

## HSST HISTORY

### KERALA HISTORY PART 3

#### **British East India Company foundation of Colonial state**

East India company also called English East India company, formally governor and company of merchants of London trading into East Indies united company of merchants of England trading to the East Indies, English company formed for the exploration of trade with East and South east Asia and India, incorporated by royal charter on December 31,1600.

Starting as a monopolistic trading body, the company became involved in politics and acted as an agent of British imperialism in India from the early in the 18 th century to the mid 19 th century.

In addition the activities of the company in China in the 19 th century served as a catalyst for the expansion of British influence there. The company was formed to share in the East Indian spice trade.

The company met with opposition from the Dutch in the Dutch East Indies and the Portuguese.

The East India company act, 1813, also known as the charter act of 1813 was an act of the Parliament of the United Kingdoms which renewed the charter issued to the British East India company and continued the company's rule in India. However, the company's monopoly was ended, except for the tea trade and the trade with China. Reflecting the growth of British power in India

#### **Judicial Organisation**

One of the earliest endeavors of the British administration was to evolve a judicial system for Malabar. Even as early as 1793 the Joint Commissioners

promulgated a code for the administration of civil and criminal justice. The Northern and Southern Superintendents were invested with civil and criminal jurisdiction in their respective divisions and local Darogas were set up in seven select centers of the district. In 1802 the judicial and executive functions were separated under the Cornwallis Code. A Provincial Court was established at Tellicherry and Zilla Courts at Tellicherry and Calicut. Several changes in the judicial organization of Malabar took place since then until at last the district came to be divided into the District Judgeships of North and South Malabar, with headquarters at Tellicherry and Calicut respectively.

### **Improvement of Communications**

There was the steady improvement of communications in the district under the British administration.

The Pazhassi revolt gave an impetus to road building activity and the interior areas of Malabar were opened up by military roads. Some companies of the Madras Pioneers worked in the district between 1810 and 1830 and undertook the construction of several roads, the Periyar Ghat Road being the most important.

The road from Cannanore to Coorg was constructed in 1848-1851 and it was an important link in the communication system of the district. The rise of the plantation industry in Wayanad also gave a spurt to road building activities in North Malabar. During the period 1861- 1907 the railway line was laid from the southern end of the district to the north.

### **Economic Progress**

The Malabar district made progress in the economic and social fields as a result of the labors of the Government as well as of private agencies.

In 1797 the English East India Company established a Spice Plantation at Anjarakandy 280 A Survey of Kerala History and in 1799 it was handed over to Mr. Murdoch Brown.

**Coffee, cinnamon, pepper, nutmeg and such other crops** were cultivated here on an experimental basis. It was from here that coffee was introduced into Wayanad. The plantation continues to this day, though only cinnamon is grown here.

It may be mentioned that the **Anjarakandy Cinnamon Plantation** is believed to be the biggest of its kind in the world. Before the end of the 19th century several tea estates also sprang up in the Wynad area of Malabar. The industrial development of the district also received attention. The Basel Evangelical Mission was responsible for starting some of the earliest weaving mills and tile factories in Malabar. The first tile factory was started in Pudiyaarakallu near Calicut in 1874. The oldest weaving mills were started at Cannanore and Calicut by the Mission.

### **Educational Activities**

In the 19th century the Malabar district made progress in the field of education. The Basel Missionaries were pioneers in this field also.

The Basel Evangelical Mission opened a primary school at Kallayi (Calicut) in 1848 and it developed into the Malabar Christian College of later days. The Mission opened at Tellicherry on March 1, 1857, the first English school in North Malabar. Dr. Gundert, the founder of the Basel Mission in Malabar, was also the first Government Inspector of Schools in Malabar and South Canara.

The Tellicherry Brennen School started in 1862 under the auspices of the Basel Mission with an endowment of Rs. 12,000 left by Mr. Brennen, Master Attendant at Tellicherry was later taken over by the Government and developed into the Government Brennen College. The modern Victoria College, Palghat, began in 1866 as a rate school and the Zamorin's College (at present the Guruvayurappan College) Calicut, in 1877 as a school for the young princes in the Zamorin's family.

## Local Self-Government

In the field of local self-government Malabar also made considerable progress in the 19th century. The Municipalities of Calicut, Tellicherry, Cannanore, Palghat and Fort Cochin came into existence in 1866 or 1867 under the provisions of the Madras Town Improvement Act in 1865. The local bodies also provided social services to the people by running educational institutions and dispensaries

## MARTHANDA VARMA AND DHARMA RAJA

In the 18th century Venad (Travancore) produced two illustrious rulers, viz., Marthanda Varma (1729–1758) and Kartika Tirunal Rama Varma (1758– 1798), popularly called the Dharma Raja. Under their able guidance and leadership Travancore rose to prominence as a powerful military State. Whereas the former carried out the annexation of several neighboring States and contributed substantially to the expansion of the kingdom, the latter consolidated the conquests and preserved its territorial integrity in the face of the threat from Mysore. In this chapter we shall attempt a brief review of the achievements of the two rulers.

### Marthanda Varma's Policy



**Venad** at the time of Marthanda Varma's accession to the Trippappur Swarupam (Tiruvitamkode or later Travancore) presented a picture of disorder and confusion. There was no proper administrative machinery for the transaction of government business. The finances of the kingdom were in an

extremely unsatisfactory state. The authority of the king was nowhere respected.

**The Pillamar and the Matampimar** had established themselves as a powerful force in the public life of the State and they were supported by the Yogakkar. In short, the feudal elements enjoying the patronage of the priestly class, had the upper hand in the affairs of the State. The rivalries of European powers like the Dutch and the English made the situation more complex. Thus, on his accession to the throne, Marthanda Varma had to face a perilous situation.

The young Marthanda Varma rose to the occasion with a stout heart. He followed a policy of **“blood and iron”** the basic aim of which was to crush the feudal elements and make royal authority supreme in the kingdom. In order to achieve his aim Marthanda Varma decided to seek help from extraneous sources.

Even as Yuvaraja he had advised his uncle to enter into treaties with the English East India Company and the Nayaks of Madurai and obtain their help in crushing the power of the feudal elements which opposed royal authority. On his accession he continued the same policies with redoubled vigor. Marthanda Varma's policies ultimately bore rich fruit with the destruction of the power of the feudal barons, the establishment of a strong and centralized monarchy and the expansion of Travancore into a powerful military State. Marthanda Varma gave his first attention to the task of reorganization of the administrative system.

The finances of the State were improved and every care was taken to ensure the economy in public expenditure. Special attention Marthanda Varma and Dharma Raja 226 A Survey of Kerala History was bestowed on the reorganization of the military forces. The army was equipped with better arms and discipline was strictly enforced.

He then proceeded to stamp out the forces of rebellion and anarchy.



## Administration

- The reign of Marthanda Varma saw the introduction of some important administrative reforms.
- It was the Raja's good fortune to have been assisted in the task of administration by able and loyal ministers of the caliber of **Ramayyan Dalawa**. The administrative system was improved considerably. Several works of public utility were undertaken all over the kingdom.
- The palace at Padmanabhapuram was improved and several new buildings like the Krishnapuram palace were constructed. There was improvement of communication following the opening of new roads and canals.
- The improvement of agriculture received the special attention of the Raja. Irrigation works like the Ponmana and Puthen dams were executed.
- The latter, while irrigating vast areas of land, also supplied drinking water to the inhabitants of Padmanabhapuram and suburbs.

## **E ▶ ENTRI**

- A number of canals, reservoirs, and tanks were also constructed in order to provide water for irrigation purposes. The defense system received the special attention of the ruler.
- Forts were built in important centers like Padmanabhapuram, Trivandrum, etc. The old forts in places like Quilon, Mavelikara, Changanacherry, etc., were repaired. The Travancore army was trained and equipped after the European model. D'Lannoy, the Dutch Admiral, captured as a prisoner in the battle of Colachel, helped the Raja considerably in this task. The collection of revenue received the special attention of the Raja. In 1739 Mallan Sankaran of Palliyadi was appointed on special duty to affect the settlement of lands, both wet and dry.
- The classification of lands under the main heads of Devaswom, Brahmaswam, Danam and Pandaravakd was introduced by Mallan Sankaran. The double crop lands were assessed at twice the pattom for single crop lands.
- Every landholder was given a Patta specifying the tax levied on each item of land. The commercial department of the kingdom was reorganized. The Government reserved for itself the monopoly of trade in such articles as pepper, tobacco, cassia, areca, etc., and built depots at different places to store these articles.
- Chowkies or customs houses were set up on the frontier in order to prevent smuggling. Special care was taken to collect export and import duties. Mavelikara was made the headquarters of the commercial department. Salt manufacture was made a State monopoly. Marthanda Varma reorganized the system of administration with the village under the Pravarthika Has the lowest unit.
- Pravarthikar was the man of all work attending to all affairs which required the attention of the state at the village level. A group of villages constituted the Mandapathil vathukkal which was under the Karyakar who was the prototype of the modern Tahsildar.



## **E ▶ ENTRI**

- An important innovation introduced by Marthanda Varma was the framing of the annual budget called the Pativukanakku allotting specific sums of money for various items of public expenditure.

### **Cultural Progress**

Side by side with the progress of religion we find the progress of literature and arts. Trivandrum became a center of intellectual and artistic activities. Poets like Ramapurathu Warriar and Kunjan Numbiar came to adorn the court. Temple arts like **Kuthu, Patakam, Kathakali and Tullal** received all encouragement.

The art of mural painting reached a high level of excellence as is evidenced by the murals in the Padmanabhapuram palace. Thus the reign of Marthanda Varma saw not only the expansion of Travancore and the establishment of a centralized administration, but also the spectacular progress of religion, literature and arts. He is rightly regarded as the 'Maker of Modern Travancore'.

### **Sakthan Thampuran (1790–1805)**



**Ram Varma, the Saktan Thampuran,** had in the meantime ascended the throne. He was an able administrator, diplomat and statesman and he followed in Cochin the same policy which Marthanda Varma followed towards the feudal nobles in Travancore. Even before his accession to the throne the power of the Nair nobles in Cochin had been crippled, thanks to the vigorous action taken by Paliath Komi Achan.



Their powers had been vested in officers directly appointed by the king. The wealthiest of the nobles had been deprived of their property and reduced to abject poverty. The State had been divided into taluks called Kovilakathu Mva Tukkals each of which was under a Karyakar.

