

**Trembling Raj and the Emerging Public: Mentalities,
Expressions and Politics in Malabar,
1900-47**

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Submitted to the University of Calicut
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Doctor of Philosophy
in
History

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Certificate

I certify that the thesis entitled **Trembling Raj and the Emerging Public: Mentalities, Expressions and Politics in Malabar, 1900-47** submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) by Rahul M Ramesh is the record of research work carried out by him under my guidance and supervision and this work has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma or other titles in this University or any other University or institution of higher learning.

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I also certify that the corrections/suggestions from adjudicators have been incorporated in the revised thesis.

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Date: 27- 03- 2025

Declaration

I hereby declare that the work presented in the thesis entitled **Trembling Raj and the Emerging Public: Mentalities, Expressions and Politics in Malabar, 1900-47** is based on the original work done by me under the guidance of Dr. Sivadasan P, Senior Professor, Department of History, University of Calicut and has not been included in any other thesis submitted previously for the award of any degree. The contents of the thesis are undergone plagiarism check using iThenticate software at C.H.M.K. Library, University of Calicut, and the similarity index found within the permissible limit. I also declare that the thesis is free from AI generated contents.

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Acknowledgment

I had as many limitations of being a PhD scholar as I joined for PhD immediately after completing my post-graduation. There was narrow idea regarding the methodology or corresponding references in my mind as the area I dealt with was a comparatively new and broader one. The background of my study is a long period. I had to deal with and refer books in multiple areas including modern world history, the Indian national movement, the national movement in Malabar, and cultural history. It made my bibliography a thick one. The data collection was a task requiring tireless efforts as the study has to rely on multiple sources. Even though the data collection was effectively carried out for three years, the outbreak of covid pandemic hindered the flow of data collection. The covid and post-covid mental distress was a challenge to me as a researcher.

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Abstract

The Strategy of a political struggle is based on the opponent's mentality and character. The Strategy of the Indian national movement was based on the nature of the colonial state in India. Gandhi realized the semi-hegemonic character of the colonial state and utilized it while devising the strategy of the Indian national movement. As the Gandhian strategy heavily relied on the energy of the masses, the mentality of the masses was also important. The Indian national movement was a psychological game, where the strategies of the colonial state and the national movement were the major players. The years between 1900-47 were an age of crisis for the British Empire. During this period, Britain faced many sharp political setbacks, which created a defeatist mentality for Britain. The dominance of Britain in world politics was lost. The Boer Wars began in 1899, a notable incident that deeply impacted Britain's defeatist mentality. The defeatist mentality of Britain became intense during the First World War Period and the interwar period and the Second World War period was its climax stage. The leaders of the Indian National Movement used the stages of Britain's crisis to form counterstrategies and to launch mass movements.

The history of mentalities has a particular relevance in the case of colonial Malabar. The politics of Malabar was closer to world politics during 1900-47. The presence of Mappilas, Communists, and the Malayalis living outside Keralam played a crucial role in this. Various mentalities and emotions created by the First World War and the rumours about Britain's defeat in the First World War became one of the main causes for the rebellion of 1921. The Malabar rebellion of 1921 became a major turning point in the defeatist mentality of Britain in India. After the rebellion, the British government was haunted by the memories of the rebellion, and attempts were made to hide the defeatist mentality before the people. The Courage and fearlessness expressed by the *satyagrahi volunteers* to suffer lathi charges and go to jail became the main factor behind the success of The Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar. During 1934-47, with the rise of the leftists into prominence and the politics of Malabar came closer to international politics. The formation of Congress ministries in provinces in 1937 was a notable incident in the erosion of colonial power in India. The bureaucrats changed their loyalty and the people started to believe that 'freedom is near.' People began to treat Congress leaders as their future rulers. During the Second World War, the conquest of Singapore and Burma by Japan were notable events. Through the large number of Malayali people living in South East Asia, Jap fear spread to the villages of Malabar. Factors such as inflation, famine, and unemployment during the Second World War and the post-war period induced the masses in Malabar to become active participants in the popular movements during 1946-47, which became the 'final assault' on the British power in India.

Keywords: mentality, ideology, expressions, crowd, nationalism.

സംഗ്രഹം

ഇരുപതാം നൂറ്റാണ്ടിന്റെ ആദ്യപകുതിയിൽ ഫ്രാൻസിലെ അനാൽസ് ചരിത്ര കാരന്മാരാണ് വ്യക്തികളുടെയും സമൂഹങ്ങളുടെയും മനോഗതികളുടെ അടിസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ ചരിത്രത്തെ വായിക്കാനുള്ള ശ്രമങ്ങൾ തുടങ്ങുന്നത്. ഏതൊരു രാഷ്ട്രീയ സമരത്തിന്റെയും പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രവും അത് സ്വീകരിക്കുന്ന സമരരീതികളും പ്രതിയോഗിയുടെ സ്വഭാവത്തെയും മാനസികാവസ്ഥകളേയും അടിസ്ഥാനപ്പെടുത്തിയുള്ളതായിരിക്കും. ഇന്ത്യയിലെ കൊളോണിയൽ ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് ഭരണകൂടത്തിന്റെ സ്വഭാവവും ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് സാമ്രാജ്യത്തിന്റെ മനോഗതികളും ഇന്ത്യൻ ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളെയും സമരരീതികളെയും നിർണ്ണയിച്ച പ്രധാന ഘടകമായിരുന്നു. ബഹുജനങ്ങളുടെ മനോഗതികൾക്കനുസൃതമായാണ് ഗാന്ധി ഇന്ത്യൻദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രങ്ങളെയും സമരരീതികളും രൂപപ്പെടുത്തിയത്. 1900 മുതൽ 1947 വരെയുള്ള കാലഘട്ടം ബ്രിട്ടൻ ലോകരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിൽ ധാരാളം തിരിച്ചടികൾ നേരിടുകയും ലോകരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിൽ ബ്രിട്ടനുണ്ടായിരുന്ന ആധിപത്യം നഷ്ടപ്പെടുകയും ചെയ്ത ഘട്ടമാണ്. ഈ കാലഘട്ടത്തിൽ ബ്രിട്ടനെ കടുത്ത പരാജിത ബോധം വേട്ടയാടി. ഒന്നാം ലോകമഹായുദ്ധം, 1929 ലെ സാമ്പത്തിക മാന്ദ്യം, രണ്ടാം ലോകമഹായുദ്ധം എന്നിവയൊക്കെ ബ്രിട്ടന്റെ പരാജിത ബോധം പാരമ്യത്തിലെത്തിയ ഘട്ടങ്ങളാണ്. ബ്രിട്ടന്റെ പ്രതിസന്ധി ഘട്ടങ്ങളെ ബഹുജനസമരങ്ങൾ സംഘടിപ്പിക്കാനും ഇന്ത്യയുടെ ആവശ്യങ്ങൾ ശക്തമായി ഉന്നയിക്കാനുമുള്ള അവസരങ്ങളായി ഇന്ത്യൻ ദേശീയ പ്രസ്ഥാനം ഉപയോഗപ്പെടുത്തിയിരുന്നു. ബഹുജനങ്ങളുടെ നിർഭയത്വവും പ്രതീക്ഷകളുമായിരുന്നു ഇന്ത്യൻ ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ അടിത്തറ.

ബ്രിട്ടന്റെ പരാജിതബോധം 1900-47 കാലത്തെ മലബാറിന്റെ രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിലും പ്രതിഫലിച്ചു. ബ്രിട്ടൻ രാഷ്ട്രീയമായും സാമ്പത്തികമായും തകർന്നിരിക്കുന്നു എന്ന മാപ്പിളമാരുടെ ഇടയിൽ ശക്തമായി ഉണ്ടായിരുന്ന ധാരണ 1921 ലെ മലബാർ കലാപത്തിന്റെ പ്രധാന കാരണങ്ങളിലൊന്നായിരുന്നു. ഇന്ത്യക്ക് പുറത്ത് താമസിക്കുന്ന മലയാളികളും സാർവ്വദേശീയതയിൽ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്ന കമ്മ്യൂണിസ്റ്റുകാരും ലോകരാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിലെ മാറ്റങ്ങളുമായി മലബാറിലെ രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തെ ചേർത്തു നിർത്തി. ബ്രിട്ടന്റെ തീവ്രമായ പരാജിതബോധത്തിന്റെ ഘട്ടങ്ങൾ മലബാറിലെ രാഷ്ട്രീയത്തിൽ ഉണർവിന്റെ ഘട്ടങ്ങളായി. മലബാറിലെ ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിൽ 1920 മുതൽ പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെട്ട വലിയ ആശങ്കുത്കങ്ങൾ ദേശീയപ്രസ്ഥാനത്തിന്റെ കരുത്തിന്റെ പ്രതീകമായി. നിസ്സഹകരണ സമരം, നിയമലംഘന സമരം, ഇന്ത്യയിലെ ബ്രിട്ടീഷ് ഭരണകൂടത്തിനേറ്റ അവസാനത്തെ ആഘാതമായ 1945-47 ലെ ബഹുജനസമരങ്ങൾ എന്നിവയിലൊക്കെ മലബാറിലെ ജനങ്ങൾ സജീവ പങ്കാളികളായി.

പദസൂചി: മനോഗതി, പ്രത്യയശാസ്ത്രം, ആവിഷ്കാരം, ആശങ്കുത്കം, ദേശീയത

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The history of the Indian National Movement is a deeply researched and well explored area in Indian history. Many prominent Indian historians including Bipan Chandra, Sumit Sarkar, and Ranajit Guha have deeply inquired and written elaborately on multiple aspects with regard to this area. The Indian National Movement has been interpreted in different perspectives including the subaltern approach, which emerged in the last decades of the 20th century. The history of mentalities is a notable approach in history writing introduced by the Annales historians of France during the 20th century. The Indian National Movement is not yet read in this perspective. Thus, this is an attempt to uncover an undone approach.

Political struggle is similar to war. To explain the strategies of a political struggle, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky, and Antonio Gramsci have used military metaphors in their writings.¹ An analysis of the analogy between political struggle and military strategy is there in Antonio Gramsci's *Prison Note Books*. Gramsci's attempt to explain different political strategies such as the 'war of position' and 'war of manoeuvre' is part of this analysis.² M K Gandhi regarded the *satyagraha* against the British as a *dharmayudh* and the use of metaphors like battle, battlefield, and warrior was common in Gandhi's writings.³ Strategy and tactics are important in a political struggle like in a war. Furthermore, as in a war, the character, mentality, strategy, and strength of the opponent are the main factors deciding the strategy and tactics of a political struggle.

For Gramsci, the leaders of a political struggle should have a clear understanding of the nature of the state they have to counter. An error in this can be a reason for the

¹ Daniel Eagan, 'Rethinking War of Manoeuvre/War of Position: Gramsci and the Military Metaphor', *Critical Sociology*, Vol. XL, no.4, 2013.

² Alvaro Bianchi, *Gramsci's Laboratory: Philosophy, History and Politics*, Translated by Sean Purdy, London, 2019, pp. 176-224. In Gramsci's opinion, political struggle is more complex than war.

³ Ajay Sakaria, 'Living by Dying: Gandhi, Satyagraha, and the Warrior', in Anand Pandian and Daud Ali(eds.), *Ethical Life in South Asia*, New Delhi, 2010, pp. 211-231.

failure of a political struggle.⁴ Bhagwan Josh has argued that the nature of the colonial state in India was semi-hegemonic.⁵ By stating that the character of the colonial state was non-hegemonic, Ranajit Guha has pointed out that the character of the colonial state was a 'dominance without hegemony.'⁶ In his study about the nature and strategy of the Indian National Movement, Bipan Chandra argues that the Gandhian strategy of struggle was devised with a clear understanding of the nature of the colonial state in India. Bipan Chandra adds that Gandhi realized that the character of the colonial state in India was neither authoritarian nor dictatorial but semi-hegemonic. He makes his argument clear and says:

The nationalist strategy was based on a particular understanding of the specific nature and character of British rule and the colonial state and its policies. But it was also realized that the colonial state was semi-hegemonic or semi-authoritarian in character. It was not like Hitler's Germany, or Tsarist Russia, or Chaing Kai-Shek's China, or Batista's Cuba, or Portuguese Mozambique, Samozas Nicaragua, or even French Algeria or Vietnam. its character should be best described as legal authoritarianism.⁷

Apart from Bipan Chandra, Shashi Joshi has similar arguments. India's freedom struggle during the Gandhian phase was a game where the strategy of the colonial state and Gandhi's counter-strategy were the major players. In that game, the colonial state was forced to respond to Gandhi's moves. Shashi Joshi attempts to explain the factors that made a violent mass struggle or armed insurrection impossible in India. In Shashi Joshi's view, the Communists came to the conclusion that an armed insurrection was not possible in Indian conditions as they knew that the colonial state was prepared and militarily capable of crushing any violent challenge to its authority. The colonial state also had a clear assessment of the nature of the Indian national movement. For instance, when many of Gandhi's critics such as the Communists dismissed the Gandhian constructive programmes as insignificant, the colonial state was fully aware and conscious of the significance of the constructive programmes in

⁴ Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Note Books*, Edited and Translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, Delhi, 2015, p. 239.

⁵ Bhagwan Josh, *Struggle for Hegemony India, 1920-47: The Colonial State, the Left and the National Movement*, Vol. II, 1934-41, New Delhi, 1992, p. 43.

⁶ Ranajit Guha, *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*, Cambridge, 1997, p. xii.

⁷ Bipan Chandra, *Indian National Movement: The Long-Term Dynamics*, New Delhi, 2013, p. 17.

the Gandhian strategy. Based on the assessment that the constructive programmes would help the Congress to spread to the villages and politically arouse the masses, the colonial state took the constructive programme as a serious political threat. The crux of Bipan Chandra's and Shashi Joshi's argument is that the strategy and nature of the National movement were based on the nature of the colonial state.⁸

Bipan Chandra describes the strategy of the Gandhi-led National Movement as P-C-P (Pressure-Compromise-Pressure) or S-T-S (Struggle-Truce-Struggle). For Bipan Chandra, this strategy has a close resemblance with the 'war of position,' a strategy in political struggle put forward by Antonio Gramsci.⁹ Gramsci made clear that the mindset of the opponent is the deciding factor in the selection between the 'war of position' and 'war of manoeuvre' as the strategy of a political struggle.¹⁰

The mentality of the masses in a political struggle is an equally important factor in deciding the strategy of a political struggle. In Bipan Chandra's view, the Gandhian strategy heavily relied upon the energy and creativity of the masses and cadres of the National Movement.¹¹ Gramsci had an opinion that a political struggle, which adopts the 'war of position' as its strategy demands 'enormous sacrifices by infinite masses.'¹² Gandhi launched and called off his mass movements according to the mood of the masses. Thus, the ups and downs in the momentum of the National Movement were decided by the mentality of the masses. One of the strong objectives of the National Movement during the Gandhian phase was to create fearlessness, courage, and the capacity to fight and make sacrifices and break the conception of the invincibility of British rule.¹³ Gandhi frequently reminded the people about the importance of being fearless. He wrote: "I have been collecting the description of *swaraj*. One of these

⁸ Shashi Joshi, *Struggle for Hegemony India, 1920-47: The Colonial State, the Left, and the National Movement*, Vol. I, 1920-34, New Delhi, 1992, pp. 1-36.

⁹ Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*

¹⁰ Antonio Gramsci, *op. cit.* However, Gramsci had an opinion that 'India's political struggle against the English knows three forms of war: war of movement, war of position, and underground warfare. Gandhi's passive resistance is a 'war of position', which at certain moments becomes a 'war of movement', and at others underground warfare.' For more details see Christine Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci and the State*, Translated by David Fernbach, London, 1980.

¹¹ Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*

¹² Antonio Gramsci, *op. cit.* p. 238.

¹³ Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

would be: *swaraj* is the abandonment of the fear of death".¹⁴ Thus, in short, the history of India's freedom struggle is also the description of the mentalities of the colonial state and the counter-mentalities of the National Movement and the masses.

In another sense, by defining the nature of the colonial state, Bhagwan Josh, Bipan Chandra, and Shashi Joshi are explaining the mentality of the colonial state. However, there is one important aspect they have left untouched. They did not attempt to describe the mentalities of the British Empire in the 20th century. The Gandhian nationalism was born in the second decade of the 20th century. Bipan Chandra and his students failed to explain the nature of the Gandhi-led- National Movement by linking it with the nature of the British Empire in the 20th century, the position and role of Britain in international politics, and the changes in world politics. The years between 1900 and 1947 were a period of crisis for the British Empire. During this period, Britain faced several sharp and serious political and economic setbacks, which created a 'defeatist mentality' for the British Empire. The defeatist mentality of the British Empire had a profound impact on Indian politics.

1.2. The Research Problem

In India's freedom struggle, the mentality of the colonial state and the counter-strategy of the Indian National Movement were the key players. The defeatist mentality of Britain during 1900-47 was one of the main factors that decided the strategy of the National Movement. In other words, Britain's fear and the fearlessness of the masses were the prominent feelings during India's freedom struggle. The words emotions and mentalities are used interchangeably. Emotions denote feelings like love, friendship, and anger and mentalities symbolize the feelings such as nationalism, internationalism, anti-colonial attitude, and working-class consciousness. Mentalities are more close to ideologies. Simply, emotions are more 'I feel' and mentalities 'I think'. 'Mentalities is a broad concept, which also incorporates emotions. Mentalities are collective or the feelings of a group of people or classes. Emotions are individual-centered. For instance, the meaning and consequences of the fear of a group of people is different from the fear of a single individual. The anger of a crowd is more

¹⁴ *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XXI (August-December 1921), Ahmedabad, 1966, p. 102.

powerful than the anger of a person. Ideologies are also mentalities. For instance, nationalism and internationalism are not only ideologies but also mentalities. The meaning of a mentality is communicated in the form of its expression. A Mentality or emotion can be expressed as an idea, an action, or as both.

1.3. Background of the Study

Political and economic crises were not new for the British Empire. Even before the 20th century, in the 18th and 19th centuries, the British Empire had faced and successfully survived several grave crises.¹⁵ However, the crisis of Britain between 1900 and 1947 ended in the decline of the British Empire. The decline of the British Empire had three phases: (1) The first phase was from the end of the 19th century to 1914. During this period, Britain was a superpower in world politics but it began to lose its hegemony in world politics and economy. A few other powers emerged in world politics as an alternative to Britain; (2) The period between the beginning of the First World War in 1914 and the end of the inter-war period in 1939. During this period, Britain completely lost its dominance in world politics. The British Empire could not survive the unprecedented economic and political crisis that began during the World War and regain its dominance in international politics; The third phase was the years of the Second World War from 1939 to 1945. This period saw the ultimate decline of the British Empire.

Eric Hobsbawm and A. J. P. Taylor give many facts about the changing role of Britain in late 19th-century world politics. For Hobsbawm, there were five major powers in Europe in the mid-19th century: Britain, Russia, France, Austria, and Prussia. Though there were a few other major powers in world politics during 1848-75, the period Hobsbawm termed as the 'Age of Capital', Britain remained in a hegemonic position because of its wealth and navy. Hobsbawm mentions the growth of Japan and the U. S. A. as two major powers as an important change during this period. Japan had a powerful navy capable of challenging Britain. The growth of the U. S. A. was at the cost of Britain. The mass migration of people from Britain to America was the reason

¹⁵ There is a study by C. A. Bayly focusing on the growth of the British Empire during the years between 1780 and 1830. In this study, Bayly Shows how Britain had successfully survived a major political crisis, which they faced during the 1770s and 1780s. C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830*, New York, 1989.

behind the sudden rise and growth of America.¹⁶ In Hobsbawm's opinion, the end of a mono-centric economy, of which Britain was the focal was during 1875-1914, which he calls the 'Age of Empire.' By pointing out a few factors such as the fall in the exports from Asia, Africa, and Latin America to Britain, Hobsbawm commented that 'the Age of Empire was no longer mono-centric.'¹⁷ During the late 19th century, Britain feared the penetration of German and American capital into the British economy. Hobsbawm writes: 'Plainly the economic world is no longer, as it had been in the mid-19th century, a solar system revolving around a single star; Great Britain.'¹⁸ Britain lost its role as the 'workshop of the world' in this period. By the late 19th century, a number of competing industrial economies confronting each other emerged on the international scene.¹⁹

For A. J. P. Taylor, no power had a hegemony in the politics of Europe between 1848 and 1918. By the end of the 19th century, by overtaking France, Germany became the 'potential conqueror of Europe.' By the same period, Germany emerged as a powerful opponent for Britain. Though Britain's navy was stronger than Germany's, the German army was capable of challenging Britain. During the late 19th century, as a result of the rise of nationalism, the people of Europe began to think in terms of their numbers. A big population became a source of great psychological strength for the people of a nation. Among the countries of Europe, Russia had the largest population and the population of Britain was smaller than Russia and Germany.²⁰

The beginning of the 20th century for Britain was with the Boer War, in which Britain suffered a humiliating setback. In the initial phase of the Boer War, which was in December 1899, Britain had several serious and costly defeats. As the Boers excelled in guerilla warfare, the British were unprepared to counter them. The Boers sieged many key British strongholds such as Kimberley, Ladysmith, and Mafeking in the war. Though

¹⁶ E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital: 1848-1875*, Calcutta, 1992 (1975).

¹⁷ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914*, New Delhi, 1995(1987), p. 51.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 317.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* According to Hobsbawm, Britain became the 'workshop of the world' 'during the period, which Hobsbawm describes as the 'Age of Revolution.' See E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution, 1789-1848*, London, 1975 (1962).

²⁰ A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848-1918*, Oxford, 1957 (1954), pp. xiv-xxxvi.

Britain won the Boer War in the end, the reverses in the war were a terrible blow to the notion of the invincibility of the British Empire.²¹

The beginning of the mature stage of the defeatist mentality of Britain was during the First World War. Even before the years of the First World War, Britain had lost its position as the major economic power in the world. The U. S. A. overtook Britain as the leading economy in the world. By 1913, U. S. A. had become the largest economy in the world. The First World War made the U. S. A. the world's major creditor. The British had lost about a quarter of their global investments during this period. America became an 'international leader' in the war period.²² Major European powers such as France and Britain heavily depended on the U. S. A. for munitions, food, tools, and raw materials.²³ Hobsbawm lists six great powers of Europe (Britain, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Italy), and U. S. A., and Japan as the major powers in world politics during the beginning of the First World War.²⁴ As the first-ever global war and a war involving all the major powers of Europe, the First World War became the first major test of the military strength of the major European powers. Thus, the First World War became an occasion, where all the major powers were forced to prove their military strength. During the years before the beginning of the First World War, German movements in the sea endangered British interests in India. The German fleet was used as an instrument to blackmail Britain.²⁵ There was a common feeling after the end of the First World War that if the war had been confined to Europe Germany would have won the war and the result of the war was changed by the entry of the U. S. A. A. J. P. Taylor has such an argument.²⁶

²¹ R. K. Webb, *Modern England: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, London, 1969, p. 441.

²² Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991*, New Delhi, 1995 (1994), p. 97. About this work, Hobsbawm says: "for anyone of my age group who lived through or most of the short the twentieth century, this is inevitably an autobiographical endeavour. We are talking about, amplifying (and correcting) our memories."

²³ Philipp Bell, 'The Great War and Its Impact', in Paul Hayes(ed.), *Themes in Modern European History: 1890-1945*, Oxon, 1992, p. 136.

²⁴ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, p. 22.

²⁵ E. L. Woodward, *History of England*, London, 1962 (1947), pp. 180-181.

²⁶ A. J. P Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. xx.

The World War shattered Britain economically and politically. By comparing the pre-war and post-war conditions A. J. P. Taylor depicts the changes in social life in Britain after the war:

All this was changed by the impact of the Great War. The masses of the people became, for the first-time active citizens. Their lives were shaped by orders from above; they were required to serve the state instead of pursuing exclusively their affairs. Five million men entered the armed forces, many of them (though a minority) under compulsion. The Englishman's food was limited, and its quality changed, by the government's order. His freedom of movement was restricted; his conditions of work were prescribed. Some industries were reduced or closed; others were artificially fostered. The publication of the news was fettered. Street lights were dimmed. The freedom of drinking was tampered with; licensed hours were cut down, and the beer was watered by order. The very time on the clock was changed.²⁷

The prices shot up by a whopping in Britain during the war period. The burden of inflation fell more heavily on the poor. There was a feeling among the people that Britain's huge war loan would be a burden for future generations.²⁸ The First World War was the most terrible and traumatic experience in British memory. The death tolls and casualties in the war were heavier for Britain. One-quarter of the Oxford and Cambridge students below the age of 25, who served in the British Army during the First World War were killed in the war. In other words, the British 'lost a generation' in the war²⁹

The period between 1914 and 1939 was an age dominated by emotions. War is an occasion that amplifies nationalist and patriotic feelings. In his memoirs, M. N. Roy, a prominent Indian Communist leader recounts an experience as a notable instance of this. M. N. Roy was living in Mexico during the First World War. While in Mexico, Roy had stayed in the house of a German diplomat as his guest. The wife of the diplomat was an American lady. America and Germany were rivals in the First World War. Thus, the Germans suspected that the wife of the diplomat was an American spy.³⁰ Nationalism became an extremely strong feeling in Europe during the war and inter-war years. Eric Hobsbawm argues that nationalism emerged as a stronger feeling in

²⁷ A. J. P Taylor, *English Social History, 1914-1945*, Oxford, 2001 (1965), p. 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

²⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, p. 26.

³⁰ M. N. Roy, *M. N. Roy's Memoirs*. New Delhi, 1964 (1960), pp. 84-85.

Europe as a response against the very least nationalist or non-nationalist socialist movements.³¹ Nationalism and internationalism are rival ideologies. The First World War ended with the victory of nationalism over internationalism.³² Nationalism and internationalism are not only ideologies but also mentalities. Thus, in other words, nationalism and internationalism are rival mentalities. The Russian Revolution and the growth of Soviet Russia made the conflict between nationalism and internationalism intense. In a short work on Marxism and nationalism written in 1912-13, Joseph Stalin stated that 'to resist nationalism by countering it with the tried weapon of internationalism is the high mission of Social Democracy.'³³ Fascism and Nazism were ideologies based deeply on emotions. Notably, Daniella Sarnoff has argued that 'Fascism meant an appeal to emotion over reason.'³⁴

Britain couldn't resist the left wave that flew across the world during the war and inter-war years. The Labor Party's ascendancy in British politics resulted from this. Unemployment and economic problems during the war were the factors that helped the trade union movement and the Labour Party to grow in Britain. This change was also reflected in Britain's attitude to India. There was always an 'Indian lobby' in the Labour Party.³⁵ The Russian Revolution was a 'tremendous inspiration' for the Labour Party.³⁶

Britain, which was economically devastated and politically trembled by the war could not overcome this crisis in the inter-war period. The inter-war years were an age of disillusionment and despair for Britain. After the war, Britain's 40 percent of merchant ships had been sunk. Britain lost a major portion of its overseas investments and many of its traditional markets after the war. Other countries replaced Britain in many of its

³¹ E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations, and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, 2000(1990), pp. 122-123.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ JV Stalin, *Marxism & the Question of Nationalities*, New Delhi, 2011, p. 4. To learn more about the aspects of the ideological conflict between nationalism and working-class internationalism, see Eric Hobsbawm, *On Nationalism*, Edited by Donald Sassoon, London, 2021.

³⁴ Daniella Sarnoff, 'Mass Politics in the Age of Anxiety: Interwar Fascism and the Italian Case', in Vandana Joshi(ed.), *Social Movements and Cultural Currents: 1789-1945*, New Delhi, 2010, p. 144.

³⁵ Partha Sarathi Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement: 1914-1964*, London, 1975.

³⁶ Charles Loch Mowat, *Britain Between the Wars, 1918-1940*, London, 1962 (1955), p. 17.

former stronghold areas like Japan in the Far East and the U. S. A in Latin America.³⁷ The most serious issue faced by Britain during the inter-war period was the severe economic crisis. The huge war debt to the United States haunted Britain both politically and economically. Britain signed an agreement in 1922 promising that the war debt would be paid by sixty-two annual payments together with interest. Britain's adverse trade balance increased year by year in the interwar era.³⁸ In the post-war years, Britain began to import more and its exports had been falling. The prices in Britain were relatively higher than in many other countries in the world. Britain's share in world shipping declined during this period.³⁹ Massive unemployment due to the demobilization after the war became an extremely grave issue for Britain in the inter-war period. Europe's share in the world trade declined in the inter-war years but Japan and U. S. A. increased their shares. The General Strike in Britain in 1926 became a notable incident in the 1920s.⁴⁰ The bleeding economy of Britain was further hurt by the Great Depression in 1929. Due to the pressure of the economic depression, Britain was forced to abandon the gold standard in 1931-32. Britain also abandoned Free Trade in 1931, which had been the focal of British political identity since the 1840s.⁴¹

During the years of the Great Slump, the Soviet Union became the centre of attraction of the world. When the economy of the major countries was crushed by the Great Slump and their economic growth stagnated during the years of the slump, the Soviet economy was industrializing and growing rapidly by the Five-Year plans.⁴² During the inter-war years, the Socialist ideology represented by Soviet Russia had emerged as a powerful alternative to capitalism.⁴³ The world started to gravitate towards Soviet

³⁷ R. K. Webb, *op. cit.*, pp. 499 & 517.

³⁸ E. H. Carr, *International Relations Between the World Wars*, New York, 1966, pp. 86 & 144. E. H. Carr regarded the period between 1919 and 1939 as the 'years of crisis.' Carr wrote in 1941: "Periods of crisis have been common in history. The characteristic feature of the present crisis, seen in the light of the twenty years between 1919 and 1939 has been the abrupt descent from the visionary hopes of the first post-war decade to the grim despair of the second, from a Utopia which took little account of reality to a reality from which every element of Utopia seems rigorously excluded". Edward Hallet Carr, *'Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, London, 1941, p. 287.

³⁹ R. K. Webb, *op. cit.*, p. 518.

⁴⁰ Charles Loch Mowat, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-270.

⁴¹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes*, p. 95.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

Russia. As Socialism was an ideology for 'all humanity and not for any particular section of it', internationalism became an inevitable element of Socialism.⁴⁴

During the 1930s, Britain was not a superpower in international politics. In the 1930s, Soviet Russia and Germany were regarded as the powers capable of deciding the fate of the world. Britain feared these powers. According to a review conducted by the Chief of Staff of Britain in 1937, Germany, Japan, and Italy were the major enemies of Britain, and the British armed forces were inadequate to fight these powers.⁴⁵ During the mid-1930s, Britain feared Germany and as pointed out by A. J. P. Taylor, due to this fear Britain tended to exaggerate the military strength of Germany.⁴⁶ The alliance of Germany, Italy, and Japan, which was formed in 1937 became a crucial event in world history.⁴⁷ Britain was not a key player in the Second World War. When Britain became helpless before the rapid advances of Germany and Japan in the war, the depth of the crisis of the British Empire was revealed to the world. The result of the world war was decided by Soviet Russia and America. The defeatist mentality of Britain reached its peak during the Second World War. The war proved that Britain would have no role to play in the future of post-war world politics.

It was evident that the bargaining capacity of the Indian National Movement had been increasing and the attitude of the colonial British Government changing between 1900 and 1947. The National Movement had utilized the crises of the British Empire. The mass agitations and upsurges from Indians always compelled the British to change their policy in India. As argued in a study by S. Gopal, the revolt of 1857 forced the British to make a policy for India. The revolt of 1857 scared Britain. Gopal mentions several instances of the circulation of alarmist rumours about the outbreak of another 1857 revolt in the 1860s. The mass agitational phase of the National Movement between 1905 and 1910 forced Britain to change its policy again.⁴⁸ Thus, the Indian response and resistance played a crucial role in deciding the British policy in India.

⁴⁴ Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting Times: A Twentieth Century Life*, London, 2002, p. 137.

⁴⁵ Philip Bell, 'Hitler's War?': The Origins of the Second World War', in Paul Hayes (ed.), *Themes in Modern European History: 1890-1945*, pp. 235-236.

⁴⁶ A. J. P. Taylor, *English Social History*, p. 410.

⁴⁷ E. H. Carr, *International Relations Between the World Wars*, p. 264.

⁴⁸ S. Gopal, *British Policy in India, 1858-1905*, London, 1965.

Marxists Such as M. N. Roy, R. P. Dutt, and E. M. S. Namboodiripad have explained the different phases of the crisis of the British Empire and the Indian responses towards it. In his famous pamphlet published in 1916, Lenin described some aspects of the crisis of the British Empire in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Lenin mentioned the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) as a notable incident. He described the growth of Germany and the U. S. A. as major economic powers through the concentration of production and workers. The emergence of Japan as a new imperialist power was also noticed by Lenin. Lenin wrote that the monopoly of Britain as the 'workshop of the world' came to an end in the last quarter of the 19th century. He added that other countries, which protected themselves by tariffs had developed as independent capitalist states. Lenin further noticed that at the beginning of the 20th century, Germany had an 'overwhelming superiority 'over England in the iron and coal industries.⁴⁹

While explaining the crisis of the British Empire and the growth of the Indian National Movement, one of the main points highlighted by the Marxists was the development of Indian industries and the emergence of a prominent Indian capitalist class during the late 19th century and early 20th century. The Indian capitalist class took the stages of Britain's crisis as an opportunity to bargain and gain concessions. For this, they supported the British Empire, whenever it faced crisis. ' Britain's difficulty is India's opportunity was their line. The Indian capitalist class had realized the crisis of the British Empire and bargained by using it. This was the background of the Swadeshi Movement, which had a strategy based on the boycott of foreign goods and the protection of the Swadeshi industries. This was also the material background of the Moderates-Extremists conflict in Congress. The interests of the Indian capitalist class and the British capitalist interests came into conflict with each other.⁵⁰ M. N. Roy pointed out all these in 1922. A capitalist class grew in India in the last years of the 19th century. For Roy, the economic boycott was their weapon against British capitalism. The Minto Morley Reforms and the decision to revoke the partition of

⁴⁹ V. I. Lenin, *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, A Popular Outline, London, 1988.

⁵⁰ E M S, *Indian Swathanthrya Samara Charithram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2022.

Bengal were the major political victories of the Swadeshi Movement.⁵¹ The Boer War and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05 influenced the mass agitations in 1905-10.

R. P. Dutt has identified 'Three Great Waves of Struggle' in India's freedom struggle: From 1905-10, 1919-22, and 1930-34. In 1940, the year in which his work *India To-Day* was published, Dutt wrote that 'a fourth wave is preparing'. Dutt Connected the waves of struggle with the changes in international politics. He placed the first wave in the background of the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05 and the first revolution in Russia in 1905, the second wave and the third wave in the background of the First World War and the Great Depression respectively. For Dutt, the backdrop of the fourth wave, which was preparing was the Second World War.⁵² Later, D. A. Low gave an interpretation in the same pattern. Low put forward an argument by linking the three agitational phases of the freedom struggle with the three different stages of the economic crisis. He has argued that the agitational phase of 1920-22 was linked with the price rise during the First World War, the agitational phase in 1930-32 with the Great Depression, and the agitational phase in 1942 with the severe economic crisis during the Second World War.⁵³

The victory of Japan over Russia in 1904 began to shatter the 'myth of the invincibility of the West 'in the eyes of the people of Asia.⁵⁴ After the Russo-Japanese War a pro-Jap feeling grew in India, especially in Bengal, the hub of nationalist agitations. Muzaffar Ahmad, a notable Communist leader from Bengal recounts this in his memoirs. The victory of Japan in the Russo-Japanese War attracted the attention, especially of the upper and middle classes of India. Messengers from Japan visited India as cultural ambassadors to spread their ideas among the educated people of India. During the Swadeshi Movement, Japanese goods were also treated as swadeshi and there was a vigorous campaign to promote the use of Japanese matches with the elephant trademark.⁵⁵ The British had realized the threat from the Japanese goods. In

⁵¹ M. N. Roy, *India in Transtion*, Bomaby, 1971, pp. 27-29. M. N. Roy and E. M. S. Namboodiripad regarded the Indian National Movement as a movement of the Indian bourgeoisie.

⁵² R. Palme Dutt, *India-Today*, London, 1940.

⁵³ D. A. Low, ' Introduction: The Climatic years, 1917-47', in D. A. Low (ed.), *The Congress and the Raj: Facets of Indian Struggle (1917-47)*, London, 1977, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁴ R. Palme Dutt, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

⁵⁵ Muzaffar Ahmad, *Myself and the Communist Party of India, 1920-29*, Calcutta, 1970, p. 10.

the early years of the First World War, when Japan began to grab a considerable part of the Indian market, the British Government countered this by giving more concessions to Indian capitalists.⁵⁶

The First World War completely shattered 'the myth of the invincible Europeans. 'Even before the World War began in 1914, the revolutionary terrorists in India started to think that a world war would begin before 1920, which would be used as an opportunity to win freedom.⁵⁷ The revolutionary terrorists strongly believed that Germany would help them to fight Britain. For instance, in August 1914, M. N. Roy, who was then a revolutionary terrorist met the German Consul General in Calcutta by expecting his help to fight the British.⁵⁸ There was a pro-German feeling among many of the people in India during the First World War. A few incidents related to this are recollected by Nirad C. Chaudhari in his famous autobiography. Two types of mentalities were strong among the people of Calcutta during the First World War. When a section of the people wished for the victory of Germany in the war another section wanted the victory of Britain. Often, the news of the Allied reverses in the war created panic among the pro-British section. The poor performance of the British navy in the war disturbed the pro-British Indians.⁵⁹ During the war, a section of the Indian middle class got excited by German victories and expected the defeat of Britain in the war.⁶⁰ M. N. Roy wrote: "A whisper ran through the length and breadth of the country that the British power was crumbling. Even in the far-off villages, this whisper raised an echo. There was a period of suspension and tension."⁶¹ For Roy, the war became an opportunity for the Indian bourgeoisie to bargain and demand concessions. Indian bourgeoisie asked for concessions in return for their support for Britain in the war.⁶² The Indian soldiers, who fought in Europe in the war, by their real experience, began to feel that the condition of even the poorest in Europe was better than theirs. Through the demobilized soldiers, the disturbing and discontented elements scattered

⁵⁶ M. N. Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

⁵⁷ N. Damodaran, M. N. Roy; *Swathanthranweshiyaya Viplavakari*, Kottayam, 2019 (1987), p. 46.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁵⁹ Nirad C. Chaudhari, *Autobiography of an Unknown Indian*, Bombay, 2018 (1964), pp. 30-44.

⁶⁰ M. N. Roy, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 232.

all over India. The discontent during the war was not limited to the middle class. It spread to the villages.⁶³

In 1915, the military strength of Britain was at the minimum. In M. N. Roy's view, this was the most opportune moment for the Indians to organize a revolution. For Roy, the Indian bourgeoisie, who showed loyalty to Britain and beseeched for concession missed this opportunity. Pan-Islamism was a mentality that influenced Indian Muslims during the war and post-war years. In the Turko-Italian wars and the Balkan Wars, even the majority of the non-Muslim people and the press were pro-Turk.⁶⁴

The Russian Revolution of 1917 became a great scare for imperialism. The British Government feared the influence of the Russian Revolution on the Indian National Movement and the outbreak of a Russian-model armed revolution in India.⁶⁵ R. P. Dutt has argued that the decision of the British Government to announce the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms in 1917 was influenced by the Russian Revolution.⁶⁶ The Russian Revolution became a big hope for the oppressed all over the world. Due to its 'Bolshevik scare', the British Government arranged strict anti-Bolshevik surveillance in Calcutta City. The favorable attitude to Soviet Russia became a form of resistance during this period. Though no left organization was formed in Calcutta under the influence of the Russian Revolution, the British Government viewed even sympathy for Bolshevism as a serious threat.⁶⁷ The pan-Islamist groups in India saw Soviet Russia as a hope and expected support from Russia. The Muslim revolutionary leaders in India hoped for an alliance of Islamic nations and Russia. A Persian pamphlet titled *Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations* by Mohammad Barkatullah, published in 1919, shared this hope. A quote by Lenin on liberty and equality was included at the end of the pamphlet.⁶⁸ The new vision born by the influence of Soviet Russia was in the form

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

⁶⁴ Nirad C. Chaudhari, *op. cit.*, p. 336. Nirad C. Chaudhari says that he was an anti-Turk at that time as he believed that pan-Islamism was the biggest danger to Indian nationalism.

⁶⁵ Muzaffar Ahmad, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

⁶⁶ R. Palme Dutt, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

⁶⁷ Suchetana Chattopadhyay, 'From London to Calcutta: The Bolshevik Outsider and Imperial Surveillance, 1917-1921', in Ezra Rashkow *et al.* (eds.), *Memory, identity and the Colonial Encounter in India; Essays in Honour of Peter Robb*, Oxon, 2018, pp. 91-109.

