining to Kalaripayattu and Kalarichikilsa; Revitalization of the ancient art form and Kalarichikilsa through government and non-government bodies and stakeholders; Widespread transmission through formal education by developing curricula and adoption of non-formal education methods, creation of awareness and interpretation through systematic and trained interpreters on practices of Kalari; Extensive research to examine the status of the art form, scope and unleash its economic viability aiming at preservation through commercialization; Enhancement mechanism through strategies of commercialization and preservation of the art form, expanding the avenues of Kalaripayattu to general public and tourists; Preservation efforts through inculcation of awareness and appreciation along with effective training of the youth in Kalaripayattu and Kalarichikilsa through

professionals; Protection of the art form through appropriate commercialization strategies upholding the authenticity of the heritage resources and facilitating economic benefits to stakeholders; Effective promotion in various target markets as tourism products, fitness products and products for self-defence etc are some of the measures that can be adopted for safeguarding the martial art form and as a way forward.

India is a land of varied heritage and flourishing culture. The cultural and heritage resources, both intangible and tangible forms are languishing due to many reasons which have economic, political, and social dimensions. Culture resources management focuses on effective means of preservation despite commercialization through its holistic and pragmatic approach. In a Phoenix-like resurrection, Kalaripayattu is today emerging in a new avatar- an ancient art form – a source of inspiration for self-expression in dance forms- both traditional and contemporary, in theatre, in fitness and in movies too. Considering the economic potential of Kalaripayattu and the threats confronting Kalaripayattu and Kalarichikilsa; as the mother of martial arts, Kalaripayattu deserves to be protected and preserved for future generations.

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