The village under the Pravarthikal had become the lowest unit of administration. The Saktan Tampuran continued the policy of centralisation. He improved the finances of the State and rooted out corruption.

A special class of officers called captains of Subas were appointed to exercise a close watch over the conduct of officials.

History of Cochin 242 A Survey of Kerala History While suppressing the power of the feudal nobility, Saktan Tampuran also took steps to cripple the power of the Brahmin clergy. He discontinued the institution of the Yogiatiripads, the ecclesiastical heads of the Vadakkunnathan and Perumanam Devaswams.

The management of these temples was taken over by the government. The Raja was, however, very harsh in his treatment of the Konkanis and the Latin Christians.

He extracted money from wealthy businessmen among the Konkanis and even attempted to forcibly take possession of the image and costly jewels of the deity of the Thirumala Devaswom temple at Mattancherry belonging to that community.

The Latin Christians who had enjoyed certain privileges under the Portuguese and the Dutch were harassed by the ruler in all possible ways. Many Latin Christians were deprived of their land and properties and expelled from the kingdom.

Saktan Tampuran's policy towards the Syrian Christians, however, offers a contrast. He gave them lands and settled them in the heart of important towns like **Trichur, Chalakudi, Kunnamkulam, Irinjalakuda, Tripunithura etc.**

## General Progress in Cochin



The reign of Saktan Tampuran was an epoch of economic and social progress in the history of Cochin. While the Syrian Christians who were settled in the chief towns carried on trade and contributed to the commercial prosperity of the State, the Raja also took steps to provide them with all amenities for carrying on trade. Markets were opened in all major centers. Special attention was bestowed on the repair and renovation of temples. In addition to the Vadakkunnathan and Perumanam temples, the Thiruvilwamala temple was also taken over by the government.

The temples of Koodalmanikyam and Tiruvanchikulam which had suffered destruction at the hands of Tipu's men were renovated by the Raja. The Trichur Puram, the festival of festivals, which is celebrated with all pomp and grandeur even today, was instituted by the ruler. Saktan Tampuran also took interest in the execution of works of public utility such as roads, bridges, lakes, rest houses etc.

Irrigation works received his special attention. Justice was administered without fear or favor in the Cochin kingdom during the reign of Saktan

Tampuran. There was complete security of person and property as robbers and deacons were relentlessly suppressed.

Thus, on the whole, the reign of Saktan Tampuran was an important epoch in the history of Cochin. As in the reign of Marthanda Varma in Travancore, it saw the end of the feudal era in Cochin and the beginnings of a highly centralized administration under the personal supervision and guidance of the ruler.

### **Travancore- Cochin Alliance**

In 1757 a treaty of alliance was concluded between Travancore and Cochin against the Zamorin of Calicut who had occupied large portions of Cochin territory and were preparing for an invasion of Travancore.

The initiative for the signing of the treaty was taken by Paliath Komi Achan who had been taken to Trivandrum as a prisoner after the battle of Ambalapuzha in 1754 and who had now returned home to assume the office of the Prime Minister of Cochin.

The treaty provided for mutual friendship between Travancore and Cochin. Travancore promised help to Cochin in its war against the Zamorin of Calicut on condition that if Travancore were to capture any territories, other than those which originally belonged to Cochin, they should exclusively go to that State.

The Cochin Raja undertook not to render help to the dispossessed princes or to enter into any kind of relationship with them. The treaty was a decisive gain to Marthanda Varma as he got a peaceful neighbor on the northern border of his State

### **Tenurial reforms of Travancore and Cochin**

Land tenure system is basically a relationship that can be legally or customarily defined among people as individuals or groups, with respect to land. Land tenure is an institution based on the ownership and proprietary right upon land.

Rules of tenure define how property rights to land are to be allocated within societies. They define how access is granted to rights to use, control, and transfer land, as well as associated responsibilities and restraints.

In simple terms, it is the land tenure systems which determine who can use, what resources for, for how long, and under what conditions.

Land tenure is an important part of social, political and economic structures of a country. It is multi-dimensional which brings into play social, technical, economic, institutional, legal and political aspects that are often ignored but must be considered.

Land tenure relationships may be well-defined and enforceable in a formal court of law or through customary structures in a community.

The Great Depression was a worldwide phenomenon which had its impact throughout the world irrespective of its bigger or smaller status.

The sources of a nation's wealth were mostly from agricultural lands, manufacture, trade and commerce. Among the resources of state revenue the land revenue assumed greater importance in India.

In the course of history different land tenures evolved in Cochin and Travancore.

Both the premier princely states of Kerala remained basically agricultural tracts. Land revenue constituted the most important source of revenue of the state.

Therefore the primary aim of the British administrators was to capture the control of land revenue systems in Travancore and Cochin States.

The British after the establishment of their domination followed the policy of maximization of revenue and adopted measures for maximization of production.

They made Comprehensive land revenue assessments. As a part of the maximization of land revenue and production and to fulfill their political motives, the British followed a policy of showing undue importance to the Jenmi system Travancore and Cochin.

This policy gave birth to tenurial protests in the region fanned by communal feelings. But the British took no interest in finding a lasting solution to the tenurial problems in Travancore and Cochin. The exorbitant demand of revenue by the British from Cochin and Travancore rulers had its impact on the agrarian sector.

The condition of the agricultural class of Cochin was worse than that of their counterparts in Travancore due to the excessive collection of tax. Supportive mechanisms for the effective implementation of the land revenue reforms were absent in Cochin, although the Cochin rulers were keen to prevent any form of unrest connected with the tenurial system of the state. Certain lands were exempted from taxation.

When the financial crisis gathered momentum during the days of the Great Depression, due to the pressure of the colonial rulers the governments of both Travancore and Cochin tried to tax the land that were once excepted from taxation.

The condition of tenants under the different tenurial systems became miserable during the days of the Great Depression. Although the Great Depression started in 1929, its effects on the Indian economy began to be evident from 1930 onwards.

During the period of the Great Depression from 1929 to 1937, exports and imports fell and it drastically crippled the trade and commerce of the country. The railways and the agricultural sector were badly affected through the rapid spread of the Great Depression. The international financial crisis combined with detrimental policies adopted by the British Government in India resulted in soaring prices of commodities.

But agriculturalists did not get adequate prices for their products. High prices along with the stringent and exorbitant rate of taxes prevalent had a dreadful impact on the princely states like Travancore and Cochin.

The farmers found it very difficult to function under such a situation. In order to understand the impact of the Great Depression on the land tenurial system in Travancore and Cochin State

It is essential to understand earlier land relations and related legislations existed in both princely states controlling land tenurial systems. It is seen that until 1865 the tenurial relations were controlled by customs and some obligations.

The first royal proclamation in this regard was made by Maharaja Ayilliam Tirunal Rama Varma who took some initiative and issued a Proclamation on 2 June 1865. In 1896 **Janmi-Kudiyam Regulation was passed**. In 1933 it was amended and the amendment brought certain drastic changes in the Jennie - kudiyan relations. Lands in Travancore are broadly classified into three categories viz., jenmam, sarkari pandaravaka and others. The Jenmam tenure comprises lands that were entered before Revenue Accounts under the heads of Devaswomvaka, Brahmaswomvaka and Madambimarvaka.

The first two groups related to lands belonging to private Devaswom And Brahmas Ms. The third embraced all lands owned by non-Brahmins and non-Devaswomjenmis.

Originally, the distinguishing feature of Jenmam lands was that they were tax-free. Some of them were subjected to a light tax called rajabogam when they passed from the original owners to others for monetary consideration.

Until the Land Tax Proclamation of 1946 a basic tax that was introduced on all these lands was continued.

Whatever be the origin of the Jenmam lands, it is evident that Jenmam lands were regarded as the absolute private property of the owner. Most of the land was owned by the Nambudiris.

The Jenmis (landlords) created some types of subordinate tenures from simple lease (verumpattom) to outright sale (attipper) in Travancore as in other parts of Kerala. The most important of such tenures was the Kanappattom tenure.

The kanappattom is a combination of a lease and mortgage lease which entitles the Jenmi (landlord) to rent, and mortgage which entitles the kudiyan

mortgagee to so much of the usufruct as is equal in value to the interest of the sum advanced by him.”

The tenant under this tenure has the right to cultivate or sub-lease the land. Every year he pays a fixed rent, from which the interest on the sum advanced by him to the jenmi(kanam sum) is deducted. Besides the rent, several other customary and regular payments had to be paid. The payments usually made by the kudiyan to the jenmi in the past could be grouped under three heads: **(1) annual, (2) occasional, and (3) once in twelve years.**

The annual payments consisted of

- (a) michavaramor rent fixed by the deed and**
- (b) onakazchaor ulsavakkoppui.e.**

gifts by the kudiyan at the time of Onam festival or, at the time of the annual festival of the temple. There were several occasional payments on various ceremonial occasions such as the choroonu, or the initial rice-giving to a child, the upanayanam or investing with the Brahminical thread etc.

When the jenmi happened to be a Devaswom, the tenant had to pay what is called Kalasavarifees for conducting purificatory ceremonies in the temples. The periodical fee was ordinarily renewable once in 12 years. Along with that there were also certain customary payments, in cash or kind, at the time of Onam, or on other important occasions

For a long time the jennis and kudiyan generally exercised their respective rights without prejudice to each other. Of course, this was after the Brahmin authority and rights and the canonical caste rights became part of the social system. Landlord-tenant relations were gradually determined by custom. But as population increased and as society changed, its character under the impact of western civilization, the situation changed significantly.

During the British regime law began to take the place of custom. Eviction came to be accepted as a right, though under the age-old customs, a kanappattom tenant was seldom evicted. A sense of insecurity on account of the jenmi’s right of eviction became a chief cause of complaint by the cultivating



peasants. The jenmis also began to demand exorbitant rents. This led to serious discontent among the agricultural classes.

Therefore, the Maharaja of Travancore commanded the courts by an order of 1830 to maintain the old established custom.

It enjoined that the tenants had to pay the jenmi his usual ordinary and extraordinary dues and let the tenant remain in possession and enjoyment of the property.

This restored amicable relationship between jenmis and tenants for a time. But in less than forty years discontent again manifested itself. The provisions of the Royal command of 1830 were found to be inadequate and it was superseded by another proclamation in 1867.