⁶⁸ 'Concluding Portion of "Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations"', G. Adhikari (ed.), *Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India*, Vol. I (1917-1922), New Delhi, 1971, pp. 123-128.

of a dream. The Government also feared the intrusion of Bolshevism into Punjab. The geographical proximity of Punjab to Russia scared the Government.⁶⁹ S. A. Dange in his *Gandhi Versus Lenin*, one of the early works by an Indian on Soviet Russia and the Russian Revolution, which was published in 1921, gave a few details about the 'Bolshevik scare' of the British Government. At that time, Bolshevism was a 'forbidden fruit' for Indians. The Government took stringent measures to obstruct the entry of the literature on Soviet Russia to India.⁷⁰

From the late 19th century, the freedom movement in Ireland began to influence the politics of India. While explaining the cosmopolitanism in the thoughts and politics of Alfred Webb, the Irish nationalist, Jennifer Lefebvre argues that Alfred Webb viewed the empire as 'a complex communication network through which ideas spread.' The Irish nationalists found similarities in their goals and ideas with the Indians.⁷¹ There were many Indians, who held pro-Irish views and sought aid, advice, and inspiration from the Irish freedom movement. After the First World War, Ireland became a model for Indian nationalists. An Indo-Irish radical nexus was formed in the inter-war period. Michael Silvestri in his work shows that the Chittagong armoury raid in April 1930 was motivated by the Easter rising in Ireland in 1916. From the First World War, the Bengali revolutionaries were inspired by the Irish model of anti-colonial resistance. The British feared the formation of an anti-colonial nexus of the Irish nationalists, Indian nationalists, Bolsheviks, and Islamists in the inter-war period.⁷²

Ali Raza, Fanziska Roy, and Benjamin Zacharia describe the period between the Russian revolution in 1917 and the beginning of the Second World War as the 'internationalist moment.' Internationalism was strong in India during the inter-war

⁶⁹ Bhagwan Josh, *Communist Movement in Punjab, 1926-47*, Delhi, 1979, pp. 43-44.

⁷⁰ S. A. Dange, *Gandhi Versus Lenin*, Bombay, 1921. Shripad Amrit Dange, who was born at Nasik in Maharashtra was a great admirer of Tilak. Dange joined the National Movement by the influence of Tilak. later he became a prominent Communist and trade union leader. Dange's work begins by quoting the following words of Tilak: "we shall not give the Government assistance to collect revenue. We shall not assist them in carrying on the administration of justice. We shall have our courts and if time comes, we shall not pay taxes. For short biographies of the early Communist leaders of India, see C. Bhaskaran, *Indiayile Communist Prasthanam: Aadhya Padhikar*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013.

⁷¹ Jennifer-Reagan Lefebvre, *Cosmopolitan Nationalism in the Victorian Empire: Ireland, India and the Politics of Alfred Webb*, New York, 2009.

⁷² Michael Silvestri, *Ireland and India: Nationalism, Empire, and Memory*, New York, 2009; Kate O' Malley, *Ireland, India, and Empire: Indo-Irish Radical Connections, 1919-64*, Manchester, 2008.

period.⁷³ Internationalism in India grew revolving around the Soviet Union. Many people in India began to admire Soviet Russia when it astonishingly survived the Great Depression of 1929. This factor led to the growth of left movements in India.⁷⁴ Jawahar Lal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Bhagat Singh, the most popular political leaders in inter-war India next to Gandhi were known as internationalists. According to Benjamin Zachariah, Nehru was an internationalist from the mid 1920s. Nehru's visit to Soviet Russia in 1927 became a turning point that made Nehru an internationalist. During this period, the British Government had a tendency to brand every disturbance as 'Bolshevik.' The government records regarded Nehru as a 'Communist' and 'Leninist.' Nehru maintained close contact with the international left. Even in the 1930s, Nehru was identified as the future prime minister of India in the political circles of Britain. From the 1930s, other countries also began to treat Nehru as the future ruler of India. Mussolini's invitation to Nehru to meet him in 1936 was a sign of Nehru's growing international importance.⁷⁵

Subhas Chandra Bose left for Europe in March 1936 for treatment. Then Bose was in Europe till March 1936. He visited several European cities and established contacts with prominent politicians in Europe. The years that Bose had spent in Europe were the years of notable political changes in European politics. These years made Bose an internationalist.⁷⁶ Bhagat Singh was also known as an Internationalist in politics. Though Bhagat Singh had never worked outside India or made attempts to create international political ties, ideologically he was an internationalist. The influence of Soviet Russia and its ideology was profound on Bhagat Singh's politics.⁷⁷

The office acceptance of the Congress and the formation of Congress ministries in provinces was a factor that led to the erosion of colonial power in India. The Congress ministries filled confidence in the mindsets of the masses and created the feeling that

⁷³ Ali Raza et al. (eds.), *The Internationalist Moment: South Asia, Worlds, and World Views, 1917-39*, New Delhi, 2015.

⁷⁴ EMS, *op. cit.*, pp. 514-518.

⁷⁵ Benjamin Zachariah, *Nehru*, London, 2005.

⁷⁶ Chandrachud Ghose, *Bose: The Untold Story of an Inconvenient Nationalist*, Gurgaon, 2022, pp. 203-232.

⁷⁷ Aparna Vaidik, 'Was Bhagat Singh an Internationalist?': Resistance and Identity in Global Age', in Vivek Sachdeva et al. (eds.), *Identities in South Asia: Conflicts and Assertions*, Oxon, 2019, pp. 175-197.

'freedom is near. 'Thus the psychological impact of the Congress rule in provinces during 1937-39 was very significant. When the Congress came to power in 1937, the bureaucrats were forced to shift their loyalty from the British to the Congress. R. P. Noronha, an I. C. S officer recounts:

Before the popular ministry took over in 1937, it was the done thing to revere the Raj and parade one's loyalty like a banner with an eye of course to an eventual Rai Sahib or Diwan Bahadur title. The years of Congress rule quickly established new norms. It was the done thing to parade one patriotism and if possible, a third cousin twice removed who had been to jail in the civil disobedience movement. I did quite well out of the fact that Sarojini Naidu was my grandmother(real not fairy).⁷⁸

Subhas Chandra Bose keenly watched the international politics during the mid 1930s. Bose had a strong opinion that India should use the crisis of the British Empire as an opportunity to win freedom. Bose's writings reveal that he had a clear understanding about the international political condition during the mid-1930s. Bose imagined Europe as a 'complicated chess board, where interminable moves are going on and the scene is changing from day to day.'⁷⁹ For Bose, It was not Russia but Germany and Italy were the 'explosive forces' of Europe during the 1930s. Bose classified the countries of Europe as 'haves' and 'have-nots.' Bose regarded the countries such as Britain, which gained from several post-war treaties as 'haves.' The 'have-nots' countries were Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria, and Bulgaria, who lost their territories by the post-war treaties.⁸⁰ However, before the Second World War Bose thought that Germany was believing that their defeat in the First World War was because of the strength of British navy and Germany wouldn't enter in a war again by knowing that Britain would be against her.⁸¹

By the mid-1930s, Bose began to show a strong pro-Japanese attitude. In 1934, Bose regarded Japan as the "British of the East."⁸² Bose knew that Japan was powerful to challenge Britain and Japanese expansion would be possible only by a conflict with the

⁷⁸ R. P. Noronha, *A Tale Told by an Idiot*, New Delhi, 1979 (1976), p. 3.

⁷⁹ Subhas Chandra Bose 'Europe-Today and Tomorrow', in Sisir K. Bose and Sugata K. Bose (eds.), *The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose*, Delhi, 1997, p. 163.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 169-174.

⁸² Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India's Struggle Against Empire*, Cambridge, 2011, p. 122.

British. Thus, Bose began to adopt a pro-Japanese line even from the mid-1930s. Bose remarked that the main enemies of Japan would be Russia, Britain, and U. S. A. Bose wrote by praising Japan in 1937: " Japan has shattered the white man's prestige in the Far East."⁸³

The Second World War was the climax of the crisis of the British Empire. Bose had an assessment that the international situation during the Second World War was favourable for a mass struggle in India. For Bose, India should use the war as an opportunity.⁸⁴ R. P. Dutt begins his *India-Today* , which was published during the Second World War by reviewing the Indian and international situations. In Dutt's opinion, Britain was facing a deep crisis and India was preparing for a mass struggle. Dutt viewed the diplomatic clash between the Congress leadership and the British Government and the one-day strike of the Bombay workers against the war in October 1939 as the symptom of a 'deep struggle preparing.'⁸⁵

The sharp and shocking defeats of Britain in the early phase of the war gave immense confidence to leaders such as Subhas Bose, who had an opinion that India should use the war as an opportunity. Many people of India had expected the defeat of Britain in the First World War but the result was different. Thus, the main challenge before Bose was to convince the Indians that Britain would lose in the Second World War. For this, Bose reminded the people that the 'Axis victory is sure' and 'Britain is in extreme danger. ' Bose wrote: 'The British in India and the British Empire today are not the British we had seen fifty years ago. 'Bose added that after the war, Britain would become a 'third class power. 'He stated that the repeated reverses of Britain in the war changed the mindset of the British Indian Army and India was in a 'proper psychological moment for revolution. 'Bose remarked that the British navy was totally inferior to the Japanese navy. In Bose's view, the people of Asia started to trust Germany by seeing their astonishing victories in the war and Britain's prestige was shattered. For Bose, India should use this psychological moment. The fall of Burma and Singapore created a feeling in India that the 'white men are shivering in fear. 'In

⁸³ Subhas Chandra Bose , ' Japan's Role in the Far East', Sisir K. Bose and Sugata K. Bose (eds.), *The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose*, p. 52

⁸⁴ Sugata Bose, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

⁸⁵ R. Palme Dutt, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

his broadcast on the Azad Hind Radio on 19 February 1942, Bose Said: "the fall of Singapore means the collapse of the British Empire."⁸⁶

The Communists in India depended more on the decisions and policies of the *Comintern* and Soviet Union than on national trends. The attitude of the Communist Party of India was based on the moves of Soviet Russia.⁸⁷ The Communist Party showed extreme commitment to the policies of the *Comintern* and Soviet Russia. When the Second World War began, the Communist Party, which held the view that "the empire is cracking; it cannot survive the crisis", raised an opinion that the Indian National Movement should launch a mass struggle by taking the war as an opportunity. The communists warned the Congress that if they did not launch a mass struggle by utilizing the difficulty of Britain it would be a great betrayal. However, the Communist Party adopted the 'People's War' Line and supported Britain and its allies after the Nazi invasion of Soviet Russia in August 1942. As part of this line, they were forced to oppose the Quit India Movement in 1942. For the Communist Party of India, the 'People's War' Line had many aspects. For them, it was a total break away from the freedom movement.⁸⁸ For the Communists, who were holding a strong anti-British attitude, the shift to the People's War' Line was an emotional crisis. Thus, the period between 1941-44 was more emotional than political for the Communists in India.

The post-war years witnessed the end of the British Empire. The role of anti-colonial resistance movements was very crucial in the decolonization. For R. P. Dutt, the three factors that helped Britain to suppress the resistances in their colonies were lost after the war. The overwhelming military superiority, the divisions within each colonial population, and the divisions and lack of contact of the colonial people across the world were these factors. The troops lost loyalty. Dutt mentioned the R. I. N mutiny as an example. Thus, in Dutt's view, the changes in the international situation were one of the main factors that forced Britain to leave India.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Sisir K. Bose and Sugata K. Bose (eds.), *Azad Hind: Writings and Speeches*, Delhi, 2002.

⁸⁷ EMS, *op. cit.*, pp.648-652.

⁸⁸ Sobhanlal Dutta Gupta. *Comintern and the Destiny of Communism in India, 1919-43: Dialectics of Real and Possible History*, Calcutta, 2006, pp. 197-204.

⁸⁹ R. Palme Dutt, *The Crisis of Britain and the British Empire*, London, 1957.

1.4. Review of Literature

The beginning of the Annales School, which Peter Burke called the 'French historical revolution' was in 1929. The term was used to denote a group of historians associated with the journal *Annales*, which was founded in 1929. The members of this group were Marc Bloch, Lucien Febvre, Fernand Braudel, Georges Duby, Jacques Le Goff, and Emmanuel Ladurie. The term *histoire des mentalite's* (history of mentalities) is related to this school.⁹⁰ The earliest instances of this perspective were the works of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, the founders of the Annales School. Marc Bloch's *The Royal Touch* was a pioneering work in this field of study. This is a study of the belief of the people of medieval France and England in the king's miraculous power to heal scrofula by his touch. Bloch discusses the psychology of the people believing in miraculous powers and the relation between ideas, individual ambitions, and healing rites. Lucien Febvre's *The Problem Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century* is a path-breaking work in the history of mentalities. This work is an inquiry to find whether atheism could exist in the 16th century France. This work is based on the thoughts of Francois Rabelais, a sixteenth century French writer and thinker. By analyzing the mentality of the people in the 16th century Febvre tries to answer the question 'believe or not believe' and makes a conclusion that the sixteenth-century society was a 'society wanted to believe' Febvre has argued that the men of each age have their own intellectual and emotional features and the content of man's mind is affected by material conditions. Georges Duby in his study titled *The Three Orders* shows how a feudal society based on three orders was imagined in medieval France. There is an attempt by Duby to analyze the state of mind of the people of the 12th century. The part of this work, which explains the social fear in the 12th century is notable.

The historians of the later generation of the Annales School such as Philippe Aries, Robert Darnton, and Michael Vovelle have contributed remarkably to the history of mentalities. Philippe Aries's works gave the history of mentalities a new outlook. Aries's works, *Centuries of Childhood* and *The Hour of Our Death* deserve a very special mention. *Centuries of Childhood* is about the changes in the attitudes towards childhood and family in different ages. For Aries, the 'the discovery of childhood as a

⁹⁰ Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School, 1929-89*, Cambridge, 1990.

distinct phase of life, is a recent event. 'In his *The Hour of Our Death*, Aries argues that there is a relationship between man's attitude towards death and his awareness of the self, of his degree of existence, or simply of his individuality. He describes the changes in men's attitudes towards death in different ages. Death is also an emotion. Fear of death is a common feeling of society. Based on the different attitudes towards death, Aries classified the death into four types: The Tame Death, The Death of the Self, Remote and Imminent Death, The Death of the Other, the Invisible Death. Aries connects the psychological landscape of a society and its attitudes towards death. Robert Darnton's *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* is a collection of six essays describing the way of thinking in 18th century France. Though Darnton uses the term cultural history in the title he says that the work is his contribution to the history of mentalities. Among the essays in this work, the essay on the Great Cat Massacre gained attention. This essay sketches how the killing of the master's cats by the workers became a symbolic revolt in 18th century France. Darnton has argued that a hatred towards the bourgeoisie was expressed by killing cats.⁹¹ *Ideologies and Mentalities* by Michael Vovelle is a collection of 12 essays touching on the different aspects of the history of mentalities. Two of the essays, which explain the background of the French revolution are relevant. In these essays, Vovelle attempts to link the collective sensibilities in France during 1760-89 with the French revolution. Another essay describes the use of iconography in the history of mentalities. The backdrop of the works produced by the Annales School is the social, cultural, and economic history of medieval and early modern France and Europe. These works were written in French and available to us as the English translations. Though Aries's works touch the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries Aries doesn't link the changes in the mentalities with the political changes during these centuries. Most of the works of the Annales School are focused on France. Though a few of the works of Annales School explain the case of other countries such as England, they do not address the whole of Europe.

⁹¹ Mahmood Kooria uses the theme and concept of Robert Darnton's *The Great Cat Massacre* in one of his essays in his recent work describing the role of animals in the Malabar Rebellion 1921. The essay is based on the Song *Elippada* (The Mouse Army), a Mappila song written in Arabi Malayalam in 1891. Mahmood Kooria, *Mrigakalapangal*, Kozhikode, 2023.

Outside France, the most notable contributors to the history of mentalities are Keith Thomas and Carlo Ginzburg. Keith Thomas's work titled *Religion and the Decline of Magic* explores some of the systems of belief such as astrology, witchcraft, magical healing, prophecies, ghosts, and fairies in 16th and 17th century France. This work attempts to study the mental climate and material environment in early modern England. Thomas tries to find the logic that made even the intellectuals of that age to believe in magic and witchcraft and support these practices. Thomas begins his work by describing the social life in 16th and 17th century England. The social life in England during this period was haunted by disease, poverty, and sudden disaster. Plague was a serious threat to life during that time. Another serious issue after plague was the threat from fire. Houses catching fire was a common occurrence during that period. Thus, the helplessness in the face of disease and disaster forced the people to believe in witchcraft and magic.

Italian historian, Carlo Ginzburg's *Cheese and Worms* is an attempt to reconstruct the intellectual world of Menocchio (Dominico Scandella), a 16th-century miller from a remote Friulian village. His thoughts, feelings, imaginations, aspirations, and the views about the world around him is detailed in this work. Though George Lefebvre is a historian not belongs to the Annales School, his work *The Great Fear of 1789*, which portrays the rural panic in revolutionary France should be counted as a notable study in the history of mentalities. Fear is the most common and intense feeling of man. Fear can create a popular revolution. Thus, as a study explaining the political consequences of fear this work is significant. George Rude in his *Ideology and Popular Protest* gives a few arguments on the relationship between ideologies and mentalities.

In the Indian context, most of the works on emotional history and the history of mentalities by Tapan Ray Chaudhari, Rajat Kanta Ray, Subrata Das Gupta are about the mental world of the Bengal Renaissance. The works, *Perceptions, Emotions, Sensibilities*, and *Europe Reconsidered* by Tapan Ray Chaudhari touches on some aspects of emotional history and the history of mentalities. In the first work, the essays like 'Love in Colonial Climate', 'The Transformation of Indian Sensibilities', and 'The Pursuit of Reason in Nineteenth Century Bengal' are notable. In this work, Chaudhari explains the new perceptions, emotions, and sensibilities shaped by the influence of

colonialism. Chaudhari's *Europe Reconsidered* depicts the perceptions of Europe in the thoughts of Bhudev Mukhopadhyay, Bankim Chandra, and Vivekananda. In Chaudhari's opinion, the admiration to colonial rulers always had constraints and the real perceptions about colonialism were a point between total rejection and blind admiration. Subrata Das Gupta in his work exploring the creative mentality of the Bengal Renaissance, describes the cross-cultural mentality and universalism during the Bengal Renaissance. However, Gupta limited the mentalities to the middle class. Peter Robb's *Sentiment and the Self* is a study based on the diaries of Richard Blechynden (1759-1822), a British surveyor, architect, and builder in Calcutta. By using Blechynden's diaries Robb attempts to reconstruct the real image of Calcutta at that time. As Robb's work is solely depended on the personal diary of a man, the work has some resemblances with Ginzburg's *Cheese and Worms*. The most notable contribution to the history of mentalities and emotional history in India is from Rajat Kanta Ray. The Work titled *Mind, Body, and Society: Life and Mentality in Colonial Bengal* is a collection of essays edited by Rajat Kanta Ray. Ray begins his introduction to this work with an attempt to define the literal meaning and the real meaning of the term mentality. For Ray, the Bengali word *manasikata* is the synonym for the term mentality. This work is a collection of 13 essays arranged in four parts. The title of part one is 'Mentalities and Classes' and part four has the title 'Literature and Mentalities.' Rajat Ray's *Exploring Emotional History* is one of the best works available on this subject in India. In this work, which is a brilliant attempt to write the emotional history of the Bengal Renaissance and Indian Awakening, Ray defines emotional history comprehensively and explains the methodology of emotional history. Ray identifies autobiographies, diaries, and letters as the main sources of emotional history. For Ray, emotional history is part of the history of mentalities. Ray's work *Felt Community*, which explains the pre-history of Indian nationalism from the perspective of emotional history is his most notable contribution. This study is an attempt to describe commonality, mentality, and emotions before the emergence of nationalism in India. Roy's work, which argues that nationalism is a sentiment or feeling and the pre-history of every nationalism has emotional roots is pathbreaking and fresh.

Leela Gandhi's *Affective Communities* attempts to explain the idea the 'politics of friendship.' A special issue of *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* published in 2017 is a collection of a few essays based on the concept the 'feeling communities.' In the introductory essay, Margrit Pernau defines and explains the concept the 'feeling communities.' The idea the 'history of emotions is also explained by Pernau. Among the essays in this volume, the essays by Imke Rajamani, Amelie Blom, and Max Stille are notable. Autobiographies are the major source to study emotional history. The work titled *Writing the First Person* by Udaya Kumar analyzes the beginning and growth of autobiographical writing in Keralam and the significance of autobiographies in history writing. Udaya Kumar brings the autobiographies of notable political leaders such as E. M. S Namboodiripad and A. K. Gopalan to detailed discussion in his work.

1.5. Research Questions

- What is the relationship between ideologies and mentalities?
- Was the politics of Malabar during 1900-47 linked to national and international politics?
- How can an ideological shift become a mentality shift in politics?
- How did the mentalities and nature of the colonial state influence the mentalities of the masses and the strategy of the Indian National Movement?
- What were the ideologies, strategy, and forms of agitation adopted by the National Movement in Malabar?
- Was the mentalities in the phases of mass movements of the National Movement an important factor in attracting the crowd to the National Movement?

1.6. Hypothesis

Ideology is a mindset. Ideologies are the mature forms of mentalities. A shift from one ideology to another in politics is an ideological change and a mentality shift. For, instance if a Gandhian adopts Marxism it is a mentality shift. An ideology or a political struggle is the expression of various mentalities. The strategy and tactics of a political struggle are based on the nature and mentality of the opponent. Apart from political

changes, the changes in material conditions impact mentalities. For instance, the political and economic changes during the First World War were the equally important causes of the agitational phase followed by the war.

Even soft emotions like love and friendship may become the reason for a political change. The friendship of two politicians who believe in the same ideology is an ideological and emotional bond. Unexpressed emotions have a value in history. The mentality behind a political struggle may take shape even before the beginning of the struggle. In some cases, unexpressed mentalities can become an important ideology. Individual mentalities and crowd mentalities are different. An intense emotion or mentality, which takes shape during a mass struggle can make a crowd. Changes in material conditions have a profound impact on a crowd. For instance, poverty can create a crowd very easily. The mentality of a crowd is not the sum of the mentalities of the people in it. A crowd has a mentality in common and the people in a crowd behave according to this. A mentality in a political struggle can be expressed in its symbolic and actual forms. For instance, the *khadi* movement is a symbolic expression and the Quit India Movement is an actual expression.

1.7. Objectives

Most of the existing studies on the history of mentalities focus on cultural and social history. The French Annales school deals mostly with the social and cultural themes in medieval and early modern France or Europe. The works on the emotional history in India are an attempt to explore solely the mental and intellectual world of the Bengal Renaissance. Thus, the major objective of this study is to describe the mentalities behind ideologies and political struggles. Though there are some studies placing emotions such as love and friendship in a historical perspective, none of them attempts to link emotions with political change. Thus, this study attempts to link political changes with emotions. The existing works on the National Movement in Malabar do not address it in a total aspect. For instance, K. N. Panikkar in a few of his essays describes the social background of the emergence of nationalism in Malabar. K. N. Panikkar, M. Gangadharan, and Conard Wood in their works on the rebellion of 1921 give a description of the early phase of the National Movement in Malabar. Dilip Menon's work analyzes the relationship between caste and nationalism in Malabar. K.

Gopalankutty's works deal with the period between 1921 and 1947. Thus, this study aims to describe the ideology and strategy of the National Movement in Malabar during 1900-47. This study tries to trace the element of continuity in the National Movement in Malabar. The role of the crowd in the Indian National Movement is a neglected area of study. It is an objective of this study to explain the role of the crowd in the National Movement in Malabar. To interpret the ideologies, strategy, and forms of agitation adopted by the National Movement as the expressions of the mentalities is another objective. The strategy of the Indian National Movement is a topic of debate. Thus, this study will analyze whether the strategy of the National Movement had an all-India aspect by taking the case of Malabar.

1.8. Methodology and Approach

The lack of a common and definite methodology is a serious limitation of the history of mentalities. The Annales School or the Indian historians such as Rajat Ray do not put forward a definite methodology to write the history of mentalities and emotional history. While writing the history of mentalities, the nature of sources varies according to the subject and the personal choices of historians. For Instance, wills are a major source for Philippe Aries to write his work on the changing attitudes towards death. However, Aries depends on sources such as paintings and diaries in his work on childhood. The main source of this study is autobiographies and memoirs. Almost all the autobiographies and memoirs used in this study were written and published after 1947. An autobiography is a journey back or relook into one's own past. A person may reveal many experiences and emotions, which he was reluctant to express in the past in his autobiography. Autobiography deeply touches emotions. Memories are closer to emotions. Autobiography can address the expressed and unexpressed feelings of a person. For instance, in their autobiographies, the Communist leaders such as E. M. S. Namboodiripad, A. K. Gopalan, and N. C. Sekhar share the ideological and emotional background that made them Communists. Though the ideological background for them is the same, the emotional background is different in some aspects. An autobiography is not merely the life story of a person or the incidents in his private life. It is the real description of the world he lived and the people touched his life. For instance, the autobiographies of the Communist leaders are the major source to study

the subaltern mentalities in Malabar. We have to depend on archival sources to study the mentalities of the colonial state. The documents such as the C. I. D reports, intelligence reports, and secret files can be helpful to know the mentalities that were not publicly expressed by the colonial state. Thus, we should devise a new methodology and approach to study the history of mentalities and emotional history.

1.9. Interdisciplinary Relevance

As the source and methodology maintain an interdisciplinary character, the history of mentalities is interconnected with different branches of study. The methodology of the history of mentalities and emotional history is inextricably linked to literature. A study dealing with mentalities and emotions should depend on the tools of psychology. The use of the ideas and concepts of political science is needed for a study that attempts to analyze the emotions and mentalities behind political changes. Aries's works show the importance of fieldwork in writing the history of mentalities. The study of the mindset of man is relevant in every subject. Thus, the methodology and scope of the history of mentalities and emotional history are interdisciplinary.

1.10. Chapterisation

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study. The chapter explains the background of the study and the ideas and concepts used in the core chapters. The chapter gives an outline of the main arguments of the study. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are the core chapters of this study. Various themes are arranged in these chapters in a common chronological framework of 1900-47. Chapter 2 explores various mentalities and emotions that influenced the politics of Malabar during 1900-47. The chapter interprets the ideological changes in the politics of Malabar as mentality shifts. The chapter considers both expressed and unexpressed emotions behind the politics of Malabar and shows how the vigour of the National Movement in Malabar was decided by the attitude changes of the people. Chapter 3 explains the ideologies and expressions of the National Movement in Malabar during 1900-47. The chapter begins with an attempt to trace the roots of nationalism in the late 19th century by using the clues in early Malayalam novels. Then the chapter describes the ideology, strategy, and forms of protest adopted by the National

Movement in Malabar. By considering several neglected areas such as the *khadi* movement, nationalist Muslim politics, and counter public sphere, the chapter attempts to connect the links missed by the historians and to fill the void left by the existing studies on the National Movement in Malabar. Chapter 3 addresses the role of the crowd in the politics of Malabar during 1900-47. By discussing various topics such as the birth of the crowd in Malabar, the crowd in the Malabar rebellion, the crowd in Gandhian politics, and the crowd in left politics, the chapter analyzes the mentalities of the crowd and the expressions. The Fifth and final chapter presents some arguments as the conclusions of the study by summarizing and synthesizing the main arguments of other chapters.

1.11. Conclusion

The crisis of the British Empire, mass anti-colonial agitations in colonies, and decolonization were three important events in 20th-century world politics. Among these, decolonization was the result and the other two were its causes. The period from 1900 to 1947 was a vigorous phase of the Indian National Movement and during the same years, Britain faced a crisis and was haunted by a chronic defeatist mentality. The most active phases of the National Movement and the peak stages of Britain's crisis were the same. It is noteworthy that the years between 1919 and 1947, the acute stage of Britain's crisis was the age of Gandhian nationalism. Though Gandhi was not an internationalist other important leaders of the National Movement such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose were internationalists. The Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience, and the Quit India Movement, three mass movements launched by Gandhi took place in the peak stages of the crisis of the British Empire.

The changes in international politics generated various mentalities among the masses in India. The Indians were not the eyewitnesses of major events in 20th-century world politics such as the two world wars and the Russian revolution. They just read and heard about these events. Thus, the Indian responses to these changes were expressed as mentalities. However, the changes in the material conditions during these years were real experiences for the people in India. For instance, the economic crises during the world wars and the Great Depression of 1929 directly affected India.

Moreover, though the world wars were not fought in India the feelings such as panic and anxiety created by the world wars were real for the people in India.

As pointed out by Bipan Chandra, the strategy adopted by the Indian National Movement was a 'War of Position' in Gramscian terms. The clever use of the occasions of crisis of the opponent is important in a long drawn out hegemonic struggle based on 'War of Position. 'However, the crisis of the British Empire was not the main factor that led to the independence of India. Decolonization is a psychological process. The Indian National Movement played a crucial role in the erosion of the fear of the people in India towards the British Government. The National Movement cleverly used Britain's crisis for this. Thus, it was not the crisis of the British Empire but the strategy of the Indian National Movement was the key player in India's freedom struggle.

Chapter 2

Mentalities, Attitudes, and Emotions

2.1. Introduction

Mentalities and emotions have a crucial role in history. Even the emotions of some individuals can change the entire course of history. Michel Vovelle has attempted to link ideologies with mentalities.¹ Ideologies take birth in the form of emotions. Even nationalism is an emotion or feeling. Rajat Kanta Ray defines a nation as “a community of sentiment.”² For Rajat Ray, “ideas and emotions are equally important in the political process of forging a nation.”³ While explaining the character of pre-colonial patriotism in India, C. A. Bayly emphasizes the emotional aspect of nationalism.⁴ In his study exploring the emotional history of colonial Bengal, Rajat Kanta Ray regarded colonialism as a twist in the emotional history of the Indian people. Apart from colonialism, the birth of Indian nationalism was a major twist that influenced the emotions of the Indian people.⁵ Emotions decide the nature of politics. More extreme emotions of the people make politics radical, and people's soft emotions make politics moderate.

Colonial Malabar is known in history for the presence of the rebellious Mappila Muslims and the Communists. Both Islam and Communism have international aspects and roots. Thus, the people of colonial Malabar responded more quickly to the changes in international politics. The changes in world politics from 1900 to 1947 were a crucial factor that shaped the mentalities and attitudes of the people of Malabar. Thus, as a region with some peculiarities, the mentalities, attitudes, and emotions of the people that influenced the politics of Malabar between 1900 and 1947 need to be

¹ Michel Vovelle, *Ideologies and Mentalities*, Translated by Eamon O' Flaherty, Oxford, 1990.

² Rajat Kanta Ray, *The Felt Community: Commonality and Mentality Before the Emergence of Indian Nationalism*, Delhi, 2007(2003), p. 4.

³ *Ibid.*, p. X

⁴ C. A. Bayly, *Origins of Nationality in South Asia: Patriotism and Ethical Government in the Making of Modern India*, Delhi, 1998. In this study, Bayly explains the pre-colonial Maratha patriotism as ‘proto-nationalism.’

⁵ Rajat Kanta Ray, *Exploring Emotional History: Gender, Mentality and Literature in Indian Awakening*, New Delhi, 2001, p. 5.

explored. The impact of the changes in local, national, and international politics on the mentalities of the people of colonial Malabar should be addressed. The mentalities of the rulers and the ruled should also be considered. There were many emotions and mentalities such as internationalism, pan-Islamism, fear, frustration, anxiety, friendship, hopes, and disillusionment behind the politics of Malabar from 1900 to 1947. The politics in Malabar in this period was the expression of these mentalities

2.2. The Birth of Nationalist Feeling

All the historians, who have studied the National Movement in Malabar in the pre-rebellion period have an opinion that the Congress-led National Movement had a late start in Malabar.⁶ The mentalities and emotions of the people will be recorded in history only when they are expressed. The mentalities behind a political movement or agitation may form before the beginning of the movement. For Rajat Kantha Ray, 'the pre-history of every national movement lies in emotions.'⁷ Thus, the unexpressed mentalities also have a place in history, because every political movement is the sudden expression of the mentalities that have been formed over different phases of history. In this sense, anti-British feeling as a mentality and attitude was present in the mindset of the people of Malabar before the First World War period or even before the beginning of the Congress-led National Movement in Malabar. However, this anti-British feeling was not expressed in the form of a political movement in the pre-First World War period in Malabar. Many instances of anti-British feeling, which was unexpressed can be found in the autobiographies of the political leaders of colonial Malabar. Chettur Sankaran Nair recalls an incident in his autobiography when he was a student at the Madras Presidency College. Sankaran Nair joined the Madras Presidency College in about 1875. Most of his professors in the College at that time were Englishmen. Every student of this College had to write an essay on a particular topic once a week. One day he and his classmates had to write an essay on the topic 'The Declaration of Independence by America.' Some of the students including

⁶ Cornard Wood, *The Moplah Rebellion and Its Genesis*, New Delhi, 1987, p. 125; K. N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar, 1836-1921*, Delhi, 1992, pp. 117-18.

⁷ Rajat Kanta Ray, *The Felt Community*, p. 5.

Sankaran Nair wrote in their essays that “England must behave better in India, otherwise Bombay would be another Boston Harbour.”⁸

V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, one of the founders of the peasant movement in Malabar recounts in his autobiography that it was an incident in 1909, which took place when he was only 19, first sparked anti-British sentiment in him. This was an incident that a 15-year-old girl was raped by a European soldier in broad daylight. Bharatheeyan says that though this incident sparked discontent against the British in him, he couldn’t express it because of the fear he had about the British Government. A decade after this incident Vishnu Bharatheeyan became part of an anti-British movement by participating in the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement in 1919. Thus, it was only in 1919, he got the opportunity to express a feeling, which was in his mind since 1909.⁹

Whenever the colonial British Government in India was in crisis, Eranad Mappilas identified it. By taking advantage of this situation, they plotted revolts against the colonial British Government in Malabar. In August 1857, Puvadan Kunyappa Haji and seven other Mappilas from Ponmala in Eranad *Taluk* hatched a conspiracy to take revenge for the relapse of a Nair convert and to liberate the country from the *kafirs* (Europeans). These Mappilas believed that the mutiny in North India weakened the British government. One of the conspirators was the *mukri* of Ponmala Mosque.¹⁰ There were many occasions when the Englishmen who settled in Malabar as the administrators of the district were scared of the Mappilas. The news of the murder of H. V. Connolly, the District Collector of Malabar in September 1855 spread panic among the Englishmen in Malabar. At that time, Chettur Sankaran Nair’s father was one of the officials who was entrusted with protecting the Englishwomen when the district officials were away from the headquarters to suppress the Mappila outbreak. Sankaran Nair’s father began his official career as a clerk under H. V. Connolly. But later he was promoted to the post of *tahsildar*.¹¹

The activities related to the National Movement began in Malabar during the First World War period. The people of Malabar were active participants in the Home Rule

⁸ Chettur Sankaran Nair, *Autobiography of Chettur Sankaran Nair*, Ottapalam, 1998 (1966), p. 7.

⁹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *Adimakalengane Udamakalayi*, Kannur, 2018 (1980), p. 28.

¹⁰ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, New Delhi, 2010 (1887), p. 580.

¹¹ Chettur Sankaran Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

Movement led by Annie Besant. Annie Besant, the most influential leader in Malabar politics at that time reaffirmed a view that Indians had to raise their demands in the war period when Britain was facing difficulty.¹² During the war period various feelings, emotions, and mentalities tend to influence the rulers and the people. In the war period, the people of a colony like India would naturally desire the defeat of the imperial power that was oppressing and exploiting them. The autobiographies of famous Malayalam writers like P. Kesava Dev and Joseph Mundassery hint at the growth of a pro-German feeling in their villages during the First World War.¹³ P. Narayanan Nair also recollects in his autobiography that the people of his village had a pro-German feeling during the war.¹⁴ However, the Villages of Kesava Dev, Joseph Mundassery, and Narayanan Nair were not in the Malabar district.

Though anti-British sentiment was strong at that time among the Mappilas of Malabar, it didn't become a pro-German feeling among the people of Malabar. The middle class in Malabar supported Britain in the war. Even from the beginning, some of the Muslim religious leaders in Malabar were against the German-Turkish alliance against Britain.¹⁵ Kesava Dev says that the people of his village wanted to see Britain's defeat rather than German victory in the war.¹⁶ There are indications in Moyarath Sankaran's autobiography that the youth of Malabar wanted the defeat of Britain in the war.¹⁷ However, the people of Malabar were aware of the German success in the initial phase of the war. Even V. T. Bhattathirippad, a Namboodiri social reformer from Keralam, who talks very little about politics in his autobiography narrates about the First World War and 'Europe that boiling by the military campaign of the German Emperor, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and about the 'German submarines swimming in the Atlantic and the Arabian Sea.'¹⁸ Bhattathirippad writes: 'Everyone is awakened. In that sense, the war did more good than harm to the people of Keralam, who had been

¹² K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinjakaalam*, Kozhikode, 2016(1957), p. 48.

¹³ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, Kottayam, 2017(1959), p. 87; Joseph Mundassery, *Kozhinja Ilakal*, Thrissur, 2017(1978), p. 12.

¹⁴ P. Narayanan Nair, *Aranoottantilute*, Thrissur, 1999(1973), pp. 31-32.

¹⁵ 'Thurkkivirodhamaya German Koottukettu', in Abdul Rahman Mangad(ed.), *1921 Fatwakal Ahwanangal*, Malappuram, 2021, pp. 20-25.

¹⁶ P. Kesavadev, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, Kozhikode, 2014, p.60.

¹⁸ V. T. Bhattathirippad, *Kanneerum Kinavum*, Kottayam, 2017 (1970) , p. 87.

sleeping without warmth and spirit in the cold shade of foreign rule.’¹⁹ Namboodiripad of Pathaikkara *illam* in Perinthalmanna, a sponsor of V. T Bhattathiripad was a pro-German. Pathakkara Namboodiripad always preferred to use goods with the ‘Made in Germany’ seal. Once when V. T. Bhattathiripad went to see him he was marking on a map the areas where Germany had advanced in the war.²⁰

SMS Emden was a German cruiser that shook Britain on the war front and sank many British warships.²¹ Famous Indian English writer, R. K. Narayan recounts that *Emden* bombarded Madras city from the sea. He remembers that one shell from the cruiser hit the High Court building and destroyed the compound wall. Fearing the attack of *Emden* many people fled from Madras.²² The rumour that *Emden* would attack the Kerala coast spread rapidly among the people of Keralam. As *Emden* appeared somewhere near Kochi, many rumours about the cruiser were spread among the people in and around Kochi. There are descriptions of the rumours about *Emden* and the panic it caused among the people of that area in the autobiographies of P. Narayanan Nair, Kesava Dev, and C. Kesavan.²³ However, the autobiographies and memoirs available on the incidents in Malabar during the First World War indicate that the panic caused by *Emden* was not very strong among the people of Malabar. But the story of *Emden*, which shook the British Empire in the First World War remained in the popular memory of Malabar.²⁴

The First World War made people curious about the news. Women were also interested in knowing the news.²⁵ Perhaps this kind of curiosity to know the news was the first time among the people of Malabar. The widespread circulation of rumours is a natural thing during a war. In October 1917, a rumour that the German Imperial Chancellor had declared his intention to grant ‘Home Rule’ for India spread in

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

²⁰ V. T. Bhattathiripad, *Karmavipakam*, Kottayam, 2021(2007), p. 124.

²¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, p.62.

²² R. K. Narayan, *My Days: Autobiography*, Madras, 2017(1974), pp. 37-38.

²³ P. Narayanan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33; P. Kesavadev, *op. cit.* pp. 86-92., C. Kesavan, *Jeevithasamaram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015 (1953), p. 128. C. Kesavan was a Congress leader, social reformer, and the former Chief Minister of Tiru-Kochi. P. Kesav Dev in his novel *Velicham Kerunnu*(Light Enters) provides an interesting account of the rumours spread in a Kerala village during the First World War. P. Kesavadev, *Velicham Kerunnu*, Kottayam, 2021 (1974).

²⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*

²⁵ P. Narayanan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

Thalassery.²⁶ R. H. Hitchcock explained the period between 1896 and 1915 as “the longest period of peace yet Known” in the history of Eranad.²⁷ There were no Mappila outbreaks in Eranad *Taluk* during this period. The British officials in Malabar like Hitchcock and Innes argued that this peaceful atmosphere in Eranad was destroyed by the rumours about Britain’s defeat that spread among the Mappilas. The excitement created by the war, the news that Germany and Turkey were joining hands, and the rumour that the Germans had already landed in Bombay created a “feeling of unrest in Eranad.”²⁸ Innes wrote that the Mappilas had a general feeling in the First World War period that “the British *Raj* coming to its end.”²⁹

On 27 February 1915, there was a murder attempt on C. A. Innes, the District Magistrate and Collector of Malabar when he was on his way from Karuavarakundu to Pandikkadu. Innes had a narrow escape from this attempt. Following this incident, four Mappilas were arrested as a preventive measure.³⁰ Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji was one among them. There were rumours that Kunhahamad Haji was the one who instigated the assassination attempt. Hitchcock interrogated Kunhahamad Haji.³¹ K. Madhavan Nair says that the Mappilas had believed that most of Britain’s army was ruined in the German war and ‘Britain’s power has waned.’ The armed forces posted at Malappuram were recalled during the World War. Mappilas thought that the goods in the Malappuram barrack were auctioned and sold because Britain was facing a severe economic crisis.³²

During wars, every state fears and suspects the people of enemy countries living inside their territory. Till the First World War period, Thalassery was a center of the German Basel Evangelical Mission and German priests. In the pre-First World War period, the handweaving industry of Malabar was controlled by the German Basel Evangelical Mission. During the World War Britain deported many important German priests who

²⁶ Fortnightly Report, dated 5 October 1917, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²⁷ R. H. Hitchcock, *Peasant Revolt in Malabar: A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921* by R. H. Hitchcock, New Delhi, 1983(1925), p. 14.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ C. A. Innes and F. B. Evans, *Malabar (Gazetteer)*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997 (1908), p. 84.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

³¹ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Shaheed Variankunnath Kunhahammed Haji*, Kozhikode, 2021(1992), p. 39

³² K. Madhavan Nair, *Malabar Kalapam*, Kozhikode, 2016(1971), p. 96.

were settled in North Malabar and permitted them to come back only after the war was over. One of the deported priests was Rev. G Lubke, who was a famous German priest who settled in Thalassery. He lived in the bungalow, where once Herman Gundert had lived.³³ When the war ended, Britain seized many assets from Germany as compensation. Consequently, the assets of Basel Mission in Malabar came under the control of the Common Wealth Trust.³⁴

The Indian capitalist class gained strength and Indian industries added profits by utilizing the opportunities provided by Britain's economic difficulties in the First World War period and the interwar period.³⁵ In Malabar too, capitalists like Samuel Aron emerged as prominent from taking advantage of the new opportunities opened by the economic crisis caused by the First World War. As the mill cloth had to be used for military purposes and imports were disrupted, the people had to rely on handloom cloths. There was a demand for the handloom clothes from Malabar even in North India. Weaving factories had proliferated in Kannur and surrounding areas in 1916-17. When the war ended in 1918, there were 100 to 150 weaving factories in Kannur and surrounding areas. The Aron Mills at Pappinsseri under the ownership of Samuel Aron also gained profits and prominence in this period.³⁶ This situation created a nationalist feeling among the entrepreneurs of North Malabar. By realizing that Britain's economic difficulty was their best opportunity, these entrepreneurs donated huge sums to the *Swaraj* Fund in 1920.³⁷

The war forced Britain to bow its head before its colonial subjects for resources including money and men. When a resolution on the war loan to Britain came for discussion in the Second Malabar District Conference presided over by C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer held in Kozhikode, a young man known as M. P. Narayana Menon opposed it.³⁸ Narayana Menon said: ' It is a new practice that when the debtor lends

³³ Nettoor P. Damodaran, *Anubhavachurulukal*, Kannur, 2007(1987), p. 7.

³⁴ C. Samuel Aron, *Jeevitha Smarankal*, Kannur, 1974, p. 45.

³⁵ Aditya Mukherjee, *Imperialism, Nationalism and the Making of the Indian Capitalist Class, 1920-47*, New Delhi, 2002, p. 27.

³⁶ Samuel Aron, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-50.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

³⁸ A. K. Pillai, *Congressum Keralavum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1982(1935), pp. 19-22.

money to the creditor.”³⁹ Menon added: “A government which legislated laws in connection with press and other matters might at some future time legislate that the loan now by the people in connection with the war shall not be returned by the British Government.”⁴⁰ Though, the British loyalists in the conference raised objections he didn’t retract his statement. The resolution was passed in the conference with a huge majority but Narayana Menon got the support of the youths who attended the conference. Moyarath Sankaran, K. Appu Nair, and some other young delegates and some students in the visitor’s gallery applauded Narayana Menon.⁴¹ Narayana Menon’s speech created a stir in Malabar politics. Some famous local newspapers of that time published statements criticizing Narayana Menon’s speech.⁴² By opposing the resolution, Narayana Menon reminded that the British Empire was in a condition to bow its head before the people of India.

2.3. Boers, Bolsheviks, Ottomans, and Malabar

The people of Malabar were aware of the changes that had been taking place in world politics since the beginning of the 20th century and the setbacks that Britain faced including the Boer War. The Mappilas had a general tendency to view these setbacks to Britain in Islamic terms. The Mappilas imagined that even the Boers' victory over Britain was due to the involvement of the Turkey Sultan.⁴³ C. Kesavan recounts that when he was studying in school, his teacher, Philipp, used to read the news to him and his friends in *Manorama* about the Boer War.⁴⁴

A pro-Turkish feeling was generated among the Mappilas when Ottoman Turkey was at war with other countries. The war between Ottoman Turks and Italy in 1911-12 created a pro-Turkish feeling for the Mappilas. Special prayers were conducted at Perinthalmanna mosque for 40 consecutive days for Turkish victory.⁴⁵ Between 1911

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴⁰ *New India*, 26 April 1917.

⁴¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

⁴² *Manorama*, 24 April 1917, Native News Paper Report (March-April 1917), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁴³ Cornard Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

⁴⁴ C. Kesavan, *op. cit.*, p. 35. Jawahar Lal Nehru recalls in his autobiography that he began to read newspapers to get the news about the Boer War. Nehru had a Pro-Boer attitude in the War. Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, Gurgaon, 2004(1936), p. 13.

⁴⁵ Cornard Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

and 1918, Turkey fought many wars including the Balkan Wars and the World War.⁴⁶ The *West Coast Spectator*, a local English newspaper reported on 9 November 1912, that the Mappilas rushed to their office in Kozhikode daily to know the latest news of the Turkish War. The report further says that one day, one of these Mappilas inquired them: “whether there are any Italians or Bulgarians in Kozhikode. So that they may be taught a lesson.”⁴⁷

The Indian National Movement took root in Malabar by the Home Rule Movement led by Annie Besant, an Irish woman.⁴⁸ It was not only through Besant the youth of Malabar came to know about the Irish freedom movement. Professor Hogg, an Irishman was M. P. Narayana Menon’s favorite teacher at the Madras Christian College. Hogg later became the principal of the Christian College. It was Hogg who told Narayana Menon about the Irish freedom movement and the Irish Republican Army.⁴⁹ K. P. Kesava Menon was Hogg’s student while he was studying at the Madras Christian College.⁵⁰ K. Kelappan was also a student of Hogg.⁵¹ Kelappan was attracted by Hogg’s impressive personality.⁵² Indian students in foreign universities easily got more information about the Irish freedom Movement. A. K. Pillai, when he was a student at Oxford was influenced by the politics of De Valera, the leader of the Irish freedom movement.⁵³

The Indian National Movement led by the Indian National Congress was often compared with the Irish freedom movement. The Congress leaders of Malabar showed empathy and expressed psychological solidarity with the people of Ireland, who had been fighting for freedom from Britain. The government decided to shift E. Moidu Maulavi, who was arrested during the rebellion of 1921 from Vellore jail to Bellary jail.

⁴⁶ Ford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Cambridge, 1977, pp. 287-334.

⁴⁷ *West Coast Spectator*, 9 November 1912, NNPR (September-December 1912), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁴⁸ While explaining the psychological motivations for Annie Besant Raj Kumar describes the influence of her Irish origin on her political career. Raj Kumar, *Annie Besant’s Rise to Power in Indian Politics, 1914-17*, New Delhi, 1981, pp. 21-26.

⁴⁹ M. P. S. Menon, *Malabar Samaram: M. P. Narayana Menonum Sahapravarthakarum*, Kozhikode, 2005(1992), pp. 29-30.

⁵⁰ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinjakalam*, p. 32.

⁵¹ M. P. Manmathan, *Kelappan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016(1984), pp. 40-42.

⁵² C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, Kottayam, 1982, pp. 39-40.

⁵³ A. Radhakrishnan, *A. K. Pillai Aadarshangalude Rakthasakshi*, Kochi, 1998, p. 18.

While travelling to Bellary, Moidu Maulavi's train stopped at Guntakal Junction. There, some Englishmen approached Moidu Maluavi knowing that he was a non-cooperator. One of them asked Moidu Maulavi about the future of the freedom struggle in Ireland. Moidu Maulavi replied to him that the people of Ireland would definitely win.⁵⁴ The Congress leaders in Malabar often mentioned the sufferings of the people of Ireland in the speeches they made during the *Khilafat* Non-cooperation Movement. Mozhikunnathu Brahamadathan Namboodiripad, a Congress leader recounts an incident. During the rebellion of 1921, the maids of Mozhikunnathu Brahamadathan Namboodiripad's house scared his mother saying that her son, who was a non-cooperator would be shot dead by the troops. To console his mother, Mozhikunnath told her the story of a mother in Ireland, who had three sons. Two of her sons were shot dead by the government for sedition. Pointing to her third son, the mother asked the government to shoot him too. This story was mentioned by K. P. Kesava Menon in his speech at the Ottapalam Conference in 1921.⁵⁵ The Congress leaders of Malabar supported the Irish freedom struggle by heart and made use of the history of the Irish freedom movement to create fearlessness and a sense of suffering among the people.

It is important to examine whether the Russian Revolution of 1917 had any influence on the Malabar rebellion of 1921, an armed revolt against the state that took place just four years after the Russian Revolution. In 1912, a few years before the Russian Revolution, a small biography of Karl Marx was published in Malayalam as the first work on Marx published in any Indian language.⁵⁶ This biography of Marx was written by K. Ramakrishna Pillai, a famous Malayalam journalist, and the editor of the newspaper *Swadeshabhimani*, who was banished from the princely state of Tiruvitamkur. He wrote this biography when he was in Malabar.⁵⁷ While writing the

⁵⁴ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran: Muhammad Abdu Rahaman Sahib*, Thrissur, 1964, p. 99.

⁵⁵ Mozhikunnathu Brahamadan Namboodiripad, *Khilafat Smarankal*, Kozhikode, 2015(1965), pp. 86-87.

⁵⁶ K. Damodaran and P. C. Joshy (eds.), *Marx Comes to India*, Delhi, 1975, p.6.

⁵⁷ Dilip M. Menon, *Blindness of Insight: Essays on Caste in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2011(2006), p. 32.

biography of Marx, Ramakrishna Pillai, and his family were living in exile in the house of Ammalu Amma in Palakkad in the Malabar district.⁵⁸

In Moyarath Sankaran's opinion, the fear caused by the Russian Revolution was behind the repressive measures adopted by the colonial British Government against the freedom movement in the post-First World War period. The colonial British government came to think that there was the possibility of an armed revolution in India like the Russian Revolution in the post-War economic and political conditions. Moyarath Sankaran asks: "But how were Indians to blame for this?"⁵⁹ A. K. Pillai was a student at Oxford in the years immediately following the Russian Revolution. He was one of the first Indians who was attracted by the Socialist ideology. In 1920, he became a member of the Oxford branch of the Independent Labour Party. He came to Kozhikode to join the *Khilafat* Non-cooperation Movement with a heart filled with Socialist ideology.⁶⁰

By using a hint in Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad's autobiography Rajat Ray unearths a rare episode in the Indian freedom movement that was buried in the confidential files of the British Government. Ray in this study attempts to explain the unknown details of a political underworld formed in Calcutta by the interaction of revolutionary terrorists, Bolsheviks, and pan-Islamic secret societies.⁶¹ Ray asserts that after the defeat of Germany in the First World War Soviet Russia became the only source of external revolutionary aid to pan-Islamists.⁶² Yakub Hasan, a *Khilafat*-Congress leader

⁵⁸ B. Kalyani Amma, *Vyazhavatta Smarankal*, Kottayam, 1991(1916), pp. 78-80. Ramakrishna Pillai's wife B. Kalyani Amma published this memoir in 1916, just some months after the death of Ramakrishna Pillai. In this memoir, she narrates the miseries and sufferings of Ramakrishna Pillai's family in exile.

⁵⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, Translated by Radhika P. Menon, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, p. 85.

⁶⁰ A. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-21.

⁶¹ Rajat Ray, 'Revolutionaries, Pan-Islamists and Bolsheviks: Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and the Political Underworld in Calcutta, 1905-25', in Mushirul Hasan(ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 1985(1981), pp. 101-102.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 119. Maulana Azad in his autobiography recalls this memory that he was very active in the revolutionary movement in Calcutta and he persuaded his colleagues to extend their activities outside Bengal to other Important towns of North India and Bombay. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *India Wins Freedom: The Complete Version*, New Delhi, 2016 (1959), pp. 5-6.

from India was in close touch with the Bolsheviks when he was abroad.⁶³ In 1919, the Grand *Mufti* of Egypt issued a *fatwa* declaring that 'Bolsheviks principles are against the basic tenets of Islam.' The colonial British Government in India made attempts to give wide publicity to this *fatwa* and translate it into English.⁶⁴ On 7 February 1920, a meeting of some prominent Muslim leaders of Madras was held at the Office of M. Jamal Moideen and Co. in Thambu Chetty Street, Madras. Leaders like Jamal Muhammad, Khalil Shiraz, Maulavi Hamdani, and B. Pocker, a Mappila lawyer from Malabar were present at the meeting. Yakub Hasan was not invited because of personal differences.⁶⁵ Most of the leaders in the meeting opposed the *fatwa*. B. Pocker said in the meeting: "if the Indian Muslims now pronounce their hatred against Bolshevism and learn that they acted on a bogus *fatwa*, they will look small in the eyes of the world."⁶⁶ A discussion on the possibilities and potentialities of 'Bolshevism as the last hope of Islam' was there in a meeting held to discuss the future policy of Indian Muslims in February 1920 at the house of Abbas Hussian at Angappa Naicken Street in Madras.⁶⁷

2.4. Travel and Information

The tendency to travel and the desire to study out of state and abroad is part of the mentality of the youth. For the youth, leaving home and travelling solves many of their problems. Madhavan, the hero of Chandu Menon's 19th-century Malayalam novel *Indulekha* leaves home and wanders in many places because he thinks that he has lost his lover Indulekha. Instead of going to England, Madhavan decides to travel to North India and Burma.⁶⁸ The Malayali youth who went to England for higher studies brought all the latest news of world politics and British politics to Malabar in the early 20th

⁶³ Summary of the Confidential History of Non-cooperation and the *Khilafat* Movement in the Madras Presidency Published by the Government of Madras, HFM, Vol. LXXXIV, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁴ G. O. No.1965, Home Department (Political), dated 17th September 1919, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁵ B. Pocker, one of the founders of the Muslim League in Malabar was born at Thalassery in North Malabar in 1890. He came to Madras for higher studies in 1909. After pursuing a Law Degree from the Madras Law College, he started to practice as a lawyer at Madras High Court. K. P. Kunhimoosa, *B. Pocker Sahib*, Malappuram, 2021(2013).

⁶⁶ Extracts from Secret Files Relating to Non-cooperation and *Khilafat* Movement in Madras Presidency, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ O. Chandu Menon, *Indulekha*, Kottayam, 2016(1889), p. 312.

century. In a period, when the number of newspapers was very limited, these Malayali youth were the major source of world news for the people of Malabar.⁶⁹ T. C Punnen from Tiruvitamkur was the first Malayali to study in Britain. He was a student of C. M. S College, Kottayam, who had been in London between 1869 and 1872 for the purpose of higher studies.⁷⁰ In those days the people of Keralam could travel to England only by ship.

Javed Majeed argues that the national leaders of India like Gandhi and Nehru by their voyages from India to London derived a clear understanding of the geographical extent of the British Empire.⁷¹ Yasmin Khan has argued that Gandhi by his voyages established links with the maritime world and became aware of the strength and vastness of the British Empire.⁷² Travelling by ship to London at that time often lasted for months and touched many countries. In 1898, G. Paramewsaran Pillai, popularly known as Barrister G. P Pillai, a veteran Congress leader from Tiruvitamkur published a work about his experiences in London, titled *London and Paris: Through Indian Spectacles*. This work was written in the form of letters. He writes: "it is a great advantage that you are compelled to go to England by sea."⁷³ In August 1912, after completing his graduation, K. P Kesva Menon, a prominent Congress leader of Malabar sailed for England to study law.⁷⁴ Travelers are always interested in sharing the experiences of their journey and the details of the places they visited. K. P. Kesava Menon who had been in England for three years wrote 31 articles on various topics about England and sent them to the *Manorama*. In 1916, Kesava Menon published the work *Bilathi Vishesham* by

⁶⁹ Some of the autobiographies and memoirs in Malayalam refer to the Malayali youth who went to England for higher studies in the early 20th century. In her memoirs, the famous Malayalam writer, Madhavikutty, recounts about some of her relatives who had studied in England. One of her relatives, Narayana Menon who went to London to study medicine married an Irish lady. Madhavikutty, *Neermathalam Pootha Kalam*, Kottayam, 2021(1993), pp. 27-29.

⁷⁰ George Oommen, 'Reimagining a Migratory Self: A History of Malayali Migration', in Sam George and T. V. Thomas(eds.), *Malayali Diaspora: From Kerala to the Ends of the World*, New Delhi, 2013, p. 8.

⁷¹ Javed Majeed, *Autubiography, Travel, and Postnational Identity: Gandhi, Nehru and Iqbal*, Delhi, 2015, pp. 80-143.

⁷² Yasmin Khan, 'Gandhi's World', in Judith M. Brown(ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Gandhi*, New Delhi, 2011, pp. 17-18.

⁷³ G. Parameswaran Pillai, *London and Paris: Through Indian Spectacles*, Madras, 1898, p. 9.

⁷⁴ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinajakaalam*, pp. 36-37.

collecting these articles and adding a few more new articles to them.⁷⁵ The first part of this work is a description of Kesava Menon's voyage from Malabar to England. Menon describes his experience of visiting various countries including European countries during his voyage. The places visited by Menon during his voyage to England include the city of Paris and the port city of Marseille.⁷⁶ Menon shares the experience of passing through the Suez Canal. He also gives a brief description of the Suez Canal. Menon says that more than 4, 000 ships would pass through the Suez Canal every year and most of them are British ships.⁷⁷

Travel by sea became extremely difficult and too risky during the war. K. P. Kesava Menon and, K. M. Panikkar, who were in England had returned home when the war was going on. At that time, K. M. Panikkar was a student at Oxford. The voyages gave Kesava Menon and K. M. Panikkar direct experiences of the naval war between Germany and Britain. They could see Britain, which boasted of being the world's greatest naval power, faltering before the German submarines. During the war, Britain failed to provide a safe journey for the passengers on their ships. Hence, during the war, the Indians in England returned home by sea betting their life and Britain left them to their fate.⁷⁸ After coming home, in light of his experience during the journey, K. M. Panikkar wrote in *Kairali* about the setbacks that Britain faced in the naval battle with Germany.⁷⁹ The ships from India to Britain had not been free from the threat of German submarines even in early 1918, the final year of the War. K. P. S. Menon who sailed for London from Madras in 1918 to study at Oxford recounts that "the German submarine campaign was at its height and few boats were allowed to go through the Mediterranean."⁸⁰ Menon further recollects that his mother was "extremely worried

⁷⁵ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Bilathi Vishesham*, Kozhikode, 1916, pp. 1-2.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 1-22.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-22. At that time the people of Kerala used the local Malayalam word *Bilathi* to refer to England. The word *sheema* was also used to refer to England in local Malayalam. The word *sheema* was often used to denote all European countries. Kanippayyur Sankaran Namboodiripad, *Ente Smaranakal*, Part I, 1963, PP. 339-348.

⁷⁸ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinajakaalam*, p. 43; K. M. Panikkar, *Athmakatha*, Vol. I, Thrissur, 1967, p. 71.

⁷⁹ K. M. Panikkar, *An Autobiography*, Translated by K. Krishnamurthy, Madras, 1977, p. 26.

⁸⁰ K. P. S. Menon, *Many Worlds: An Autobiography*, Bombay, 1965, p. 48.

because the War was on and she had heard that the Germans had been dropping bombs on London.”⁸¹

A few Malayalam novels and short stories of the late 19th century and early 20th century refer to the voyages from Keralam to England. A short story, *Dwaraka* by Vengayil Kunhiraman Nayanar provides an imaginative description of a ship voyage from England to Bombay.⁸² Madhavan, the hero of the novel *Indulekha* has the wish to travel on a ship. Madhavan is going from Bombay to Calcutta by ship. The novel also says that Malayalis going from Malabar to England usually boarded the ship from Bombay port. Chandu Menon explains the importance of Bombay port and there is a situation in the novel when Madhavan is sitting at Bombay port.⁸³ While returning to Keralam, Kesava Menon and A. K. Pillai disembarked at Bombay port.⁸⁴

The Malayalis in London passed the information to the people of Malabar about the British Empire that trembled when Germany advanced astonishingly in the war. In July 1914, K. P. Kesava Menon along with his friend visited Germany.⁸⁵ They were in Germany when the war began. As Germany was Britain's rival in the war, Kesava Menon and his friend immediately returned to London. But they could not reach London and had to stay in Switzerland for some time. Kesava Menon and his friend came to London from Switzerland via France. Menon says that the war affected the whole of Europe and the people of Europe were in extreme distress due to the increase in the price of essential goods. When Kesava Menon returned to London, he saw a different London from what he saw when he left. Kesava Menon recollects that he doubted whether that was true or a dream. Life and conditions of the people in London changed a lot from the pre-war period. Menon dismisses the claims of Britain that the war hadn't affected the Empire at all. Kesava Menon further recounts that the people of London at that time were talking only about the atrocities and injustice committed by Germany.⁸⁶

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² V. Lissy Mathew(ed.), *Vengayil Kunjiraman Nayanar Samboorna Krithikal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012, pp. 8-16.

⁸³ O. Chandu Menon, *Op. cit.*, pp. 312-315.

⁸⁴ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinajakaalam.*, A. Radhakrishnan, *Op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁸⁵ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Bilathi Vishesham*, p. 165.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 182-228.

Chettur Sankaran Nair, the only Malayali president of the Indian National Congress was serving as a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council since 1915. He was in charge of not less than 36 departments.⁸⁷ He was very close to many prominent political leaders of the world and Britain. Sankaran Nair was born at Mankara in Malabar.⁸⁸ Referring to the political changes during the war, Sankaran Nair said: "At first the exigencies of war generated an atmosphere of idealism. Nations which professed to be fighting for freedom could not the right to freedom to subject nations."⁸⁹ It was after the war, in August 1919, A. K Pillai went to England for higher studies.⁹⁰ Following the Instruction of Gandhi, instead of going home, A. K Pillai a native of Tiruvitamkur leaving his studies at Oxford came to Malabar to join the Non-Cooperation Movement.⁹¹

Before the rise of Gandhi, the Indian National Movement was mainly confined to the three Presidencies, Madras, Bombay, and Bengal.⁹² At that time, many young men from Malabar were settled in the capitals of the Presidencies for the purpose of jobs and higher education. The travel route of Madhavan in *Indulekha* is Madras-Calcutta-Bombay.⁹³ Many of the Congress leaders who became popular in post-War Malabar politics were those who went to the headquarters of the Presidencies for higher education. Thus, they could absorb all the new trends of Indian Nationalism easily. M. P. Narayana Menon was a student of the Presidency College, Madras, and the Madras Christian College.⁹⁴ In 1913-14, Moyarath Sankaran was a student at the National Medical College, Calcutta.⁹⁵ K. Kelappan was graduated from the Madras Christian College.⁹⁶ In 1917, he went to Bombay to study law.⁹⁷

⁸⁷ Chettur Sankaran Nair, *op. cit.*, p. XV.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. XV.

⁹⁰ A. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 19-21.

⁹² Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 1968, pp. 349-350.

⁹³ O. Chandu Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-322.

⁹⁴ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-30.

⁹⁵ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-53.

⁹⁶ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-42.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-63. Though Kelappan had enrolled four times to study law, he never completed the course and didn't become a lawyer.

Michael Fisher studied the Indians who travelled to and settled in Britain between 1600 and 1857.⁹⁸ A detailed study should be made on how the Indians who settled in Britain became the informants of India on world politics and British politics. There is also a possibility of a detailed study of how the voyages of Indian political leaders influenced their ideology and politics.⁹⁹

2.5. Ex-Servicemen and the 'Seeds of Violence'

The latest news on world politics reached rural Malabar mainly through the soldiers demobilized from the British Indian Army. S. K. Pottekkatt in his famous novel *Oru Deshathinte Katha* describes how ex-servicemen circulated the news about the World War and world politics among the people of rural Malabar. Ex-servicemen always tend to present overdramatized war stories before others as proof of their valor. Kunhappu, the brother of Sreedharan, who is the protagonist of the novel is an ex-serviceman. It is Kunhappu, who brought the tales of the war to the people of Athitranippadam, the imaginary village in the novel. Later, Kunhappu gets the nickname 'Basra Kunhappu'.¹⁰⁰ In the pre-war period and the war period, many Mappilas were enlisted as sepoys in the British Indian Army. Many Mappilas from Eranad and Valluvand taluks served in the 77th and 78th Moplah Rifles of the British Indian Army. Military units like the 72-73rd Malabar Infantry also had a large number of Mappilas.¹⁰¹ There were many Mappila sepoys in the military unit known as the 88th Carnatic Infantry.¹⁰² Among these, the 77th and 78th Moplah Rifles were disbanded in 1907, and the 72-73rd Malabar Infantry was disbanded by 1918 as they were found unfit for service in Mesopotamia.¹⁰³ The District Government of Malabar had an assumption that the Mappila sepoys who became unemployed when the 78th Moplah Rifles was disbanded in 1907, would start committing crimes for a living if the government didn't give reemployment to them. The local officers had a general opinion that Mappila ex-

⁹⁸ Michael H. Fisher, *Counterflows to Colonialism: Indian Travellers and Settlers in Britain, 1600-1857*, Delhi, 2004, p. xiv.

⁹⁹ There are a few studies about Indian seamen and seafarers. F. J. A. Beroze, 'The Muscles of Empire: Indian Seamen and the Raj, 1919-1939', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. XXVIII, no.1, January, 1981.

¹⁰⁰ S. K. Pottekkatt, *Oru Deshathinte Katha*, Kottayam, 2017(1971), pp. 19-36.

¹⁰¹ M. Gangadharan, *Malabar Rebellion*, Kottayam, 2008, p. 257.

¹⁰² Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁰³ M. Gangadharan, *op. cit.*

servicemen would turn to crimes as soon as the savings brought from regiments were over.¹⁰⁴

Ex-servicemen often have a haughty and aggressive behaviour. A report published in *Keralapatrika*, a local Malayalam newspaper in January 1915 says that a large number of crimes were reported from the Malappuram Division, and many of them were committed by ex-sepoys from the Mappila regiment. The report further assumed that if the government would form a new Mappila regiment and send these Mappilas to the battlefield that might be helpful to reduce the number of crimes in the District. The report explains this as like 'killing two birds at a shot'.¹⁰⁵ In Hitchcock's view, one of the reasons why there were no Mappila revolts in Malabar between 1896 and 1915 was that many Mappilas were kept away from the District by being enlisted into the British Indian Army as sepoys.¹⁰⁶ K Madhavan Nair says that 'the Mappila soldiers, who lost their means of living as demobilized from the service in Mesopotamia sowed the seeds of violence in the country'.¹⁰⁷

During the War, not only the Mappilas joined the army from the villages of Malabar. when poverty became severe the people began to join the army on a large scale.¹⁰⁸ The youth, who were estranged from the joint families began to join the army.¹⁰⁹ Referring to this situation V. T. Bhattathiripad recounts: 'physically fit young men are missing from the local tea shops'.¹¹⁰ Thami, a *Tiyya* friend and follower of Variankunnath Kunhammad Haji, was a soldier in the Malabar Infantry Battalion that disbanded in 1918.¹¹¹ Chittambalan Kunhalavi, a disciple and lieutenant of Ali Musliar was an ex-serviceman. After leaving the army, Kunhalavi married a girl from Kizhakke Angadi in Tirurangadi. Kunhalavi used to visit Kizhakkepalli for prayers, from where he became close to Ali Musliar.¹¹² The British Government appointed some Mappila ex-

¹⁰⁴ G. O. No.1336-37, Judicial (Confdl.), dated 29th July 1907, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

¹⁰⁵ *Kerala Patrika*, 2 January 1915, NNPR(December 1914 to January 1915), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

¹⁰⁶ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁷ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

¹⁰⁸ P. Narayanan Nair, *op. cit.*

¹⁰⁹ V. T. Bhattathiripad, *Kanneerum Kinavum*.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ A. K. Kodoor, *Anglo Mappila Yudham 1921*, Malappuram, 2020 (1999), p. 177.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 250.

servicemen, who were British loyalists, even in the top ranks in the Police Department. The government might have kept a feeling that the Mappila ex-servicemen, who had a better understanding of the Mappilas and had military training would be useful in suppressing the Mappila revolt easily. Amu, who was the Deputy Superintendent of Police in Malabar during the rebellion of 1921 was a Mappila ex-serviceman. He belonged to Thalassery in North Malabar.¹¹³ Ahmed Kutti, the son of Khan Bahadur Chekkutti, a British loyalist was a Sub Inspector of Police during the rebellion. He was an ex-sepoy in the 77th *Mappila Rifles*. He was fatally injured during the Pandikkad Camp attack by Kunhahamad Haji's gang.¹¹⁴

A Mappila Volunteer Core was organized in Malabar by the beginning of 1921. Most of its volunteers were ex-servicemen. They wore *Khaki* uniforms. Mappila ex-servicemen enthusiastically joined as volunteers in the *Khilafat* Movement since its beginning.¹¹⁵ Ali Musliar enrolled many as *Khilafat* volunteers at Kizhakkepalli mosque. The uniforms of these volunteers were *Khaki* trousers and coat and a red Turkey cap with an emblem on it.¹¹⁶ The slogan of *Khilafat* volunteers was *Takbir*. They had a white flag with holy verses of the *Quran* written on it.¹¹⁷ If in Tirurangadi, the patron of *Khilafat* volunteers was Ali Musliar, in Mannarkkad they were under the patronage of Mannarkkad Ilaya Nair.¹¹⁸ The *Khilafat* volunteers were organized like this all over India. In a few places, drills, and processions of these volunteers in the uniform and carrying swords and wooden sticks were a regular practice.¹¹⁹ Often the *Khilafat* volunteers of Ali Musliar walked through roads in uniform and carrying long knives, which was their weapon. As these volunteers needed knives, Ali Musliar established links with local blacksmiths.¹²⁰ Kunhalavi and Lavakutty, the lieutenants of Ali Musliar

¹¹³ 'An Interview with Moidu Maulavi, 21 November 1979', Appendix II, in M. Gangadharan, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

¹¹⁴ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

¹¹⁵ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁶ 'Case No.7 of 1921, in the Court of the Special Tribunal Malabar, Calicut, 2 November 1921', in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

¹¹⁷ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*

¹¹⁸ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹¹⁹ Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, Delhi, 1982, p. 120.

¹²⁰ Case No.7 of 1921..., in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*

were always armed with weapons.¹²¹ Public parades and drills of the *Khilafat* volunteers were conducted on the premises of mosques. By the Ottapalam Conference of 1921, the people began to address *Khilafat* volunteers as *pattalam* (army). The Mappilas began to respect the volunteers in the *Khilafat* volunteer core. The activities of the *Khilafat* volunteers created fearlessness among the Mappilas. Consequently, the Mappilas began to disrespect and disobey the police.¹²²

The role of Mappila ex-servicemen is notable in the spread of the rebellion of 1921. The fighting spirit of the soldiers returning after a great war did not wane.¹²³ Mozhikunnathu Brahmaddattan Namboodiripad says that 'their sense of pride derived from the battlefield have not subsided easily.'¹²⁴ The methods of warfare learned by the Mappila soldiers from the war front were widely used by them during the rebellion of 1921. Inspector M. Narayana Menon reported to the government that felling trees across the roads and destroying bridges by the rebels to prevent the advance of the troops were new techniques that were not used by the Mappilas in the previous outbreaks.¹²⁵ The extensive use of guns by the rebels in the rebellion of 1921 was because of the presence of the ex-servicemen among them, who knew how to handle guns. When the Mappilas seized a few guns from Tirur Police Station, some ex-servicemen examined the 303 rifles to ensure that they had their bolts. The 303 rifles were usually handled by the ex-servicemen among the rebels.¹²⁶

In 1854, the District Government of Malabar disarmed the Mappilas by the *Malabar War Knives Act (Act XXIV of 1854)*.¹²⁷ When the Mappilas were enlisted into the British Indian Army on a large scale, the same colonial British Government that disarmed the Mappilas allowed them to use modern weapons like guns during the War. Thus, a sense of courage was generated among the Mappilas. Even Gandhi promoted the recruiting of Indians during the First World War. The colonial British Government had disarmed Indians by the Arms Acts. Thus, Gandhi regarded the recruiting of Indians to

¹²¹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

¹²² Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ 'Demi-Official from J. T. W. Filson, Esq., Personal Assistant to the Inspector General of Police, dated 13 August 1921', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *The Mappila Rebellion, 1921-22*, Madras, 1922, p. 26.

¹²⁶ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, pp. 46&128.

¹²⁷ William Logan, *op. cit.*, p. 576.

the British Indian Army as a 'good opportunity' for Indians to learn how to use weapons.¹²⁸ M. P. Narayana Menon, who spoke against the War Loan at the Second Malabar District Conference spoke in favour of recruiting at the same conference.¹²⁹

2.6. Pan-Islamic Trends and Gandhi's Unfulfilled Promise

Cornard Wood and M. Gangadharan, while explaining the backdrop of the rebellion of 1921 have identified the influence of the pan-Islamic sentiments among the Mappilas of Malabar on the rebellion. This sentiment was expressed in the form of a concern for the Ottoman Turkish Empire and a desire to protect the *Khilafat* from the threat of Western imperialist forces.¹³⁰ For Roland Miller, 'due to the geographic peculiarities of Keralam, the Mappilas were separated from the areas of Muslim hegemony and Urdu culture in the rest of India.'¹³¹ He added that 'Kerala's western openness to the sea has resulted in the continuing impact of a variety of influences from the west, including that of the Arabs.'¹³² Notably, Islam arrived in Keralam by sea. Thus, due to these factors, the Mappilas of Malabar were closer to international Islam than to national Islam.¹³³

For centuries, all the important religious leaders of the Mappilas of Malabar were immigrants from Arabia. They passed their knowledge of Islam to the local Mappilas.¹³⁴ Shaikh Jifri Tangal, the founder of the family of Mambaram Taramal Tangals, which was very influential among the Mappilas of Malabar was a native of Tarim in Hadhramaut in Arabia. Hadhramaut is located near Yemen, an important trading center in Arabia. Jifri Tangal came to Kozhikode along with a trading group

¹²⁸ M. K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography or the Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Translated by Mahadev Desai, Ahmedabad, 1968, p. 494.

¹²⁹ 'S. J. C. No.128 of 1922', in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39. Both these speeches of M. P. Narayana Menon were presented in the court as exhibits during his trial.

¹³⁰ Cornard Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-39; M. Gangadharan, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹³¹ Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: A Study in Islamic Trends*, Madras, 1992(1976), p. 2.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Tuhafat-al-Mujahidin* written by Shaikh Zainuddin Makhdum in the 16th century and *Fat'h-al-Mubin* written by Muhammad Ibn Qadi Abdul Aziz in the late 16th century outlined the need for a united front of all Muslim rulers against the Portuguese. Shaikh Zainuddin Makhdum, *Tuhafat-al-Mujahidin*, Translated by S. Muhammad Husyn Nainar, Kaula Lampur, 2006; Qadi Muhammad, *Fat'h-al-Mubin*, Kozhikode, 2015.

¹³⁴ Roland E. Miller, *op. cit.*

from Hadhramaut.¹³⁵ Mecca as a holy city of Islam and the most important pilgrimage center for Muslims in the world became the nerve center of pan-Islamism by providing the opportunity for Muslims all over the world to get together and discuss the threats against Islam. Many Muslim religious leaders, who had participated in several anti-British revolts in India, fled to Mecca escaping from the police.¹³⁶

The life of the Mappilas was linked with Mecca in many ways. The colonial British Government had deported some prominent Muslim religious leaders from Malabar to Mecca for their involvement in anti-British activities. The most important among them was Mambaram Sayyid Fazal Pookkoya Tangal. Pookkoya Tangal was deported from Malabar to Mecca in March 1852.¹³⁷ After staying at Mecca for some time, from there he went to Constantinople via Egypt. Later he served as a minister under the Sultan of Turkey. Tangal was in Constantinople when he died in 1901. Until 1914, the heirs of Tangal received a pension from the Turkish Government. Due to the financial crisis during the war, the Turkish Government was forced to discontinue this.¹³⁸ Seema Alavi in a study has analyzed the role of Mecca in making Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the age of the British Empire. A chapter in Seema Alavi's work is exclusively about Sayyid Fazal Pookkoya Tangal.¹³⁹

Ali Musliar and Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji had close links with Mecca. Ali Musliar did his higher studies in Mecca. He stayed in Mecca for about seven years and visited all important places related to Islam in Arabia.¹⁴⁰ Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji was deported by the government to Mecca for some time.¹⁴¹ But K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, Kunhamad Haji's biographer says that Haji was left for Mecca via Bombay by ship when he came to know that he would be deported by the government

¹³⁵ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Ha: Mamabaram Sayyid Alavi Tangal*, Tirurangadi, 1957, pp. 18-19.

¹³⁶ Seema Alavi, *Muslim Cosmopolitanism in the Age of the Empire*, Cambridge, 2015, pp. 1-4.

¹³⁷ M. Gangadharan, *Mappila Padanangal*, Kottayam, 2012(2007), p. 34.

¹³⁸ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Ha: Mamabaram Sayyid Alavi Tangal*, pp. 77-83; K. K. Muhammad Abdul Sathar, *Mappila Leader in Exile: A Political Biography of Syed Fazal Tangal*, Kozhikode, 2012, pp. 105-129.

¹³⁹ Seema Alavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-168. For more details also see Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal (eds.), *Oceanic Islam: Muslim Universalism and European Imperialism*, New Delhi, 2020.

¹⁴⁰ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Ali Muslyar: K. M. Moulaviyude Khilafath Smaranakal*, Tirurangadi, 2021(1968), p. 17.

¹⁴¹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

soon. This was in 1911. In his opinion, Kunhahamd Haji lived in the Mecca-Madina region and he earned his livelihood as a petty trader in Mecca. He returned to Malabar from Mecca a few years before the rebellion of 1921.¹⁴²

The Mappilas of Malabar were linked with Mecca and the Arab world by the *Hajj* pilgrimage. Ali Musliar performed *Hajj* several times.¹⁴³ Karat Moideenkutti Haji, an important leader of the rebellion of 1921 went along with Ali Musliar to Mecca to perform the *Hajj*.¹⁴⁴ It was during the *Hajj* pilgrimage that the Mappilas got the latest news in the Arab world and world politics. In December 1914, during the return of the pilgrims from Mecca that year, a rumour spread that the result of the war was favourable to Germany and against Britain and its allies, and the German emperor was converted to Islam and he distributed large sums among the pilgrims in Mecca. This had an impact on the Mappilas of Malabar.¹⁴⁵

Stephen Dale regarded Ali Musliar as 'the direct heir of Sayyid Fazal's teachings.'¹⁴⁶ Ali Musliar studied at Ponnani, which was famous as 'little Mecca.' Students from faraway places like Malaya, Indonesia, Java, Maldives, and Lakshadweep studied in Ponnani. After Ponnani, Tirurangadi was the most important center of Islamic learning in Keralam. Ali Musliar was the *mudarris* at Jama at Mosque, Tirurangadi.¹⁴⁷ Islamic study centers were places where students from various Islamic countries met each other.

For Sunni Muslims, the dominant section of the Muslim population in India, the Sultan of Turkey was the *Amir al-Mu'minin* (Commander of Faithful) and the 'protector of holy places.' From the Mughal rulers of India to the small independent Muslim rulers in India in the 18th century had viewed the Sultan of Turkey as their source of strength. In 1785, Tipu Sultan sent an embassy to the Ottoman Sultan. However, the pro-Turkish feeling of Indian Muslims was criticized by the Aligarh reformers including Syed Ahmed Khan while trying to strengthen the Anglo-Muslim ties. However, their anti-Turkish

¹⁴² K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Shaheed Variamkunnath Kunhahammed Haji*, p. 38

¹⁴³ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Ali Musliyar: K. M. Moulaviyude Khilafath Smaranakal*.

¹⁴⁴ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.* p. 44.

¹⁴⁵ M. Gangadharan, *Malabar Rebellion*, p. 254.

¹⁴⁶ Stephen Frederick Dale, *Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar, 1498-1922*, Oxford, 1980, p. 8.