In Travancore The monarchy was more powerful and the state was the largest owner of land. Therefore the state could follow a policy of curbing the landlords favoring the cultivators.

The progressive and enlightened policy together with its position as the largest owner of land made attempts in land reforms more successful. It was hailed as the '**Magna Carta**' of the Travancore peasants because it conferred ownership title to all the tenants of Pandaravaka and even though it was subject to the due payment of land revenue and made land a heritable, saleable and mortgageable commodity. By that, the kanam tenure was recognised as a perpetual lease and the tenants were given fixity of tenure subject to the payment of a fair rent determined by custom or contract. By the Pattam Proclamation of 1867 conferred the ryots fixity of tenure on holders of state owned lands, and converted a large body of ryots from the position of tenants at will to that of proprietors.<sup>7</sup> But in its operation it did not satisfy either the jenmi or the kudiyan.

**The main tenures under Sirkar lands fall broadly under the following heads:**

**(1) Pandarapattom,**

**(2) Inam,**

- (3) Viruthi,**
- (4) Thiruppu-varam, and**
- (5) special tenures.**

**(1) Pandarapattom** tenure was originally in the nature of a lease without any proprietary or transferable rights. By the Royal Proclamation of 1865 the Rajah of Travancore gave the holders of these lands full proprietary rights and the lands were declared to be ' private, heritable, saleable and otherwise transferable property'.

This Proclamation, together with the Janmi Kudiyan Proclamation of 1867, was hailed as the Magna Carta of the Travancore ryots 1.

It was also held that the Proclamation of 1865 brought about ' a distribution or diffusion of landed property among all classes of His Highness' subjects and the evils arising from land monopoly have thus been remedied to a considerable extent.1'

Though these may be tall claims, it is certain that these legislations were far in advance of the time, especially when compared to the situation in the British Indian Provinces.

**(2) Inams** were grants of lands made by ruling princes, chieftains, or great jenmis from time to time either for some service rendered or to be rendered to the State or Sovereign, as a mark of royal favor. Inams were of two kinds— service inams and personal inams. Inams granted for specified services were service inams while those granted for the support of individuals or families were personal inams. By a Royal Proclamation of 1912, personal inams were given freedom to mortgage, to sell or transfer them in any manner, subject only to the payment of quitrent.

**(3) Viruthi:** These were service grants to which were attached certain obligations in the shape of personal labor and supply of provisions such as

vegetables to the sovereign. The holders of Viruthi lands enjoyed these lands in return for the services offered. By the Viruthi Proclamation of 1882, this system was revised.

The Proclamation provided for a re-arrangement of the services and the settlement of the surplus lands remaining and re-distribution of those lands relinquished by the holders seeking relief from the service under the terms offered by the Proclamation. All alienation of Viruthilands made by the holders were declared null and void by the Proclamation.

**(4) Thiruppuvaram** is an assignment, in favor of a third party, of a specific portion of land revenue payable to the Government by the holders of specified land. Since the assignments are old ones, the circumstances under which they were made cannot now be fully traced.

In some cases it was probably the interest on money lent to or due by the Government. In other cases, it may be the machavaram due to the jenmi from a tenant when the interests of the jenmi lapsed to Government by escheat or otherwise.

In certain other cases it was probably an allowance or gift to a religious or charitable institution. In all these cases, the thiruppu holder (one who is entitled to receive Thiruppuvanam) used to collect the varam direct from the holder of the land on which it is charged.

**(5) Special tenures:** These comprise tenures in the nature of inam which received special treatment and were charged special rates of assessment. Besides these, there were innumerable other minor tenures which were gradually eliminated, even before independence, and all land brought under Pandarapattom.

The Travancore Enfranchisement of Sirkar Pattom Lands Proclamation, 1940, sought to confer on all holders of Sirkar lands permanent rights of occupancy heritable and transferable.

Besides the above tenures the following tenures which occupy a position different from **Jenmam and Pandaravadai**

- (1) Edavki,**
- (2) SreePandaravaka,**
- (3) Kadu Krishi, and**
- (4) SreePadamvaka.**

**(1) Edavakai lands:** There were four Edavakais (freehold estates) in the State which were free from assessment. They were Edappally, Poonjar, Vanjipuzha and Kilimanoor. The landlords were called ' Chiefs '. The total extent of land under these was about 1.23 lakh acres

The Edavaka Chiefs were the absolute proprietors of the lands till recently. They bore some resemblance to the Zamindars in other parts of India. The proclamations of 1865 and 1867 which conferred permanent occupancy rights on the tenants of Sirkar and Jenmom lands were not applicable to Edavaka lands. Permanent occupancy right was sought to be granted to the tenants of Kilimanoor and Edappally Estates in 1893 by the Estates Rent Recovery Regulation of the year.

Many years later in 1934 the tenants of Poonjar and Vanjipuzha were given permanent occupancy rights under the Edavaka Regulation of that year. However, as there were several exemption clauses in these legislations the tenants' rights were not fully implemented.

**(2) Sree Pandaravaka lands:** The SreePandaravaka lands belong to the deity of Sree Padmanabhaswamy temple and have been held in trust by the kings of Travancore since the days of King MarthandaVarma. A portion of these lands was assessed to Rajabogam or a light tax by the Government while the residual assessment is paid to the temple for its upkeep and maintenance. These lands lying in Kerala consist of about 12,360 acres. They were exempted from the purview of the basic tax of 1946.

**(3) Kandukrishi lands:** The crown lands or the home-farms of the Travancore sovereigns fall in this category. They were given on simple leases, recoverable at pleasure. The ryots had not only no proprietary rights; they did not even have transferable rights. The rent was generally fixed and was payable in grain. Though the tenants were, strictly speaking, no more than tenants-at-will, they were not generally interfered with so long as they paid the rent regularly. The total extent of the land was about 19,400 acres.

#### **(4) Sreepadam lands:**

Sreepadam lands also belonged to the ruling family of the former Travancore State. The total area of Sreepadam lands in Kerala is 14,600 acres. The Sreepadam Lands belonging to the Sreepadam Palace (belonging to the Attingal Rani) were not accessible under the tax proclamation of 1946.<sup>19</sup> The land tenurial of Cochin was not as complicated as that of Travancore. The kanam, verumpattom and inams are the major types of tenures in the Cochin area.

The tenancy legislation of Travancore had its influence in the Cochin State. The earliest law in Cochin on this subject was the Theorem Of the Raja of Cochin in 1863,<sup>20</sup> preventing eviction of kanam tenants before a“ period of 12 years. This was not strictly implemented. The tenants clamored for more reforms. The Landlord-Tenant Commission of 1909 was appointed to study the problem. On their recommendation the Cochin Tenancy Act of 1915 was passed.

### **Mysorean Invasion**

The reign of Kerala Varma saw the Mysorean invasion of Kerala. In 1774 the Cochin Raja undertook to pay one lakh of Ikkeri pagodas as subsidy to Mysore. In 1776 Sirdar Khan, the Mysore general, entered Cochin territory via Chowghat and occupied Trichur.

The Cochin Raja agreed to become a tributary of Mysore and to pay a Nuzzar of one lakh of pagodas and four elephants besides an annual tribute of 30,000 pagodas. Rama Varma (1775–1790) was the next ruler of Cochin.



He was a weak prince and at the instance of the Dharma Raja and the Dutch Company he delegated in 1769 all his authority to Rama Varma, the first prince (heir presumptive) who was 26 years old at that time. The prince who was thus entrusted with administrative responsibility was a person of extraordinary ability and is known to history as Saktan Tampuran (the strong prince). Though he formally ascended the throne only in 1790, he was in full charge of the administration-of-the State from 1769 onwards. During the reign of Rama Varma (1775–1790) the Raja of Cochin was called upon by Tipu to play the role of a mediator between Mysore and Travancore with a view to securing the subordination of the latter State to the former, but the Raja's effort only met with rebuff.

Tipu brought large areas of Cochin territory under his control but immediately after the exit of the Sultan, the Cochin Raja threw off his allegiance to Mysore and entered into a treaty with the English East India Company (January 1791).



The Mysorean invasion of Malabar (1766 –1792) was the military invasion of the Malabar region of Kerala, including the territories of the Zamorin of Calicut, by the then-de facto ruler of the Kingdom of Mysore, Hyder Ali. After the invasion, the Kingdom of Cochin to the south of Malabar became a tributary state of Mysore.

The invasion of Malabar was motivated by a desire for access to the ports bordering the Indian Ocean.

The Mysore invasion gave the East India Company the opportunity to tighten their grip on the ancient feudal principalities of Malabar and convert Travancore into only a protected ally.

By the late 18th century, the small kingdoms had been absorbed or subordinated by three large states: **Travancore, Calicut (ruled by Zamorins), and the Kingdom of Cochin.**

The Kingdom of Mysore, ruled nominally by the Wodeyar family, rose to prominence in India after the decline of the Vijayanagara Empire and again after the Mughal Empire. In 1761, Ali took control of Mysore by overthrowing the then-prime minister of Mysore, and became its de facto head. He made the Mysorean king Krishnaraja Wodeyar II a prisoner in his own palace. He turned his attention towards expansion, which included the capture of the Kingdoms **of Bednur (Ikkeri or Keladi), Sunda, Sera, and Canara.**

In 1766, he descended into Malabar and occupied the Kingdoms of Chirakkal (former Kolathunad), Kottayam, Kadathanad, Calicut, Valluvanad and Palghat. The king of Cochin accepted his suzerainty and paid him tribute annually from 1766 to 1790. Faruqabad, near Calicut, was the local capital of the Mysorean-ruled area.



Ali's 1767 attempt to defeat Travancore failed; a second effort by his son Tipu Sultan in 1789–1790 triggered the Third Anglo-Mysore War. Only Travancore stood outside the Muslim Mysore authority in the area.

In the Treaty of Seringapatam (1792), Tipu ceded half of his territories, including Malabar, to the East India Company and their allies, and paid 3.3 crores (33 million) rupees as indemnity. By 1801, Richard Wellesley created the Madras Presidency by attaching Malabar and the Carnatic territories seized from Mysore.

The Company asked Travancore to pay all the expenses of the Third Anglo-Mysore war on the rationale that the war was undertaken in its defense.

The treaty of 1795 reduced the status of Travancore from friend and ally of the East India Company to protected ally.

The king was forced to entertain a subsidiary force far beyond his capacity to subsidize. The Company also claimed a monopoly on the country's black pepper trade.

## **RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS AGAINST THE COMPANY RULE**

- A resistance movement is an organized effort by some portion of the civil population of a country to resist the legally established government or an occupying power and to disrupt civil order and stability.
- It may seek to achieve its objectives through either the use of nonviolent resistance or the use of force, whether armed or unarmed. In many cases a resistance movement may employ both violent and non-violent methods, usually operating under different organizations and acting in different phases or geographical areas within a country.
- The term resistance is generally used to designate a movement considered legitimate.

## ENTRI

- Resistance movements can include any irregular armed force that rises up against an enforced or established authority, government, or administration. Such resistance
- Movements can be visible in every part of the world where the government or the powerful one used authoritative measures against the government without considering the welfare of both the people and the existing political power.
- From the entrance of the European powers in the soil of Kerala onwards, the native powers began to resist the foreigners who were trying to be the masters of the land. With the establishment of British supremacy, the history of Kerala underwent changes.
- The period after this can be considered as a period of challenge and response. The British challenge of domination had an equal response from the native chieftains and people.
- When the British tried to establish their supremacy over the land, resistance against their domination broke out in various parts. The early native resistances were mainly led by the disposed local princes, feudal chieftains, aggrieved peasants, tribal communities and others.
- The revolts of Pazhassi Raja in Malabar, School of Distance Education History of Modern Kerala Page 4 Paliath Achan in Kochi, the Kurichiyas in Wayanad and the Moplahs in Eranad and Valluvanad are examples of such resistance movements.
- The earliest recorded such native resistance against foreigners was against the Portuguese by the native Mappilas and Nairs of Calicut in 1500 AD.
- In this brawl the natives killed many Portuguese and destroyed their factory.
- Even though the Portuguese under Cabral retaliated by killing many natives on the high seas, they were compelled to leave Calicut and they moved and settled Cochin which caused clashes between Cochin and Calicut.

### **REVOLT OF PADINJARE KOVILAKAM RAJAS.**

During the British period, a lot of such violent resistance took place. One of the most striking ones among these took place at Anjengo in 1695, at Tellicherry in 1704 and again at Anjengo in 1721. The Patinjare Kovilakam Rajas of the Zamorin's family also raised their arms against the British. It was an attempt of the dispossessed princes to regain their lost status and privileges. At the time of Mysorian invasions, the Zamorin of Calicut and family left Calicut and took asylum in other places. After the withdrawal of Tippu, the Zamorin returned to Calicut in 1792. When the Zamorin made a compromise with the British resulting in the loss of status and territories, the Western branch protested demanding restoration of the territories. But the British rejected this which frustrated the Prince of Patinjare Kovilakam and raised revolt against them. The Raja was supported by the local population and was joined by Unni Muppan, a Moplah chief, Poliugar chiefs of Coimbatore, Palakkad Raja (Kunji Achan) and others. The British forces under Captain Burnell pursued the Princes who escaped to Thiruvitamkur and arrested his nephew and brother. Later the Prince returned to Calicut and came to an agreement with the British.

He agreed to live in peace at Calicut accepting a nominal pension from the company. Even though almost all these early attempts against the British were failed, it created a new history of resistance against the foreigners.

### **THE ANJENGO AND THE BRITISH- THE ATTINGAL OUTBREAK (1695-1721)**

- When the British under Captain Keeling reached Calicut with three vessels in 1615, the Zamorin gave them wholehearted support and concluded a treaty with them according to which the English were to assist Calicut in expelling the Portuguese from Crangannur and Cochin.
- The Zamorin gave the English freedom of trade in his dominions. But the English didn't help the Zamorin against the Portuguese in accordance

## ENTRI

with the treaty signed with them. Instead they left the cost leaving ten men to open warehouses at Ponnani and Calicut.

- In 1634-35 the English East India Company entered into an agreement with the Portuguese through which they got access to all Portuguese ports in Kerala. In accordance with this, the British merchants exported pepper to England for the first time from Cochin in 1636.
- In 1664 the Zamorin gave the English permission to build a factory at Calicut, but as he was suspicious of the motives of all foreign traders he was not inclined to give them further sites in his territory.
- Due to such difficulties at Calicut, English turned their attention to other parts of Kerala. In 1684 AD, they obtained from the Rani of Attingal, a sandy plot of land at Anjengo for the construction of a factory. In 1690, they also obtained permission to build a fort at Anjengo and its construction was completed in 1695.
- A depot for military stores was also opened there. They mainly constructed this factory here to break the Dutch monopoly in pepper trade. Alexander Hamilton who visited the place in 1721 expressed a poor opinion of Anjengo, particularly the scarcity of water.
- But, at the same time, it had strategic importance also. It had water communication by the Vamanapuram River, the largest producer of pepper in South Kerala and also water connection with Kadinamkulam, the southern terminal of the water way enabled it to be an ideal location for a trading factory. Soon Anjengo developed into the most important British possession on the West Coast, next only to Bombay.
- It also provided a convenient grip from where the English East India Company could extend its sphere of influence in South and Central Kerala. Under pressure from the English, Rani of Attingal was compelled to grant them the monopoly of pepper. After getting this, the English manipulated the price of pepper against the interest of the local cultivators, which provoked the wrath of the local population.

## ENTRI

- In November 1697 the factory at Anjengo was subjected to a violent attack by the local people. They attacked English factories there and massacred Englishmen. Their attempt to capture the fort failed and the rebels were forced to retreat in the face of the superior military power of the British. The Rani of Attingal was forced to sign a fresh treaty by which Rani agreed to rebuild the factory and to pay 80,000 panama as compensation.

### **Attingal Outbreak of 1721**

- In 1721 a crisis occurred in the functioning of the Anjengo factory. The British continued their policy of economic exploitation at Attingal. The local people were antagonized by realizing this kind of exploitation and corrupt practices of the British.
- At the same time the British followed a completely different policy towards Rani and they tried to please her by providing costly presents every year. The immediate provocation for the revolt was the Easter Dinner given by the Company.
- In course of the celebrations a mistress of the company's interpreter insulted a Muslim merchant by throwing colored water or powder to him. When this was reported to the chief factor Mr. Gyfford, instead of punishing the real culprit, he ordered to punish the Muslim which provoked the Muslim and he was looking an opportunity to wreck the vengeance on the chief factor for this inhuman deed.
- The situation was aggravated by the policy of the British government to give costly presents to the Rani of Attingal to win more concessions. In 1721 the gents of the Pillamar (Nair chieftains) demanded that the presents to the Rani should be handed over to them for transmission to her.

## ENTRI

- Gyfford turned down the demand and proceeded to Attingal along with 140 (or 14) English men to hand over the price to Rani in person. Actually he tried to show the strength of the English, but it turned against them itself.
- On their return, they were attacked by the provoked local people. In this attack almost all the English men except two or three were murdered including Gyfford. The hostile mob then turned against Rani.
- They proceeded towards Anjengo fort which was defended by Gunner Ince. The siege lasted for six months and it ended with the arrival of reinforcements from Tellicherry.
- Canter Vischer observed this event as “in the course of the night, the inhabitants fell upon their unfortunate guests and massacred them and this so thoroughly that not a single English man escaped”.
- Following the failure of the revolt, the English and Rani entered into an agreement under which the Company was compensated for all the losses sustained during the attack on Anjengo and were also given the sole monopoly of trade in pepper as well as the right to erect factories in places of its choice.
- Results of the Anjengo Revolt This revolt was the first organized revolt against British authority in Kerala.
- The immediate result of the Anjengo revolt was that the pepper supply from Anjengo fell down. Rani compensated the British loss by giving two gardens to the English. The most important result was that it paved the way for Marthanda Varma’s alliance with the English.
- It paved the trend in Travancore political development, resulting in the consolidation of royal power and its extension over kingdoms in the North. In his wars of conquest, Marthanda Varma made use of the military assistance provided by the Anjengo factors.

## **E ▶ ENTRI**

- But there is no evidence in Mathilakam records in connection with the help given by the company.

## **PAZHASSI REVOLT (1793–97)**



- ❖ The most serious and widest revolt against the British in South India was of Kerala Varma Pazhassi Raja who is pictured by the British as Coyote Raja and is popularly known as Kerala Simham.
- ❖ As he belonged to the Padinjare Kovilakam branch of the Kottayam royal family (Purakizhnad) which had its headquarters at Pazhassi, the rebellion is called the Pazhassi revolt.
- ❖ The most important source material to study the revolt of Pazhassi Raja was the Thalsseri Rekhakal (Thalasseri consultations) of the English East India Company.
- ❖ In Addition to this, there are a lot of secondary sources also to study the revolt of pazhassi. William Logan's Malabar Manual gives a detailed description of the rebellion in the British point of view and his A collection of treaties, engagements and other papers of importance relating to



## ENTRRI

British affairs in Malabar 1841-1914 gives the original documents such as proclamations and declarations of Pazhassi.

- ❖ KKN Kurup's Pazhassi Samarangal, T P Sankaran Kutty Nair S A Tragic Decade in Kerala History, P K K Menon's Freedom
- ❖ Movement in Kerala and also novel Kerala Simham by K M Panikkar and play Pazhassi Raja by Kappana Krishna Menon are some of the Secondary sources that can be used for studying on Pazhassi Raja.
- ❖ In addition to all these, we have diaries, revenue reports, political and military collections, Confidential Records etc. in the Archives and India office library.

### **Relations of Pazhassi with East India Company**

- ❖ In the early days Pazhassi had maintained cordial relations with the company. During the second Anglo-Mysore War when Mysoreans attacked Tellichery. Pazhassi sent 2000 Nair soldiers against Sirdar Khan in order to help the English. They even captured an outpost at Muttungal(Badgara).
- ❖ By 1782, Kottayam, Eravinad and Kadathanad became free from Mysorean authority. By the Treaty of Mangalore in 1784, all territories were given back to them by the English. But, afterwards Kottayam Ravi Varma, the elder brother of Pazhassi Raja contacted Tippu and agreed to pay Rs.65000/- as tax to Mysore.
- ❖ But Mysore demanded Rs.81000/- which was a heavy burden to the peasants. Thus the peasants opposed this and started struggle. In this struggle Pazhassi was with the peasants and he gave leadership to the struggle and organized the natives.
- ❖ The most important event which exasperated Pazhassi even more was that his brother who paid visit to Tipu in 1786 for peace talks and compelled to sign in a treaty with him which caused for ceding Wayanad to Tipu Sultan.