¹⁴⁷ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Ali Musliyar: K. M. Moulaviyude Khilafath Smaranakal*, pp. 15&20.

attitude was questioned when leaders like Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad emerged into prominence in Indian politics.¹⁴⁸ From the beginning of his political career, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad had close ties with Turkey. He had also contacts with countries like Iraq, Egypt, and Syria.¹⁴⁹ Azad recounts: "contacts with these Arab and Turkish revolutionaries confirmed my political beliefs."¹⁵⁰

The pro-Turkish feeling was very strong among the Mappilas of Malabar who had never visited Turkey or met the Sultan of Turkey even once in their life. The Mappilas were always curious and anxious about the political developments in Turkey. They sympathized with the Sultan of Turkey whenever he faced a political crisis or he was at war with other countries. *Fatwas* and notices about the political developments in Turkey were widely circulated among the Mappilas of Malabar. The Mappilas knew about the German-Turkish alliance and the Young Turk Movement in Turkey.¹⁵¹ As Turkey became a major party in the war, several rumours related to the victory of Turkey spread among the Mappilas. In January 1915, a rumour spread among the Mappilas that Turkey was advancing day by day in the war and the Sultan of Turkey would soon descend to India.¹⁵² Some Mappilas at Vallappuazha said that they would pay the assessment of that year only after knowing the result of the war.¹⁵³ At that time, there were some Mappilas in Malabar who had feelings and sympathy for Egypt. Maulana Maulavi Kunhahamad Haji, who was E. Moidu Maulavi's teacher used to read some Arabic periodicals published in Egypt.¹⁵⁴

The high hopes of the people of India that the war would change Britain's attitude to India and that Britain would consider India's demands empathetically were shattered by the attitude and the repressive policy adopted by the colonial British Government in India in the post-war period. The British Premier had also broken his promise to the Indian Muslims to protect Turkey without any harm. There were no political changes

¹⁴⁸ Mushirul Hasan, ' Introduction: Khilafat Movement: A Reappraisal', in Mushirul Hasan(ed.), *Communal and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, pp. 3-6.

¹⁴⁹ Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, pp.6-7.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁵¹ 'Thurkkiku Virodhmayya German Koottukettu', in Abdul Rahman Mangad(ed.), *1921: Fatwaka Ahwanangal*.

¹⁵² *Cochin Argus*, 16 January 1915, NNPR, Tamil Nadu State Archives , Chennai.

¹⁵³ M. Gangadharan, *Malabar Rebellion*, p. 255.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

favorable to India in the post-war period as expected by the people of India. This situation created discontent and disillusionment among the people of India.¹⁵⁵ The people of India were deeply disillusioned also by the Reforms of 1919. The resentment and disillusionment of the people of Malabar were reflected in the Malabar District Conferences held after the war at Vadakara and Manjeri.¹⁵⁶ Many of the people of Malabar and a section of the Mappilas had supported Britain in the war. Mappilas joined the British Indian Army and fought for Britain's victory. However, Britain did not keep the promise that it would protect the sovereignty of Turkey after the War. Thus, even the Mappilas who supported Britain in the war had a feeling that the British Premier had broken his promise. A public meeting of the Mappilas held on 17 October 1919, in Kozhikode expressed extreme anguish in the news of Turkey's partition. The meeting also expressed its complete confidence that the ministers of the British Emperor would fulfil the promise on Turkey made by Llyod George, the British Premier as a representative of the British Empire, and would restore the trust of the Muslim subjects in the crown.¹⁵⁷ Thus, the hopes of the people of Malabar during the war became despair after the war.

In 1919, Indian Muslims launched the *Khilafat* Movement with the demands to preserve the boundaries of Turkey as in 1914 and to protect the spiritual and temporal authority of the Sultan of Turkey as the Caliph of Islam.¹⁵⁸ Gandhi linked the *Khilafat* Movement with the Non-Cooperation Movement which was to begin in August 1920.¹⁵⁹ The *Khilafat*- Non-Cooperation Movement provided Mappilas the opportunity to express their pro-Turkish feelings for the first time in the form of a mass political movement. By launching the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement, Gandhi linked a pan-Indian movement with a movement with pan-Islamic interests. In C. Sankaran Nair's view, Gandhi and his followers during the Non-Cooperation Movement were influenced by the growth of pan-Islamism.¹⁶⁰ The *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement generated a sense of fearlessness among the Mappilas of Malabar. The

¹⁵⁵ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, pp.62-63.

¹⁵⁶ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

¹⁵⁷ 'Khilafat Divasam', in Abdul Rahman Mangad(ed.), 1921: *Fatwakal Ahwanangal*, p. 29.

¹⁵⁸ Gail Minault, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁶⁰ C. Sankaran Nair, *Gandhi and Anarchy*, Madras, 1922, p. 51.

Mappilas began to consider the *Khilafat* Movement with the same divinity and respect accorded to the Caliph. Thus, they took the trespass or atrocity of any kind to the *Khilafat* Movement as an insult to the Caliph and thereby to Islam as a whole. K. Madhavan Nair, a prominent Congress leader from Malabar in a statement given by him before the special tribunal pointed out nine important causes for the rebellion of 1921. Among these, Madhavan Nair finds two incidents as more serious and the chief causes of the rebellion. They were the incidents where the *Khilafat* flag in the *Khilafat* office at Tirurangadi was trampled to the ground by the policemen, and the police registered a case against Vadakke Veettil Mammad, the Secretary of the Pookottoor *Khilafat* committee on the complaint of Nilambur Tirumulpad and raided Mammad's house to find the gun allegedly stolen by him from the palace.¹⁶¹

On 29 July 1921, Ali Musliar attended the *jamaat* prayers at Tirurangadi along with a procession of 40 Mappilas including 20 *Khilafat* volunteers, who were armed. Special prayers were offered in the name of the Kabul men, who recently died. The proceedings of the *Khilafat* Conference of Karachi were read in the mosque. Ali Musliar said that Britain was trying to introduce the Indian model of government in Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Basrah against the interest of Turkey and Indian Muslims should help Turkey in this.¹⁶² The Mappilas lost their fear of the police. Local issues and disputes began to be settled outside the courts. On 12 July 1921, Ali Musliar accompanied by some *Khilafat* volunteers went to Panampauzha ferry and told the ferryman near Tirurangadi that there was no need to charge fees from the passengers or pay to the government. He also said that the total strength of the government at Tirurangadi was one Sub-Inspector, two Head Constables, and twelve Constables. He said that he would keep a *Khilafat* Boat at the ferry if needed.¹⁶³ The *Khilafat* Movement organized the Mappilas and the Mappilas began to feel that they were numerically stronger than the government and the loyalists. Local Mappilas boycotted loyal Mappilas and collaborators. The loyal Mappilas and *Khilafat* Mappilas had to buy goods from separate shops. The loyal Mappilas were forbidden from taking water from the wells of *Khilafat* Mappila's houses. As *Khilafat* Mappilas forbade *ossans* (barbers)

¹⁶¹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp.66-68.

¹⁶² R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

from giving a haircut to the loyal Mappilas, the loyal Mappilas had to cut their hair each other. The loyal Mappilas were not given tea from the local tea shops.¹⁶⁴ Boycotting is often something only the majority can attempt and succeed. Thus, the realization of the *Khilafat* Mappilas that they were more in number than the loyal Mappilas gave them the confidence to boycott the loyal Mappilas. At that time, there were local Mappila leaders known by the name of the *Khilafat*. There was a man in Kozhikode named Karimadath Mammad Haji who was famous as *Khilafat Uppappa*(*Khilafat* Grandfather).¹⁶⁵

The colonial British Government was always scared of the spread of pan-Islamism among the Mappilas. Thus, they closely watched the activities of the Mappilas who upheld pan-Islamic views. Hitchcock noticed that Thayyil Muhammadkutti Musliar of Trikolam, Tirurangadi was a man upholding pan-Islamic views.¹⁶⁶ Just before the outbreak of the rebellion, A. R Knapp gave a warning to Thomas, the District Collector that the actions like the arrests of the *Khilafat* leaders in Malabar would not be interpreted as a proclamation of war by the government against the *Khilafat*. Knapp had an opinion that *Khilafat* was a serious matter and he advised the government to avoid the use of the word *Khilafat* as much as possible in the prohibitory orders. Instead of seeing the unrest in Malabar as an issue between the British Government and *Khilafat*, Knapp tended to interpret it as an issue between the government and the Mappilas.¹⁶⁷ In one of his articles on the *Khilafat* Non-Cooperation Movement in Malabar, Manjeri Rama Iyer argued that “the power of the British Empire quietly melted away yielding place to visions of pan Islam.”¹⁶⁸ Before the rebellion and during the rebellion of 1921 a rumour that the Amir of Afghanistan would invade India spread among the Mappilas. If so, the Mappila leaders had an intention that the *Khilafat* volunteers should support the *Amir*.¹⁶⁹ During the rebellion, a rumour that the Afghan

¹⁶⁴ C. P. Muhammad Haji, Tirurangadi, 'Avismaraneeya Dinangal', in *Malabar Kalapam 1921: Smaranakalum Padanangalum*, Tirurangadi, 2015(1981), p.64.

¹⁶⁵ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, Kottayam, 1981, pp. 30-31.

¹⁶⁶ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

¹⁶⁷ A. R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs', in G. R. F. Tottenham, , *op. cit.*, p. 34.

¹⁶⁸ Manjeri Ramaier, 'Khilafat Explosion in Malabar', in *Ibid.*, p. 3. It is notable that the title of the article was 'Khilafat Explosion in Malabar'

¹⁶⁹ 'Case No.4 of 1921', Appendix III, in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

army was coming to India spread in the village of Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad.¹⁷⁰

In 1924, K. M Seethi, a prominent Muslim League leader from Keralam wrote a Malayalam biography of Maulana Muhammad Ali. In this work, Seethi explained the concept of pan-Islamism. He says that the term pan-Islamism was a making of the Europeans and many misunderstood this concept due to their fake propaganda. According to Seethi, among those who misunderstood the idea of pan-Islamism included some of the important Hindu leaders in India. For Seethi, the meaning of pan-Islamism was the awakening of Islam from its downfall, to provide equality, justice, and freedom to the believers of Islam and the establishment of communal and economic unity among Islamic countries all over the world. In Seethi's opinion, the term pan-Islamism was popularized during the Balkan Wars when the idea of fraternity was spread in the Islamic world. He further said that the empathy for Turkey, expressed by Muslims worldwide, frightened the European powers, who interpreted it as an organized and joint movement of the Islamic countries against them.¹⁷¹

At that time, besides the pro-Turkish and pan-Islamic feelings the Mappilas were influenced by the politics and ideology of Gandhi. Gandhi's promise that 'swaraj within a year' generated courage and confidence among the people. The people thought that it was real. Not only the ordinary Congressmen but also the top Congress leaders like K. Madhavan Nair had believed that Britain was preparing to leave India. When some criticized K. Madhavan Nair, who resumed his legal practice after the rebellion, he replied to them that he had given up his practice on the belief that 'swaraj would be achieved within a year', and not forever.¹⁷² The promise of the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders that 'swaraj before 31 December 1921' and its frequent reiteration influenced the people.¹⁷³ Moyarath Sankaran in his autobiography recollects an incident during the *Khilafat* Non-Cooperation Movement in Malabar when a local Magistrate told an *adhikari* that "see how the times have change *adhikari* ! Now this job commands no

¹⁷⁰ Mozhikunnath, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

¹⁷¹ K. M. Seethi Sahib, *Maulana Muhammad Ali*, Malappuram, 2021(1924), pp. 39-42. Seethi translates the term pan-Islamism as *Islamika aikyam* in Malayalam.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

¹⁷³ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

respect. Looks like Gandhi will have his way. Will we lose our jobs?"¹⁷⁴ C. Sankaran Nair criticized Gandhi harshly for his promise of 'swaraj within a year'.¹⁷⁵

The Government of Madras admitted that the resolutions passed by the All India *Khilafat* Conference held in Karachi and the inflammatory speeches by the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders created a feeling among the Mappilas that the 'British rule in India was over'.¹⁷⁶ The Mappilas were influenced by Gandhian nationalism and the idea of swaraj. Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji once told Hitchcock that "*Khilafat* is a Turkish matter, not Indian."¹⁷⁷ In May 1921, when a village official went to Varainkunnath Kunhamad Haji's house at Nellikuthu for collecting the rent for that year, Kunhammad Haji told him that he would pay the rent only this year and wouldn't pay from the next year. Kunhamad Haji had sincerely believed that the British rule in India would soon end as a result of Gandhi and Maulana's efforts.¹⁷⁸

In those days the men, whom the people feared the most the 'policemen wearing red caps'.¹⁷⁹ An incident occurred that in July 1921 vanished the fear the Mappilas had of this 'red cap' and the policeman wearing it. Ali Musliar and his followers on their way to Puthiya Ponnani to attend a *Khilafat* Conference were stopped by a policeman at the Ponnani bridge. In the clash that followed, the policeman was beaten up by Musliar's volunteers and his 'red cap' fell into the stream and flowed away. This news spread among the Mappilas.¹⁸⁰ When a Sub-Inspector ordered Lavakutti to meet him at the police station, Ali Musliar told Lavakutti to disobey the order unless there was a warrant.¹⁸¹ Besides the nationalist and the pan-Islamic feeling, the anti-landlord feeling that the Mappilas already had in their mentality became stronger during this period. The Mappilas began to resist the landlords in a more powerful and organized manner. They began to treat the landlords with sarcasm. When Nilambur Tirumulpad

¹⁷⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, p. 120.

¹⁷⁵ C. Sankaran Nair, *Gandhi and Anarchy*, pp. 80-95.

¹⁷⁶ The Fortnightly Report of the Second Half of 1921, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

¹⁷⁷ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

¹⁷⁸ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Shaheed Variamkunnath Kunhammed Haji*, p. 51.

¹⁷⁹ Thikkodian, *Arangu Kanatha Nadan*, Kottayam, 2017(1991), p. 27.

¹⁸⁰ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29., E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, p. 138.

¹⁸¹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 120

threatened Mammad, a *Khilafat* leader that he would evict him, Mammad replied: ' I will evict you from the *kovilagam* before that.'¹⁸²

2.7. The *Raj* Tastes Defeat

When the people of a country begin an armed revolt against a state and achieve a victory temporarily, there are some peculiarities in the mentality of the rebels, the rulers, and the people of the country, who aren't directly involved in the revolt. While the rebels and the people who are opposing the government express fearlessness and the joy of victory the government and the loyalists express fear, despair, and a sense of defeat. The government begins to exhibit fear and panic even before the outbreak of a rebellion because they often anticipate the possibility of a rebellion. This panic will force them to take certain preventive measures before the outbreak of the rebellion. Before the outbreak of the rebellion, Thomas, the District Collector of Malabar had instructed the English plantation owners in Malabar to keep their wives away from Eranad.¹⁸³ An English planter in Eranad published an article titled 'Away from the Moplahs' in the *Madras Mail* on 12 September 1921. In this article, he revealed that the District Collector of Malabar instructed the English planters in Malabar that there was a possibility of the outbreak of a Mappila revolt on 22 and 23 August 1921 and therefore the English women had to be kept away from Eranad. Following this, an English woman was shifted to Kozhikode.¹⁸⁴

As soon as the rebellion started, there were scathing criticisms that the Madras police and the District Government of Malabar failed to realize the real strength of the Mappilas. British officials like Lord Willingdon confessed that the forces available in Malabar during the beginning of the rebellion were inadequate. There were criticisms that the total strength of the troops in Malabar during the outbreak of the rebellion was only 200 and the entire police force in Malabar became completely useless when the rebellion began. William Vincent, the Member for Home Affairs of the Governor General's Council, invited the government's attention to the need to spend more on internal defense and the construction of new roads and bridges as the Indian rebels

¹⁸² Aakkaparambil Saidali Haji, 'Ente Jeevithathile Smarankal', *Madhyamam Weekly*, 29 October 2018.

¹⁸³ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

¹⁸⁴ K . Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.* , p. 107.

had already proved that railway communication was easily destroyable.¹⁸⁵ The Pookkottur incident took place on 1 August 1921. It was on the day that the attempt of Inspector Narayana Menon to arrest Vadakkeveettil Mammad failed.¹⁸⁶ Following this, only on August 20, there was a move from the government against the Mappilas of Pookkottur, who had expected an immediate move and action from the government. When there was no such move from the district officials, the Mappilas began to feel that the government didn't dare to touch them. A. R. Knapp criticized the government for this delay. Knapp pointed out that because of this delay, the Mappilas began to feel that "the British Raj is finished."¹⁸⁷ The Congress leaders of Malabar also criticized the district officials for not taking the situation that prevailed before the outbreak of the rebellion seriously. Madhavan Nair Says: 'A trusted official of E. F. Thomas had advised him that all the Mappilas would be scared if Thomas went to Eranad and fired two gunshots.'¹⁸⁸

Any incident that reveals the fear of the state during a rebellion will give confidence to the rebels. On the night of 19 August 1921, E. F. Thomas, the District Magistrate with a party of 100 Reserve policemen and 79 soldiers of the Leinster Regiment left for Tirurangadi from Kozhikode in a special train. The District Magistrate was accompanied by I. M. Fraser, the Assistant Magistrate, R. H. Hitchcock, the District Superintendent of Police, E. V. Amu, the Deputy Superintendent of Police, and five important military officers. They reached Tirurangadi on 20 August by 4 AM in the morning.¹⁸⁹ Thomas and his team left for Tirurangadi with a difficult mission of arresting the important *Khilafat* leaders including Ali Musliar. In a later letter, E. F. Thomas wrote about their terrible experience in Tirurangadi on 20 August, when the Mappilas turned violent. On that day the District Collector and party faced difficulty in getting food. On the evening of August 20, the District Collector received a message from Deputy Tahsildar that the Parappanangadi Railway Station was under the control of the Mappila rebels. This forced the District Collector and party to continue at Tirurangadi and spend the night

¹⁸⁵ 'Extracts from the "Times" dated 10 September 1921, in G. R. F. Tottenham, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-2.

¹⁸⁶ M. Gangadharan, *Malabar Rebellion*, pp. 107-109.

¹⁸⁷ A. R. Knapp, 'Note on...', in G. R. F. Tottenham, , *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

¹⁸⁸ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

¹⁸⁹ M. Gangadharan, *Malabar Rebellion*, p. 121.

there. Thomas regarded the night of 20 August as 'very uneasy night'.¹⁹⁰ The District Collector and his team were forced to abandon many of their belongings in Tirurangadi. On the next day morning, the District Collector and party who left for Kozhikode from Tirurangadi via Parappanangadi were chased and attacked by the gang of Mappilas all along the way.¹⁹¹ As the railway lines were torn, they had to walk up to Feroke.¹⁹² They reached Feroke at 8.30 P. M and reached Kozhikode only by midnight.¹⁹³ Kondanath Koyakutty was an important member of the gang of Mappilas that chased Thomas and the party from Parappanangadi to Feroke.¹⁹⁴ The English refugees from the rebellion-affected areas were given shelter at West Hill.¹⁹⁵

The same incident created a general feeling that the troops, fearing death, surrendered to the Mappilas. Ridiculing the Government's plan for that day Mozhikunnathu says: 'It was a big blunder to think that arresting and detaining Ali Musliar is as easy as fish hunting.'¹⁹⁶ During a rebellion, the circulation of rumours about the fear and defeat of the government has a role in the spread of the rebellion. Rumours of this kind will give confidence to the people who oppose the government. During the rebellion of 1921, rumours circulated that the Collector, the D. S. P, and the troops from Malappuram that were sent to help them were killed by the Mappilas, the policemen fled without firing in fear of the Mappilas, and the 'two-a-half crore Indian Muslims' were prepared for the final revolution for freedom because of the firing at the Mambaram mosque. As the trains were not running and the postal communication was disrupted, these rumours got wide publicity.¹⁹⁷

The carelessness of a government in the initial stages of a rebellion in suppressing it may make the rebellion uncontrollable. The District Collector of Malabar wired that the situation in Kozhikode was very critical and to send a warship there immediately.

¹⁹⁰ 'Letter from E. F. Thomas, Esq., I. C. S, District Magistrate, Malabar, No.92/21, dated Calicut, the 25th August 1921', in G. R. F. Tottenham, , *op. cit.*, pp.68-70.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

¹⁹² 'S. J. C. No.128 of 1922', in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

¹⁹³ 'Letter from E. F. Thomas...', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

¹⁹⁴ *Malabar Kalapam 1921: Smaranakalum Padanangalum*, p. 329.

¹⁹⁵ 'Letter from E. F. Thomas...', in G. R. F. Tottenham, , *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹⁹⁶ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-83.

Following this, a warship, *HMS Comus* arrived at Kozhikode.¹⁹⁸ On 23 August, a demonstration by *HMS Comus* was held in Kozhikode Town. The Mappila ex-servicemen, who was leading the rebellion knew well that the naval forces were useless in the ground war.¹⁹⁹ The demonstration of *HMS Comus* generated total contempt among the Mappilas towards the government.²⁰⁰ The major strength of the British Empire was its navy. But it was ineffective before the Mappilas who excelled in guerilla warfare. The district officials later admitted that the British troops were ineffective in dealing with the Mappilas, but Gurkha troops and Kachins were more effective.²⁰¹

The members of the ruling class who are stuck in the affected areas during a rebellion are a symbol that reveals the intensity of the panic among the rulers. For many days after the rebellion began, T. Austin, a Sub-divisional Magistrate, 20 men of the special force, and the wives and families of some police sergeants were stuck at Malappuram. The District Government of Malabar was very apprehensive about the condition of these people.²⁰² On 20 August 1921, Inspector Reedman, while travelling in the car of E. F. Thomas, the District Collector, was attacked and killed by a mob of Mappilas. District Collector's car was thrown into Panampuzha ferry.²⁰³ It is notable that on the very same day, the rebellion began the Mappilas showed the courage to kill an official while traveling in District Collector's car and throw the car into the ferry.

As soon as the rebellion started, landlords, loyalists, and collaborators in the affected areas began to flee away along with their families. When the rebellion began, Kalladi Moidutti, a loyal Mappila landlord in Mannarkkad shifted his family to Palakkad. Then he along with his son went to Pollachi in the Coimbatore district.²⁰⁴ Most of the

¹⁹⁸ 'Press Communiques No.4&5 dated 25&26th August 1921', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *Op. cit.*, p. 180.

¹⁹⁹ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, p.62.

²⁰⁰ 'Letter from General Officer Commanding to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command, Ponna, No. S/250/313/G., dated 27th September 1921', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 221-222. The rebellion was quelled brutally by using the Gurkha troops, also with the intention of bringing back people's lost fear of the government. Sreedharan, the protagonist of Pottekkatt's novel, gets scared by seeing the Gurkha troops when he is a student. S. K. of Pottekkatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-129.

²⁰² R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

²⁰³ 'Atrocities', Appendix IX, in C. Gopalan Nair, *Moplah Rebellion, 1921*, Kozhikode, 1923, p. 55.

²⁰⁴ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

landlords fled to Kozhikode. Nilambur Tirumulpad and his family reached Kozhikode by boat on 5 September 1921.²⁰⁵

Thus, through the refugees, the news of the defeat of the government to the Mappilas spread to other regions. Rumours about the coming of Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji and his gang to attack Kozhikode were heard occasionally in the Town.²⁰⁶ S. K. Pottakkatt in his novel narrates the rumours spread in Kozhikode Town during the rebellion.²⁰⁷ These types of rumours created panic in Kozhikode.²⁰⁸ Palakkamthodi Abubaker Musliar, an important leader of the rebellion in Kozhikode *Taluk* said that he was reluctant to join the rebellion in its initial stages as he had a feeling that the British Government was more powerful than the Mappilas. Karat Moideenkutti Haji and Konnara Tangal, other important leaders of the rebellion in Kozhikode *Taluk* filled enthusiasm among the rebels by saying that 'the white men would run away from the country soon'.²⁰⁹

At the outbreak of the rebellion, the total strength of the police force in Malabar was 21 Sub Inspectors, 49 Head Constables, and 357 Constables (including 61 Mappilas). The total number of policemen in the area was 431. There were no arms in some of the police stations. Thus, this very limited strength of the police gave confidence to the Mappilas, who were numerically strong.²¹⁰ As the telegraph wires were cut by the rebels, official communication with the Madras Government became impossible for the district officials.²¹¹ The rebellion proved to the Government the need of establishing wireless communication system in of Malabar district. Consequently, the attempts to set up a wireless communication system in Malabar began even before the rebellion ended.²¹² The Mappilas had a wide intelligence network consisting of a

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p.64.

²⁰⁶ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 236. Madhavan Nair says that Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji had such an intention in real.

²⁰⁷ S. K. Pottakkatt, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

²⁰⁸ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

²⁰⁹ Statement of Palakkamthodi Abuvoker Musliar of Puttur Amsam, Calicut taluk, in the Central Jail Coimbatore, on 9th August 1922, before Inspector 'B' and 'Statement of Konnara Muhammad Koya Tangal before the Deputy Superintendent Police, Khan Bahadur E. V. Amu sahib on 29th August 1922', in *Ibid.*, pp. 197-200.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 166-170.

²¹¹ G. R. F. Tottenham, , *op. cit.*, p. 212.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 139.

number of local spies who informed the rebels about all the latest movements of the Government.²¹³ F. B. Evans, Special Officer, Malabar admitted that the Mappilas had an intelligence network, which was more efficient than the government.²¹⁴

Ali Musliar, who was arrested on 31 August 1921 was tried by the Special Tribunal. The request to prosecute him was submitted on September 19 and the permission was granted on 21 September. But Ali Musliar, who was sentenced to death was not hanged until the end of January 1922. This delay caused many rumours. A feeling became strong among the people that he would be reprieved. This feeling gave the energy and confidence to the rebels to continue the rebellion. Thus, to avoid such rumours, Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji, who was arrested on 6 January 1922 was shot dead on 20 January.²¹⁵

The Mappilas expressed psychological solidarity with the armed uprisings in other parts of India at that time. E. Moidu Maulavi compares Alluri Sita Rama Raju, the leader of the Gudem-Rampa hill uprising in Andhra with Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji.²¹⁶ He recollects an incident when he was in Rajahmundry jail, when a rumour that Sita Rama Raja was coming to break the jail excited the prisoners and trembled the jail officers.²¹⁷

The rebellion of 1921 that lasted for months was a terrible blow to the colonial British Government in India. Though Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji, the main leader of the

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 390.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

²¹⁵ R. H. Hitchcock, *Op. cit.*, p. 142. The interview with Ali Musliar by C. K. Muhammad Yacoob on 10.12.1921 was published in the *Hindu*. G. O. No.112, Public Department, 7.2.1922, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²¹⁶ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, p. 93.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.* The Malabar Special Police force led by Hitchcock and Amu was tasked to quell the Gudem-Rampa rebellion led by Alluri Sita Rama Raju. Moidu Maulavi says that Alluri Sita Rama Raju was killed by a gunshot from the notorious Circle Inspector M. Narayana Menon. Some similarities could be found between the Malabar rebellion of 1921 and the Gudem-Rampa uprising in the 1920s in the aspects like the mobilizational techniques and organization. The Mappilas had a belief that if they had the blessings of Chembrasserai Tangal the bullets would become a sponge. The study by David Arnold is revealing that the Gudem-Rampa hillmen believed that Sita Rama Raju also had such a divine power. K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-203., David Arnold, 'Rebellious Hillmen: The Gudem-Rampa Risings, 1839-1924', in Ranajit Guha(ed.), *Subaltern Studies I: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1982, pp. 88-142. K. Gopalankutty in his study about rumours and the rebellion of 1921 mentions such rumours. K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, pp. 16-34.

rebellion was arrested and shot dead in January 1922, the government couldn't restore total peace and the law and order in the rebellion-affected areas suddenly. Some important leaders of the rebellion like Konnara Tangal and Abubaker Musliar remained elusive. Even in April 1922, crimes and atrocities committed by the Mappilas were reported from the rebellion areas.²¹⁸ London papers published elaborate reports on the rebellion.²¹⁹ The rebellion was a big shock to the British Empire. Moidu Maulavi says that the colonial British Government thought even of solving the issue by surrendering a part of the Malabar district to the Mappilas.²²⁰ Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji established an independent kingdom based in Nilamabur. He even issued passports in the territory under his control.²²¹

The temporary defeat of the British Government before the Mappilas made the common people and the loyalists like the landlords to doubt the strength of Britain and their firm faith in the invincibility of the British Empire was shattered. The people including local landlords and loyalists who fled leaving their homes were reluctant to return home after the rebellion. Thus, the first challenge before the government after the rebellion was to restore confidence among the Hindu population in Malabar and to make the landlords and loyalists to comeback their homes.²²²

A. R. Knapp, who took charge as the Special Commissioner for Malabar Affairs in October 1921 found that the estimated cost of restoration of destroyed Government buildings was 1.25 lakhs. This was an estimate excluding the badly damaged forest buildings in Nilambur. The District Board was tasked with the maintenance works of the bridges destroyed by the rebels. The revenue administration in Malabar had been disrupted for some months as the revenue records were destroyed extensively by the rebels. The Government had to rewrite all the records that were destroyed.²²³ The information that the colonial British Government spent a huge amount to suppress the

²¹⁸ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of April 1922& Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of April 1922, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²¹⁹ P. MacEnroy, Captain, 'Mappila Rebellion', Appendix II, in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

²²⁰ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, p. 97.

²²¹ G. R. F. Tottenham, , *op. cit.*, p. 413.

²²² *Ibid* , p. 40.

²²³ *Ibid*, pp. 405- 406.

rebellion became a major topic of discussion among the public. Moyarath Sankaran had an opinion that the government had spent 60 lakh rupees to quell the rebellion.²²⁴

2.8. Post-Rebellion Mentalities

A post-rebellion phase in history is a period of various mentalities and emotions. In a post-rebellion period, the state suspects the possibility of the recurrence of the rebellion. Thus, the state will always adopt all necessary preventive measures to avoid such a recurrence and if it does, to crush it suddenly. The colonial British Government made attempts to cover up the embarrassment of defeat before the people and to make them feel that nothing happened to the invincibility of the British Empire. However, they were haunted by the fear of the recurrence of another Mappila rebellion. The Congress leaders vehemently blamed the police for being inactive and acting indifferent during the rebellion and criticized the Government officials who fled from the rebellion areas until the rebellion spread.²²⁵ C. R Ramalinga Reddy raised this issue in the Madras Legislative Council by criticizing the cowardice expressed by the police force in Malabar who ran away surrendering their arms to the rebels during the rebellion.²²⁶ When C. R Reddy raised the question about the conduct of the police during the rebellion Knapp grew angry.²²⁷ While speaking in a public meeting held at the Victoria Town Hall, Kozhikode, on 9 March 1923, Manjeri Rama Iyer criticized the inactive and indifferent attitude of the policemen in Malabar during the rebellion. K. P Raman Menon, a veteran Congress leader of Malabar was present in this meeting.²²⁸ By seconding a resolution moved in the meeting, Rama Iyer said: "in Tirur we could not find any policemen. The 39 constables of that station were not at all seen in the neighborhood but were coming out of their hiding places when the military came."²²⁹

The Government felt the absence of an efficient and loyal police force in Malabar. During the rebellion, many Mappilas in the police force joined with the rebels. On 30 September 1921, the sanction was granted for a Malabar Special Police Force (M. S. P).

²²⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *Indian National Congress*, Thrissur, 2012 (1935), p. 180.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

²²⁶ 'Debate in Legislative Council', Appendix VIII c., in C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

²²⁷ *Andhra Patrika*, 5 April 1923, NNPR(March-April), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²²⁸ 'Town Hall Meeting', Appendix VIII d., in C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

The total strength of this force was 350 men.²³⁰ Most of the men in this force were ex-servicemen, who belonged to the Nair and *Tiyya* communities.²³¹ The government didn't disband the Malabar Special Police Force even after the end of the rebellion, but they made it a permanent force due to the fear of the recurrence of the rebellion.²³² By believing that the illiteracy and ignorance of the Mappilas of Malabar as the main cause of the rebellion, the Government attempted to introduce some educational reforms exclusively for the Mappilas of Malabar.²³³ Consequently, some 'Single Teacher Schools' were started, and the post of a Special Education Officer was created for the promotion of Mappila education.²³⁴ Against the backdrop of the rebellion, the government cancelled all the gun licenses in the Malabar District and seized all the firearms.²³⁵ This action of the government received criticisms that this was against the natural rights of man to keep arms for self-defense.²³⁶

Thikkodian recalls those days in his autobiography and says that 'the British Government began to view everything from the anti-untouchability campaign to the cattle fair with suspicion.'²³⁷ For some years after the rebellion, the colonial British Government was afraid of the *Khilafat* leaders and the Congress leaders visiting the rebellion areas of Malabar. The Madras Government took the visit of Yakub Hasan and Shaukat Ali in the rebellion-affected areas of Malabar as a serious matter.²³⁸ When Gandhi visited Madras in March 1925, the thought that whether Gandhi would also visit the rebellion-affected areas of Malabar, became a major headache for the Madras Government.²³⁹ The government was always haunted by the memories of rebellion. Consequently, the District Magistrate of Malabar issued a serious warning against instituting ceremonies in the graveyards of the Mappilas who died in the rebellion.²⁴⁰

²³⁰ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

²³¹ 'Letter from Armitage Esq., Acting Inspector General of Police, Madras, No. R/76, dated 26 September 1921', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

²³² E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, p. 106.

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

²³⁵ *Yogakshemam*, 26 August 1922, NNPR (August-October 1922), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²³⁶ *Mathrubhumi*, 14 July 1923.

²³⁷ Thikkodian, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

²³⁸ Fortnightly Reports for the First Half of March 1924, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²³⁹ Fortnightly Reports for the First Half of March 1925, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²⁴⁰ Fortnightly Reports for the Second Half of May 1925, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

Gandhi's sudden decision to call off the Non-Co-operation Movement caused deep disappointment among the Congressmen in Malabar, who believed freedom would be achieved by 31 December. Moyarath Sankaran recollects this experience in his autobiography and says: "My humble co-workers, who had toured the whole land delivering speeches and making claims about leading India to independence on 31 December found life unbearable, taunted by the moderates. The big leaders who travelled by car spared this experience."²⁴¹ K. P. Kesava Menon recounts that 'in those days the people have forgotten even to show basic manners to Congressmen and even friends started ignoring them.'²⁴² The brutal suppression of the rebellion and the trauma the rebellion caused led people to view the nationalist activities with suspicion.²⁴³ Contributing to the funds is a simple way for the people to express their solidarity with a movement. The reluctance to contribute to the Congress fund was a sign of the change in the favourable attitude of the people towards the Congress in 1920-21. At that time in Malabar, Hindus and Muslims commonly had a negative attitude towards the Congress. Therefore, when they decided to start the newspaper, *Mathrubhumi* in the post-rebellion period, the Congress leaders knew that it would not be easy to raise funds from the people for this purpose.²⁴⁴ Consequently, in the early post-rebellion period, the activities of the Congress in Keralam were confined to the princely state of Tiruvitamkur.²⁴⁵

There was a change in the attitudes of not only the people and the ordinary Congressmen but also the Congress leaders. C. H Govindan Nambiar in a letter to Moyarath Sankaran describes the condition of Congress politics in the post-rebellion Malabar. Nambiar says: 'There were no notable incidents for a long time after 1923. Most of the people who entered the Congress went back to their old life. Some students returned to their educational institutions. Some went back to their professions. The lawyers too did the same. When they resumed their practice in the court, it was described as 'deplorable' by the *Mathrubhumi*. Finally, Kesava Menon has

²⁴¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*.156.

²⁴² K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kalaam*, p. 116.

²⁴³ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

²⁴⁴ V. R. Menon, *Mathrubhumiye Charithram*, Vol. I, Kozhikode, 1973, pp. 49-50.

²⁴⁵ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

also gone.²⁴⁶ Immediately after the rebellion, K. Madhavan Nair, the first Secretary of the K. P. C. C, and U. Gopala Menon, another notable Congress leader resumed their legal practice.²⁴⁷ There was an allegation that in an explanation submitted in the Madras High Court seeking permission to resume the legal practice, Madhavan Nair and Gopala Menon had denied their association with the Khilafat-Non Co-operation Movement.²⁴⁸ In the post-rebellion period, K. P Kesava Menon, who was the secretary of the K. P. C. C during the rebellion provided the leadership for the attempts to start the *Mathrubhumi* and also for the Vaikom *Satyagraha*. Kesava Menon, who had resumed his legal practice in Madras in July 1925 finally left for Malaya from Madras along with his family in August 1927.²⁴⁹ K. Kelappan, after his release from jail became active in constructive programmes including the anti-untouchability campaign.²⁵⁰ Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the General Secretary of the Kerala *Khilafat* Committee, who was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for two years in October 1921, was released from prison in August 1923. After his release, Abdu Rahman focused his attention on the running of the *Al Ameen*, a newspaper founded by him, and on the relief works among the Mappila refugees of the rebellion.²⁵¹ The colonial British Government was scared of the presence of M. P. Narayana Menon in Malabar as he was the most influential Congress leader among the Mappilas of Malabar. Thus, the Government made attempts to keep him away from the District after the rebellion.

M. P. Narayana Menon was convicted for the charge of *Waging War against the King* (Section 121 IPC) and sentenced to transportation for life. He had to spend 14 years in prison, from 1921 and 1934.²⁵² Though there was intense public pressure for his release, the Government didn't release him.²⁵³ The demand for the release of Narayana Menon rocked even the Legislative Council of Madras. Resolutions

²⁴⁶ 'Letter from C. H. Govindan Nambiar to Moyarath Sankaran, dated 26.11.1946, Appendix IV, in Kaviyoor Rajagopalan, *Moyarath Sankaran*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1986, pp. 143-144.

²⁴⁷ CK. Moosad, *K. Madhavan Nair*, Kozhikode, 1987, pp. 137-38.

²⁴⁸ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

²⁴⁹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 107-179. The *Mathrubhumi* started its publication in March 1923 from Kozhikode.

²⁵⁰ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.

²⁵¹ M. Rasheed, *Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*, Kozhikode, 1998(1994), pp. 18-53.

²⁵² M. P. S, Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-76.

²⁵³ *Kudiyar*, 11 October 1922; *Manorama*, 9&12 October 1923; *Mathrubhumi*, 11 October 1923, NNPR, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

demanding his release were passed in almost all the important political conferences and meetings that were held in the post-rebellion Malabar.²⁵⁴ However, the colonial British Government didn't succumb to this intense public pressure because the government was extremely scared of the presence of Narayana Menon in the rebellion areas as he was very popular and influential among the Mappilas.²⁵⁵

Agriculture was ruined and occupations stagnated due to the rebellion. The people had to experience acute poverty and their lives became miserable. There were many refugees of the rebellion. The refugees of the rebellion mainly consisted of Mappila women and children. The Mappila women had to suffer severe torture at the hands of the troops.²⁵⁶ After his release, Muhammad Abdu Rahman worked mainly among these refugees.²⁵⁷ After the rebellion, the government sought every possible way to keep the Mappilas away from Malabar. Consequently, many of the Mappilas were charged with serious offences and were hanged or deported.²⁵⁸ Even after their release, the government didn't allow them to come back to Malabar. Many of these Mappilas had to live in Madras, Salem, Coimbatore, and Tiruchirappalli.²⁵⁹ Some Mappilas stayed away from the District themselves, fearing cases. Muhammad, Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji's son left the Malabar District fearing that the police would frame some false case and arrest him. He was in Coimbatore for some time. The government hatched plans to deport all the Mappilas who had participated in the rebellion to Andaman and make them settle there permanently.²⁶⁰ For this, in September 1924, the government introduced the 'Andaman Scheme'. Muhammad Abdu Rahman vehemently opposed this scheme.²⁶¹ Abdu Rahman made attempts to organize an all-India protest against the scheme and for this, he sought the support of

²⁵⁴ *Mathrubhumi*, 6 September 1924.

²⁵⁵ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

²⁵⁶ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman: Rashtreeya Jeevacharithram*, Kozhikode, 1978, p. 117.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

²⁵⁸ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

²⁵⁹ Shamsad Hussain K. T., *Malabar Kalapathinte Vamozhi Paramabaryam*, Kottayam, 2020, p. 46.

²⁶⁰ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Shaheed Variamkunnath Kunhahammed Haji*, p. 155.