## ENTRI

- ❖ Pazhassi was not ready to leave Tipu to enjoy Wayanad and decided to make problems for Tipu. He started a guerilla warfare that constantly harassed Mysore troops in Wayanad and neighborhood.
- ❖ In this time, he entered into a treaty with the English against Tippu and by 1790 he assumed the leadership of Kottayam.
- ❖ In 1790, the British recognized Pazhassi Raja as the head of Kottayam instead of the original Raja who was in refuge at Travancore. But by the Treaty of Srirangapatna signed between the British and Tipu in 1792, Malabar was ceded to the British.
- ❖ Afterwards the British began to work for the establishment of their supremacy in Malabar. From here onwards a completely different relationship had started between Pazhassi and the British and he started to resist British imperialism from 1793 onwards till his death in 1805.
- ❖ He fought two wars to resist British intervention in the domestic affairs of his kingdom.

### **The First Pazhassi Revolt (1793–1797)**

- The primary cause of the first revolt organized by the Pazhassi Raja was the mistaken revenue policy of the British.
- The Mysoreans had collected their revenue directly from the cultivators through their officials.
- But the British reversed this policy and framed out the collection of revenue to the different Rajas for lump sums.
- This policy of the British had a lot of implications. The assessments of the local Rajas were harsh and beyond the capacity of the peasants to pay. Pazhassi was not on good terms with his uncle Vira Varma, Raja of Kurumbranad.

## ENTRI

- In 1793, Vira Varma surrendered Kottayam to the British and convinced the British commissioners to let him collect tax in the Kottayam.
- At this time, the British had adopted a hostile approach to Pazhassi Raja who had consistently refused to accept British suzerainty and decided to make the obedient Vira Varma as the head of Kottayam.
- Vira Varma, on the one hand undertook to collect tax in Kottayam directly, and on the other hand instigated Pazhassi to oppose the British.
- Early the lease was for one year, but in 1794 it was renewed for a period of five years. More than all these, the British assessment of revenue was more callous and beyond the capacity of the peasants to pay.
- The peasants resisted its forcible collection by the agents of the British and thus challenged British authority. Pazhassi Raja took up their cause and opposed the extortion of the peasantry.
- Pazhassi decided to challenge the British by organizing an open rebellion. He prevented the British from collecting revenue in Kottayam and threatened to cut down the pepper vines.
- He stopped all collection of revenue from Kottayam on 28th June 1795 and openly challenged the British authority. He gave asylum to one of the Iruvazhinad Nambiar whom the Supervisor had declared a rebel.
- Two Mappilas who had committed robbery in the house of a Chetti were at this time sentenced to death by the Raja .The Company's officials ordered the Raja's arrest on a charge of murder. But they failed to carry out the order. The Company decided to collect tax in a more serious way.
- British troops were stationed at Kottayam bazaar and Manathana in 1795 to help the Kurumbranad tax collectors. But the officials could not carry out the work of revenue collection due to the resistance and tactics of Pazhassi Raja and his men.
- In April 1795 a contingent of British troops under Lt. Gordon made an attempt to seize the Raja in his palace at Pazhassi, but on entering the palace they found that "the bird had flown away".

## ENTRI

- So they plundered the palace of Pazhassi and carried away all the valuables. The Raja sought asylum in the Puralimala jungles in Wayanad and adopted a guerilla system of warfare. The British troops stationed at Wayanad were forced to withdraw. In June 1796 he stopped all traffic on the Kuttiadi Ghat. The British now entered into negotiations with the Raja and permitted him to return to this palace at Pazhassi.
- But due to a misunderstanding between the officials of the Company and the Raja, Pazhassi Raja withdrew again to the Wynad jungles along with his followers. On 18th December 1796 the British Commissioners issued a proclamation forbidding the people to cooperate with the Pazhassi Raja.
- At the same time, Raja established contacts with Tipu's men beyond the border and sought the help of Mysore in driving the English out of Wayanad. Some of the Kurumbranad Raja's men also crossed over to the Raja's side. In January 1797 a series of revolts took place in which several Englishmen lost their lives.
- The British forces were overpowered by the Kurichias and Nairs. They assembled in groups, erected barriers, cut off British communications and refused to pay taxes.
- The Rajas of Kurumbranad and Parappanad, who were loyal to the Company, joined hands with Pazhassi. The eastern branch of Zamorin's family too allied itself with Pazhassi Raja.
- The Moplahs of Malabar led by Chempan Potter and the Founders of Coimbatore joined the rebels. Pazhassi Raja also sought help of Mysoreans driving out the English from Wayanad.
- The geographical peculiarities of Wayanad and the strong support he received from the tribals prevented the British from taking any effective action against the Raja.
- The situation was so critical that Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, was forced to admit that the 'great evil in this unhappy contest arises principally out of Pazhassi Raja's extraordinary success which renders it

## ENTRI

dangerous to the company's interests and disgraceful to our national character'.

- In March 1797, a British force under Col. Dow marched without opposition to the Periya Pass and he was to be joined by another contingent under Lt.Mealey.
- In battles fought on three consecutive days from 9th to the 11th March, British forces were overpowered by thousands of Nairs and Kurichias who had rallied under the banner of the Pazhassi Raja. Col.Dow decided to withdraw his forces from Wynad, but on their way they were attacked by the Pazhassi troops.
- On March 18, 1797, a contingent of 1,100 men under Major Cameron was ambushed and cut into pieces while making their way through the Periya Pass. The situation was thus so difficult for the British.
- Jonathan Duncan, the Governor of Bombay came to Malabar and worked out a compromise with the Raja. As per the agreement signed in 1797, the agreement with the Kurumbranad Raja was canceled and the rebellion was brought to an end through the mediation of the Chirakkal Raja and Parappand Raja.
- By agreement, the British decided to withdraw their forces from Wayanad. Pazhassi called off the rebellion and he accepted a pension of Rs. 8000/ per annum and agreed to live in peace with the Company. The company also agreed to restore the treasure captured from the Pazhassi palace.
- As per the treaty, the Company has given back the confiscated Pazhassi palace. Peace was thus restored for the time being, but it was only a truce.
- It was only a temporary settlement and did not last long and soon to be violated.

## **Pazhassi Revolt II(1800–1805)**

- ❖ The peace agreement between Pazhassi and the British East India Company only had a short life. Pazhassi was provoked by the British move to take possession of Wayanad which had been ceded to them by the treaty of Srirangapattanam. Wayanad was a traditional possession of Kottayam Raja and Pazhassi has been in control of this region since 1793.
- ❖ Pazhassi saw this move of the Company as an encroachment on his country's ancient provinces. The Raja retaliated by collecting a large force of Nairs and Kurichias which was now supplemented by Mappilas and Pathanas, later being ex- soldiers of Tipu who became unemployed after Tipu's death
- ❖ Raja was served by several loyal lieutenants as Kunnavath Sankaran Nambiar, Kaitheri Ambu Nair, Edachenna Kungan Nair and the Kurichiya leader Thalakkal Chandu.
- ❖ Raja himself was a brilliant strategist and he gave special training to these troops in the technique of guerilla warfare so as to carry on the fight effectively against the English in the jungles of Wayanad.
- ❖ The British Government at Madras appointed Major General Arthur Wellesley as British army commandant of Mysore, South Canara and Malabar. He planned a double pronged move from Malabar Coast and Mysore into Wynad and began preparations for it. General Wellesley came to Tellicheri and planned his military strategy against Raja.
- ❖ Wellesley devised minute plans of operations. Networks of roads were constructed. Military outposts were set up at strategic places to counter the guerrilla tactics and from these outposts he could send light detachments in all directions to hunt out the guerillas.
- ❖ But Raja realized the fact that Wellesly had left for Deccan on a military mission and marched across Kuttiyadi pass and below he made a

## ENTRI

junction with Unni Mootha Mooppan, a Walluvanad Mappila leader and his men.

- ❖ Soon several great nobles like Kampuratt Nambiar of Iruvazhi Ad, Peruvayal Nambiar and Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar also joined Raja with their men. Pazhassi started his resistance in the monsoon of June–July 1800.
- ❖ His troops came down the Ghats and attacked Me. Brown’s spice plantations at Anjarakandy and some of the British outposts.
- ❖ Wellesley sent a large force under Colonel Sartorius to recapture rebel-held Kottayam, but the plan could not be carried out as there were not enough troops in Malabar.
- ❖ Wellesley advised Commissioners to stop all communications with Wayanad so as to starve Raja of supplies.
- ❖ But a shortage of troops made all his plans in vain. In 1801, a large British troops of over 10,000 men under Col. Stevenson entered Wayanad from Mysore.
- ❖ They blocked all passes that linked Wayanad with Malabar and then converged on the Raja’s palace at Pazhassi. By that time the rebels went underground.
- ❖ The British troops achieved a large measure of success in their hands. Raja became a wanderer in the jungles accompanied by his wife and close followers. His followers were hunted down and prominent leaders like Chuzhali Nambiar and Peruvayyal Nambiar were captured. Peruvayal Nambiar was hanged at Kannavam.
- ❖ The British also threatened a brutal penalty and confiscation of property for all those rebels who failed to surrender in six weeks time. But a pardon was also issued for surrendered rebels.
- ❖ Most of Raja’s chief supporters including Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar were arrested. British troops under Lt. Edward captured him on the hill near his house at Kannavanam. Kannavath Sankaran Nambiar and his son were hanged and their property was confiscated.



## **ENTRI**

- ❖ (The tree on which Nambiar and his son hanged was preserved until the recent past and then the tree fell away. It stood at Chittariparamba junction near Koothuparamba). The murder of Sanakaran Nambiar was a serious blow to the Pazhassi struggle.
- ❖ The British believed that war was over and went ahead with the exploitation program.
- ❖ In January 1802 Major Macleod, the Collector issued orders disarming the district and threatened those who kept arms with death penalty. He also doubled the rate of tax and ordered a reassessment of tax of the whole Malabar in a mere forty days.
- ❖ In October 1802 the rebels under the leadership of Edachena Kungan Nair and Thalakkal Chandu captured Panamaram fort and massacred its seventy strong garrisons.
- ❖ Wellesley was School of Distance Education History of Modern Kerala Page 11 enraged at this rebel attack and dispatched 500 men to retaliate. But by then the victory at Panamaram thrilled the rebels and they afterwards controlled all passes in Wayanad.
- ❖ Edachena Kungan went to Pulpally shrine and issued a proclamation to people to join Raja's war and volunteered 3000 men. They were posted at Valliyoorkavu at Mananthavady, Edappally etc. .
- ❖ 100 men under Kungan's brother were posted at Periya Pass and 25 men at Kottiyoor Pass. Rebel outposts were set up along the route from Dindigul to Valliyoorkavu.
- ❖ Edachena Kungan led an attack on a British detachment headed from Mysore to Manathavadi, but unfortunately a British troop detached one of the block made by the rebels and many of the rebels were caught as prisoners and many of them were murdered.
- ❖ Afterwards, the rebels concentrated in Kottayam and in 1802 they raided a supplies convoy near Kottiyoor.

## ENTRI

- ❖ The British were frustrated by the Kottayam people's total lack of cooperation. Soon the rebellion spread into Chirakkal. Raja's army by the end of 1803 was ranging as far as Kannur and Thalasseri.
- ❖ In March 1803, a rebel force marched to Calicut and captured Sub-Jail and killed all guards and seized their firearms and ammunition.
- ❖ They also released prisoners, many of whom joined with the rebels. Following this incident Major Macleod resigned from his post.

### **Martyrdom of Pazhassi raja**

- ❖ In 1803, Wellesley left for Europe after three years of inconclusive war with Raja and accepted the post of Duke of Wellington.
- ❖ In 1804, Thomas Harvey Baber, a young and energetic British officer was appointed as the Sub-Collector of Tellichery and he was entrusted with the responsibility of crushing the Pazhassi forces.
- ❖ The Company officials organized a new body of 1,200 policemen called Kolkars to deal with the small body of Pazhassi troops in the various parts of the country. With the help of Kolkars Baber could suppress several local uprisings in the Chirakkal area.
- ❖ In April 1804 he ordered the people in each locality to be non cooperative with the rebels and told to give full information about the movements of the rebels. In this situation, Raja was forced to withdraw all the men into the jungles of Wayanad. The Madras army under Col.Macleod pursued them into the jungles and crushed all opposition.
- ❖ On 16th June a proclamation was issued offering rewards for the apprehension of the Pazhassi Raja and his close lieutenants. The Kolkars were entrusted with the task of capturing the rebels. Many encounters took place between Pazhassi's troops and the Kolkars.

## ENTRI

- ❖ Thalakkal Chandu, the Kurichiya hero was captured in one such encounter. The British made a strict blockade to Pazhassi in the jungle. Baber chased the Raja to the Jungles.
- ❖ On 30th November 1805, the British troops surrounded Raja and his men on the Banks of Mavilaythodu(Kanjirapuzha).
- ❖ After a severe battle of 15 hours, Pazhassi forces were routed and the Raja was shot dead. Local tradition says that the Raja committed suicide by swallowing the diamond in his ring.
- ❖ It has been also said that Pazhassi emptied his pistol to his own chest in order to escape capture by the British.
- ❖ Baber was so touched by the gallantry of the Raja that he carried the dead body of Raja in his own palanquin to Mananthavady and cremated it with customary honor.
- ❖ Baber wrote " thus terminated the career of a man who has been enabled to preserve in hostilities against the company for nine years...".
- ❖ He reported to the principal Collector of Malabar in his letter dated 31st December 1805," although a rebel, he was one of the natural chieftains of the country and might be considered on that account rather a fallen enemy".
- ❖ The death of Pazhassi Raja symbolized the collapse of the resistance movement.
- ❖ The other leaders either committed suicide or were killed in encounters or deported. In true sense the Pazhassi revolt was a popular struggle or people's war for national liberation. In this struggle all classes of people irrespective of caste or religion took an active part in it. Baber characterized Pazhassi Raja as 'an extraordinary and singular character'.
- ❖ The revolt of Pazhassi marks an important stage in the history of resistance movements against the foreigner's domination in Kerala. This struggle was for defense of freedom and the object of resistance was liquidation of foreign rule and nothing else.

## E ▶ ENTRI

- ❖ The Pazhassi episode marked the beginning of an era of resistance against the British in Kerala.

## REVOLT OF VELUTHAMPI DALAWA



- Kerala history is dotted with the heroic deeds of great patriots.
- A man living all comforts and luxuries offered by the top post as commercial minister to the King, revolting against an empire where the sun never sets is a rarity.
- One such personality in the decades of Kerala history is Veluthampi Dalawa, the Diwan of Travancore.
- **Champakaraman Velayudhan, popularly known as Veluthampi Dalawa** is a rare version of heroism in the history of Kerala.
- The revolt of Veluthampi, the Dalawa of Travancore, is a significant episode in the annals of Indian resistance movements against the British.
- In the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Travancore was ruled by Sri Balarama Varma of Travancore dynasty who, although a good hearted, was weak and inexperienced.
- Thus the administration of Travancore State was controlled by the trio consisting of Jayanthan Sankaran Namboothiri, Sankaranaranayanan Chetty and Mathu Tharakan.

## E ▶ ENTRI

- They were doing all kinds of inhuman deeds and corruption in the State which created discontent among the poor populace of Travancore. Veluthampi, as the champion of the oppressed organized a large force, marched to the capital and persuaded the Raja to dismiss the unpopular ministers. Veluthampi was elevated to the high office of Dalawa on the advice of Macaulay in 1801.
- As per the agreement with Raja, Jayanthan Sanakaran Namboothiri was exiled and his cronies, Mathew Tharakan and Sankaranarayan Chetty were whipped, their ears were cut and they were dismissed from service. He was raised to the status of Minister for Finance and Commerce.
- **Velayudhan Thampi** was the son of Sri Kunjumayitti Pillai and his wife Valliyammai Pillai Thankachi.
- He was born on 6th May 1765 in the village of Kalkulam, in Thalakulam Valiyaveedu, around 16 kilometers from the town of Nagercoil in the present day Tamil Nadu, then a Southern district of Travancore State.
- He came from a family that held a high title of Champakaraman for their services to the state by Maharaja Marthanda Varma. During the initial years of the reign of Maharaja Balarama Varma, Velu Thampi was appointed as Kariakkar or Tahsildar of Mavelikkara.
- The new Dalawa, Veluthampi introduced a lot of new reforms to strengthen the government and to improve the finances of the State. Expenditure of the State was curtailed down and income was increased. Veluthampi administered the State with the support of Col. Macaulay, the British Resident of Travancore and Cochin..
- His period as the minister (1801–1809) was a **glaring example of how a debt and corruption ridden state can lead to prosperity**. To increase revenue, he carried out a systematic resurvey of all garden and paddy lands in 1802 and assessed the revenue taking into consideration the produce of the land. Title deeds (kandezhuth) were given to the cultivators.

## ENTRI

- A new Revenue code was framed and a novel system of keeping accounts was started. This resulted in a great increase of revenue. His system of Nalvazhi was the forerunner of the modern feature of revenue administration.
- Velu Thampi supplemented the land revenue with higher returns from trade and commerce. Corrupt officials were executed, maimed or exiled. The story of an officer who went to assess tax is a glaring example of his commitment to justice. The officer deputed to assess property-income assessed much less than the actual property of Veluthampi own.
- When Veluthampi came to know about it, he was furious and ordered to cut off the thumb of the officer as punishment. He had done a lot of measures for the development of trade in the State. He made attempts to improve trade in the Ambalappuzha town,
- which was constructed by Raja Kesavadas, the former Diwan of Travancore and developed Kollam as a great trading center. He took great interest in opening markets (chanthas) and roads in various corners of the State.
- 
- Markets were opened at Vaikom and Changanassery and it was he who constructed Kollam- Shenkottai road. He made Pathiramanal of Vembanad Kayal as suitable for human life.
- The increased revenue was spent to clear the debts. He also introduced a criminal code which was **'barbarously severe'**. Thus within a short span of time, Veluthampi evolved order out of chaos, placed the administration on a sound footing, improved the financial conditions of the state and proved his mettle as an administrator.
- But the later life of Veluthampi was in trouble and he faced a tragic end. He had done the affairs of the Govt. firmly and strictly without fear or favor.

## ENTRI

- This alarmed his enemies who plotted to dismiss the Dalawa. But the Resident always supported him and due to his intervention Veluthampi was reinstated as Dalawa.
- There was also a mutiny of the Nair militia when Thampi attempted to stop their double allowance. He suppressed the mutiny with the help of Company's forces.
- The price of this help was a new treaty with the company. The revised treaty of perpetual friendship and Alliance which was signed on 12th June 1805 gave the British specific power to keep a subsidiary force in Travancore and to interfere in its internal affairs. It also increased the tribute to be paid to the Company.
- The treaty virtually sounded the death knell of Travancore as an independent kingdom. But the staining of the relationship of Travancore and Company came within a short span of time when Veluthampi found that the Resident was interfering in the internal affairs of the state using the treaty as a pretext.
- When the tribute to the company fell into arrears, Macaulay insisted that its payment worsened the relationship of Travancore with the Company.
- 
- Further the Resident canceled an order issued by the Dalawa attaching the landed properties of Mathu Tharakan who owned an enormous amount of the State. This activity of the Resident infuriated the Dalawa.
- 
- Now each of them attempted to get rid of the other- Dalawas appealed to the Madras Governor to recall the Resident and the Resident asking the Raja to dismiss Velu Thampi. Direct and indirect clashes between the Company soldiers and king's soldiers took place here and there.
- Veluthampi had only a ragtag army and so it was difficult to go to war with the army of the company.