²⁶¹ K. Koyatti Maulavi, *1921 Malabar Lahala*, Kozhikode, 2021(1956), p. 100. K. Koyatti Maulavi(1897-1982) was a Khilafat-Congress leader from Malabar and an eyewitness to the rebellion of 1921. In 1949, he penned his work on the Malabar rebellion.

all the prominent Muslim leaders in India, including Muhammad Ali Jinnah.²⁶² When Mappila men were imprisoned or forced to stay away from the District, Mappila women and children became alone at home. They had to go through a life with extreme insecurity feeling. There is a study by Ashutosh Kumar on the labour migration in the 19th century and early 20th century India and the life of the Indian Indentured labourers in Britain's overseas sugar plantations. Ashutosh in this study describes how the feeling of separation becomes part of the mentality of the migrant labourers.²⁶³

In post-rebellion Malabar, the feeling of separation became an intense emotion for the Mappila women as their men were away from home. The Mappila songs of that time hint at this. The British Government has imprisoned Hasankutti, a Mappila youth from Eranad in Bellary Jail. Some anti-socials from his village fabricated an allegation about the chastity and conduct of his wife Mariyakutti and by describing this they write a letter to Hasankutti, who was in the Bellary Jail. Hasankutti writes a letter to Mariyakutti's mother informing her that he will divorce Mariyakutti. In response, Mariyakutti writes a letter to Hasankutti explaining her innocence. Through this letter, Hasankutti is convinced of Mariyakutti's innocence. This is the plot of the Mappila song, *Mariyakuttiyude Kathu* (Mariyakutti's letter) by Pulikkottil Haider.²⁶⁴

The case of Parambott Kalyanikutti Amma, M. P. Narayana Menon's wife was an example of the miserable life outside the prison of the wives of men imprisoned in connection with the rebellion of 1921. She was only 26 when Narayana Menon was arrested. M. P. Narayana Menon had four children when he was imprisoned in 1921. M. P. Narayana Menon's wife suffered for about a year without knowing what

²⁶² S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 167-185. According to M. Rasheed, E. Moidu Maulavi's son and a biographer of Muhammad Abdu Rahman, by seeking support for the agitation against the 'Andaman Scheme', Muhammad Abdu Rahman visited Muhammad Ali Jinnah's residence in Bombay. But Jinnah refused to meet him. M. Rasheed, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

²⁶³ Ashutosh Kumar, *Coolies of the Empire: Indentured Indians in the Sugar Colonies, 1830-1920*, Delhi, 2017, pp. 163-240.

²⁶⁴ Pulikkottil Hyder, 'Mariyakuttiyude Kathu', in M. N. Karassery (ed.), *Pulikkottil Krithikal*, Kondotti, 2021(1979), pp. 113-16. Pulikkottil Hyder (1879-1975) is one of the most famous Mappila songwriters in Kerala. It is said that this song was written by Haider for Mariyakutti, who met him and explained her sorrows to him. The *Kathupattukal* (Letter Songs) are the Mappila songs that are written in the form of letters. V. M. Kutti, *Mappilappattu: Charithravum Varthamanavum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2019 (2007), p. 84.

happened to him. She didn't even know where Narayana Menon was taken to or whether he was alive. Later in 1923, she visited Narayana Menon in jail. She asked Menon to submit an apology to the British Government and come out. She also requested this through her letters to Menon. But he was not willing for that. He also told his wife not to visit him in jail again as he did not want to see such a wife who was always asking him to compromise with the British.²⁶⁵

Although the factional fights within the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee began with the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in 1934, the objection and the dissent against the rightists in the Congress, as a mentality, took form in the early post-rebellion period. Even from the early years of the Congress politics in Malabar, the Nationalist Muslim faction in the Congress, led by Muhammad Abdu Rahman opposed the politics and ideology of the rightists of the Congress, which was dominated by high caste Hindus. During the rebellion, Abdu Rahman slammed the Congress leadership for being partial in the relief works among the refugees of the rebellion and alleged that the relief works led by the Congress were concentrating solely on the Hindu refugees.²⁶⁶ The fundraising efforts for the relief activities in connection with the 'Great Flood of 1924' were led by the K. P. C. C. There was an allegation of financial fraud in this Fund. Following this, the Congress leadership split into two factions. The leader of one of these groups was Muhammad Abdu Rahman. To discuss the issue, a meeting of Congress leaders was held at Mammiyur Lodge in Guruvayoor. K. Kelppan was the president of the K. P. C. C at that time. There was a big argument and noise in the meeting. Finally, Kelappan stepped down as the president and L. S Prabhu became the president of the K. P. C. C instead.²⁶⁷ Moidu Maulavi says that there were two different factions within the Congress in Malabar from that time. The leader of one of these groups was Muhammad Abdu Rahman. The youth were in his group. The other group came to be known as the *Chalappuram Gang*. Most of the leaders of this group were lawyers. They were also called the 'Sunday Congress'.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁵ M. P. S, Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

²⁶⁶ Under Secretary's Safe, No.327-A, dated 2.11.1921, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²⁶⁷ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, pp. 113-115.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 114-115.

2.9. Changing Attitude and the Civil Disobedience Campaign

The Congress-led National Movement in Malabar needed a change in the attitude of the people to revive. The Simon Boycott Agitation of 1928 was a clear sign of the changing attitude of the people of Malabar towards the Congress-led National Movement. The success of boycotting as a form of protest depends solely on the co-operation of the public. On 3 February 1928, when the members of the Simon Commission disembarked at Bombay Port, there were huge protests in Malabar as well.²⁶⁹ The Simon Boycott Movement began in India with the all-India *hartal* of February 3. The *hartal* was a huge success also in Malabar. All sections of people including Hindus and Muslims, upper castes and low castes, students and parents, and traders and workers fully co-operated with the *hartal*. The District Collector of Malabar rushed to Kozhikode to make the *hartal* non-successful by any means. Even though many methods including threats and offers were used, the Government was unable to dissuade the people from supporting the *hartal*. The *hartal* was held not only in the towns of Malabar like Kozhikode, Thalassery, Payyanur, and Palakkad but also in remote villages of Malabar.²⁷⁰ At that time, a form of protest like *hartal* would succeed only with the full cooperation of the people. Thus, the success of the *hartal* was a strong sign of the changing attitude of the people of Malabar towards the Congress-led National Movement.

Not only the attitude of the people but also of the leaders changed during the Simon Boycott Movement. It was by the initiative of Annie Besant, who had disappeared from the politics of Malabar after the Manjeri Conference in 1920, the first meeting in relation to the Simon Boycott Movement was held at Kozhikode Town Hall on 1 December 1927.²⁷¹ Manjeri Rama Iyer, who was the right hand of Besant when she was active in Malabar politics was at the forefront with the Congress leaders in organizing the Simon Boycott Agitation in Malabar.²⁷² Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who had diverted his entire time attention to relief works among the Mappila refugees and political journalism after the rebellion of 1921, came back to the leadership of the

²⁶⁹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

²⁷⁰ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 167-171.

²⁷¹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 1214.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 126.

National Movement in Malabar during the Simon Boycott Agitation. On 2 February 1928, Abdu Rahman wrote a long editorial in the *Al Ameen* in which he reiterated the importance of making the *hartal* of February 3, a huge success.²⁷³ Abdu Rahman also seconded both the resolutions on the Simon Boycott Agitation that were presented at the public meeting held at Kozhikode Town Hall on 22 January 1928.²⁷⁴

T. Subramanian Tirumumbu, a famous Congress leader and nationalist poet from North Malabar wrote in his memoirs about two incidents of that time that motivated him. These incidents were the brutal lathi charge against Lala Lajpat Rai and the Payyannur Conference in 1928.²⁷⁵ The Fourth Kerala Provincial Conference which was held at Payyannur in May 1928 was presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru.²⁷⁶ It was by this time, Nehru had become more than a politician in the United Provinces and one of the most popular politicians of his generation.²⁷⁷ At that time, Jawaharlal Nehru was the leader of the radical young Congressmen. At the same time, his father, Motilal Nehru was the leader of the old generation of moderate Congress leaders. This ideological difference between the father and son and the tales circulated about both Nehrus made a conference attended by Nehru a notable political event. It was the presence of Jawaharlal Nehru that attracted E. M. S Namboodiripad, a student from South Malabar to a conference held at Payyannur, which was located at the northern end of the Malabar District.²⁷⁸ When Nehru visited Payyannur, Lakshmi, Vishnu Bharatheeyan's wife expressed the wish to see Nehru. She had read a lot about Nehru. Finally, Bharatheeyan and Lakshmi left home on the pretext of going to visit the Guruvayur temple. She attended the conference along with Bharatheeyan.²⁷⁹ The table that was used by Nehru in the conference was put up for auction after the conference. The table was bought by Kunhiraman Adiyodi in the auction. Adiyodi was a *satyagrahi* who died in prison during the Civil Disobedience Movement. He was only 22 when he

²⁷³ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, pp. 143-147.

²⁷⁴ S. K. Pottakkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 200-201.

²⁷⁵ K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *T. S. Tirumump Smaranakal Kavithakal, (1928-1948)*, Thrissur, 1989, p.69.

²⁷⁶ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.* , p. 130.

²⁷⁷ Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography*, Vol. I (1889-1947), Delhi, 1981(1975), p. 119

²⁷⁸ EMS, *Aathmakatha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017, pp. 87-88.

²⁷⁹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.* , p. 27.

died.²⁸⁰ Remembering Nehru's speech at the Payyannur Conference, Vishnu Bharatheeyan said: 'every word in his speech was a blow to the foundation of British imperialism.'²⁸¹

The changes in people's attitudes were reflected in matters in their everyday lives like marriage and death. The wedding of M. M Lakshmikutti Amma, the sister-in-law of Vidwan P. Kelu Nair, a famous nationalist poet from Nileschwaram occurred in May 1928. A huge Congress flag flew near the *pandal* arranged for the guests. The venue of the wedding was decorated with Congress flags and photos of national leaders. The bride came to the wedding ceremony after offering prayers before Gandhi's photo. The bride strongly insisted that she needed a *khaddar* dress instead of the foreign mill cloth gifted by the groom as the *pudava* at the time of the wedding. At last, the groom, U. P Kunhiraman Nair accepted her demand. Many of the men and women, who accompanied the bride to the groom's house wore *khaddar*. The wedding gifts included a few *charkhas*.²⁸² On 18 April 1929, Vidwan P. Kelu Nair committed suicide due to some family issues. Kelu Nair committed suicide by lying on the national flag.²⁸³

The unprecedented momentum that was achieved by the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar was a natural culmination of this mentality shift. At the end of 1928, Subramanian Tirumumbu wrote a poem titled *Sannadhanmarayi* (We Are Ready) on the backdrop of Gandhi's call to self-rule for India within a year and if not he would launch a Disobedience struggle. This poem was published in the *Deshabandhu* Magazine founded by his brother, Unnikrishnan Tirumumbu. The theme of this poem is that the people are saying to Gandhi that they are prepared for the struggle.²⁸⁴ K. Gopalankutty has argued that that 'a period of regular nationalist activities' began in

²⁸⁰ T. V. Gopalan, *Kerala Bardoli*, Payyanur, 2013, p. 39. This table is preserved in Kunhiraman Adiyodi's ancestral house for his memory. Interview with A. V. Govindan Adiyodi(78), Payyannur, 25.9.2018.

²⁸¹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

²⁸² K. Balakrishnan Nambiar, *Vidwan P. Kelu Nair: Jeevithavum Krithikalum*, Thrissur, 2018(1992), pp. 94-95.

²⁸³ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014(1987), p. 93, P. Kunhiraman Nair, a famous Malayalam poet in his autobiography poetically narrates the suicide of Kelu Nair, who was his close friend and a fellow native. P. Kunhiraman Nair, *Kaviyute Kalpadukal*, Kottayam, 2020(2006), pp. 205-207

²⁸⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p.68.

Malabar during the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930.²⁸⁵ Fearlessness expressed by the *satyagrahis* was the main factor for the success of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar. A short Malayalam biography of C. R. Das by Moyarath Sankaran was published in 1923. In this work, Moyarath wrote that C. R. Das once said that the *satyagrahis* should overcome three kinds of fear: 'the fear of imprisonment', 'the fear of physical torture', and the 'fear of death'. The *satyagrahis* had successfully overcome the three kinds of fear during the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar.²⁸⁶

The most widely used tactic of the police to suppress the Civil Disobedience struggle was severely lathi-charging the *satyagrahis* by postponing their arrests to the maximum.²⁸⁷ In the early phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement, the police didn't show interest in arresting the *satyagrahis* and sending them to jail. In Kozhikode Town, continuously for months, the police had adopted the tactics of leaving the *satyagrahis* after lathi charging and caning without recording their arrest. For E. M. S, there were *satyagrahis* who were subjected to lathi-charge 40-50 times. E. M. S added that the police were testing the fortitude and the limit of endurance of the *satyagrahis*.²⁸⁸ Bipan Chandra has argued that there was nothing more shameful to the morale of the public school-educated British Civil Servants than *lathi* charging an unarmed man.²⁸⁹ A. K. Pillai says that courage, fortitude, and the love of the nation were the three qualities displayed by the Congress leaders of Malabar, which attracted the masses to the Civil Disobedience struggle.²⁹⁰ This made even the moderate political leaders the supporters of the Civil Disobedience struggle.²⁹¹ During the Civil Disobedience struggle, the most essential quality of a *satyagrahi* was the courage to suffer the lathi-charge. E. Moidu Maulavi recollects such an incident. On a day during the Civil

²⁸⁵ K. Gopalankutty, 'Mobilization Against the State and Not Against the Landlords: The Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. XXVI, no.4, 1989.

²⁸⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *Deshabandhu Das*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014(1923), p. 72. In the same work, Moyarath also says that man's major problem is the fear of death. He states that leaders like Gandhi and C. R. Das don't have the fear of death.

²⁸⁷ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

²⁸⁸ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018(1948), p. 294.

²⁸⁹ Bipan Chandra, *Indian National Movement: Long-Term Dynamics*, New Delhi, 2013, p. 71.

²⁹⁰ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

Disobedience struggle, A Muslim youth named Abdulla came and met Muhammad Abdu Rahman, to join as a volunteer in the Civil Disobedience Struggle. At the time of his visit, Abdu Rahman was reading the *Swaraj* newspaper. Abdu Rahman showed him the photos of some Congress volunteers in the newspaper, who fell unconscious after being brutally lathi-charged by the Madras police. The young man got a reply from Abdu Rahman that he could join the *satyagraha* only if he dared to endure tortures like this.²⁹²

The *satyagrahi* volunteer's health was destroyed and fell seriously ill and died prematurely as a result of the brutal lathi charges became the symbols of the Civil Disobedience struggle. A bruised body and injured and bleeding head became the identification marks of the *satyagrahis*.²⁹³ One K. M. Kunhiraman Nambiar from Purameri, who was severely beaten up during the Civil Disobedience Movement died in less than three years due to lung disease caused by the injuries from the brutal beating.²⁹⁴ Muthirakkal Ramankutti Panikkar and P. K Panikkar died as a result of severe beating in Kannur jail.²⁹⁵ P. C. Kunhiraman Adiyodi lost his hearing after being severely beaten up by the police during the Payyannur *Satyagraha*.²⁹⁶ V. P. Krishnan Nair lost his sight in one eye in the police lathi charge during the liquor shop picketing at Kanhangad.²⁹⁷ Two teeth of T. C. V. Kunhirama Poduval fell out in the lathi-charge during the Salt *Satyagraha*.²⁹⁸ M. G. S Narayanan, an eminent Malayali historian recounts in his autobiography about his elder uncle's son, Narayankutti, a Congress volunteer who was severely beaten up by the police and died of health problems caused by the beating.²⁹⁹ Kunhali, the protagonist of S. K. Pottekatt's short story, *Ozhinha Kattil* (The Empty Cot) was a small tea shop owner who was brutally beaten up by the police for participating in the Civil Disobedience struggle. Kunhali's ribs are broken in the lathi charge. He is affected by severe chest pain and a chronic cough. He

²⁹² E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, p. 153.

²⁹³ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

²⁹⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *Aathmakatha*, pp. 175-176.

²⁹⁵ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *Athyuthara Keralam Swathanthrya Samarathil*, Payyannur (the year of publication not available), p.68.

²⁹⁶ K. K. N. Kurup (ed.), *Swathanthrya Samaram Kasargod Talukkil (Smaranika)*, Kodakkad, 1984, p. 34.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

²⁹⁸ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

²⁹⁹ M. G. S. Narayanan, *Jalakangal: Oru Charithranweshiyude Vazhikal Kazhchakal*, Thrissur, 2018, p. 14.

is forced to shut down his tea shop business. After his premature death, his wife and children are thrown into destitution.³⁰⁰

The most notorious lathi charge during the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar took place on 12 May 1930, at Kozhikode Beach. On that day, Congress leaders including K. Kelappan, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer, Madhavanar and P. Krishna Pillai were brutally beaten up by the police. In this infamous incident, apart from beating with lathis, other methods of torture like beating with bare hands and kicking with boots were also experimented on the *satyagrahis* by the police.³⁰¹ The police atrocities of that day lasted for an hour.³⁰² Police atrocities of that day and the courage, forbearance, and spirit of suffering expressed by the *satyagrahis* attracted the attention of the whole public in Kozhikode Town towards the Salt *Satyagraha*. It was after this incident, that the Civil Disobedience Movement gained tremendous public support in Malabar.³⁰³ The brutal lathi charges against the *satyagrahis* created huge public sympathy in favour of the *satyagrahis*. Most of the time, the public were the eyewitnesses of these lathi charges. P. S. Namboodiri was a member of a *jatha*, which had 13 members and was started from Valiyangadi, Kozhikode in August 1932. On that day, when the police were lathi charging the volunteers in the *jatha*, an old Muslim man, who was on the spot, pulled out a knife from his waist, raised it to the policemen, and said: *Pasumvenna poleyulla ee makkale ningal enthanda kaattanath* ('what are you doing to these tender kids').³⁰⁴

Often, *satyagrahis* fell unconscious due to the severity of the beating. Sardar Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair who received lathi blows fell unconscious during the police lathi charge against the *satyagrahis* at Thalassery Beach.³⁰⁵ P. S. Namboodiri also fell unconscious during a lathi charge in Kozhikode.³⁰⁶ K. Madhavan Nair, in a statement, praised Kuttikrishna Panikkar, who fell being beaten by the police but got

³⁰⁰ S. K. Pottekkatt, *Pottekkatinte Kathakal Sampooranam*, Vol. I, Kottayam, 2014, (2013), pp. 211-214. This story was originally published in the *Mathrubhumi weekly* in 1939.

³⁰¹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-147.

³⁰² P. K. K. Menon, *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, Vol. II(1885-1938), Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p. 192.

³⁰³ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

³⁰⁴ P. S. Namboodiri, *Njanum Ente Vazhikalum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, pp. 59-60.

³⁰⁵ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *op. cit.*, p.68.

³⁰⁶ P. S. Namboodiri, *op. cit.*, p.60.

up and continued his speech and he continued his act despite being beaten by the police again and again.³⁰⁷ Some students were brutally lathi-charged by the police at Kozhikode Beach on 7 July 1930. Their head was injured and their hands and legs got fractured in the lathi charge.³⁰⁸ Many police officers of that time were notorious as cruel torturers. They assaulted the *satyagrahis* very cruelly. The Government brought E. V. Amu, the Deputy Superintendent of Police who was notorious for suppressing the rebellion of 1921, to Kozhikode from Palakkad. Amu led the brutal lathi charges against the *satyagrahis* in Kozhikode.³⁰⁹ Krishna Kurup and Chandu Nair were two police inspectors, who were notorious for their atrocities committed against the *satyagrahis* of Payyannur. The *satyagrahis* were brutally beaten up by them.³¹⁰ During the lathi charges, the police targeted the Congress leaders, to whom the government had a special grudge. Muhammad Abdu Rahman was specifically targeted during the lathi charges at Kozhikode Beach.³¹¹ Congress volunteer captain, E. C. Kunhikannan Nambiar's hand got fractured in a lathi charge.³¹² The lathis used by the police at that time were much heavier. The policemen used these to poke the picketers on their back, between the ribs, and chest.³¹³ The policemen didn't make any arrangements to provide medical care for the *satyagrahis*, who were injured in the lathi -charges. They were not admitted to Government hospitals. Moreover, the number of *satyagrahis*, who were injured in lathi charges every day was very high. Thus, admitting all of them at a time in the hospital was impossible.³¹⁴ A 'People's Hospital' was opened to take care of the *satyagrahis*, who were injured in the lathi charges. The leaders like Muhammad Abdu Rahman were the promoters of this hospital and Manju Nath Rao was its chief organizer.³¹⁵ The *satyagrahis* removed the pain of injuries by applying heat with turpentine on the injuries on their body.³¹⁶ The Congressmen who succeeded to bear the extreme tortures of the police during the Civil Disobedience

³⁰⁷ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

³⁰⁸ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

³⁰⁹ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, pp. 180-181.

³¹⁰ Moyarath Sankaran, *Aathmakatha*, p. 176.

³¹¹ K. Madhava Menon, 'Kesu Vicharana: Niyamalanganavum Neethinyayavum', *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 18 October 1970.

³¹² C. K. Gopalan, *Quit India Samaravum Njanum*, Kozhikode, 2000(1997), p. 38.

³¹³ Puthupally Raghavan, *Vipalava Smarankal*, Part I, Kottayam, 1992, p. 123.

³¹⁴ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-176.

³¹⁵ P. S. Namboodiri, *op. cit.*

³¹⁶ Puthupally Raghavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

struggle completely lost the fear of the police. They began to think that there would be nothing more to come. Cherukad recounts that he once told his *Kunjammaman* (younger uncle) that 'Congressmen were not sacred of the police.'³¹⁷

The youth began to consider that they were fortunate if they had an opportunity to suffer imprisonment by participating in the Civil Disobedience struggle. After the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in March 1931, thousands of young men, who were disappointed as they didn't get a chance to go to jail began to join as volunteers for picketing with the willingness to face imprisonment. The common people had a belief that something lacking in the Congressmen, who didn't go to jail, whatever their other contributions were. Educated youth had a feeling that they had to do something for freedom. Thus, going to jail and serving imprisonment was a way for them to fulfil their urge.³¹⁸ A. K. Gopalan says that in those days 'suffering imprisonment was the certificate of patriotism.'³¹⁹ Even the students began to feel that they would become mature men if they go to jail. K. Madhavan was only 15 when he was arrested for picketing the liquor shop at Kallayi in August 1930. But he went to jail instead of going to the Borstal School, lying to the Magistrate that his age was 19.³²⁰ Many Congress leaders had more interest in serving imprisonment than in suffering lathi charges by participating in picketing. According to N. C. Sekhar, Congress leaders like Kongattil Raman Menon were an example of this. Congress leaders like Raman Menon were disinterested in facing a lathi charge but were always ready to face arrest and serve imprisonment.³²¹ E. M. S Namboodiripad states that the young Congressmen, who suffered brutal lathi charges and 'C' class imprisonment began to part away emotionally from the Congress leaders whose sufferings were comparatively minimal. He has added that the roots of the leftist-rightist struggle in the Congress, which intensified after 1934 lie in this.³²² The people began to empathize with the Congress leaders when they were arrested from their houses like notorious criminals and publicly humiliated them. When the

³¹⁷ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, Thrissur, 2013(1974), p. 204.

³¹⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People: Reminiscences*, Madras, 1973, p. 19.

³¹⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, Kozhikode, 2016, p. 37.

³²⁰ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp.69-73.

³²¹ N. C. Sekhar, *Agniveedhikal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010(1987), p. 81. Sekhar strongly criticizes the Congress leaders like Kurur Neelakantan Namboodiripad and Kongattil Raman Menon, who cruelly ignored the volunteers injured in lathi charges.

³²² EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*.

police arrested A. C. Kannan Nair from his house like a 'criminal' and publicly insulted him, many people joined the Civil Disobedience campaign following his path.³²³

The attitudes and mentalities of women also changed. A man with the marks of lathi blows on his body became the most beautiful man from a woman's perspective. Going to jail was considered as the eligibility of a suitable groom.³²⁴ K. A. Damodara Menon came to Palakkad from Rangoon to become a volunteer in the Civil Disobedience struggle, abandoning his studies. On his way to Keralam, he happened to hear a speech by Sardar Vallabhai Patel at a public meeting in Surat. One of Menon's Gujarati friends translated to him a statement in Patel's speech. In his speech, Patel advised Indian girls to make sure that there were marks of lathi blows on the groom's body and if not cancel the marriage.³²⁵ Damodara Menon got off the train at Palakkad in the Malabar district. On the very same day, he attended a Congress meeting held there. The people who attended the meeting, including Damodara Menon were cruelly lathi-charged by the police. The lathi charge was led by D. S. P, Amu. Due to the severity of the lathi blows, lumps appeared on several parts of Damodara Menon's body. He felt pain. Menon says: 'However, I felt a relief because I have got the eligibility of a groom that Patel has said.'³²⁶ This change in the mentality of the youth was also reflected in romance and influenced things like the selection of lovers. College students started to love the girls, who wore *khaddar* dresses. Young men began to feel that their girlfriends were looking more beautiful in *khaddar* saris.³²⁷ Annamma, the heroine of Vaikom Muhammad Basheer's short story, *Oru Jayilpulliyude Chithram* (The Portrait of a Prisoner) loves Joseph, a freedom fighter who is in jail, whom she hasn't met even once.³²⁸

³²³ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p.67.

³²⁴ K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, p.67.

³²⁵ K. A. Damodara Menon, *Thirinja Nokkumbol*, Kottayam, 1981, pp. 40-41.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42. A decade after this incident, during the Second World War, K. A. Damodara Menon married Leela Damodara Menon, who later became a famous woman Congress leader of Keralam. Those lumps caused by the lathi blows were still on Damodara Menon's body. He still felt pain when touching them. Thus, Damodara Menon explained to Leela about the eligibility of a suitable groom that was proposed by Patel. Leela Damodara Menon, *Chettante Nizhalil*, Kottayam, 1984, p. 52.

³²⁷ M. S. Devadas, *Jeevithathinte Thaalukal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1990, p. 139.

³²⁸ Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, *Basheer Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. I, Kottayam, 2016, (1992), pp. 277-290. S. K. Pottekatt's novel *Oru Deshathante Katha* and his short stories like *Vipalavabeejam* refer to the changes in the mentality of women. Nani, the heroine of Cherukad's famous novel

The *satyagrahis*, who suffered imprisonment were not treated by society as ex-convicts or ex-prisoners. Parents began to take the initiative to marry off their daughters to the *satyagraha*, who served imprisonment for taking part in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Kunhammbu Adiyodi met Subramanian Tirumumbu in jail when they were serving imprisonment for participating in the Salt *Satyagraha*. After their release, Kunhammbu Adiyodi married off his niece, Karthiyanikutti Amma to Subramanian Tirumubmbu.³²⁹ Participation in the Civil Disobedience struggle became a token of masculinity. The incidents of sending glass bangles, worn only by women, to taunt the men who hesitated to join the Civil Disobedience struggle were common at that time.³³⁰

The craze for ornaments and colourful clothes was lessened. Even the women of elite families began to renounce their ornaments and started to wear rough *khaddar* clothes by abandoning soft and colorful mill clothes.³³¹ Balamani Amma, a famous Malayalam poetess and a member of the famous Nalapattu family wore a *khaddar* sari even at the time of her wedding.³³² Kaumudi, a 16-year-old girl, voluntarily donated her whole ornaments to Gandhi's *Harijan Sahaya Nidhi*. Kaumudi was the daughter of Rama Varma Raja, a member of the Kadattanad royal family, and Devaki, who belonged to the Chirakkal royal family.³³³ The first incident when women courted arrest and suffered imprisonment as part of the freedom struggle in Kerala took place during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Women enthusiastically participated in

Muthassi is longing to meet a Congressman and to become a Congress activist. P. K. P. Namboodiri, a character in Lalithambika Antharjanam's novel *Agnisakshi* has joined the satyagraha movement sacrificing his love for Thankam. Cherukad, *Muthassi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018(1957), p. 51., Lalithambika Antharjanam, *Agnisakshi*, Kottayam, 2017(1976), pp. 33-34.

³²⁹ Karthiyanikutti Amma, *Thirumumbinoppam*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2006, pp. 40-41.

³³⁰ V. R. Menon, *Op. cit.* p. 266.

³³¹ Madhavikutty, *Balayakalasmarrankal*, Kottayam, 2017 (1987), pp. 13&26.

³³² Madhavikutty, *Januvamma Paranja Katha*, Thrissur, 2019(2002), p. 18. Wearing a cotton saree became a luxury even for the women who were sympathetic towards the National Movement but never took part in it directly. Once during her childhood, when Madhavikutty, Balamani Amma's daughter and a famous Malayalam writer cried to wear a silk frock, her father said: 'look, your mother wears only *khaddar*. Being crazy about luxury isn't good.' Madhavikutty, *Varshangalkku Munpu*, Thrissur, 2017(1989), pp. 42-43.

³³³ Kureepuzha Francis, *Kaumudi Teacher: Thyagathinte Nilavu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017, p. 11; Guru Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair and Aneesh Kuttan, *Jeevitharasangal*, Kozhikode, 2015(2012), pp. 54-55.

the campaigns like picketing and courted arrest and went to prison.³³⁴ Often, the valour expressed by young men, who took part in the *satyagraha* attracted the attention of women to the Civil Disobedience struggle. For instance, Devi, the niece of veteran Congress leader, K. Kelappan, participated in the picketing, courted arrest, and suffered imprisonment when she was very young. Devi joined the Civil Disobedience struggle as she was inspired by an incident when two young men shouted *Bharat mata ki jai* despite they were being brutally beaten up by the police during picketing and blood dropped from their bodies.³³⁵

For Bipan Chandra, the sufferings during the Civil Disobedience *satyagraha* included imprisonment, lathi charges (often brutal), heavy fines, auction and confiscation of property, and the separation from aged parents, children, and wives. Separation from aged parents and children was a major problem of *satyagrahis*.³³⁶ Things like a son going for picketing where he was being brutally lathi-charged by the police and suffering imprisonment were very painful for a mother. During the freedom movement, mothers were the weakness of many notable political leaders of Kerala. The plot of Vaikom Muhammad Basheer's short story *Amma* (Mother) is relevant in this regard. This story was based on Basheer's real-life experiences as Basheer himself was a *satyagrahi*, who took part in the Civil Disobedience struggle and suffered imprisonment. This story is about his *Umma* (mother). When Basheer was in jail, his mother used to wait for him every night without sleeping and preparing food for him expecting that her son would return anytime.³³⁷ Many similar incidents can be found in the autobiographies of the political leaders, who took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement. E. M. S Namboodiripad, who lost his father very early was emotionally close to his mother.³³⁸ In 1932, when E. M. S decided to go to Kozhikode and to court arrest by participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement, his mother tried to dissuade him. But when she came to realize that her son was firm in his decision, she

³³⁴ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-216.

³³⁵ K. Lakshmi, 'Devaki Enna Devaki Amma', in *Kerala Gandhi Kelappan 125-aam Janmadina Varshika Smaranika*, Koyappalli Travad Paripalana Trust, Thurayur, 2014, pp. 145-146.

³³⁶ Bipan Chandra, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

³³⁷ Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, *op. cit.*, pp. 293-304.

³³⁸ EMS, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

accepted his decision.³³⁹ At last, E. M. S's mother wrote a letter blessing him, who was in jail. It was the first and last letter written by his mother to him in his entire life.³⁴⁰ A. K. Gopalan says that though, his mother didn't like he was going to jail, she knew that it was part of his political life.³⁴¹ It was after seeking permission from their mothers, that each *satyagrahi* left home to take part in the Civil Disobedience Movement.³⁴²

K. Madhavan Nair claimed in a statement that most of the *janmis* and the entire *janmi* youth of Malabar, either publicly or secretly, supported the Civil Disobedience Movement.³⁴³ The Civil Disobedience Movement attracted the *janmi* youth of Malabar. K. T. Kunhiraman Nambiar, one of the main leaders of the Civil Disobedience struggle in Malabar was a member of Koodali Thazhahth *taravad*, a prominent landlord family in North Malabar and was the son of Echikkanam Koran Nair, a prominent landlord.³⁴⁴ T. Subramanian Tirumumbu belonged to Thazhekattumana, a wealthy Nambudiri landowning family near Payyanur of North Malabar.³⁴⁵ Likewise, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, who entered to active politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement was a member of Elamkulammana, a prominent Namboodiri landowning family in South Malabar.³⁴⁶ K. Madhavan was the son of Echikkanam Chirakkara Raman Nair, a landlord who belonged to Echikkanam *taravad*, a prominent landowning family at Madikkai in Kasargod *Taluk*. K. Madhavan was only 15 when he took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement. K. Kelappan's attempt to send Madhavan back home by convincing him about the terrible side of the Civil Disobedience struggle and the sufferings of a *satyagrahi* failed.³⁴⁷

The *adhikaris* were the heads of village administration in Colonial Malabar. They were the representatives of the Colonial British Government in the villages. They were the omnipotents of a village, who enjoyed all kinds of civil and criminal powers over the

³³⁹ E. M. Radha, *EM. S: Makalude Ormakal*, Kottayam, 2018, p. 19.

³⁴⁰ EMS, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

³⁴¹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithakatha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015(1980), p.6.

³⁴² N. C. Sekhar, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

³⁴³ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 150-151.

³⁴⁴ C. H. Kunhappa, *Smaranakal Mathram*, Thrissur, 2000(1981), p. 161

³⁴⁵ R. K. Mannur, *T. S. Tirumumbu: Jeevithavum Krithikalum*, Thrissur, 2008, pp. 20-25.

³⁴⁶ EMS, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-26.

³⁴⁷ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p.60.

people of that village.³⁴⁸ In most cases, *adhikaris* were the members of the most prominent landowning families of a village. They had shown extreme loyalty to the British Empire. For an ordinary villager, *adhikari* was the symbol and representative of the British Empire. Moyarath Sankaran remembers: “it was through my knowledge of *adhikaris* in the remote village during my salad days that I grew to hate the British Government for the first time.”³⁴⁹ Even the attitude of a section of *adhikaris* had changed during the Civil Disobedience struggle. In some places, the reception for the salt satyagraha *jatha* led by Kelappan was arranged at the behest of *adhikaris*. Due to this, a few *adhikaris* were suspended before the *jatha*, which started from Kozhikode reached Payyanur. The *adhikari* of Balussery and the *adhikari* of Nadavannur were dismissed from service for arranging receptions for the salt satyagraha *jatha*.³⁵⁰ Edamana Ilath Vishnu Namboodiri, a prominent landlord and the *adhikari* of Kadannapalli near Payyannur, donated a sum to the Salt *Satyagraha* fund on behalf of the *Namboodiri Yuvajanasangham*, of which he was a leader. Knowing this, the Government asked for an explanation from him. But he resigned by giving an explanation that what he did was his duty to his country.³⁵¹

Some young Congress leaders, who entered into active politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement were the sons of *adhikaris*. K. P. R. Gopalan, a famous peasant-trade union leader from Malabar was the son of Rayarappan Nayanar, the *adhikari* of Kalliasseri in North Malabar.³⁵² V. P. Kunhiraman Nayanar, father of famous peasant leader K. A. Keraleeyan was also an *adhikari*.³⁵³ C. H. Kunhappa states that some Government officials, by their heart, were with the Civil Disobedience struggle.³⁵⁴ Landlords and Government officials were the most loyalists of the British Empire. Thus, it was a clear sign of the changing attitudes that a section of them supported the Civil Disobedience struggle, directly or indirectly.

³⁴⁸ Thikkodian, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

³⁴⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, p. 38.

³⁵⁰ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, pp. 21-22., C. H. Kunhappa, *Op. cit.* p. 161.

³⁵¹ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

³⁵² Sarada Teacher, *Ormakalil Ente Priyasakhavu*, Kottayam, 2016, p. 16.

³⁵³ K. K. N. Kurup, *K. A. Keraleeyan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015, p. 20.

³⁵⁴ C. H. Kunhappa, *op. cit.*

There were many youths, who had abandoned their jobs and given up legal practice to take part in the Civil Disobedience struggle.³⁵⁵ Most of them never rejoined their jobs or fetched any other jobs for a livelihood. C. K. Govindan Nair, who had good practice as a lawyer, gave up his legal practice and joined the Civil Disobedience struggle. However, he did not resume his legal practice but became a full-time politician even after the Movement ended.³⁵⁵ K.P.R.Gopalan, who was a clerk in the Registration Department had resigned from his job to participate in the Civil Disobedience struggle. He became a full-time Congress worker even though he was advised by his father to rejoin the job.³⁵⁶ K. A. Damodara Menon, who had come to Malabar by abandoning his studies in Rangoon never returned to Rangoon or to his home. After studying law at the Law College, Thiruvananthapuram, Damodara Menon came to Kozhikode to take over as the editor of the *Mathrubhumi*. Menon devoted the rest of his life to active Congress work and the running of the *Mathrubhumi*.³⁵⁷ Notably, a few prominent leaders like K. Madhavan Nair and U. Gopala Menon resumed their legal practice after the end of the Non-Co-operation Movement. Though the Civil Disobedience Movement failed to achieve its proclaimed goal, the Congress leaders didn't follow the model Madhavan Nair and Gopala Menon set earlier. The administrative reforms introduced by the Government in the years that followed the Civil Disobedience struggle opened new opportunities for the Congress leaders. The feeling that the power would come into the hands of Congress soon was also a reason. After 1934, when the senior Congress leaders had devoted their attention to electoral politics, the young generation of the Congress in Malabar worked at the grassroots level, organizing peasants and workers.

2.10. A Broken Dream

Revolutionary terrorism was one of the ideologies that fascinated the Indian youth the most in the 20th century. Sumit Sarkar also explained the prehistory of revolutionary terrorism in Bengal from the 1860s to 1870s, showing how revolutionary terrorism took root in colonial Bengal.³⁵⁸ The birthplace of revolutionary terrorism was Bengal,

³⁵⁵ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp., 141-142.

³⁵⁶ Anil Kumar. A. V., *K. P. R. Gopalan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2001, pp. 10-12.

³⁵⁷ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-66.

³⁵⁸ Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908*, Ranikhet, 2010 (1973), pp. 395-418.

from where it spread to other parts of Colonial India. Moyarath Sankaran joined the National Medical College, Calcutta in January 1913. Moyarath recounts those years as a period when the revolutionary terrorists, by the use of guns and bombs, made Bengal politics turbulent.³⁵⁹ However, he asserts that he was disinterested in the ideology of revolutionary terrorism because he was always doubtful about its practicability in India.³⁶⁰ But as Calcutta was a hub of revolutionary terrorists at that time, the police suspected that Moyarath Sankaran also had links with the revolutionary terrorists in Bengal and the police passed this information to his parents. Consequently, Moyarath Sankaran's parents and relatives forced him to return home, lying that his mother and grandmother were seriously ill.³⁶¹

It was the youth and students who were attracted to the ideology of revolutionary terrorism the most. According to one of his biographers, K. Kelappan who was a prominent Congress leader and ardent Gandhian from Malabar, had attended one or two classes conducted for giving training for making bombs, while he was studying at the Samutiri College, Kozhikode.³⁶² At the beginning of the 1920s, even during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement led by Gandhi, many youths in India believed that Gandhian non-violence was not the only way to freedom. During the Non-Co-operation Movement, under the leadership of V. M Vishnu Bharatheeyan, who was the secretary of the *Khilafat*- Congress committee of Kunhimangalam in North Malabar, a group including two or three other men plotted to destroy bridges and remove railway lines. But their attempt ended as a total failure as the information was somehow leaked to the police and they arrested all the important leaders of the revolutionary group including Bharatheeyan.³⁶³ Thus, in the initial phase of the revolutionary terrorism in India, it failed to grow into a movement in Malabar and it didn't have any notable ideological influence on the youth of Malabar.

³⁵⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, pp. 45-48.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³⁶² C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, p. 38.

³⁶³ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.* pp. 32-33. However, Bharatheeyan did not say that their attempt was influenced by the ideology of revolutionary terrorism.

In the 1920s, revolutionary terrorists became popular heroes in North India.³⁶⁴ The politics of Bhagat Singh and his Hindustan Socialist Republican Association drew nationwide attention and public sympathy.³⁶⁵ There were widespread protests also in Malabar against the execution of Bhagat Singh and his comrades that took place on 23 March 1931. A complete *hartal* was observed and a mourning procession was held in Kozhikode Town. It was a National Day of Mourning in most of the places of Malabar like Kannur, Taliparamba, and Palakkad.³⁶⁶ The people including students took part in the protests. In Payyannur, the protest of the students against the execution of Bhagat Singh was led by Subramania Shenoy, who later became a famous Communist leader.³⁶⁷ Shenoy was expelled from his school, for hoisting the national flag in place of the Union Jack that was hoisted at the school ground as part of the scout program.³⁶⁸ In protest against Bhagat Singh's execution, Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair, a soldier who earned the title *Sardar* for his distinguished service resigned from the British Indian Army.³⁶⁹ Vaikom Muhammad Basheer recounts that he and his co-prisoners in Kannur Jail observed a fast on the day when Bhagat Singh and his comrades were hanged.³⁷⁰ As a tribute to the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh and his comrades, K. P. R. Gopalan wrote the poem *Poye Bharatha Simhangal* (The Indian Lions have left). In this poem, Gopalan urges that 'our blood is boiling for taking revenge.'³⁷¹

The young Congressmen of Malabar, who went to jail for participating in the Civil Disobedience struggle came into contact with the revolutionary terrorists from different parts of India, who were detained in Kannur Jail. Most of these young

³⁶⁴ Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*, Hyderabad, 2009(1979), p. 228. We are indebted to Bipan Chandra for his sincere attempts to study the ideology and politics of Bhagat Singh, and the revolutionary terrorism in Colonial North India in the 1920s. He has analysed the writings of Bhagat Singh including 'Why I am an Atheist'. Bipan Chandra, *Ideology and Politics in Modern India*, New Delhi, 1994.