## **E ▶ ENTRI**

- Veluthampi decided to organize an open armed insurrection with the help of anti-British elements against the British. He therefore reached into an agreement with Mc. Cauley ignored the advice of the King.
- This agreement was later used by the resident officer to create a rift between the King and the Minister. The Company was gearing up for an open confrontation.
- This time he approached **Paliath Achan of Cochin** who had similar grievances with the Company and Zamorin of Calicut. They collected men and arms on a large scale. All these made an open war inevitable.
- The revolt began with the night attack on the Residency at Kochi (Bolgatty palace) under the leadership of Paliath Achan.
- But the attack on the residency failed to capture Macaulay as he had already managed to escape to a British ship anchored in the harbor.
- The rebels consisting of 600 men plundered the Residency, broke open the jails at Kochi and set all prisoners free. In an outbreak at Alappuzha, 636 Englishmen were killed. But the attempt at Kollam failed to achieve its desired results.
- The situation had become desperate for Velu Thampi who staged a strategic retreat to Kundara where he set up his headquarters and issued a call to arms. He camped at Kundara with his army and there he declared open war against the Company. He described the presence of the British as harmful to the cultural integrity and self pride of Kerala.
- This declaration which he made on **1st Makaram 984 ME** (Jan 11, 1809) has been known in the history of Kerala as the famous '**Kundara Proclamation**'. Through this declaration he exhorted the people to rally under his banner for a patriotic struggle against the British. It has shown the concern for the maintenance of social forms in general and the caste system in particular.
- The document reads: "it is the nature of the English nation to get possession of countries by treacherous means. And should they obtain

ascendancy in Thiruvithamkoor, they will practice all unjust and unlawful things'.

He raised the following arguments against the British in his proclamation:

- 1. They would put their own guards in the palace, Sarkar buildings, for gates, destroy the royal seal, and do away with honorific palanquins and other distinguishing marks.**
- 2. They will suppress the Brahmins and prohibit worship in temples**
- 3. They will make sale and every other thing a monopoly of the state. They may measure up and assess themselves as absolute owners of waste lands, impose exorbitant taxes on paddy lands, coconuts etc.**
- 4. Low castes people will be inflicted with heavy punishments for slight offenses.**
- 5. They will put up crosses and flags of Christianity in temples, compel intermarriages with Brahmin women without reverence to caste or creed.**
- 6. And practice all the unjust and unlawful things which characterize Kaliyuga.**

He proclaimed: "Let us therefore exert ourselves to keep off impending calamities sketched above and Endeavour that no disparagement may be imputed to us in guarding our homes, the charitable institutions and the manners and customs of our land".

- This proclamation was the first one in this kind which called to the people at large to unite against the oppressors. It provided the motivation for a mass upsurge of unprecedented dimension. The proclamation had made great impact and motivated the mass for an unprecedented upsurge against the English. The mass rose against the British. With 3000 men and 18 guns Velu Thambi renewed the war.
- He sent part of his forces to Kochi to help Paliath Achan and with the rest he proceeded against the British. But both Paliath Achan and Veluthampi

## ENTRRI

failed miserably and the tide of the revolt decisively turned against Veluthampi.

- At this time the British army under Col. Laedger entered Travancore through Aruvamozhi and thrust in to the interior. They captured the old fort of Udayagiri and the old capital Padmanabhapuram and advanced towards Trivandrum, the new capital.
- The Raja, feared of all these events, sued for peace. Under pressure from Macaulay, Veluthampi was dismissed and the new Dalawa Ummini Thampi ordered for the arrest of Veluthampi. The responsibility for the losses was taken personally by Veluthampi in his personal meeting with the King following which fled to the jungles with the British in School of Distance Education History of Modern Kerala Page 16 pursuit.
- The British then issued orders for the arrest of Veluthampi with a reward of Rs. 50,000/-, Veluthampi left the capital, reached Kilimanoor where he gifted his sword to the local chief, proceeded to the north and took refuge IN the house of the Potty of the Mannady temple.
- Velu Thampi who needed money sent out his servant to sell his gold and silver and this man was caught by the British. Upon interrogation, he revealed to them Thampi's hiding place. The enemies surrounded his hiding place. He then fled to the Bhagavati temple along with his brother Padmanabhan Thambi and decided to end his life.
- He asked his brother to stab him, but his brother refused. Then he stabbed the knife himself, seriously wound. Thampi didn't die and cried out to his brother to cut his neck and his brother had done it.
- The British seized his brother and the body of Thampui removed to Trivandrum where it was exposed to the public on a gibbet at Kannammoola. Padmanabhan Thampi was also hanged.
- His house was razed to the ground and plantain and castor trees planted thereon. Most of his relatives were transported to Maldives and some appear to have committed suicide, some died in prison. The rest were flogged and banished elsewhere.

## **E ▶ ENTRI**

- All these activities were carried out by Valuthampi's successor Ummi Thampi who proved to be as unreliable as the others from whom Veluthampitook over and he was too intent on enriching himself.
- The same situation continued with Macaulay, but this time Macaulay chose to complain about the Elaya Raja and not the minister. In this time too the palace intrigues continued with the Elaya Raja challenging the old one.
- The British wanted him out, but Macaulay retired from service in 1801 and went back to England. Col. Munro, his follower, was a tough man and took tough measures. Ummi Thampi was caught when he plotted against Munro. He was imprisoned at Chingleput. He reinstated the Nair brigade of Travancore.

### **Revolt of Velu Tampi and Paliath Achan**



During the period following the suppression of the Pazhassi revolt in North Kerala another great challenge was hurled at British authority in Travancore and Cochin.

The leaders of the revolt were **Velu Thampi Dalawa and Paliath Achan, the chief ministers of the respective States**. Velu Thampi had risen to the high position of Dalawa in Travancore after having led a successful popular revolt against bureaucratic misrule and forced the hands of the king to yield to the demands of the people. In 1805 he had played a leading part in negotiating the treaty with the English East India Company.

Till the conclusion of this treaty Velu Thampi maintained friendly relations with the English Company and their Resident in Travancore, Col. Macaulay. But before long the Resident interfered actively in the internal administration of the State and came into conflict with the Dalawa. An order issued by the Dalawa, attaching the lands of Mathu Tharakan who owed large sums of money to the Travancore Exchequer by way of taxes, was canceled by Col. Macaulay.

The Resident also insisted on the prompt payment of the arrears of tribute due to the Company at a time when the State government was in financial difficulties. The overbearing conduct of the Resident exasperated the Dalawa and he took the crucial decision to organize a revolt against the English. The Travancore Dalawa found a friend and ally in Paliath Achan, his counterpart in Cochin. Cochin had all along been aggrieved against the Company as most of the territorial claims of that State had been settled by the The Challenge to British Supremacy 264 A Survey of Kerala History

I. Chaudhri, Dr. S.B., Civil Disturbances in India (1765-1857), p.135. English to its disadvantage. English agents had been interfering in the affairs of Cochin and creating difficulties for its administration.

Resident Macaulay gave asylum to one Kunhikrishna Menon of Nadavaramba who had fallen out with the Paliath Achan. The Achan demanded the surrender of Menon. On Macaulay's refusal to oblige him, the Achan joined hands with Velu Thampi in organizing a revolt against the English

## **KURICHIYA REVOLT-1812**

## E ▶ ENTRI



- ❖ The Kurichiya Revolt of 1812 is one of the most important and distinctive of resistance movements against British rule in Malabar. The Kurichias were the tribal folk who lived in the mountain ranges of Wayanad.
- ❖ They were leading their own way of life without outside disturbances for centuries.
- ❖ The advent of the colonialists made interventions into the tribal life of the high ranges of Wayanad and the rhythm of the tribal life was shattered.
- ❖ This interference forced the Kurichias to take arms against the oppressors and intruders. The Pazhassi revolt gave them inspiration to take arms against the British.
- ❖ The Kurichias and other tribal people under the leadership of Thalakkal Chanthu had fought against the British during the Pazhassi revolt. Their support was a great source to Pazhassi and it was with their support that Pazhassi could find out the remote areas of the jungles to hide.
- ❖ It was their guerilla wars with traditional weapons that Pazhassi could gain decisive victories. After the suppression of the Pazhassi revolts, Wayanad was kept under the strict surveillance of the Company army.
- ❖ The atrocities of the British in the Wayanad jungles were unbearable to the tribals. The British subjected them to utter miseries. The company official denied freedom to the tribal people and forcibly made them the as mere slaves of the British.
- ❖ The unscientific revenue reform introduced by the Malabar Collector, Thomas Warden in Wayanad was the major reason behind the outburst of the revolt. The revolt was started not against the increased rate of tax,

## ENTRI

but as a protest against the British Government's policy of collecting revenue from them in cash rather than in kind.

- ❖ As their money exchange system was unknown to them, they were not having cash to pay the tax, but the British Government strictly enforced them to pay the tax in cash which made them debtors of the Company.
- ❖ Their tax money became arrears and the Government authorities began to confiscate properties of the tribals, attacking their residences, looting their belongings and evicting them from their property. In front of the poor tribal nothing was there other than revolt.
- ❖ The Kurichiya Revolt began on 25th March 1812 under the leadership of their chief Rama Namby. The revolt was not a spontaneous one. After making elaborate preparations for a final fight with the British, they started the revolt. The Kurumbras also joined with their fellow beings in the fight.
- ❖ The low grade officials of the Company like the Nairs and Thiyyas had got information of the preparations of the tribals for an uprising against the British, but they didn't inform this to the Company due to the fact that basically they were also against the rule of the British.
- ❖ They were working in the revenue and police departments of the Company and were thoroughly dissatisfied by the treatment of the Company.
- ❖ It has been reported that in the later stage of the revolt, these native officials indirectly helped the Kurichias to make their struggle against the British a more popular one. Some of the Kurichias were working in the Kolakkarans of the Company and almost all of them resigned from their job prior to the revolt and joined with the rebels.
- ❖ The Kurichias attacked the Company forces with their traditional weapons like the bow and arrows in their own guerilla method. T.H. Baber has noted that the aim of the rebels was to expel the watts Thoppikkara (Round Heads or Europeans) from the country.