³⁶⁵ S. Irfan Habib, *To Make the Deaf Hear: Ideology and Programme of Bhagat Singh and His Comrades*, New Delhi, 2015 (2007).

³⁶⁶ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 304. In a meeting held by the Thiruvananthapuram District Congress Committee to protest against the execution of Bhagat Singh, G. Ramachandran, an ardent Gandhian from Keralam, criticized Gandhi as he was failed to save Bhagat Singh's life. Pattom G. Ramachandran Nair, *N. P. Kurukkal: Oru Samarethihasam*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, pp. 52-53.

³⁶⁷ Keecheri Raghavan, Subramanya Shenoy, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015, p. 21.

³⁶⁸ T. V. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-52.

³⁶⁹ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

³⁷⁰ Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, *Basheer Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. II, Kottayam, 2016, (1992), p. 1530.

³⁷¹ Andalath, *Swathanthrya Samarageethangal*, New Delhi, 1997, p. 46.

Congressmen later became Communists. The autobiographies and memoirs of these young Congressmen refer to the ideological influence of revolutionary terrorism on them.³⁷² The members of all important revolutionary groups including the Anushilan group, H. S. R. A, and the accused in the Kakori Conspiracy Case were in Kannur Jail. Some of them noted down their names on the walls of the cells. The names of a few revolutionaries were written like this on the wall of the cell allotted to Puthupally Raghavan in Jail.³⁷³ While E. M. S Namboodiripad, who was arrested during the Civil Disobedience struggle was serving imprisonment in Kannur Jail, there were four important leaders of revolutionary terrorist groups in India in the same jail as his co-prisoners. One of them was Kamal Nath Tewari, who was convicted in the Lahore Conspiracy case. To keep them out of Bengal, the Government detained the revolutionary terrorists in various prisons in South India. Three important leaders of the Anushilan group were imprisoned in Kannur Jail. Kiran Chandra Das, the brother of the famous martyr Jatin Das was also a co-prisoner of E. M. S in Kannur Jail.³⁷⁴ The top leaders of the Anushilan group in Bengal, detained in Kannur jail, were R. M. Sengupta, T. N. Chakrabarty, and R. C. Acharya. E. M. S also met Jaya Dev Kapur, a friend and comrade of Bhagat Singh in Vellore Jail. Later, Kamal Nath Tewari was shifted to Vellore Jail, where he came into contact with radical Congressmen. Tewari formed a five-member revolutionary group in Vellore Jail. Gopal Reddy from Andhra, C. Subramaniam from Tamil Nadu, E. M. S. Namoodiripad and K. C. Gopalanunni from Keralam were its members. It is interesting that C. K. Govindan Nair, a Gandhian Congress leader, and an anti-Communist was a also member of this group.³⁷⁵ The Congress leaders in Malabar, who continued in the Congress after 1934, also met these revolutionary terrorists in jail and interacted with them. K. A. Damodara Menon came into contact with Tewari and Acharya in Kannur jail and discussed with them

³⁷² Autobiographies and memoirs of the revolutionary terrorists were the most important sources used by Durba Ghosh for his recent study on revolutionary terrorism in India. According to Sumit Sarkar, the major problem he faced, while studying the history of the revolutionary terrorism in Bengal was the non-availability of reliable source materials. Kama Maclean's study on the revolutionary terrorism in inter-war India is based on a variety of source materials, which include archival, oral, and visual evidence. Durba Ghosh, *Gentlemanly Terrorists: Political Violence and the Colonial State in India, 1919-1947*, New Delhi, 2017; Kama Maclean, *A Revolutionary History of Interwar India: Violence, Image, Voice and Text*, Gurgaon, 2015.

³⁷³ Puthupally Raghavan, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

³⁷⁴ EMS, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-154.

³⁷⁵ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012(1987), pp. 51-52.

topics like revolutionary terrorism, socialist ideology, and various other political and economic issues.³⁷⁶

After their release from jail, a few young Congressmen of Malabar attempted to form a terrorist group and organize some revolutionary activities. The planning for this began, while they were in jail. They decided to collect arms, acquire the training to handle them and kill the notorious British officials and police officers. For this, the Bengali prisoners provided directions to them. They also decided to arrange arms from Bengal and conduct arms training in Kodagu.³⁷⁷ To discuss this, a meeting was held at Bharatheeya Mandiram, Vishnu Bharatheeyan's house at Naniyur in the second week of February 1934. K. P. Gopalan and K. A. Keraleeyan, who later become notable communist leaders were present in the meeting. The meeting decided to send K. P. Gopalan to Calcutta to collect arms and to conduct arms training in Koadagu. But they had to abandon the plan as the information was leaked to the police by a betrayer.³⁷⁸ K. A. Keraleeyan has admitted that 'I and some of my friends at that time, who were active Congress workers believed in revolutionary terrorism.'³⁷⁹

A. V. Kunhambu, when he was put in the Condemned Cell in Kannur Jail for misbehaving with the jail authorities met Bachlal, a comrade of Bhagat Singh and a member of H. S. R. A. Bachlal was the inmate of the neighbouring cell of Kunhambu. Kunhambu began to rethink after the interaction and discussions with Bachlal.³⁸⁰ After his release, Kunhambu and C. V. Kunhiraman Nair plotted to murder the District Collector of Malabar, who was visiting Payyannur. For this purpose, they managed to acquire a country gun. But the Murder attempt failed. Knowing about this incident, P. Krishna Pillai met Kunhambu and brought him to the leadership of the peasant movement in Malabar, convincing him about the differences between an organized political movement and the revolutionary terrorism based on individual bravery and heroism.³⁸¹ However, the biographer of P. Krishna Pillai states that after his release

³⁷⁶ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

³⁷⁷ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p.66.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.67-69.

³⁷⁹ K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Communist Partiyilekku Njan Nadannethiya Vazhi', In K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, Kozhikode, 2014, p. 302.

³⁸⁰ A. V. Kunhambu, *Kayyurum Karivellurum*, Payyanur, 2013(1986), pp.66-67.

³⁸¹ M. N. Kurup, *Kunjambuvinte Katha*, Kottayam, 1982, pp. 128-131.

from jail, Krishna Pillai himself was involved in some activities related to revolutionary terrorism. After his release, Krishna Pillai took membership in *the Anushilan Samiti*. He also established a branch of *Anushilan Samiti* in Keralam. P. Krishna Pillai and K. P. Gopalan were caught by the police from Kozhikode, on a night, when they were sticking a wall poster of the *Anushilan Samiti*.³⁸² They escaped from the police after a minor scuffle. A. K. Gopalan says that by the interaction with the revolutionary terrorists in jail, he too inclined to the ideology of revolutionary terrorism.³⁸³

An attempt to form a revolutionary terrorist group in Keralam was made by Vaikkom Muhammad Basheer, an eminent Malayalam writer, and a few of his friends. Basheer was attracted to revolutionary terrorism, while he was serving imprisonment for participating in the Civil Disobedience struggle. Growing moustache in the style of Bhagat Singh was a trend among the Indian youth at that time. Basheer says that, when he walked out of prison, he had a moustache like Bhagat Singh.³⁸⁴ After his release, Basheer along with P. A. Sainuddin, a Congress leader, whom he met in Kannur jail, started the newspaper, *Ujjivanam*. It was the mouthpiece of the revolutionary terrorist group in Keralam. Basheer was assisted by K. S. Divakaran in such activities.³⁸⁵

Basheer along with T. K. Varghese Vaidyan, who later became a famous Communist leader, P. Kesva Dev, a famous Malayalam writer, and two other young men, K. S. Divakaran and Hameed formed the Kerala Republican Army (K. R. A) in the model of Bhagat Singh's H. S. R. A. The activities of this revolutionary group were based in Mattanchery. Basheer and his friends prepared more than a hundred wall posters containing revolutionary slogans and put them up in different areas of British Kochi and Mattanchery. K. S. Divakaran stole acid from the T. D. High School Laboratory, Kochi, and it was used by the revolutionary group for destroying postal materials at the Head Post Office, British Kochi. The police who came to know about the activities of the revolutionary group reacted quickly. They arrested and interrogated Varghese Vaidyan and ordered him to leave Kochi. Fearing arrest, Basheer also left Kochi

³⁸² T. V. K, *Sakhavu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017(1975), pp. 34-35.

³⁸³ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, pp. 57-58.

³⁸⁴ Vaikkom Muhammad Basheer, *Basheer Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. II, p. 1530.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1648-1649.

hurriedly after the incident.³⁸⁶ Varghese Vaidyan says, 'we did this just because of excitement.'³⁸⁷ But the police took the matter seriously because they feared that the activities as part of the revolutionary politics in Bengal and Punjab also began in Kerala.³⁸⁸ Revolutionary terrorism was an ideology that the colonial British Government in India had feared the most.

Thus, in short, the establishment of a revolutionary terrorist group in Malabar remained as only a dream of a few young men. It couldn't grow as a movement in Malabar. However, revolutionary terrorism ideologically influenced a few political movements and organizations in Malabar that began after the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Immediately after his release from jail, deriving inspiration from the ideology of Bhagat Singh and revolutionary terrorism, A. V. Kunhambu established the *Abhinav Bharat Yuvak Sangham*, bringing together the youth in Karivellur and adjacent villages. The membership was given only to the youth below 25.³⁸⁹ The football team sponsored by the *Yuvak Sangham* was named by Kunhambu as the 'Bhagat Memorial Football Team.'³⁹⁰ C. H. Kanaran, a prominent Communist leader from Malabar came into contact with the revolutionary terrorists in jail when he was serving imprisonment for participating in the Civil Disobedience struggle. It was by the influence of the ideology of revolutionary terrorism C. H. Kanaran established *Swathanthra Chintha Samajam* (The Organization for Free Thinking) to promote atheist and rationalist thoughts in society.³⁹¹

³⁸⁶ Varghese Vaidyan and Cheriyan Kalpakavadi, *Varghese Vaidyante Athmakatha*, Kottayam, 2015, pp. 24-28.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.* There is a short description of Basheer's link with revolutionary politics in the biography of Basheer written by M. K. Sanu. M. K. Sanu, *Basheer: Ekantha Veedhiyile Avadhoothan*, Kottayam, 2018(2007), pp. 19-21. A few of Basheer's short stories like *Pazhaya Oru Kochu Premakatha*, *Nilavu Kanumbol*, and *Communist Den* also refer to this almost unknown episode in Basheer's eventful life.

³⁸⁹ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-133. When the membership of the *Yuvak Sangham* was denied to Subramanian Tirumumbu for the reason that his age was above 25, to express his protest, Tirumumbu wrote the famous poem, *Thala Narkkuvathallente...*

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 136-138.

³⁹¹ G. D. Nair, *C. H. Kanaran: Jeevithavum Samaravum*, Kozhikode, 2015, pp. 29-31. ; Andalat, C. H. *Kanaran: Kaalam Varthedutha Rashtreeya Prathibha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, pp. 50-56.

Bhagat Singh was not only a hero of the Indian Freedom Movement but also one of the early Marxist thinkers and ideologues in India.³⁹² The ideological influence of Bhagat Singh's revolutionary socialism in the rise and growth of the Socialist and Communist movements in Kerala is evident and this fact was admitted even by E. M. S. Namboodiripad, a well-known Indian Communist and Marxist ideologue. He said that 'the seeds of the Left wing of the Congress and the Congress Socialist Party were sown in Kannur Jail. This was done by Kamal Nath Tewari.'³⁹³ It was by their continuous interaction with the revolutionary terrorists in jail, the young Congressmen of Malabar got the idea of organizing peasants and workers to strengthen the popular base of the Congress.³⁹⁴ The young Congressmen of that time had a radical mentality, which was prepared for an armed revolution. A. V. Kunhambu states that when the young Congress workers of that time like him, who were dissatisfied with the Gandhian ideology and disillusioned by the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement, tended to become revolutionary terrorists the formation of the Congress Socialist Party deterred them.³⁹⁵

2.11. Forging Friendships

A special issue of *Studies in History* was published in February 2017. It is a collection of some research articles written on the subject 'Friendship in Indian History. 'The studies in this volume are the byproduct of several conferences organized to initiate a discussion among the historians of South Asia on the possibilities and strategy for writing the history of friendship.³⁹⁶ However, a study on the friendship in Indian National Movement is not included in this volume. The title of the biography of the famous nationalist Muslim leader Muhammad Abdu Rahman, which was written by his close friend and follower, E. Moidu Maulavi is *Ente Koottukaran* (My Friend). Apart from an ideological bond, an emotional bond can be easily formed between two individuals who have been working as part of the same political movement and for a common goal.

³⁹² Bipan Chandra, *Ideology and Politics in Modern India*, p. 261.

³⁹³ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 154.

³⁹⁴ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p.66.

³⁹⁵ A. V. Kunambu, , *op. cit.*, p. 99.

³⁹⁶ *Studies in History*, Vol. XXXIII, no.1, February 2017.

Among the friendships that bloomed as part of the National Movement in Malabar, the friendship of M. P. Naryana Menon and Kattilasserri Muhammad Musliar was rare and notable. Narayana Menon and Kattilasserri Musliar had worked together to organize and mobilize the Mappila tenants and formed the *Khilafat*-Congress committees in the villages of South Malabar.³⁹⁷ Since his childhood, Kattilasserri had been a close friend of Narayana Menon even though their backgrounds were entirely different. Narayana Menon was a western educated high caste Hindu, who was a lawyer by profession. Kattilasserri Musliar was a Mappila, who was not a western educated man. Their friendship, which began during childhood became intense during 1919-21, while they were working together in the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement and the tenancy movement in Malabar.³⁹⁸ The friendship of K. Kelappan and K. V. Balakrishna Menon was also special. When K. Kelappan was living at Ponnani for the purpose of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation campaign, he met K. V. Balakrishna Menon, a medical student who had abandoned his studies and joined the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement. They were arrested twice together and served imprisonment together as part of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation campaign. Balakrishna Menon, who was affected by typhoid while he was in Kannur jail died soon after his release from the jail. During the freedom movement, being arrested together at the same time for the same offense and being detained in the same prison and the same cell were situations, where a friendship would bloom. Kelappan and Balakrishna Menon were co-prisoners in Tirur Police Station Lock Up and Kannur Jail.³⁹⁹ A sense of companionship will easily develop among two individuals, who are facing the same situation and the same obstacles in life.⁴⁰⁰

Sharing is the essence of friendship. Friendships are easily formed by the sharing of food and shelter. Friendships beyond caste and class distinctions were forged during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Food and accommodation for the volunteers who

³⁹⁷ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

³⁹⁹ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-98.

⁴⁰⁰ According to C. K. Moosad, a biographer of K. Kelappan 'the demise of Balakrishna Menon's was painful to Kelappan as much as Mahadev Desai's demise in Aga Khan Palace in 1942 was painful for Gandhi.' C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, p.67.

took part in the *satyagraha jatha* were arranged in the same place.⁴⁰¹ The *Al Ameen* Lodge at Kallayi Road in Kozhikode was one of the main centers, where the *satyagrahis* of Kozhikode were accommodated. The owner of the lodge was Muhammad Abdu Rahman. N. C. Sekhar, who came from Tiruvitamkur to Kozhikode to join as a volunteer in the Salt *Satyagraha* stayed in the *Al Ameen* Lodge. The *satyagrahis*, irrespective of their caste, class, and religion, had to follow the same lifestyle and have the same food. Most of the *satyagrahis* in Kozhikode used to have their food from an 'Asoka Hotel' near the *Al Ameen* Lodge. Anti-Congress people used to call these *satyagrahis*, *Anchekal ana Pattalam* (5¼ anna Army). Because the cost of food per day for a *satyagrahi* at that time was only 5¼ anna (Two bread and a tea for breakfast=1.5 annas), (Noon meals=2 annas), (Tea or rice gruel at night = 1.5 annas), (a tea during the interval= ¼ anna).⁴⁰²

Often, the *satyagrahis* from different parts of Keralam who came to Kozhikode to take part in the *Salt Satyagraha* were accommodated in the same place and sent together for picketing. Many people not only from Malabar but also from the princely states of Kochi and Tiruvitamkur came to Kozhikode to participate in the salt *satyagraha*. Puthupally Raghavan, hailed from Kayamkulam came to Kozhikode to take part in the Civil Disobedience struggle. Raghavan and one Chakrapani Pisharadi, who came just before him, were accommodated together in the room of a Congress supporter. The next morning, they were sent together for foreign cloth shop picketing.⁴⁰³ On another occasion, Puthupally Raghavan, Chakrapani Pisharadi, one Gopala Menon from Palakkad, and another young man from Chittoor were sent together to picket the liquor shop at Kallayi.⁴⁰⁴

When courting arrest and going to jail became common during the Civil disobedience struggle, detainment became an opportunity for the young Congressmen to meet new people. Political leaders from different parts of Keralam and India were imprisoned in Kannur Jail. The Congress leaders and workers from Keralam were also imprisoned in jails outside Keralam. The prominent leaders of the peasant and trade union

⁴⁰¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 151-161.

⁴⁰² N. C. Sekhar, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-74.

⁴⁰³ Puthupally Raghavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-121.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

movements in India like N. G . Ranga, V. V. Giri, and Mukunda Lal Sarkar were the co-prisoners of E. M. S. Namboodiripad in Vellore Jail.⁴⁰⁵ Personal friendships between the Communist leaders of Keralam bloomed when they were in jail. E. M. S met P. Krishna Pillai for the first time in Kozhikode Sub Jail in January 1932.⁴⁰⁶

Usually, conversations between political prisoners are not limited to mere private talks. When they were in Kannur Jail, Moyarath Sankaran and P. Krishna Pillai used to spend their time till midnight, discussing politics.⁴⁰⁷ The friendship of prisoners, detained in the same cell is always intense. They will always remember each other. Moyarath Sankaran recollects that Thoduvayi Raman Nair and Appukunhan Adiyodi were his cellmates in Kannur Jail.⁴⁰⁸

Often, the police handcuffed Congress workers together, while arresting them. *Kaivilangu*(The Handcuff) is a short story by Vaikom Muhammad Basheer. The story is about friendship and the emotional bond that blooms between two people handcuffed together. In the story, Basheer's right hand and the left hand of the Town Congress Secretary are locked in the same handcuff. When the Congress Secretary is sentenced to rigorous imprisonment of two years, he weeps thinking of his wife who is alone at home. But he wipes his tears using Basheer's hand as Basheer's hand and his hand are locked in the same handcuff.⁴⁰⁹ Often, people of different castes and religions were handcuffed together by the police. During the rebellion of 1921, the police attempted to humiliate Mozhikunnath Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, a Hindu Brahmin, by tying his hand with the hand of a Mappila convict.⁴¹⁰ In 1946, when K. Madhavan was arrested, the police handcuffed him together with Kanisan Raman. The police did this because they thought that as Madhavan was a member of a prominent landowning family, handcuffing him with Kanisan Raman, who belonged to the low *kaniyan* caste, would be disgraceful to Madhavan. But Madhavan, who by that time

⁴⁰⁵ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 155.

⁴⁰⁶ Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, , Thiruvananthapuram, 1979, p. 25.

⁴⁰⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 194.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁹ Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, *Basheer Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. I, pp. 337-343. This story is not based on the experiences of Basheer when he was arrested for participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement , but the incident narrated in the story actually took place in 1941 or 1942.

⁴¹⁰ Mozhikunathu, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

became a Communist took it as an opportunity. Many in his village had doubts about the genuineness of Madhavan as a Communist because he was the son of a landlord. Thus, this incident was helpful to him to prove his sincerity as a communist.⁴¹¹

Sakhavu (comrade) is a Malayalam word used by the Communists of Keralam to address each other. This word was popularized after the mid-1930s. As this word refers to an intimate friend, Krishna Pillai identified its symbolic meaning. Krishna Pillai, when he became a leader of the Congress Socialist Party and then of the Communist Party addressed even the people, he met for the first time in his life as *sakhavu* to develop an emotional bond with them. The people of Keralam used to call P. Krishna Pillai as *sakhavu* without mentioning his name.⁴¹² Even the opponents and critics of the Communist Party used this term to refer to the Communists. For instance, Sanjayan, a famous Malayalam writer and an anti-communist who is known for his satirical writings used the word *sakhavu* to address the Communists in his writings. His satirical play *sakhavinte Bleach* (Comrade's Bleach) is one of his famous works.⁴¹³ A. C. Kannan Nair, a Congress leader in his diary, used the word *Sakahvu* to refer to the Communists.⁴¹⁴

After the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in 1934, P. Krishna Pillai was tasked with recruiting full-time workers for the Congress.⁴¹⁵ Krishna Pillai met the young men, who later became active workers of the Congress Socialist Party in Malabar, when he was in Kannur Jail.⁴¹⁶ Krishna Pillai attracted the peasants and workers to the Congress Socialist Party by establishing personal friendships with them. He established personal friendships with people from different sections of society, like peasants, workers, students, school teachers, petty traders, and lower level government employees.⁴¹⁷ Krishna Pillai had many ways to strengthen his personal bond with the workers of his party. Offering food to the party workers, who didn't

⁴¹¹ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gramathinte Hrudayathilude*, Kottayam, 2014(1992), pp. 46-47.

⁴¹² Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, p. 23.

⁴¹³ Sanjayan, *Sanjayan Hasyakrithikal*, Vols. II&IX, Kannur, 2012(2011).

⁴¹⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, A. C. Kannan Nair Oru Padanam, Thiruvananthapuram, 2008(1985), pp. 133-134.

⁴¹⁵ T. V. K, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁴¹⁶ K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Communist Partiyilekku', in. K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, p. 302.

⁴¹⁷ Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, p. 28.

have food was such a way. Krishna Pillai used to buy food for the workers of the Congress Socialist Party from his friend's hotel at Palayam in Kozhikode Town.⁴¹⁸

With the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party, several young men became full-time workers of the Congress.⁴¹⁹ The main task assigned to them was to enrol members in the Congress. For this purpose, they travelled through the villages of Malabar.⁴²⁰ The full-time workers had to stay away from home. Thus, the workers of the Congress Socialist Party began to share food and shelter. On many days, the food for one was shared by many.⁴²¹ Most of these Congress workers had only one or two pairs of dress. Thus, the dress also was shared by them.⁴²² For a full time Congress worker at that time, the house of his fellow-worker was like his own house. A Congress worker began to consider his co-worker's parents like his own parents. Most often, K. A. Keraleeyan, one of the prominent leaders of the peasant movement in Malabar, used to stay at Bharatheeya Mandiram, Vishnu Bharatheeyan's house.⁴²³ On these days, they used to sleep on the same mat. P. Krishna Pillai coordinated the activities of the Congress in Kasargod *Taluk* by staying in the house of A. C. Kannan Nair.⁴²⁴ Often, at that time, the full-time workers of the Congress fulfilled their basic needs by borrowing small amounts of money from their friends.⁴²⁵

Often, ideological differences between two individuals may affect their personal relationship as well. Rudrangshu Mukherjee's study on Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose shows that the ideological differences between Nehru and Bose also affected their personal relationship.⁴²⁶ The factional fights and the leftist-rightist struggle in the Congress intensified after the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in 1934. The organizational elections of the Congress became the mighty fights between the leftists and rightists. In the K. P. C. C elections in 1938, P. Krishna Pillai

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴¹⁹ K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Sakhavum Aikya Keralavum', in C. Bhaskaran(ed.), *Sakhakkaludeyum Sakkavu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012(2006), pp.67-78.

⁴²⁰ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *Op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁴²¹ Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, p. 44.

⁴²² *Ibid.*, pp.66-67.

⁴²³ K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Adhyathma Ramayanam Vayichittundo?', in K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, p. 239.

⁴²⁴ Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, p. 34.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.62.

⁴²⁶ Rudrangshu Mukherjee, *Nehru and Bose: Parallel Lives*, Gurgaon, 2015.

succeeded in canvassing the vote of A. C. Kannan Nair, an ardent Gandhian Congressmen, in favour of the left wing. Kannan Nair cast his vote in favour of the left wing only because of that Krishna Pillai was his close friend.⁴²⁷ At the beginning of their political career, most of the young Congressmen who entered politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement and later became Communists were the followers of K. Kelappan. A. K. Gopalan was one among them. At the beginning of A. K. Gopalan's political career, K. Kelappan was his mentor.⁴²⁸ Later, when A. K. Gopalan emerged as a leader of the leftists the Congress and then of the Communist Party, K. Kelappan remained in the Congress as the undisputed leader of the rightists and as an ardent Gandhian and anti-Communist. Though, A. K. Gopalan and Kelappan parted ways in their political life this didn't affect their personal friendship.⁴²⁹

During the 1930s, the group photos other than family photos became common. Several group photos of politicians and others appeared in the newspapers and magazines.⁴³⁰ These photos would be useful for the study of friendship during the National Movement in Malabar. M. S Devadas, a Malayalam writer and journalist recounts in his autobiography an incident during the 1930s, when he and a few of his friends went to a studio at Thrissur, to take a group photo. Devadas and friends placed a photo of Gandhi on the chair, put a *khadar* garland on the photo, and posed for the photo by standing on both sides of the chair.⁴³¹

2.12. Subaltern Mentalities

The rural politics of Malabar witnessed a total transformation during 1934-1940.⁴³² Following the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in 1934, attempts were made to spread the Socialist ideology and organize peasants, workers, aided school teachers, and the unemployed youth and enroll them as members of the

⁴²⁷ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, pp. 127-128.

⁴²⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agniparikshakal*, p. 28.

⁴²⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Manninu Vendi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017(1975)pp. 75-77.

⁴³⁰ Various Issues of the *Mathrubhumi Weekly* and a few college magazines during 1934-47. There is a study by G. Arunima on family photos. In this study, she is trying to explore the relationship between the visual and history. G. Arunima, 'Bonds of Love, Ties of Kinship? or are there Ways of Imagining the Family', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. LIII, no.3, 2016.

⁴³¹ M. S. Devadas, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

⁴³² Dilip M. Menon, *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India: Malabar, 1900-1948*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 119.

Congress.⁴³³ The leaders of the Congress Socialist Party such as A. K. Gopalan identified that the lack of enough support from the peasants and workers as the main reason for the failure of the Civil Disobedience Movement.⁴³⁴ The Congress Socialists realized that they had to work to make a total shift in the mindset of peasants and workers to mobilize them to the National Movement, strengthen its popular base, and organize agitations mobilizing the peasants and workers and keep them in the Congress without breaking away. This task was not easy, because the peasants and workers had expressed loyalty and fear not only to the colonial state but also to the landlords and capitalists. The activities of the Congress Socialist Party were initially concentrated among the workers.⁴³⁵ Organizing the workers was relatively easy but organizing the peasants was not so easy. Because the peasants believed that collection of the rent was the natural right of the landlord and they were obliged to pay the rent.⁴³⁶ The task of organizing the workers of the cotton mill in Kozhikode, by establishing trade unions among them, was taken up by P. Krishna Pillai and A. K. Gopalan. But they had to work hard for this. The non-success of the Civil Disobedience struggle had created many misconceptions about the Congress and Congressmen among the workers. They believed that the Congressmen were losers and the colonial government was as powerful as to crush any agitations by the Congress. The workers also feared that the police would beat them if they support Congress.⁴³⁷ A. K. Gopalan recollects those days:

Comrade Krishna Pillai and I had many fascinating experiences when we went to form the union at the cotton mill at Calicut. We would stand outside the gate when workers came out of the factory. They would stare at our *khadi* clothes and walk away in disgust. They were afraid even to come near us. Comrade Krishna Pillai would approach them with a smile and talk to them.⁴³⁸

However, A. K. Gopalan and Krishna Pillai succeeded in gaining the trust of the workers by organizing strikes, small public meetings, and giving simple speeches on workers'

⁴³³ K. Gopalankutty, 'The Task of Transforming Congress: Malabar, 1934-40', *Studies in History*, Vol. V, no.2, 1989.

⁴³⁴ A. K. Gopalan, *Ene Agniparikshakal*, p. 81.

⁴³⁵ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 70.

⁴³⁶ T. V. K., *op. cit.*, pp. 43-44.

⁴³⁷ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agniparikshakal*, pp. 91-92.

⁴³⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People*, p.62.

rights and the exploitation of the mill owners. The workers turned against the colonial state when they came to realize that the real strength of the capitalists was the support of the bureaucracy including the police.⁴³⁹ The Congress Socialists began to take up the issues related to the daily life of peasants and workers like an eviction case of a peasant and the sacking of a worker. C. Achutha Kurup, a worker in the Vidyavilasam Press, Kozhikode, was sacked for taking part in trade union activities. The press owner told scornfully Achutha Kurup to go and complain to the trade union. Trade union leaders like P. Krishna Pillai, Manju Nath Rao, and N. C. Sekhar intervened in the issue and the press owner was forced to reinstate him.⁴⁴⁰ Small victories like this, gained by the trade unions in some labour disputes made the workers feel that there was someone to speak for them. The workers realized that trade union leaders, not the capitalists were their real protectors. The capitalists also realized the change in the attitude of the workers. When the workers at Aron Mills, Pappinisseri began a strike, Samuel Aron, the mill owner told the workers: "Go to work in Keraleeyan's and Gopalan's company, there are no jobs for you in mine."⁴⁴¹

During 1934 and 1940, by the attempt of the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party, a number of *karshaka Sanghams* (peasant unions) were established in the villages of North Malabar.⁴⁴² The leaders of the peasant movement realized that a total change in the mentality of the peasants was required to enrol them as members in the peasant unions and mobilize them to the anti-land lord and anti-colonial struggle. The administration of justice and law and order in the rural areas of Malabar was usually handled by the *janmis* and by this, they had dominated every aspect of the life of a peasant and made him fearful of his landlord. The *janmis* in North Malabar imposed certain restrictions even on the private life of peasants like they were not allowed to wear sandals, wear *mundu* below their knees and grow moustaches. A peasant showed extreme loyalty, respect, and fear to his landlord.⁴⁴³ Thus, the major challenge

⁴³⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, pp. 92-94.

⁴⁴⁰ C. Achutha Kurup, 'Enikku Kittiya Siksha', in. Bhaskaran(ed.), *Sakhakkaludeyum Sakkavu*, pp. 92-93.

⁴⁴¹ Dilip M. Menon, 'A Fragile Affluence: Workers and Political Rhetoric In Kerala', 1930-1948, in M. P. Mujeebu Rahman and K. S. Madhavan(eds.), *Explorations in South Indian History*, Kottayam, 2014, p. 294. K. P. R. Gopalan and Keraleeyan were trade union leaders in Aron Mills.

⁴⁴² Dilip M. Menon, *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India*, p. 131.

⁴⁴³ A. K. Gopalan , *Manninu Vendi*, pp. 14-16.

before the leaders of *karshaka sanghams* was to annihilate the fear the peasants had of their landlords. The Congress Socialists realized that the problems of a peasant were related to his daily life.⁴⁴⁴

To gain the trust of the peasants, leaders of the *karshaka sanghams* adopted the approach of taking up the disputes between the *janmis* and peasants and settling them in favour of the peasants. K. A. Keraleeyan and V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan travelled through the villages of North Malabar to politicize the peasants and to enrol them as members of the *Karshaka Sangham*. Bharatheeyan says that though peasants agreed with the ideas of the *Karshaka Sangham* leaders, initially, they hesitated to attend the meetings held by the *Karshaka Sangham*. Meanwhile, a conflict arose between a Namboodiri *janmi* and one of his *kudiyans*, Ambukutti in Kolacheri village, when the landlord picked pepper from Ambukutti's *parambu* without his permission. V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan and K. A. Keraleeyan intervened in this issue and helped Ambukutti to file a case against the *janmi*. Keraleeyan and Bharatheeyan also gave evidence in favour of Ambukutti as the witnesses in the court. Thus, the *janmi* was forced to settle the case by paying the price of the pepper to Ambukutti. A similar incident occurred in the same village when the *janmi* picked pepper from the *parambu* of a peasant woman named Chemmarathi. The leaders of the *Karshaka Sangham* took up this issue also and here too, the landlord was forced to pay the price of the pepper to Chemmarathi. The leaders of the *Karshaka Sangham* also prevented the attempt of the *janmi* to snatch the land of a peasant named Anandan. The continuous successes achieved by the *Karshaka Sangham* in *janmi-kudiyans* conflicts attracted the peasants to the *Karshaka Sangham*.⁴⁴⁵ The most serious problem faced by the peasants of Malabar was forcible evictions from their lands without any prior notice. The workers of the *karshaka sanghams* began to use force to obstruct forcible evictions by the landlords. The *Karshaka Sangham* activists succeeded in preventing forcible evictions though the police sided with the *janmis*.⁴⁴⁶ The *kariasthans* of the *janmis*, who were collecting the rent from tenants forcibly, backed off when the *Karshaka Sangham* leaders like A. V. Kunhambu declared that the *Karshaka Sangham* would also use force

⁴⁴⁴ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-72.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-78

⁴⁴⁶ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-133.

to prevent the forcible collection of the rent.⁴⁴⁷ The *Janmis* were scared when the peasants were organized into *karshaka sanghams*.⁴⁴⁸ K. Madhavan states that the Congress Socialist Party took up even the small issues in the life of the peasants. Madhavan recounts an incident as an example. A constable of Hosdurg Police Station snatched a chicken raised by a local peasant of Puthiya Kotta. The Congress Socialist Party took up this issue and organized a protest and a notable leader such as A. K. Gopalan spoke at a public meeting that was held regarding this.⁴⁴⁹

A. K. Gopalan in his memoirs describes the change in the mentality of the peasants and workers in detail. He states that the slogans, *Janmitham Nashikkatte* (Death to Landlordism) and *Muthalalitham Nashikkatte* (Death to Capitalism) were byhearted and shouted even by the small children.⁴⁵⁰ Karikkattu Idathil Nayanar, a prominent landlord in North Malabar complained to A. K. Gopalan that even small children were shouting the slogan, *Janmitham Nashikkatte*, when they saw him, and that was very irritating to him.⁴⁵¹ The middle class party workers even restyled their way of speaking. They began to use Marxist phrases in and out of place. They also started to call the people those who dressed well and who ate good food as 'bourgeoisie.' The youth became atheists and rationalists.⁴⁵² This new mentality found expression in a few cartoons published in the *Sanjayan*.⁴⁵³ This new attitude is also narrated by Cherukad in his novels like *Muthassi* and *Manninte Maaril*.⁴⁵⁴

Most of the leaders of the Congress Socialist Party and the peasant movements in Malabar were upper caste Hindus who belonged to prominent landowning families.⁴⁵⁵ At the same time, majority of the peasants were belonged to untouchable low castes. Thus, the peasants hesitated to get close to them first. The peasants always doubted the sincerity of these leaders. Thus, the leaders of the *Karshaka Sangham*, who came

⁴⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 139-141.

⁴⁴⁸ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gramathinte Hrudayathilude*, p. 31.

⁴⁴⁹ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 132.

⁴⁵⁰ A. K. Gopalan, *Ene Agniparikshakal*, p. 109.

⁴⁵¹ A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People*, p. 76.

⁴⁵² A. K. Gopalan, *Ene Agniparikshakal*.

⁴⁵³ *Sanjayan*, 1 April 1939.

⁴⁵⁴ Cherukad, *Manninte Maaril*, Thrissur, 1954. The protagonist of the novel, Kochu Kanderan was convicted for attempting to murder a *janmi*. After his release from jail, he formed a *karshaka sangham* in his village.

⁴⁵⁵ Dilip M. Menon, *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India*.

from *janmi* families, used a psychological method to gain the trust of the peasants. K. Madhavan, a landlord's son and a Communist leader writes in his memoirs about an advice given by K. A. Keraleeyan. Keraleeyan advised Madhavan to ask for water from the peasants when he felt thirsty. Keraleeyan further told Madhavan that, to refuse water or tender coconut water when offered by the peasants and ask them for rice gruel water instead and drink it.⁴⁵⁶

It was through the activities of the *karshaka sanghams*, the Congress-led National Movement entered the villages of North Malabar, which later became Communist strongholds. The mentalities and attitudes of the peasants and workers were different from those of the middle class. Unlike the middle class, the peasants and workers wouldn't leave the National Movement over the disillusionment from the failure of an agitation. They had their own motives and interests. Their mentalities did not vary according to circumstances. Thus, the peasants and workers who entered the National Movement through trade unions and peasant unions became the backbone of the anti-colonial struggle in Malabar during 1934 -47.

2.13. The Obsession with Soviet Russia and the Growth of Cosmopolitanism

The economic depression in 1929, which was otherwise known as the 'Great Depression' was one of the biggest economic recessions in history that had affected the whole world. Keralam was one of the regions of India most affected by the Great Depression. The economy of Malabar was also hit hard by the recession.⁴⁵⁷ Following the Great Depression, a large number of Malayalis who was living and employed in the countries like Malaya, Singapore, Ceylon, and Burma were forced to return to Keralam.⁴⁵⁸ By the experience of the Great Depression, the people of Malabar realized that they also had to bother about the events and changes in international politics. The worries of the People and politicians in Malabar began to grow as an international outlook and cosmopolitanism. E. M. S. Namboodiripad wrote:

⁴⁵⁶ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gramathinte Hrudayathilude*, pp. 39-40.

⁴⁵⁷ N. E. Balaram, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Aaddya Nalukal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016(1990), pp. 8-10.

⁴⁵⁸ T. V. K, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

In the past, agriculture in India was independent like any other occupation. But today, if something happens somewhere in the world it will also trigger an impact on even the remote village of Malabar. Britain, Japan, America, and other countries have been fighting each other to make internationalism their dominance. Thus, internationalism is the competition between different countries to establish their hegemony.⁴⁵⁹

The revolutionary terrorists in inter-war India like Bhagat Singh and his comrades were fascinated by the Russian Revolution and the economic success achieved by the Soviet Union, a young Socialist state. In the inter-war period, many works on the Russian Revolution and the Soviet Union flowed to India. The literature on the Soviet Union was easily available in Lahore. Bhagat Singh and his comrades showed a strong inclination towards the Socialist ideology followed by the Soviet Union.⁴⁶⁰ In the late 1920s and 1930s, Jawaharlal Nehru as the leader of the young Congressmen of India had expressed admiration for Soviet Russia and Socialism. The Fourth Kerala Provincial Conference, which was presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru, was held at Payyannur in May 1928. During the discussions at the Conference, Manjeri Rama Iyer and U. Gopala Menon, who advocated for a Dominion Status for India under the British Empire, raised a question that how India, who had no army or navy would survive if it was attacked by a foreign power like Soviet Russia. Nehru defended Soviet Russia and replied that Soviet Russia was only concerned with its progress and did not have an intention to invade other countries.⁴⁶¹ Nehru's work on the Soviet Union was published in December of the same year.⁴⁶² Puthupally Raghavan, a famous Communist leader from Keralam writes that he was deeply influenced by Nehru's work on the Soviet Union.⁴⁶³

The young Congressmen in Malabar, who were imprisoned for taking part in the Civil Disobedience struggle, read a lot of works on world politics, while they were in jail. Many works on Socialism and the Russian Revolution were available in jail.⁴⁶⁴ E. M. S.

⁴⁵⁹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Swarajyam Enthinu?', P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. II(1936-38), pp. 46-47. *Swarajyam Enthinu?* is a pamphlet written by E. M. S in 1934, in which he explained the importance and objectives of the *swaraj*.

⁴⁶⁰ Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*, p. 230.

⁴⁶¹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁴⁶² Jawaharlal Nehru, *Soviet Russia: Some Random Sketches and Impressions*, Allahabad, 1928.

⁴⁶³ Puthupally Raghavan, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

⁴⁶⁴ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 54.

Namboodiripad says that it was from the books that he read, borrowing from his co-prisoners, who were revolutionary terrorists, he realized that the revolutionary terrorism in India was ideologically linked with Socialism.⁴⁶⁵ The revolutionary terrorists from Bengal, who were imprisoned in Kannur Jail, kept with them some works on the anti-colonial struggles in different countries across the world. The biography of Michael Collins, an Irish Revolutionary was among them.⁴⁶⁶ An admiration for Soviet Russia grew among the Young Congressmen in Malabar also by the influence of the politics of Jawaharlal Nehru and the revolutionary terrorists including Bhagat Singh. Vedantham, a young Communist who took part in the Dharasana Salt Raid was a co-prisoner of N. C. Sekhar in Kannur Jail. Actually, Vedantham, who was serving imprisonment in Yerawada Central Jail was shifted to Kannur Jail. Vedantham explained to his co-prisoners about, Lenin, Bolshevism, and the Soviet Union.⁴⁶⁷ N. C. Sekhar remembers that it was Vedantham who made him curious to know about Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. S. S. Batliwala, a famous Congress Socialist and the son of S. Batliwala, the ex-Mayor of Bombay was a co-prisoner of N. C. Sekhar in Kannur Jail. Sekhar borrowed the works, *The Revolt of the Angels* by Anatole France and, and a work by Benito Mussolini on Fascism from Batliwala and read them.⁴⁶⁸ The young Congressmen in Malabar got a new international outlook from the books they had read by borrowing from their co-prisoners in Kannur Jail.

Before 1940, the colonial British government had banned the circulation of the works and literature on Marxism and Communism in India. But the young Congressmen in India, who were interested in Communism managed somehow to get these works and read them.⁴⁶⁹ The works available in India about the Soviet Union and the October Revolution had some peculiarities. The works published by the Soviet Union Government were not available in India. Thus, the British Labour Party intellectuals

⁴⁶⁵ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 154.

⁴⁶⁶ Letter from the Office of the Superintendent, Central Jail, Kannur to the Inspector General of Prisons, Ottacamund, dated 14th January 1933, Selected Records, SL. No.184, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁴⁶⁷ N. C. Sekhar, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-93.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 94-96. S. S. Batliwala wrote a small work titled *A Congress Socialist Looks at World Politics*, which was published in 1938. S. S. Batliwala, *A Congress Socialist Looks at World Politics*, Bombay, 1938.

⁴⁶⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Keralam Innale Innu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016(2002), p. 57.

and some American journalists were the most important sources for the Indian Communists to learn and understand Marxism. Consequently, many of the early Indian Communists became Trotskyites and anti-Stalin.⁴⁷⁰ E. M. S. Namboodiripad states that the works published in the Soviet Union were not available in India at that time. He further says that as a beginner to Marxism, Emile Burns's *A Hand Book of Marxism*, which was published in England was very useful for him.⁴⁷¹ People across the world had an enormous curiosity to know about the Soviet Union and there was a huge demand for the works on the Soviet Union. American publishers, who made use of this situation earned huge profits by publishing several books on the Soviet Union. P. Kesava Dev, an eminent Malayalam writer recounts that he read a few such books borrowing from A. K Pillai.⁴⁷² The Hindi translations of many of the early works on Marxism were available at that time. P. Krishna Pillai, who knew Hindi well was able to read these books. Krishna Pillai, who was released from jail after imprisonment in connection with the Civil Disobedience struggle, always carried with him copies of the works *Rotti Ki Sawal* (the Hindi translation of *The Conquest of Bread*, by Peter Kropotkin) and *Communism Kya Hai?* (the Hindi translation of *What is Communism?*, by Emile Burns).⁴⁷³

The people of rural Malabar were impoverished by the 'Economic Depression' in 1929. The revenue collection had been disrupted in many places of Malabar as the people were unable to pay due to extreme financial difficulties. Even the rich landowning families of rural Malabar were affected by the recession.⁴⁷⁴ The influence of the experience of the Great Depression on the mentalities of the youth from the prominent landowning families in Malabar was a factor that attracted them to the Communist Party. When the recession hit heavily the economy of the capitalist countries the Soviet Union and its Socialist economy survived the Great Depression successfully. The Five-Year Plans and the rapid economic growth also attracted the attention of the young Congressmen.⁴⁷⁵ The Civil Disobedience Movement in India

⁴⁷⁰ Pavanam, *October Vipalavavum Malayala Sahithyavum*, Thrissur, 2011, pp. 72-73.

⁴⁷¹ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, pp. 84-85.

⁴⁷² P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, p. 252.

⁴⁷³ N. E. Balaram, 'Avatharika', in T. V. K, *op. cit.*, p.6.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

⁴⁷⁵ K. K. N. Kurup, A. C. Kannan Nair Oru Padanam, pp. 53&57.

took place in 1930-32, during the same period when the five-year plans of the Soviet Union achieved great success. Thus, due to all these factors the Soviet Union and Socialism generated high hopes among the young Congressmen in Malabar.⁴⁷⁶

From the beginning of the 1930s, several articles about the October Revolution and the Soviet Union began to appear in the *Mathrubumi*. In July 1932, three articles on the October revolution titled *Russia Samrajyathine Adhapanam* (the Downfall of the Russian Empire), by K. P. Kesava Menon, a veteran Congress leader published in the *Mathrubhumi Weekly*. Menon in these articles described the short history of the October Revolution and the leadership qualities of Lenin. A large photo of Lenin was also published in one of these articles.⁴⁷⁷ Kesava Menon concluded his article by saying that 'the future of the world depends upon the success and failure of Bolshevism.'⁴⁷⁸ In September 1932, an article titled 'Communism' by Kannanthodath Velayudha Menon was published in the *Mathrubhumi Weekly*. This article cleared many doubts about the Soviet Union and explained the truth behind the allegations against the Soviet Union. In Pavanan's opinion, the article of Velayudha Menon, an ardent Gandhian proved that how deeply the people of Keralam were influenced by the Soviet Union.⁴⁷⁹ In April 1932, Pulimath Raghavan Nair wrote an article in the *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, titled *Russiyale Karshikabhivridhi* (The Agricultural Progress in Russia).⁴⁸⁰

A lot of articles published about the Soviet Union in the *Mathrubhumi* between 1935 and 1938 created an impression for the Soviet Union among the people of Keralam. These articles were outspoken about the quality of social life, social equality and freedom for women in Russia. The people of Keralam began to dream of a life like in Russia by the influence of these articles.⁴⁸¹ Even K. Kelappan, an ardent Gandhian and a leader of the rightists of the Congress had praised the educational system in the Soviet Union in an article titled *Nammude Vidyabhyasam* (Our Education), published in the *Mathrubhumi*. Kelappan even said that India should adopt the educational system

⁴⁷⁶ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, p. 296.

⁴⁷⁷ Pavanan, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

⁴⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-48.

⁴⁸⁰ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 25 April 1932.

⁴⁸¹ Pavanan, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-54.

of the Soviet Union as a model.⁴⁸² The articles on the Soviet Union by K. Damodaran, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, and K. A. Keraleeyan, who later became the top leaders of the Communist Party were published in the *Mathrubhumi* during 1935-36. Keraleeyan wrote a biography of Gregory Petrovsky in the *Mathrubhumi Weekly* in September 1935.⁴⁸³

The *Prabhatham*, mouthpiece of the Congress Socialist Party in Malabar started to publish from Shornur in 1935. The people of Malabar got familiar with the names of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky by the articles and reports published in the *Prabhatham*.⁴⁸⁴ In July 1935, P. Krishna Pillai wrote an article in the *Prabhatham* on the topic 'how Ireland made use of the occasion of the world war to gain freedom'. An article by N. C. Sekhar on the topic 'Lenin in his Youth', was also published in the same issue. The government had realized the nature of the reports published in the *Prabhatham*. Consequently, they banned its publication and seized all of its copies in circulation.⁴⁸⁵ The reading when he was in jail helped E. M. S. Namboodiripad to write a small work on the Russian revolution titled *1917* in 1935.⁴⁸⁶ E. M. S states that he wrote this work by deriving inspiration from Leon Trotsky's *The History of the Russian Revolution*. He further says that his attempt would be fruitful if at least ten people, who read his work would also read Trotsky's work, and one of them would translate it into Malayalam. E. M. S's strong admiration for Trotsky is clear in his words. The style of language used by E. M. S to write this work and his remarks and arguments show how strongly the Malayali youth of that time were fascinated by the life of the political leaders in the Soviet Union.⁴⁸⁷ The autobiography of P. Kesava Dev, an eminent Malayalam writer also refers to Malayali youth's deep obsession with the Soviet Union in the 1930s. Kesava Dev says that 'for me at that time, Russia was a sacred place like Kasi for the Hindus, Mecca for the Muslims, and the Vatican for the Catholics.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, p.66.

⁴⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 93-96.

⁴⁸⁴ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

⁴⁸⁵ G. O. No.1382 Public(General)Department, dated 26th August 1935, Bundle No1-A, Sl. No.22, Madras Records, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁴⁸⁶ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 54.

⁴⁸⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, '1917', in P. Govinda Pillai (ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. I (1927-35), Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, pp. 289-352.

⁴⁸⁸ Kesava Dev wrote a pamphlet on the October Revolution titled *Agniyaum Sphulingavum* (The Fire and Spark) in 1931. For Pavanan, it was the first Malayalam work published about the October Revolution.⁴⁸⁹ John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World* was an important work on the Russian Revolution available in Kerala at that time.⁴⁹⁰

The rise of new nations into prominence in world politics attracted the attention of Malayali youth during the 1930s. The Congress leaders in Malabar were well aware of the rise of the U. S. A., Germany, Japan, and Turkey into prominence.⁴⁹¹ However, it was the rise of the Soviet Union that attracted the young Congressmen of Malabar the most. Regular columns describing the affairs in world politics appeared in newspapers and magazines. K. Damodaran wrote a regular column known as *Innathe Lokam* (Today's World) in the *Prabhatham*.⁴⁹² The life of the people in the Soviet Union became a major topic of discussion even among the people of the remote villages of Malabar.⁴⁹³ The peasants in Malabar began to see the Soviet Union as a hope. The *Karshaka Sangham* leaders in their speeches began to mention frequently about the prosperous life of the peasants in the Soviet Union.⁴⁹⁴ The rivals of the Congress Socialists in Malabar also became the rivals of the Soviet Union. They spread many allegations against Soviet Russia like that the Socialists were against religion and the god and in Russia one's wife was shared by all.⁴⁹⁵ Koodali Nambiar, a prominent landlord in North Malabar published a few articles in English newspapers like *The Hindu* and Malayalam newspapers like the *Mathrubhumi* alleging that the *Karshaka Sangham* was working by taking the Russian revolution as a model.⁴⁹⁶ The Congress Socialists of Malabar, who later became Communists began to take every criticism against Soviet Russia as criticisms against them. When P. V. K. Nedungadi published the work *Russiyude Maruvasham* (The Other Side of Russia) by criticizing the Soviet

⁴⁸⁸ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, p. 257.

⁴⁸⁹ Pavanan, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

⁴⁹⁰ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, pp. 204-205.

⁴⁹¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Indian National Congress*, p. 14.

⁴⁹² M. Rasheed, K. Damodaran, Kottayam, 1982, p. 73.

⁴⁹³ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, p. 253.

⁴⁹⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, K. A. Keraleeyan, p. 33.

⁴⁹⁵ A. K. Gopalan, *Ene Agniparikshakal*, p. 109.

⁴⁹⁶ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

Union, in response, E. M. S. Namboodiripad wrote an article titled *Sathyathinte Maruvasham* (The Other Side of the Truth) in the *Prabhatham*. E. M. S said that 'Nedungadi's arguments are deviations from the truth.'⁴⁹⁷

Soviet Russia got many admirers in Malabar after the formation of the Communist Party of Kerala. The local villages of Malabar, which were Communist strongholds came to be known as 'Moscow'. Pulamanthol, the native village of Cherukad, a famous Malayalam writer and a Communist was known as 'Moscow' in the colonial police records.⁴⁹⁸ K. Madhavan's native village, Madikkai was also known as a 'Moscow of the Communists.' People were nicknamed after the words and names linked with Soviet Russia. For instance, E. K Nayanar nicknamed Pokkan, a local tea shop worker who was also a Communist Party worker as 'Bolshevik Pokkan.'⁴⁹⁹ An active worker of the Communist Party at Koothuparambu came to be known as 'Stalin Balan.'⁵⁰⁰ The people of Malabar began to memorize the dates of births and deaths of the leaders of the Soviet Union. In January 1939, a poem about Lenin was published in the *Prabhatham* about 'Lenin Day'.⁵⁰¹ A. C. Kannan Nair wrote in his diaries that the Communists celebrated 'Lenin Day' in Vellore Jail with the red flag salute in January 1942.⁵⁰²

Malayali's love for Russia became the most extreme during the Second World War. Soviet Russia was a major participant in the war. In 1942, C. Achutha Menon, a prominent Communist leader from Keralam wrote the work *Soviet Naadu* (The Soviet Land) when he was imprisoned in Vellore Jail. This work is a prominent example of Malayali's deep obsession with Soviet Russia. Achutha Menon in this work presented Russia as a dreamland and wonderland. In Menon's view, Russia was a place where men were not exploited, there was no unemployment and poverty, women enjoyed great freedom, and where the state showed empathy to the old and orphans.⁵⁰³

⁴⁹⁷ *Prabhatham*, 21 November and 5 December 1938. E. M. S wrote this article using his secret name 'Surendran.'

⁴⁹⁸ I. V. Das, *Cherukad Smaranika*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1990, p. 75.

⁴⁹⁹ Madhavan, *Oru Gandhayan Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 168.

⁵¹³ Sessions Case No.24 of 1948, Judgements of Sessions Court, North Malabar, Thalassery.

⁵⁰¹ *Prabhatham*, 23 January 1939.

⁵⁰² K. K. N. Kurup, A. C. Kannan Nair Oru Padanam, p. 127.

⁵⁰³ C. Achutha Menon, 'Soviet Naadu(Oru Puthiya Lokam)', *C. Achutha Menon Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, Thiruvananthapuram, 2009, pp. 23-257.

During the Second World War period, a pro-Stalin feeling became strong among the Communists of Kerala. C. Achutha Menon in his work spoke out that he was with Stalin in Trotsky-Stalin fight.⁵⁰⁴ *Naniyude Chinttha* (Nani's Thought) was a poem by K. P. G. Namboodiri, which was published in the *Deshabimani* in August 1943. The poem was about the thoughts of a local Kerala village woman known as Nani, who wishes to visit the Soviet Union and to be born there.⁵⁰⁵

Malayalam literature became very close to world literature when the Malayalam writers realized that the lives of the oppressed and poor were the same everywhere in the world.⁵⁰⁶ There is a study by Dilip Menon on the concept of cosmopolitanism found in the writings of Kesari Balakrishna Pillai, a famous Malayalam literary critic.⁵⁰⁷ Kesari Balakrishna Pillai compared Malayalam works with world classics. For instance, he likened K. Damodaran's famous play *Pattabakki* (Rent Arrears) with the works of Maxim Gorky.⁵⁰⁸ Famous Malayalam writers like Cherukad and P. Kesava Dev have said that they were influenced by Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Hugo's work was translated into Malayalam by Nalappatt Narayana Menon. Cherukad says that his love for the oppressed started after reading Victor Hugo's work.⁵⁰⁹ The influence of the concept of cosmopolitanism led to the emergence of a new movement in Malayalam literature known as the *Jeevalsahithya Prasthanam* (The Living Literature Movement) in 1937. They upheld the slogan *Kala Samoothathinu Vendi* (Art's for Society's Sake) instead of *Kala Kalakku Vendi* (Arts for Art's Sake).⁵¹⁰ K. Damodaran, one of the founders of the *Jeevalsahithya Prasthanam*, when he was a student at the Kasi Vidyapith came into contact with Prem Chand, the famous Hindi writer and one of the founders of the All India Progressive Writers Association (AIPWA). The *Kerala Jeeval*

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 3031

⁵⁰⁵ Chandavila Murali, *K. P. G. Namboodiri: Communistum Kaviyum*, Kottayam, 2022, p. 148.

⁵⁰⁶ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, p. 200.

⁵⁰⁷ Dilip M. Menon, 'A Local Cosmopolitan: Keasri Balakrishna Pillai and the invention of Europe for a Modern Kerala', in Sreejith E(ed.), *Kerala Charithra Congress Prabandhangal*, Kottayam , pp. 70-102.

⁵⁰⁸ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, p. 45.

⁵⁰⁹ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, p. 253.

⁵¹⁰ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, pp. 59-60. Dilip Menon has given the translation 'The Living Literature Movement' for *Jeeval Sahithya Prasthanam*. .

Sahithya Samiti(Kerala Living Literature Organization) functioned as a local unit of the AIPWA⁵¹¹.

K. Damodaran explained how the changes in world politics influenced the *Jeevalsahithya Prasthanam*. For him, the changes in the cultural and political spheres during the 1930s indicated a major turning point in world history. Damodaran enumerated the factors that influenced the creativity of the Malayalam writers of that time like the economic crisis that shook the entire capitalist world, the threat of Fascism, the problems like poverty and unemployment, the movements of the peasants, and working class, and the oppressed for basic rights, the changes followed by the Russian Revolution, and the growth of Socialism, and the new vigour achieved by the anti-colonial struggles all over the world including India.⁵¹² During the 1930s, there were a lot of readers in Keralam for Russian writers like Gorky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Dostoevsky, and Turgenev.⁵¹³ S. K. Pottekatt, a renowned Malayalam writer was part of the *Jeevalsahithya Prasthanam* , at the beginning of his career as a writer. He recounts that he had read the works of Russian writers such as Tolstoy, Gorky, and Dostoevsky at that time.⁵¹⁴

The famous Malayalam satirist Sanjayan was a fierce critic of the *Jeevalsahithya Prasthanam*. He wrote several articles, satires, and parodies ridiculing the *Jeevalsahithya Prasthanam*. His articles like *Okkana Prasthanam*(Nausea Movement), *Leelayum Jeevalsahithyavum* (Leela and the Living Literature Movement), *Viplavaplavam*, and the prose parody, *Pokkiyude Makal Adhava Vipalava Spy*(Pokki's Daughter alias the Revolutionary Spy) were satires mocking the *Jeevalsahithya Prasthanam*.⁵¹⁵ Sanjayan was against the concept of cosmopolitanism and its influence on literature and politics. He criticized the Congress Socialists and the Communists as they were neglecting traditional Indian values and admiring Soviet-Russian values. Sanjayan nicknamed the Congress Socialist leaders after Trotsky. He

⁵¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59.

⁵¹² K. Damodaran, 'Jeevalsahithyavum Purogamanasahithyavum: Charithraparamayavalokanam', in *K. Damodran Sampurnakrithikal*, Vol. VII, Thiruvananthapuram, 2011, pp. 212-213.

⁵¹³ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, p. 315.

⁵¹⁴ S. K. Pottekatt, *Ente Vazhiyambalangal*, Kozhikode, 2017(2004), p. 32.

⁵¹⁵ Sanjayan, *Sanjayan Hasyakrithikal*, Vols. I&VIII, Kannur, 2012(2011).

called Moyarath Sankaran as *Moyarski, Shakarski, Shandaski, and Kashapishaski*.⁵¹⁶ Sanjayan called K. Damodaran as *Damodaranski*.⁵¹⁷ In 1938, Sanjayan said about Damodaran, a strong anti-Trotskyite: 'Leon Trotsky has two staunch enemies in the world. One is Joseph Stalin and the other one is our K. Damodaran.'⁵¹⁸ Sanjayan wrote a series of articles titled *Sakhavinte Aathmagatham* (Comrade's Soliloquy in) in the *Sanjayan Magazine* in 1937. Sanjayan scathingly attacked the Communist's obsession with Russia. He said that 'the Communists are abusing Gandhi and admiring the red devils of Russia' and 'the Communists think that being a peon of Stalin in Russia is better than accepting Nehru's leadership.'⁵¹⁹

2.14. Mentalities Behind the 'Peaceful Transition'

There are a few works that are analysing the factors behind the emergence of radical politics in Keralam. The studies of Victor Fic, Robin Jeffrey, Nossiter, Dilip Menon, and K. Gopalankutty explain various factors behind the birth of Communism in Malabar.⁵²⁰ However, all of these works could not identify the mentalities behind the birth of the Communist Party in Keralam. Bombay was an early stronghold of the Communist Party in India. K. Damodaran, a famous Marxist thinker and one of the founders of the Communist Party of Kerala states that many had doubts about the factors behind the formation of the Communist Party of Kerala as Keralam was not an industrial centre like Bombay.⁵²¹ Therefore, it is clear that not only economic factors were behind the formation and the rise of the Communist Movement in Keralam. It is also wrong to assume that the emergence of the Communist Party was due to the strong impact of

⁵¹⁶ Sanjayan, *Sanjayan Hasyakrithikal*, Vol. II, pp. 50-51.

⁵¹⁷ M. R asheed, *K. Damodaran*, p.60.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵¹⁹ *Sanjayan*, September, 1937.

⁵²⁰ Victor M. Fic, *Kerala: Yenan of India, Rise of Communist Power, 1937-1969*, Bombay, 1970; Robin Jeffrey, 'Matriliny, Marxism and the Birth of the Communist Party in Kerala, 1930-40', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. XXXVIII, no.1, November, 1978; T. J. Nossiter, *Communism in Kerala: A Study in Political Adaptation*, New Delhi, 1982; P. Radhakrishnan, *Peasant Struggles, Land Reforms and Social Change, Malabar, 1836-1982*, New Delhi, 1989; , D ilip M. Menon, ' Conjunctural Community: Communism in Malabar, 1934-48, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXVII, no.51-52, December, 1992; K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*. Victor Fic uses the concept of 'peaceful transition' when describing the strategy adopted by the Communists of India in the parliamentary democracy. Victor M. Fic, *Peaceful Transition to Communism in India: Strategy of the Communist Party*, Bombay, 1969.

⁵²¹ K. Damodaran and Tariq Ali, ' Memoirs of An Indian Communist', *New Left Review*, Sept-Oct, 1975.

the Marxist and Socialist ideologies. K. Damodaran admits that in the beginning, he didn't have a clear understanding of the basic principles and concepts of Marxism.⁵²² K. P. Gopalan, a prominent Communist leader from Keralam also says that "we had Socialist aims without knowing anything about Socialism."⁵²³ E. M. S. Namboodiripad also states that 'our knowledge of Socialism was incomplete and vague.'⁵²⁴ Thus, in short, the transformation of the young Congressmen of Keralam from Congressmen to Communists was not only an ideological shift but also a mentality shift. Because at least a few of the early Communist leaders of Keralam were ardent Gandhians in their early life. K. Damodaran was a prominent example. At the beginning of his political career, Damodaran was an ardent Gandhian both in his personal life and beliefs. When he was a college student, he used to spin yarn on the *charkha* and used to go to college holding an *olakkuda*.⁵²⁵ Damodaran translated Gandhi's article *Ek Hi Rastha* to Malayalam as a pamphlet titled *Otta Vazhi*(The Only Path) and he sold many of its copies.⁵²⁶ He argued in this pamphlet that Gandhism was the only solution to India's problems.⁵²⁷ This same man became a communist within a few years. Damodaran was associated with the Communist Party from the 1934-35 period even before the formation of the Communist Party of Kerala.⁵²⁸ Thus, the sudden transformation of K. Damodaran from an ardent Gandhian to a Communist was not only an ideological shift but also a mindset shift.

The formation of the Communist Party in Keralam was different from that of other regions of India. Because, the early strongholds of the Communist Party in India were Calcutta, Bombay, and Punjab. There, the youth directly came to the Communist Party. At the same time, in Malabar, the young Congressmen came to the Communist Party through the Congress Socialist Party. Amir Haider Khan formed the units of the

⁵²² *Ibid.*

⁵²³ Dilip M. Menon, *The Blindness of Insight: Essays on Caste in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2011(2006), p. 11.

⁵²⁴ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 178.

⁵²⁵ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Two Streams in India's Left Movement', in K. N. Panikkar(ed.), *National and Left Movements in India*, New Delhi, 1980, p. 170. To know more about the life of K. Damodaran see P. Govinda Pillai, *K. Damodaran Porum Porulam*, Kottayam, 2012(2011).

⁵²⁶ Pavanam, *Smrithichithrangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1992, pp. 104-105.

⁵²⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Two Streams in India's Left Movement', in K. N. Panikkar(ed.), *National and Left Movements in India*.

⁵²⁸ E. K. Nayanar, *Sakhakkal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1989(1985), p. 116.

Communist Party in Andhra and Tamil Nadu and enrolled many young men in these regions as members of the Communist Party. But Haider Khan couldn't enrol members from Keralam as he was arrested before he reached Keralam.⁵²⁹ For instance, P. Sundarayya, a famous Communist Leader from Andhra Pradesh was enrolled by Haider Khan as a member of the Communist Party. Before becoming a Communist, Sundarayya had never been a member or worker of the Congress Socialist Party.⁵³⁰

Ever since Gandhi became the most influential leader of the Indian National Movement, there were many young men all over India who Didn't believe in the Gandhian concept of Non-violent struggle. But these isolated voices didn't find a place in history. P. Kesava Dev recounts an incident that took place in the mid-1920s. When Kesava Dev was travelling from Vaikkom to Ernakulam on a boat, an anonymous young man spoke to the passengers on the boat. The young man told his co-passengers that the Gandhian method of non-violent struggle was wrong and India could win freedom only by an armed revolution.⁵³¹ During the Civil Disobedience struggle, many young Congressmen expressed their disagreements about the strategy of the Civil Disobedience struggle of suffering beating and lathi charges from the police without hitting them back. Some Congressmen had an opinion that they must hit the policemen back, who were beating them.⁵³² Most of the Nair youth of North Malabar were trained in martial arts in *kalaris*. Thus, their dissatisfaction over the agitations based on Gandhian non-violence was quite natural. It is relevant here that radical politics and the Communist Party got more acceptance and popularity among the youth of North Malabar.

Everywhere in the world, the youth are the makers of radical and revolutionary politics. Generally, the mindset of the youth is closer to radical and revolutionary politics. Likewise, the Communist Party of Keralam was founded by a few young men. Most of the Congress volunteers who participated in the Civil Disobedience struggle in

⁵²⁹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017(1995), p. 17.

⁵³⁰ P. Sundarayya, *Viplavapatha*, Translated by Ashokan Engandiyur, Kottayam, 2011, pp. 100-113; Muhammad Ameen, *Ameer Hyederkhan: Aithihasika Communist*, Translated by K. P. Satheesh Chandran and C. Balan, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017, pp. 139-149.

⁵³¹ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, pp. 158-160.

⁵³² Thikkodian, *op. cit.*, p.65.

Malabar were young men. Indian youth had anxieties about what would come after the end of the Civil Disobedience struggle. In 1933, Jawaharlal Nehru raised the question of whither India?⁵³³ A year after that, in 1934, E. M. S. Namboodiripad raised a similar question *Niyamalanghanam Ninnu, Eniyo?* (The Civil Disobedience has stopped, what next?).⁵³⁴ According to E. M. S., when Gandhi called off the Civil Disobedience Movement, it created widespread disillusionment among the youth.⁵³⁵ Gandhi's policy of truce with the British was indigestible to the youth who left home and became volunteers in the Civil Disobedience struggle with high hopes. The young Congressmen who left home and abandoned their jobs to join the Civil Disobedience struggle with great expectations were forced to return home without gaining anything and they became an object of ridicule for their friends and relatives. Puthupally Raghavan, a notable Communist leader from Keralam recounts how the failure of the Civil Disobedience struggle reflected in his personal life. Raghavan left his home and came to Kozhikode to become a volunteer in the Civil Disobedience struggle. But when he returned home after his release following the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, he became a stranger in his house. He was continuously insulted and ridiculed by his elder brother and brother-in-law. As a result, he soon had to leave his home forever.⁵³⁶ Thus, the disillusionment caused by the failure of the Civil Disobedience Movement was one of the main factors that attracted the youth of Keralam to radical politics and Communism.

The Civil Disobedience Movement contributed several young full-time workers to the Congress in Malabar. The anti-untouchability campaign, which was begun by Gandhi instead of the Civil Disobedience Movement, which was called off by him was unable to accommodate the aspirations of these young Congressmen with a radical mindset.⁵³⁷ This new generation of young Congressmen in Malabar was extremely political. Thinking of politics was a way for them even to forget their problems.

⁵³³ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Whither India?* Allahabad, 1933.

⁵³⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Niyamalanghanam Ninnu, Eniyo?', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. I, pp. 174-178.

⁵³⁵ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 172.

⁵³⁶ Puthupally Raghavan, *Op. cit.*, pp. 145-146.

⁵³⁷ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 175.

Cherukad recounts that he thought of Gandhi, K. Kelappan, P. Krishana Pillai, and Muhammad Abdu Rahman to forget the pain of his love failure.⁵³⁸

In every society, the youth is a distinct category with their lifestyle, thoughts, and attitudes. They will absorb every new trend in society and adapt to the changes easily. Their mindsets are always turbulent and they will accept new ideologies quickly. Often, the colonial British Government in India branded the dissents and protests from the Indian youth as 'anarchy.' Satadru Sen has argued that the colonial British Government used the terms 'anarchy' and 'anarchist' to describe the protests of the students and the youth in Bengal during the First World War.⁵³⁹ The government showed the same tendency during the Civil Disobedience struggle in Malabar. N. C. Sekhar and a few other young *satyagrahis*, who was arrested by the police presented before the Sub Collector of Thalassery. Sekhar and others asked the Sub Collector about the details of the offence they committed. The Sub collector replied that they were wandering in the country creating a 'public nuisance'. Here the government was attempting to misinterpret the participation of the youth in a mass political movement as 'a public nuisance'.⁵⁴⁰ The government was very serious about the entry of the youth into radical politics. During the mid-1930s, the Madras Government, by using the C. I. D department, watched the formation of the youth leagues among the youth of Malabar and the youth involving in the radical politics in Malabar. The names of E. M. S. Namboodiripad and K. P. Gopalan were mentioned in the C. I. D reports.⁵⁴¹

Young people always love to travel and wander in new places and have a tendency to stay away from home. By travelling, they will become familiar with new trends and people. P. Krishna Pillai was in North India from 1927 to 1929. During his life in North India, he completed his Hindi education and did some small jobs for his livelihood, and his experiences in this period had an impact on his later life.⁵⁴² K. Damodaran was attracted to the communist ideology, while he was studying at the Kasi Vidyapith.

⁵³⁸ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, p. 145.

⁵³⁹ Satadru Sen, 'Anarchies of Youth: The Oaten Affair in Colonial Bengal', *Studies in History*, Vol. XXIII, no.2, December, 2007; Satadru Sen, *Disciplined Natives: Race, Freedom and Confinement in Colonial India*, Delhi, 2012, pp. 13-41.

⁵⁴⁰ N. C. Sekhar, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

⁵⁴¹ C. I. D. Reports on the Formation of the Madras Presidency Youth League, H. F. M, Vol.101, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁵⁴² Chandavila Murali, *Sakhavu P. Krishna Pillai*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017(2008), pp. 25-29.

⁵⁴³The mindset of the youth will change suddenly. N. E. Balaram, a famous Communist leader and Marxist thinker from Keralam was influenced by the thoughts of Vivekananda in his early life. Balaram, a native of North Malabar left his home and lived in the Ramakrishna Missions Ashramas in Thrissur, Tanjaore, and Calcutta.⁵⁴⁴ But by the time he had left the Ramakrishna Mission Ashram in Calcutta, he became an ardent rationalist.⁵⁴⁵

Even some of the Communist leaders have admitted that at least a few of the Communist leaders of Keralam had emotional reasons to become Communists. E. M. S Namboodiripad states that he had ideological reasons while Krishna Pillai had emotional reasons to become a Communist. E. M. S compares his background with Krishna Pillai and identifies three emotional reasons for Krishna Pillai to become a Communist: (1)P. Krishna Pillai was a member of a poor peasant family (E. M. S belonged to a wealthy landowning Namboodiri family.); (2)Krishna Pillai wandered in North India for a few years and before that, for some time he was a coir factory worker in Alappuzha; (3) Krishna Pillai took part in the Salt *Satyagraha* in 1930 and suffered imprisonment as a 'C' class prisoner(E. M. S had not participated in the salt satyagraha in its first phase in 1930 and he was an 'A' class prisoner in jail.)⁵⁴⁶

In his study explaining the factors behind the birth of the Communist Party in Keralam, Robin Jeffrey has linked the emergence of Communism in Keralam with the decline of the *marumakkathayam* (matrilineal system) in Keralam. His argument is based on the fact that among the four political leaders from Keralam who secretly joined the Communist Party of India in 1937, three were Nairs. Among them K. Damodaran, P. Krishna Pillai, and N. C. Sekhar were Nairs and E. M. S. Namboodiripad was a *Namboodiri*. For Jeffrey, Communism emerged to fill the ideological void created by the decline of the *marumakkathayam*.⁵⁴⁷ It is a fact that most of the leaders of the Communist Party in Keralam were members of the matrilineal Nair joint families. The frustrations and disillusionments of the Nair youth, who belonged to the matrilineal

⁵⁴³ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, pp. 26-30.

⁵⁴⁴ N. E. Sudheer, 'N. E. Balaram: Vyakthiyum Prasakthiyum', in Benoy Viswam(ed.), *N. E. Balaram: Vyakthiyum Prasakthiyum*, Kozhikode, 2018(1998), p. 13.

⁵⁴⁵ Geetha Nazeer, *Balaram Enna Manushyan*, Kozhikode, 2019, pp. 30-33.

⁵⁴⁶ EMS, *Athmakatha*, pp. 208-209.

⁵⁴⁷ Robin Jeffrey, *op. cit.*

joint families were among the main factors that attracted them to radical politics. The mindset of a Communist is always turbulent and defiant. They are always defiant with the authority, whether in the family or society. The defiant behaviour of a communist begins with his family. The family structure, attitudes, and the behaviour of parents and the parent-child relationship will also affect the behaviour of a child. Wilhelm Reich in his study explains the role of strict parental authority in making Hitler an autocrat.⁵⁴⁸

The autobiographies, memoirs, and biographies of the Communist leaders of Keralam provide many examples of their confrontations with their fathers or uncles. The Nair youth were frustrated by the *marumakkathayam* system, in which the *karanavar* instead of the father was the head of the family and the parental authority. The Nair youth began to see the *marumakkathayam* as the major obstacle to their growth. Moyarath Sankaran, who was a member of a matrilineal joint family in North Malabar, says: " *marumakkathayam* nipped my growth." ⁵⁴⁹ In his autobiography, A. K. Gopalan, who also belonged to a matrilineal joint family in North Malabar narrates the distressing and unbearable situation in his joint family.⁵⁵⁰ K. Damodaran was born in Kizhedath *taravad*, an elite Nair family in South Malabar. Damodaran's family was extremely loyal to the British Government. Thus, the confrontation between Damodaran and Kizhedath *karanavar*, his uncle began, when Damodaran became a Congress activist. There were conflicts between Damodaran and his uncle over several issues.⁵⁵¹ K. A. Keraleeyan belonged to a prominent matrilineal joint family in North Malabar. He always questioned the dictatorial tendencies of his *karanavar*. As a young man, Keraleeyan came into conflict with his uncle over the issues of the pathetic living conditions of the members in the *taravad* and the partition of the *taravad* properties.⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁸ Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*, New York, 1993(1946), pp. 37-38. Lynn Hunt describes the relation between the French family structure and the French Revolution. Lynn Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution*, New York, 1992. California, 1992.

⁵⁴⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, p. 43.

⁵⁵⁰ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithakatha*, pp. 5-6.

⁵⁵¹ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, pp. 13-18.

⁵⁵² V. V. Kunhikrishnan, *K. A. Keraleeyan*, University of Calicut, 1991, pp. 1-4. K. A. Keraleeyan's real name was K. A. Kunhappa Nambiar.

The autobiography of Cherukad, a famous Malayalam writer and a Communist gives many instances of the intense *ammavan-marumakan* (uncle-nephew) conflict. Cherukad explains how the confrontation with his uncle, whom he called *kunjamman* (younger uncle) made him a rebel.⁵⁵³ In his autobiography, Cherukad often compares his uncle to the British Emperor and his *taravad* under Kunjamman's administration to a colony.⁵⁵⁴

In most cases, the parents of the Communist leaders in Malabar were staunch British loyalists. E. K. Nayanar, a prominent Communist leader from Keralam recollects an experience in his memoirs. Nayanar's father and uncle were British loyalists and anti-Congress. Nayanar was beaten severely by his father for picketing the liquor shop as part of the Congress campaign. After this incident, Nayanar left his home by taking one and a half Rupees from his mother's money box.⁵⁵⁵ Thus, in short, factors like the disillusionment of the youth, childhood experiences, the family structure based on the matrilineal joint family system, and the nature of parenting authority should also be considered when explaining the birth of Communism in Keralam.

2.15. The Congress in Power

The Government of India Act of 1935 proposed for provincial autonomy and a Federal Government at the centre.⁵⁵⁶ The congress participated in the elections held for the newly formed provincial assemblies and achieved a tremendous victory. The Congress won 716 seats out of the total 1585 seats in India. The Congress got clear majorities in five provinces including Madras.⁵⁵⁷ Among the Provinces of India, the most massive victory of the Congress was in the Madras province, which included the Malabar district. The Congress secured 159 seats of the total 215 seats in the Madras Legislative Assembly.⁵⁵⁸ The Congress Working Committee decided to accept office and during July 1937, the Congress formed ministries in six provinces.⁵⁵⁹ On July 14,

⁵⁵³ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, pp.61-63. Cherukad's full name is Cherukad Govinda Pisharody.

⁵⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 84

⁵⁵⁵ E. K. Nayanar, *Communistukarante Kudumbabandhangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1988, pp. 10-16; E. K. Nayanar, *Pathrapravarthakante Anubhavangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1987, pp. 7-13.

⁵⁵⁶ Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁵⁵⁷ Judith M. Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy*, Delhi, 1984, p. 286.

⁵⁵⁸ Rajendra Prasad, *Autobiography*, Gurgaon, 2010(1946), p. 420.

⁵⁵⁹ Bipan Chandra et al., *India's Struggle for Independence*, Gurgaon, 1989(1988)p. 323.

1937, the Congress ministry under the premiership of C. Rajagopalachari came into power in the Madras province. K. Raman Menon, a veteran Congress leader from Malabar was inducted as a minister in the newly formed Rajagopalachari ministry.⁵⁶⁰ Thus, from 1937-1939, the colonial British Government adopted the tactic of retreating to the centre by leaving the provinces for Indian ministers.⁵⁶¹

There are a few studies on the Congress administration in the provinces of colonial India during 1937-1939. Few of them are case studies of a particular province. Visalakshi Menon has studied about the Congress Government in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh in 1937-39. Visalakshi's work shows how the Congress worked both as a movement and government in the United Provinces from 1937 to 1939.⁵⁶² The study by Vinita Damodan on the nature of the Nationalist Movement in the Province of Bihar during the 1930s and 1940s, also has a detailed description of the Congress Government in Bihar in 1937-39. Vinita argues that during this period, the Congress in Bihar transformed from a movement to a party in power.⁵⁶³ Amit Kumar Gupta in a case study of the legislature and the freedom struggle in the North West Frontier Province gives details of the provincial Congress Governments in N. W. F. P in 1939 and 1946.⁵⁶⁴ Amalendu Guha's work on the emergence, rise, and growth of the National Movement in Assam takes the 1937-39 period when Assam was under Congress rule as one of the major topics of study.⁵⁶⁵ Christopher John Baker, a Cambridge historian explains the case of Madras.⁵⁶⁶ Bhagwan Josh in his study gives a detailed description of the attitude of the left towards the Congress decision to accept the office and towards the activities of the Congress ministries.⁵⁶⁷ Another study from

⁵⁶⁰ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

⁵⁶¹ Judith Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

⁵⁶² Visalakshi Menon, *From Movement to Government: The Congress in the United Provinces, 1937-42*, New Delhi, 2003.

⁵⁶³ Vinita Damodaran, *Broken Promises: Popular Protest, Indian Nationalism and the Congress Party in Bihar, 1935-46*, Delhi, 1992.

⁵⁶⁴ Amit Kumar Gupta, *North West Frontier Province Legislature and the Freedom Struggle, 1932-1947*, New Delhi, 1976.

⁵⁶⁵ Amalendu Guha, *From Planter Raj to Swaraj: Freedom Struggle and Electoral Politics in Assam*, New Delhi, 1988(1977).

⁵⁶⁶ Christopher John Baker, *The Politics of South India, 1920-37*, Cambridge, 1976.

⁵⁶⁷ Bhagwan Josh, *Struggle for Hegemony in India: The Colonial State, The Left and the National Movement 1920-47*, Vol. II, 1934-41, New Delhi, 1992, pp. 211-256.

Cambridge by B. R. Tomlinson describes the nature of the Congress politics in India during 1937-39.⁵⁶⁸

The most important benefit for the Indian National Movement by the provincial Congress Governments in 1937-39 was psychological.⁵⁶⁹ As Congress Governments generated confidence among the people, The people realised that were capable of ruling themselves and that freedom was near. They began to consider Congress leaders as their future rulers. People began to respect Congress leaders and workers and treat them well. The historians don't have attempted to analyze the changes in the mentalities and attitudes of the people of colonial India during the Congress rule in the provinces between 1937 and 1939. Cambridge historians regarded it as a period when the Congress leaders bargained for power. Vinita Damodaran asserts that the provincial Congress Governments were forced to depend on the institutions of the colonial state.⁵⁷⁰ Though the attempts of Bipan Chandra and Visalakshi Menon to bring into light the administrative changes and reforms introduced by the provincial Congress Government are successful, the description of the psychological changes caused by the Congress rule is limited to a few sentences in their works.