## ENTRRI

- ❖ The revolt spread to all parts of Wayanad. Their priests accelerated the rebellion by declaring it to be sanctified by the blessings of the tribal gods. In the course of the revolt it assumed the character of a mass upheaval.
- ❖ The revolt actually started on 25th March when the Company police tried to disperse a meeting of the tribals at Mallur. Within a short span of time the rebellion spread to the whole of Wayanad. The key passes came under their control. They attacked police stations and persecuted the English policemen.
- ❖ They cut down the reinforcements to the British troops in the valley. They besieged British military posts at Sulthan Bathery and Mananthavady. For a few days at least, the British flag ceased to fly in Wayanad. The British forces reacted very severely against the tribal group.
- ❖ They brought new forces from the coastal areas and from Mysore to Wayanad to suppress the Kurichiya revolt, but all these were in vain. Then the Sub-Collector of North Malabar, Baber requested the higher authorities for further military help.
- ❖ /The fresh Company forces with modern weapons moved to Wayanad, but were attacked by the Kurichias at the Kuttiadi Pass.
- ❖ Many of the Company soldiers were wounded and they had no other way except retreat. The army came from Mysore and established many new military centers from Sultan's Bathery to Panamaram. The British armed forces with the then modern weapons entered into the interior areas of the jungles could send many of the Kurichias into death.
- ❖ The British forces could suppress the Kurichiya revolt completely by May 1812. The Kurichiya revolt was one of the most important episodes in the history of resistance movements against the British. It was basically a peasant revolt and not a feudal uprising. With the Kurichia revolt a new episode has been opened in Indian history. It was the resistance of the ancient traditional culture against the modern imperialism in economic and political realms.

## AGRARIAN and POLITICAL UNREST OF 19TH CENTURY IN MALABAR



- The economic reforms introduced by the British in Malabar caused the agrarian problems in Malabar. The oppressed tenants and subtenants, majority of whom were Mappilas peasantry repeatedly in revolt against the existing system of exploitation from the very beginning of the 19th century onwards.
- The revolts, dacoits, thefts and social banditry, which occurred regularly, were essentially an expression of protests of the rural poor against oppression and exploitation. This oppressed peasantry mainly included the Mappilas holding land either directly from a Hindu Jenny or from an intermediately. The land was exclusively held by Hindus.
- Hence, these conflicts between Mappila peasantry and the Hindu land owning class were characterized as the results of communal tensions.
- These violent insurrections by the Mappilas broke out frequently in the 19th century and were a never ending source of horrified fascination for British officials. These British authorities termed these outbreaks as "Mappila Outrages". A series of violent disturbances occurred in Malabar against the British during the 19th century. These uprisings occurred

## ENTRI

throughout Malabar, but its main centers were in Ernad and Valluvanad Taluk of South Malabar. The main participants of these upsurges were the peasants, small-scale farmers, agrarian workers, petty traders and artisans of the Mappila community.

- The British officials, Innes and Evans had reported that twenty two agrarian revolts took place in Malabar during the period between 1836 and 1853. Truly these upsurges were against the existing systems in the society like evictions and the implementation of law and order through the Hindu adhikaris. These high officials also followed a repressive attitude towards the poor sections of the society.
- During the earlier times, the Mappilas had been staying in the port cities like Calicut as assistants and helpers of the Arab traders. When the Portuguese came and ousted the Arab traders from the Malabar coast,
- The Mappilas migrated to the hinterlands of South Malabar and started agriculture and petty trade. By the beginning of the 19th century, the population of the Mappilas increased and they were mainly centered on Wayanad, Valluvanad and Ponnani in south Malabar.
- During the Mysoreans occupation of Malabar, when most of the Hindu landlords fled to Travancore, the Mappilas for the possession of the agrarian lands left by the Hindus. The Mappila farmers cultivated these lands and paid land revenue to the Mysore Sultans. When Malabar came under the British, the Hindus who had earlier fled to Travancore came back to their native places and the British returned their lands to them.
- The Joint Commissioners made agreement with the Hindu landlords and entrusted them the right to collect the land revenue from the peasants. The Jannies extracted a high rate of rent from the Mappila peasants in South Malabar with the sanction and support of the Company authorities. According to the revenue settlement of 1803 95% of the total Jannies of South Malabar were Hindus.
- The majority of the Mappilas were either tenants of the Hindu Jannies or agricultural laborers. The Hindu Jannies exploited the Mappila peasants

## ENTRI

by extracting high rates of rent, which they never had to pay in the earlier time. This exploitation and the oppression by the Jenmies with the support of the authorities paved the way for the discontent among the Mappila peasants of South Malabar during the beginning of the nineteenth century.

- 
- The social, political and economic conditions of the Mappilas in the nineteenth century were very pathetic and they were in backward condition. As the British considered them as the helpers of the British, from the very beginning onwards they followed a hostile attitude towards the Mappilas,
- 
- The Joint Commissioners had assumed that all the Mappilas had helped the Mysoreans and the Mappilas had illegally occupied the landed property of the Hindus.
- The Hindu landlords exploited this attitude of the Company authorities and extracted the Mappila peasants as much as they could. The only way in front of the Mappilas was nothing other than revolt. The British Govt. was not ready to give even last grade jobs to the Mappilas in the Company administration. The Mappilas realized the fact that the Company authorities were completely against the interests of the Mappilas.
- The Muslim religious leaders like Sayyid Alavi Thangal, Sayyid Fazal Pookoya Thangal and Umer Quazi of Veliyamkode helped in kindling the hatred among the people against the British. Some of them even requested the people to conduct 'Jihad' (religious war) against the British.
- These Mappila priests were working with a deliberate purpose of clouding the vision of the Mappilas. EMS Nambooditipad commented about the action of the religious priests as:"it is in the interest of these

priests to turn the anti-Jemmy sentiments of peasants into the anti-Hindu sentiments of the Moplahs.”

- But it is not possible to accept this version completely due to the fact that the religious priests who influenced these riots were not preaching anti-Hindu sentiments, but in their preaching, they gave more emphasis to anti-British and anti-landlord sentiments.
- But unfortunately, some communal atrocities took place in the midst of all these. Sayyid Fazal Thangal of the Mamburam Thangal family severely criticized the government and the Jenmi system in Malabar. He is believed to have declared that “it was not a sin, but a merit to kill a Jenny who evicted a peasant from his land.
- “The British authorities considered the fatwas issued by Sayyid Fazal as a tool causing anti-British attitudes among the Mappilas. It is clear that the teaching of Mamburam Thangals were highly influential in the religious and cultural spectrum of Mappilas.
- The Mamburam Thangal, especially Fazal, tried their best to create aspirations for freedom and feelings of nationalism among the Mappilas. These traditional intellectuals collectively interpreted, elaborated and propagated the religious ideology and provided an intellectual tone to them by establishing a network of mosques for prayers and congregation. Their interventions in the social and religious life and their widely believed ability to do miracles, tended to reinforce the popular culture based on religious faith and superstition.
- It was stated that the religious legitimization of Mappila uprisings was drawn from this cultural context expressed by these traditional intellectuals. In this sense, the Ulemas and other religious leaders became a crucial element in the uprisings, but they did not constitute a formally organized religious, social or political movement as in the case of the Wahabi campaigns in North India in the 19th century
- . From the early part of the 19th century onwards, there were a large number of uprisings in the Southern Taluks of Eranad, Valluvanad and

## ENTRRI

Ponnani. Except the Mattannur Revolt of 1852, almost all the outrages took place in these Southern parts of Malabar.

- According to T L Strange, (the Commissioner appointed in 1852 to enquire into the Mappila revolts in Malabar) the first revolt of the Mappilas of Malabar took place at Pantallur in 1836. But there were riots prior to the Pantalur outrage. The revolts that took place at Pallippuram village of Valluvanad and Mannur village of Ernad in 1841 were basically against the exploitation of the Jennies. The participants of these revolts were Mappila peasants.
- In the 1841 Pallippuram uprising, the leader was a small tenant with a family of 17, who had been evicted from his land by a court decree. This had been the cause which led to many outbreaks.
- But no doubt that the element of religion was also there which provoked the Mappila tenants to conduct a collective action. But their main targets were not religious attacks, but British officials, Jennies and their dependents. The revolts that began at Tirurangadi and Pandikkad in 1843 were immediately suppressed by the authorities.
- These revolts were also directed against the Jennies and the British officials who had come for the help of the Jennies. The largest number of people's participation was in the Manjeri revolt of 1849.
- This revolt was under the leadership of Manjer Athan Moyan Kurikkal against the biggest landlord of South Malabar, the Raja of Nilambur. It was against the demand of the Raja that all his tenants including the Mappilas were to give the rent for one year as donation for the construction of a temple. This demand was resented by the Mappilas who constituted the majority of his tenants.
- This revolt was brutally suppressed by the British authorities and altogether about sixty five persons were killed in the revolt.
- The aim of the participants of the Kulathur rebellion of 1851 was the Jenmy brothers, Mankada Komu Menon and Ittunni Raman Menon, who were the

## ENTRRI

assistants of the Raja of Valluvanad. The rebels of the upsurge were the Mappilas peasants who worked under the Menons.

- The rebels killed the Menons and then went to the residence of the local money lender, Chengar Varier. After killing the money lender, they burnt all the records kept at his residence. Next they murdered another jenmy Kualthur Varier. By this time, the Company army reached on the spot and all the rebels died in fighting.
- The participants of the Mattannur revolt of 1852, the only one in North Malabar were also Mappilas and the Jenmy was a Hindu. The rebels altogether killed 83 persons in these upsurges.
- Among them forty three were Jammies, eleven Government officials and others were either the assistants (Karyasthan) or the supporters of the Jennies. All these riots were not against the Hindus as a community as characterized by the imperialists, but were against the Enemies and these Jimmies were Hindus.
- The rebels of Malappuram uprising of 1855 had traveled a distance of eighty miles to reach their destination, the residence of the Hindu Jenmy, but these rebels did not attack any of the Hindus or their houses on the way.
- While analyzing the fundamental causes of these riots, it is nothing other than economic inequality, poverty, the cruel exploitation of the Jennies, the unfavorable attitudes of the government officials and the blind faith in their religion.
- Almost all these assaults and murders were generally preceded by certain rituals. This made all activity the character of a Jihad from their perception, but actually they have to be considered as 'real social protests carried out in the form of religious acts.
- The preparation of an outbreak involved the intending participants donning the white clothes of martyrs, divorcing their wives, asking those they felt they had wronged for forgiveness and receiving the blessing of a Thangal(as Sayyids) for the success of their great undertaking.



## **ENTRI**

- The one good that may be said to have emerged from these meaningless sacrifices was the opening of some eyes to the injustice under which the Mappilas labored. The riots were mainly localized incidents. One or two persons, who were ready to die after killing their enemies, took up arms against their opponents.
- On the way they used to kill or convert persons who belong to non-Muslim community. They attacked not only their Jimmies, but also British offices, courts, railways etc. those stood as symbols of British authority.