A. K. Gopalan describes the psychological changes among the people created by the feeling that Congress would win the elections of 1937 and come into power. He says: "when the Congress came into power, there was a general enthusiasm and zeal throughout the country. Even those who had hitherto been the enemies of the Congress pretended to be Congressmen. The attitude of the police also changed. They sometimes even came forward to inquire into the complaints by Congress committees."⁵⁷¹ Busses gave free rides to Congressmen. The people began to respect the men who wore khaddar and started to give food to them.⁵⁷² There was a general feeling that the Congress would win. Jawaharlal Nehru, who led the election campaign of the Congress, had tried to create a pro-Congress feeling and sympathy among the

⁵⁶⁸ B. R. Tomlinson, *The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929-42*, Madras, 1976.

⁵⁶⁹ Bipan Chandra, et al., *Freedom Struggle*, New Delhi, 1994(1972), p. 184.

⁵⁷⁰ Vinita Damodaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁷¹ A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People*, p. 85.

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

people.⁵⁷³ There was also a general belief for the seat aspirants that their victory was sure if they managed to get a Congress ticket. A few political leaders of Madras who aspired to become the Justice Party candidates in the previous elections began to aspire for the Congress tickets in the elections of 1936-37. Christopher Baker argues that the huge demand for Congress tickets was due to a general feeling across the Madras province that the easy victory of the Congress candidates was definite.⁵⁷⁴

As there were many seat aspirants also in Malabar, there was a big tussle between the leftists and rightists in the Congress over the selection of candidates as soon as the election was declared.⁵⁷⁵ The Congress Working Committee realized that the selection of candidates was not easy. Because the national leadership didn't have any direct knowledge about the popularity and acceptance of the candidates. Thus, they were forced to depend on the advice of the provincial Congress committees while preparing the candidate list of the Congress.⁵⁷⁶ The leaders of the leftists of the K. P. C. C were at first against the decision of the party to contest in the elections.⁵⁷⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, a leader of the leftists in the K. P. C. C, expressed his strong disagreement with this decision. E. M. S says that at that time he had believed that participating in the election was a kind of moderatism and a stay away from it was more radical.⁵⁷⁸ The peasants and workers were attracted to the Congress by the tireless attempts of the leftists in the Congress in Malabar. In 1936, just before the elections were held, the leftists organized a *pattinijatha* (hunger march) from Malabar to Madras against the severe poverty and unemployment, which received overwhelming responses and tremendous support from the people.⁵⁷⁹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad has claimed that at the time when the election was declared, most of the leaders sided with the rightists of the Congress while the ordinary party workers were with the leftists.⁵⁸⁰ Since the election was held when the K. P. C. C was dominated by the rightists, the rightist leadership of the K. P. C. C prepared the candidate list and

⁵⁷³ Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 418.

⁵⁷⁴ Christopher John Baker, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-299.

⁵⁷⁵ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 257.

⁵⁷⁶ Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 411.

⁵⁷⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, pp. 58-60.

⁵⁷⁸ EMS, *Athmakatha*, pp. 217-221.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

⁵⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

led the election campaign.⁵⁸¹ In December 1936, E. M. S. Namboodiripad wrote an article opposing the Congress accepting office.⁵⁸²

In Malabar, not even a single seat was allotted by the rightists to the leftists. When the name of E. M. S. Namboodiripad was raised the leadership denied him the seat saying that caste Hindus would never vote for E. M. S. Namboodiripad, who became an outcaste by serving imprisonment. G. Ramachandran was deputed to enquire about this allegation and report to the national leadership. The right-wing leaders also argued that the majority of the voters in the constituency, where E. M. S. aspired to contest were *Tiyyas* and E. M. S. was a Namboodiri. But later, E. M. S. Namboodiripad became a Member of the Madras Legislative Assembly by winning a bye-election in 1939.⁵⁸³ In the elections of 1937, in provinces like Orissa and Bengal, Communists got Congress tickets and became MLAs. But in Malabar, not even a single Communist got a Congress ticket.⁵⁸⁴ Thus, no one was elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly representing the leftists of the Congress in Malabar. E. Kannan and Muhammad Abdu Rahman, to whom the rightists gave tickets switched their sides to the left wing after the elections.⁵⁸⁵ In most of the constituencies of Malabar, there were many aspirants in the Congress for the same seat. In Malabar. A. K. Pillai and M. P. Damodaran applied to the K. P. C. C for the candidature in Kottayam-Wayanad seat. Kinathi Narayanan, a local prominent Congress leader in Thalassery, and his group supported M. P. Damodaran. They supported Damodaran because of that he belonged to the same constituency but A. K. Pillai was a native of Tiruvaitamkur.⁵⁸⁶ The large number of aspirants for Congress tickets in Malabar was also due to the high chance of the Congress in the election as pointed out by Baker.

The election campaign was a great opportunity for the Congress to address the masses. The Congress got a good chance to spread its ideology among the people by

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

⁵⁸² E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Manthripada Sweekaranam', P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. II, pp. 157-162.

⁵⁸³ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 257.

⁵⁸⁴ *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 576.

⁵⁸⁵ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, pp. 122-123.

⁵⁸⁶ Nettoor P. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, pp.69-70.

its election manifesto and election speeches.⁵⁸⁷ As the elections to different constituencies, stretched across different *taluks* in Malabar held at a time, the election campaign became a good opportunity to the Congress to penetrate the areas where it had a presence or hold as well as those without it. As part of the election campaign, the Congress made a re-entry to the rebellion-affected areas of South Malabar, where the Mappilas were the majority in the population. The Congress had almost disappeared from the rebellion-affected areas after the rebellion of 1921 and no campaigns by the Congress were held there after that. Muhammad Abdu Rahman, a prominent nationalist Muslim leader in Malabar was the Congress candidate in the Malappuram (Muslim) constituency, which included the areas of the Eranad-Valluvanad *taluks*. Both his rival candidates, Khan Bahadur Unni Kammu and K. Chekku were wealthy and prominent Mappilas.⁵⁸⁸ Abdu Rahman's rivals spread an allegation that he was not a real Muslim but a *kafir*.⁵⁸⁹ The orthodox Muslim religious leaders openly and the rightists of the Congress secretly opposed Abdu Rahman. When all these became adverse factors for Abdu Rahman, the youth supported him wholeheartedly and campaigned for him vigorously. But the election results sealed the mouths of all the opponents of Abdu Rahman. Abdu Rahman won by securing 27, 398 votes while his rival candidates, Unni Kammu and Chekku got only 12, 323 votes and 10, 890 votes respectively. Abdu Rahman's rival candidates couldn't get even half of the votes secured by him.⁵⁹⁰ A fierce election battle will always create great excitement among the people. People will be eager to know its results and it will become a talk among the people. Uroob in his novel *Ummachu* narrates how a fierce election battle between the Congress and Muslim League generated excitement among the people.⁵⁹¹

The election expenditure was an important matter of concern for the national leadership of the Congress. The central leadership of the Congress checked whether a Congress candidate could bear the election expenses himself. The election expenses of the candidates also depended upon the ability of their rival candidates to spend. If

⁵⁸⁷ Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

⁵⁸⁸ V. S Keraleeyan, *Keralathinte Veeraputhran*, Thrissur, 2013 (1959), p. 113.

⁵⁸⁹ M. Rasheed, *Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*, p.68.

⁵⁹⁰ S. K Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 517-518.

⁵⁹¹ Uroob, *Ummachu*, Kottayam, 2016 (1954), pp. 167-178.

the rival candidate was rich the Congress candidate would be forced to spend more.⁵⁹² The main rival candidates of the Congress candidates in the election were the representatives of the Peoples Party of Piathapuram Raja. They were very rich and prominent people in their constituencies. For instance, Advocate Kottiyathu Krishnan, a rich and prominent person was the rival candidate of the Congress leader, M. P Damodaran in Kottayam-Wayanad constituency.⁵⁹³ The rival candidates of Muhamad Abdu Rahaman were very rich and had the support of top bureaucrats and many prominent Muslims in Malappuram were their relatives.⁵⁹⁴ Sanjayan wrote an article ridiculing the affluence of money in the elections of 1936-37. He says that the election period was the good days for those who want to sell their old presses or old cars. Because during the election campaign, a printing press for printing the election notices, and a car for transportation were two essential things for the parties and candidates. Sanjayan further says that there were two types of candidates, *sakaranmar* (the candidates who have cars) and *akaranmar* (the candidates who don't have a car).⁵⁹⁵ The victory of the Congress candidates, though their rival candidates spent abundantly for the election campaign was proof of the enormous popular support to the Congress.

In most of the constituencies, especially in the general constituencies, the Congress candidates won by a landslide, and the rival candidates lost their deposits. The rival candidate of C. K. Govindan Nair, the Congress candidate of Kurumbranad constituency was K. Rama Varma Elaya Raja of the Malabar Party. Rama Varma Raja was a member of the Kadathanad royal family. Govindan Nair won by securing more than five times the votes secured by Rama Varma Raja. Govindan Nair's victory by opposing a royal family member proved that the people began to see Congress leaders as their future rulers.⁵⁹⁶ The colonial government wished for the defeat of the Congress. The government supported the Justice Party, the major opposition party, both directly and indirectly.⁵⁹⁷ A few prominent Mappila Muslims, who received the

⁵⁹² Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, pp. 411-412.

⁵⁹³ Nettoor P. Damodaran, *op. cit.*

⁵⁹⁴ V. S. Keraleeyan, *op. cit.*

⁵⁹⁵ *Sanjayan*, November 1936.

⁵⁹⁶ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1 March 1937.

⁵⁹⁷ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of September 1936, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

titles, 'Khan Bahadur' and 'Khan Sahib' from the colonial British Government contested the elections and few of them won. They opposed the Congress in the Assembly and supported the Justice Party.⁵⁹⁸ Unni Kammu, the main rival candidate of Muhammad Abdu Rahman, was also a Khan Bahadur.⁵⁹⁹ Muhammad Abdu Rahman, a nationalist Muslim Congressman, and a staunch anti-British won the elections by securing more than double the number of votes got for his main rival candidate, a prominent Muslim with the backing of the government. The victory of the Congress candidates by giving a big shock to the British Government, which wished for the defeat of the Congress created excitement, wonder, and trust in the strength of the Congress among the people. A. K. Gopalan says: "The people realised the strength of the organization. The notion that British imperialism was indestructible gave way."⁶⁰⁰

For Baker, the left wing of the Congress feared that ministership would make the right wing more influential and stronger in the party.⁶⁰¹ Many people believed that the leaders of the left wing in Malabar who denied seats would work for the defeat of the Congress candidates. Many such allegations were raised during the elections. Madhavji, a satirist and regular columnist in the *Sanjayan* Magazine wrote a satirical poem titled *Viplavakkaradiyude Vottupidi* (Vote canvassing of the Revolutionary Bear). In this poem, he ridiculed the leftist leaders of the Congress who were campaigning and working secretly against the Congress candidates in the elections.⁶⁰² But E. M. S. Namboodiripad argues that the left-right wing conflict in Congress disappeared for some time during the elections.⁶⁰³ He asserts that the active participation of the leftist leaders in the election campaign created an impression about them among the Congress workers and that helped them to capture the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee after the elections.⁶⁰⁴

The disputes related to the induction of Muslim ministers in the Congress ministries became a major headache for the Congress leadership in all provinces. The Congress

⁵⁹⁸ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 270.

⁵⁹⁹ S. K. Pottakkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*.

⁶⁰⁰ A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People*, p. 88.

⁶⁰¹ Christopher Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

⁶⁰² Madhavaji, 'Viplavakkaradiyude Vottupidi', in K. Gopalakrishnan(ed.), *Madhavajiye Krithikal*, Thrissur, 2004, pp. 93-94.

⁶⁰³ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 265

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 257-258.

leadership realized that if they failed to give a fair representation to Muslims in the provincial ministries, the Muslim League would allege that the Congress was neglecting Muslims and make it a big issue.⁶⁰⁵ There was a demand for a Muslim minister from Malabar, where the Mappila Muslims were a substantial section of the population, and the name of Muhammad Abdu Rahman was proposed for the ministership. Two delegations with the demand to include Muhammad Abdu Rahman in the ministry, led by Kattilasserri Muhammad Musliar and Manjeri Sundaram met C. Rajagoplachari, the Premier of Madras. But among the MLAs from Malabar, only E. Kannan supported Abdu Rahman. The MLAs from Malabar like Potheri Madhavan, C. K. Govindan Nair, A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, P. Achuthan, Ambalakkattu Karunakara Menon, and Kongattil Raman Menon were against Abdu Rahman.⁶⁰⁶ The district of Malabar got representation in the provincial Congress ministry when Kongattil Raman Menon was included in the ministry. Raman Menon was born in an elite Nair family at Nattika in Thrissur in February 1895. He came to Kozhikode in 1920, at the age of 25, and started practising as a lawyer. He entered politics and became active in the Congress movement when he was in Kozhikode.⁶⁰⁷

When the Congress came into power in provinces, the people felt that they were the rulers. They began to see the Congress ministers as their representatives or as one among them. The Englishmen as the rulers of India always kept a distance from the people. The colonial British rulers were afraid of the people coming to them. The common people were not permitted to approach their rulers. The Congress had criticized imposing restrictions on the public in the meetings and programs attended by the Viceroy, Governor, and District Collectors. The Congress leaders had ridiculed the Viceroy who travelled by air as much as possible instead of travelling by land because of fear of the people.⁶⁰⁸ But this situation changed when the Congress came into power. E. M. S. Namboodiripad says that the common people believed that meeting the ministers and MLAs would be a solution for some of their problems.⁶⁰⁹ The public began to make the tour programs of the Congress ministers in the Malabar

⁶⁰⁵ Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, pp. 429-430.

⁶⁰⁶ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 520-521.

⁶⁰⁷ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keralaleeyar-II*, Kottayam, 1976, pp. 53-54.

⁶⁰⁸ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 30 May 1930.

⁶⁰⁹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2009(1984), p. 56.

district become big events. The Congress ministers became chief guests and inaugurators in public functions. People rushed to the programs attended by the ministers to get a glance at them, submit memorandums, and tell the ministers their grievances. People waited for long hours with bouquets and garlands to receive the ministers. There was a change in the situation where the people were afraid of their rulers and the rulers were afraid of the people.⁶¹⁰

The performance of the MLAs from Malabar was commendable as they were successful in bringing up the issues of the common people of Malabar in the Madras Legislative Assembly. They participated actively in the debates in the Legislative Assembly from 1937 to 1939. They raised many issues in the Legislative Assembly related to agriculture, public works and infrastructure, education, basic rights of men, and women's rights. During the debates in the Legislative Assembly, the MLAs like Muhammad Abdu Rahman lashed out against the bureaucratic highhandedness and the police *Raj*. E. Kannan, who was elected from the seats reserved for the Scheduled castes raised many issues of the Dalits in the Legislative Assembly. A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, who was elected from the seat reserved for women was also active in the debates in the Legislative Assembly.⁶¹¹ One of the most vigilant critics of the Congress Government in Madras was Muhammad Abdu Rahman, a Congress leader, and MLA, and he used the Legislative Assembly as a platform to raise his criticisms against the government. Though elected from a Muslim-reserved seat, as an MLA, Abdu Rahman was a spokesman for not only the Mappilas but the entire people of Malabar. Representing the members from Malabar, Abdu Rahman spoke in the Assembly congratulating the newly elected speaker of the Madras Legislative Assembly. When Abdu Rahman began to speak in Malayalam a member raised an objection that there was a rule that the members who knew English should speak in English. But he continued to speak in Malayalam despite the objection.⁶¹²

The Congress rule from 1937 and 1939 gave confidence and hope to the workers and peasants. The historians who have studied about the provincial Congress

⁶¹⁰ Several issues of the *Mathrubhumi Weekly* from 1937-39.

⁶¹¹ Madras Legislative Assembly Debates, 1937-39, Regional Archives, Kozhikode, 1937-39.

⁶¹² S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 521-526.

Governments in 1937-39 have mentioned this fact. The peasant and working-class movements got strengthened when the Congress came into power in the provinces. The new confidence of the peasants and workers was expressed in the form of peasant agitations and worker's strikes.⁶¹³ The feeling that the Congress would come into power created excitement among the peasants in Malabar. They worked for the Congress candidates in the elections and voted for them.⁶¹⁴ The peasants and workers toiled for the victory of the Congress candidates with an expectation that if the Congress would into power, the Congress ministry would find solutions for their problems.⁶¹⁵ The enthusiasm generated among the peasants and workers when the Congress accepted office was helpful for the leftists to organize and mobilize them to the Congress-led national movement. During the election campaign, the leftists of the Congress approached the people and appealed to them not only to cast their votes in Congress's 'Yellow Box' but also to enrol as members of the Congress.⁶¹⁶ The number of members in the Congress in Keralam increased from 32, 000 in 1937 to 55, 031 in 1938. Among the *taluks* of Malabar, Chirakkal *Taluk*, which was the stronghold of the peasant movement had the highest number of Congress members. In 1938, there were 7258 members of the Congress in Chirakkal *Taluk*.⁶¹⁷ After the rebellion of 1921, no campaigns of the Congress were held in Eranad *Taluk*, where the Mappila tenants were the majority in the population. The activities of Congress restarted in Eranad *Taluk* during Congress's rule in Madras. Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the then President of the K. P. C. C. provided the leadership for this. Congress leaders such as A. K. Gopalan and E. Moidu Maulavi worked along with Abdu Rahman to rejuvenate the Congress movement in *Eranad Taluk*.⁶¹⁸

During the Congress rule, the peasants of Malabar began massive agitations under the leadership of the *Karshaka Sangham*. Peasant *jathas* were held in all *taluks*. Peasant conferences public meetings and *jathas* became regular everywhere in

⁶¹³ Visalakshi Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 334; Vinita Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. xi; Amalendu Guha, *op. cit.*, pp. 249-256.

⁶¹⁴ A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People*.

⁶¹⁵ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, pp. 301-302.

⁶¹⁶ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, pp. 128-129.

⁶¹⁷ *Prabhatham*, 5 December 1938.

⁶¹⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, pp. 130-132.

Malabar. Agrarian problem emerged as the major issue in the politics of Malabar. During this period, N. G Ranga, the General Secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha along with P. Narayanan Nair, the President of the *Malabar Karshaka Sangham* visited the eastern hilly regions of North Malabar and studied the problem of the peasants. In December 1938, T. Prakasam, the Revenue Minister of Madras toured North Malabar to inquire into the agrarian problems in North Malabar. The peasants met the revenue minister and gave evidence and told their grievances to the minister.⁶¹⁹

Even E. M. S. Namboodiripad who criticized relentlessly the activities of the Congress Government in Madras, admits that the people had some gains during the Congress rule from 1937 to 1939. He has pointed out the actions taken by the government for the debt relief for the peasants as an example.⁶²⁰ The Madras Government passed 'The Madras Agriculturalists Relief Act' to help the indebted peasants by scaling down their debts by giving the tenants a relief from their old arrears of rent.⁶²¹ The *Karshaka Sangham* that gained enormous strength after the Congress acceptance of office organized no rent campaigns against the landlords.⁶²² This brought the landlords and peasants into an open fight. The question about the stance of the Congress ministry in the *janmi-kudiayan* disputes became most relevant in that period. The leftists of the Congress alleged that the Congress Government was siding with the *janmis* to suppress the peasant agitations in Malabar. The Madras Government posted punitive police at Peringoth in Payyanur *firka* and Ellaranji in Irikkur *firka*, two strongholds of the *Karshaka Sangham* in North Malabar.⁶²³ During the Congress rule, the leaders of the leftists also alleged that the police were registering fake cases against the peasants based on the false complaints of the landlords.⁶²⁴ But there were at least a few incidents contrary to this. K. Madhavan recounts an incident that took place in 1938. The men of the village headman of Kodakkad village set fire to the *pandal* and arranged for a joint conference between Congress and *Karshaka Sangham*. When it

⁶¹⁹ A. K. Pooduval, *Keralathile Karshaka Prasthanam: Oru Laghu Charithram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1969, pp. 42-49.

⁶²⁰ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 59.

⁶²¹ *Madras in 1938*, Madras, 1939, Book No. A/1152, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁶²² E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 48.

⁶²³ A. V. Kunhambu, , *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁶²⁴ A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People*, p. 140

became a case the village headman who knew that it was the period of Congress rule was forced to settle the case by apologizing to Subramanian Tirumumbu, the president of the *Karshaka Sangham*.⁶²⁵

Trade unions also achieved a new vigour when the Congress came into power in Madras. The election manifesto of the Congress, which included many promises to the workers was a big hope to the working class.⁶²⁶ Worker's strikes became very common during 1937-39. The textile workers and beedi workers went on strikes in many places in Malabar.⁶²⁷ D. Veeraghavan in his study on the Madras working class provides a detailed description of the attitude of the provincial Congress ministry to the working class in Madras. In his opinion, during 1937-39, the Congress Government adopted a policy of negotiation to settle the disputes between the workers and capitalists.⁶²⁸ V. V. Giri, a prominent Indian trade union leader was the Labour Minister in the Congress Government in Madras.⁶²⁹ When V. V. Giri visited Kozhikode, a large number of workers organized together to meet him and submit a memorandum.⁶³⁰ A. K. Gopalan says that the workers lost faith in the Congress Government when the Government sided with the capitalists in the employment disputes in factories.⁶³¹

Though there may be different opinions regarding whether the Congress Government met the expectations of the people, whether it kept its promises, or whether it considered the demands of the peasants and workers enough, we should accept the fact that the office acceptance of the Congress gave confidence and hopes to the common people of India including the peasants and workers. Even A. K. Gopalan and E. M. S. Namboodiripad, the leaders of the leftists of the Congress, who always criticized the Congress Government openly admit that the period of the Congress rule was a good opportunity for them to mobilize the people.⁶³² They assert that the Congress's acceptance of office provided impetus not only to the peasant and working-class movements but also to the teacher's movement, student movement,

⁶²⁵ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, pp. 119-120.

⁶²⁶ EMS, *Aathmakatha*, pp. 279-281.

⁶²⁷ G. D. Nair, *Malabarile Trade Union Parasthanathinte Charithram*, Payyanur, 2004, pp. 26-37.

⁶²⁸ D. Veeraraghavan, *The Making of the Madras Working Class*, New Delhi, 2013, pp. 241-276.

⁶²⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, p. 135.

⁶³⁰ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 72.

⁶³¹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, pp. 135-138.

⁶³² *Ibid.*, pp. 133-34; E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*.

and women's movement in Malabar. The Congress Government approved many new schools and the teachers were allowed to become members of the Congress.⁶³³ The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee led by the leftists and the nationalist Muslim group of the Congress, came into confrontation with the Congress Government in Madras.⁶³⁴ However, the Congress rule in Madras from 1937 to 1939 opened new opportunities for the leftists to address the peasants and workers. The leadership of the K. P. C. C had been taken over by the leftists from the rightists during this period. It seems very interesting that the leftists in the Congress in Malabar which had no representation in the ministry and the Legislative Assembly gained enormous popular support during the period of the Congress rule.⁶³⁵ The administration in the provinces came almost under the total control of the Congress during this period. The bureaucrats in the provinces had to act according to the instructions of the Congress ministers. Consequently, the bureaucrats switched their loyalty to the Congress ministers from the Colonial British Government.⁶³⁶

There was a big erosion in the hegemony of the colonial state in India during this period.⁶³⁷ Jayaprakash Narayan said in one of his speeches in November 1937, that 'the Congress ministries would not last long and during the time the Congress Government existed, every effort should be made to destroy the hold of the "steel frame" over the life of the people.'⁶³⁸ The Congress Government had the power to appoint, suspend, dismiss, and reinstate most of the bureaucrats in the provinces. The Congress government reinstated some *adhikaris* who were dismissed from the service for their relation with the National Movement.⁶³⁹ The Government also made attempts to reinstate the government officials who were dismissed for their involvement in the Civil Disobedience Movement and Non-Co-operation Movement.⁶⁴⁰ There were allegations that the government officials were obeying and

⁶³³ Koliyottu Madhavan, *P. R. Nambiar*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, pp. 29-30.

⁶³⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, pp. 58-60.

⁶³⁵ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, pp. 301-305.

⁶³⁶ R. P. Noronha, *A Tale Told by an Idiot*, New Delhi, 1976, pp. 3-4.

⁶³⁷ Visalakshi Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

⁶³⁸ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of November 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶³⁹ *Acts Passed by the Madras Legislature in the Year 1939*, Book No. A/103, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁶⁴⁰ *Madras Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VI, No.14, Madras, 1938, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

acting according to the orders of the local Congress leaders. In August 1938, the District Magistrate of Malabar reported that the local Congress leaders were interfering in the duty of the government officials and behaving like those who had superior powers and authority over the officials.⁶⁴¹ Most of these incidents were reported from North Malabar, the stronghold of the leftists.⁶⁴²

The Congress ministers were the former victims of the repressive laws introduced by the colonial British Government in India. Thus, there was huge public pressure on the provincial Congress Governments to repeal many of these notorious acts. The Congress Socialists demanded the repeal of the Section 124-A and the abolition of the C. I. D.⁶⁴³ Kongattil Raman Menon, a Congress minister from Malabar moved a resolution in the Madras Legislative Assembly demanding the abolition of the death penalty.⁶⁴⁴ The Congress ministers and MLAs who received many lathi blows in their lives also wanted to substitute the heavy lathis of the police with lighter canes.⁶⁴⁵ The Congress ministers who suffered imprisonment several times knew the conditions in Indian jails well. Thus, they stood for the rights of the prisoners and took the initiative to provide better facilities and living conditions for the prisoners in Indian jails. Jail reform became a main agenda of the Congress Government in Madras.⁶⁴⁶ Kongattil Raman Menon from Malabar was the Minister in Charge of Courts and Prisons in C. Rajagopalachari Ministry. Raman Menon suffered imprisonment for more than two years by participating in the Civil Disobedience struggle.⁶⁴⁷ The attitude of the jail officials towards the Congressmen in jails also changed after the Congress accepted office.⁶⁴⁸ The sentences of many Congressmen in jail were remitted and they were released prematurely by the Government. A. K. Gopalan, who was released from jail

⁶⁴¹ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of August 1938, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁴² *Ibid.*

⁶⁴³ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of October 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁴⁴ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 27 September 1937.

⁶⁴⁵ G. O. No.3734, Home Department, Ms. Series, dated 21st September 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁴⁶ *Madras in 1938*.

⁶⁴⁷ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keralaleeyar*, pp. 55-56.

⁶⁴⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, p. 123.

at that time recounts that he was 'proud to come out of jail when the Congress was in power.'⁶⁴⁹

The bureaucrats and the policemen were forced to respect the Congress flag and the *khaddar* dress which they insulted once. Every session of the Legislative Assembly began with the singing of *Vande Mataram*.⁶⁵⁰ But from 1 March 1938, this practice was discontinued in the Madras Legislative Assembly due to the objection raised by the Muslim League MLAs.⁶⁵¹ Congress flags were hoisted in many government offices.⁶⁵² The Congress Government gave direct instruction to the government officials to respect the Congress flag. During this period, the people began to consider the Congress flag as the national flag.⁶⁵³ Before the Congress accepted office, there were many incidents of government officials being suspended by the government for wearing *khaddar*. But when the Congress came into power the Congress ministers wore *khaddar* and many government officials started to attend their offices wearing *khaddar*. The Congress Government promoted the use of *khaddar* dress by government officials and school teachers.⁶⁵⁴ The government prepared a special scheme for the promotion of *khadi* and allocated a fair amount of money for this in the budget.⁶⁵⁵ The government promoted also the printing and publication of Hindi books.⁶⁵⁶ The symbols of Indian nationalism represented by the Congress were popularized among the people during this period. During this period, the people got the opportunity to respect, salute and propagate fearlessly, the symbols of Indian Nationalism instead of the symbol of the colonial British rule.

In 1935, the British Government demanded a security of Rs 2, 000 from the publishers of the *Prabhatham* newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Congress Socialist Party in

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵⁰ *Madras Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. IV, No.5, Madras, 1938, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁶⁵¹ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of March 1938, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai. In a study surveying the Biogbiography of the *Vande Mataram* Song, Sabhyasachi Bhattacharya provides the details of the Muslim League opposition to the *Vande Mataram* Song and the attempt of the Hindu communal groups to project its glory. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, *Vande Mataram: The Biography of a Song*, New Delhi, 2003.

⁶⁵² Fortnightly Report for the First Half of February 1939, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁵³ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 16 May 1938.

⁶⁵⁴ *Madras Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VIII, No.6, Madras, 1938, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁶⁵⁵ *Madras Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VI, No.6, Madras, 1938, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁶⁵⁶ *Report on the Public Instruction in the Madras Presidency for the Year 1937-38*, Voll, Madras, 1939, Book No. A/839, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

Malabar for publishing Chovvara Parameswaran's *Aathmanadam*, a poem on Bhagat Singh. The *Prabhatham*, which started publication in January 1935, had to stop publication within months due to non-payment of the security.⁶⁵⁷ In September 1937, the Congress Government in Madras cancelled the notice demanding security of Rs 2,000 from the publishers of the *Prabhatham*.⁶⁵⁸ Following this, the *Prabhatham* restarted publication and it became the mouthpiece of the Congress in Malabar when the K. P. C. C came under the control of the leftists.⁶⁵⁹

The Congress Government in Madras took all necessary actions to lift the ban imposed on various political films in the Madras province. During this period, the government lifted the ban on the films like *Mahatma Gandhiji's March to Freedom*, *Mahatma Gandhi's Historic March-12 March 1930*, *Patriot*, *Mr. Patel's Procession*, *The Patriot* (American Film), *Bombay*

Welcome Mahathma Gandhi, *Mahathma Gandhiji's Punarjanmam*, *Gandhi's Return from England*, and *Gandhi Meets the King*.⁶⁶⁰ In September 1937, the Congress Government repealed the 80-year-old notorious 'Moplah Outrages Act' enacted by the colonial British government to crush the Mappila outbreaks in Malabar.⁶⁶¹ The Mappilas and the Muslim leaders of the Congress had been demanding this for a long time. The Congress leaders of Malabar had been appealing to the Madras Government for the repeal of this act even from the beginning of the National Movement in Malabar.

The policemen were the biggest enemies of the Congressmen during the freedom struggle in India. The colonial British Government used the police force to torture and humiliate the Congressmen and to put them behind bars imposing grave charges. When the Congress formed governments in the provinces the same policemen were forced to obey the Congressmen. The Congressmen, who were tortured, insulted, and branded as notorious criminals and traitors by the policemen became their new

⁶⁵⁷ I. C. P. Namboodiri, *Viplavathinte Ulthudippukal*, Kottayam, 2002, pp. 53-56.

⁶⁵⁸ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of September 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁵⁹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 33.

⁶⁶⁰ *Madras Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. VI, No.5, Madras, 1938, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁶⁶¹ G. O. No.3647, Home Department, Ms. Series, dated 9th September, 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

masters and they had to obey their orders. However, the leftists of the Congress alleged that the police were disloyal to the Congress Government and acting against the Government policy. They openly declared that there was 'Police *Raj* over the Congress *Raj*'. A meeting presided over By E. Kannan, a Congress MLA was held at Kozhikode Town Hall on November 6, 1938 to protest against police atrocities. A resolution passed in the meeting stating that the police were continuing to repress the people, take bribes, and register false cases even under the Congress rule. The resolution was presented in the meeting by Muhammad Abdu Rahman, another Congress MLA.⁶⁶² A. K. Gopalan said that the act of the police disrespecting the Congressmen was degrading the Congress before the public.⁶⁶³

Even Sanjayan, an ardent Gandhian Congressmen and ant-Communist expressed the same opinion. A cartoon published in the *Sanjayan* in October 1937 expresses an opinion that 'the police *raj* as the charioteer who was controlling the Congress ministers, who were the horses in the chariot.'⁶⁶⁴ The opinion of the Congress leaders was based on the common belief that the police should be loyal to the ruling government. The opposition parties expressed an opinion about the police that was fully contrary to this, P. M. Attakoya Tangal raised an allegation in the Madras Legislative Assembly that the Presidents of the Pradesh Congress Committees were interfering unnecessarily in the police investigation and obstructing the police doing their duty properly. There was a heated debate in the Legislative Assembly between Attakoya Tangal and Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the then K. P. C. C President over this allegation.⁶⁶⁵

During the Congress rule in Madras, the arrests and trials of two important national leaders of the Congress Socialist Party over their inflammatory and seditious speeches got nationwide attention. Both these incidents were related to the Malabar district. In June 1937 Yusuf Meherally, an executive committee member of the all-India committee of the Congress Socialist Party visited Malabar. He spoke in different places

⁶⁶² *Prabhatham*, 14 November 1938.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, 1 August 1938.

⁶⁶⁴ *Sanjayan*, October 1937.

⁶⁶⁵ G. O. No.5020, Home Department, Ms. Series, dated 15th October 1938, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

in Malabar. He lashed out in his speeches against the Justice Party, which was in power at that time in Madras. Before the Congress formed the government, the Justice Party, which had no majority in the assembly formed an interim government in Madras when the Congress, the largest party in the assembly which had a clear majority refused to form the government due to the disagreements with the British Government. The police registered a case against Meherally for the remarks in one of his speeches and arrested him.⁶⁶⁶ He was convicted under Section 188 IPC and sentenced to a simple imprisonment of 6 months. However, when Congress came into power, the Government sentence was remitted unconditionally by the Government and he was released.⁶⁶⁷

In October 1937, S. S. Batliwala, a famous Congress Socialist leader from Bombay came to Thalassery to preside over the Malabar Students Conference that was decided to be held there. He was arrested by the police from Thalassery during the conclusion of the Conference. His arrest was in a case registered under Section 124-A for some remarks in his speech that delivered at Venakata giri on September 3, 1937.⁶⁶⁸ There were widespread protests against the Congress government for permitting to prosecute Batliwala. Protest meetings were held at several places in Malabar and in Madras City and passed resolutions criticizing the decision of the Government.⁶⁶⁹ At last, in March 1938 the Government remitted the sentence of Batliwala unconditionally and released him.⁶⁷⁰

Though the provincial Congress Governments that came into power in 1937 lasted for only 2 years and a few months, it created a feeling among the people that freedom was near. When the Congress proved its popularity by forming governments in most of the provinces People's perception changed that no matter how hard the Congressmen tried India would never get freedom. Though the provincial Congress Governments resigned after 28 months of rule, the people felt that the Congress would come back to power soon.⁶⁷¹ After 1937, there was a change in the attitude of

⁶⁶⁶ EMS, *Athmakatha*, pp. 269-270.

⁶⁶⁷ G. O. No.2769, Home Department, Ms. Series, dated 20th July 1937.

⁶⁶⁸ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of September 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Fortnightly Report for the First Half of October 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁷⁰ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of March 1938, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

the different social groups of India. For Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, the nature of the Namasudra Movement in Bengal was reshaped during the final decade of the colonial rule when the transfer of power became a 'distinct possibility'.⁶⁷¹ Even the top bureaucrats believed that the transfer of power to the Congress by Britain was just a matter of time.⁶⁷² When the Congress came into power in the provinces, many people began to show the courage to admit openly that they were Congressmen.⁶⁷³ Even the opposition parties were aware of the tremendous popular support to the Congress as a party. Thus, the opposition parties didn't field their candidates in the two bye-elections in Malabar that followed by the death of two sitting Congress MLAs. A bye-election to the seat fell vacant due to the death of Kongattil Raman Menon, a minister in the Rajagopalachari ministry held in February 1939. E. M. S. Namboodiripad became a member of the Madras Legislative Assembly by contesting and winning in this bye-election. E. M. S. Namboodiripad was elected unopposed as the election was uncontested.⁶⁷⁴

2.16. The 'Red Scare' and the War

During the interwar period and especially during the 1930s, when Soviet Russia emerged as a superpower in world politics, the British Empire was afraid that with the blessings of Russia, the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist freedom struggle in their colonies across the world like India might establish links with the international Communist Movement. This scare forced the colonial British Government to watch and shadow everyone, whom they suspected as Communists during the 1930s. A. K Pillai, a close friend and disciple of M. N Roy had been practicing at the District Court by living in Kozhikode since September 1935.⁶⁷⁵ An asterisk symbol was used in the C. I. D reports of that time to mention those members in the trade unions and youth leagues, who had Communist links.⁶⁷⁶ K. Damodaran, who came back to Malabar after studying at Kasi Vidyapeeth was shadowed by C. I. Ds. The C. I. D reports regarded

⁶⁷¹ Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *Caste, Protest and Identity in Colonial India: The Namasudras of Bengal, 1872-1947*, New Delhi, 2013(1997), p. 173.

⁶⁷² Bipan Chandra et al., *India's Struggle for Independence*, p. 341.

⁶⁷³ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, pp. 207&256.

⁶⁷⁴ G. O. No.299, Public Department, dated 14th February 1939, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁷⁵ A. Radhakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁶⁷⁶ C. I. D Report on the Madras Committee of the All India Trade Union Congress; C. I. D Report on the Formation of the Madras Presidency Youth League, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

Damodaran as 'a youth with extreme socialistic views.'⁶⁷⁷ The government was also wary of the works written by the local political leaders on Communism, the Russian Revolution, and the Soviet Union. When E. M. S. Namboodiripad published the work, *1917*, the government assumed that he wrote that work with the intention 'to propagate Communist doctrine in the country.'⁶⁷⁸

The 'red scare' of Britain reached at its peak, when the possibility of the occurrence of another world war was high. In 1936, the government started to intercept the correspondence of the Communist leaders by using the C. I. D and the Special Branch. Some important Communist leaders from Malabar such as E. M. S. Namboodiripad, P. Krishna Pillai, K. Damodaran, and P. Narayanan Nair were among the leaders, whose correspondences were intercepted. K. Anandan Nambiar, a native of North Malabar and a famous railway trade union leader in Madras was also on the list. Apart from the correspondence of the people with pro-Soviet views, the correspondences of the people with pro-German and pro-Japan feelings were intercepted.⁶⁷⁹ S. V. Ghatge, a Communist leader hailed from Mangalore in South Canara, the adjacent district of Malabar was kept under strict surveillance and his movements were restricted.⁶⁸⁰ The colonial British Government was also scared of the people who held strong anti-imperialist and anti-British feelings. For instance, the British Government was worried about the future activities of M. P. Narayana Menon, who was released from prison in October 1934 after 14 years of imprisonment.⁶⁸¹

Not only the Government but also some local people in Malabar were affected by the 'red scare.' Sanjayan feared that the Soviet model of Communism would dominate India in the future.⁶⁸² He regarded the pro-Communist feeling of the people of Malabar under various names such as 'Communist Plague' *Choppan Mahamari* (The Red Pandemic), *Thalavettippiranth*, *Karadippuni* (The Bear Fever), and *Kookkiyarppan Badhayilakkam*. According to Sanjayan, 'Communism was an epidemic or virus like the

⁶⁷⁷ C. I. D Report on the Formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party and its Activities, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁷⁸ G. O. No.2213, Public (Confdl.), dated 6th October 1935, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁷⁹ Selections from the Confidential Files Relating to the Interception of Correspondence of Political Personalities (From 1936-1940), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁸⁰ G. O. No.2213, Public (Confdl.), dated 12th December 1939, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁸¹ Fortnightly Report for the First Half October 1934, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁶⁸² Sanjayan, *Sanjayan Hasyakrithikal*, Vol. II, pp. 38-39.

Plague, Typhoid, and Influenza that came to India crossing the sea.⁶⁸³ Sanjayan made clear that 'he was not against Socialism but against the Soviet model Socialism.'⁶⁸⁴

However, despite the fear of the government and the anti-Communist local people and the precautions that were taken by the government, Communism emerged as a dominant ideology in the politics of Malabar by the end of the 1930s. The colonial British Government failed to prevent the rise and growth of Communism in Malabar because they thought that Communism was an ideology that was always associated with violence. However, the emergence of Communism in Malabar was almost a silent and peaceful process that the Government failed to realize. It was an attitude shift or mentality change. The shift in the attitude of some Congressmen in Malabar led to the birth of Communism in Malabar. E. M. S. Namboodiripad argues that their transformation from Congress Socialists to Communists was a change from their attitude based on Indian nationalism to an attitude based on proletariat internationalism.⁶⁸⁵ The Communists, who were fond of internationalism alleged that the Congress Socialists were too loyal to Indian nationalism and many Congress Socialist leaders were holding an anti-Soviet view.⁶⁸⁶ The leftists in the Congress in Malabar started to believe in Socialism without understanding the basics of Marxism. They were inspired by their strong obsession with the Soviet Union and their impression of the astonishing achievements of Soviet Russia.⁶⁸⁷

During the mid-1930s, just before the outbreak of the Second World War a feeling was strong among the people that Britain was struggling to survive and Germany and Italy rose to prominence. Sanjayan ridiculed the pathetic situation of Chamberlain, the British Premier who was forced to hold the legs of Hitler by going to Munich and the legs of Mussolini by going to Rome. Sanjayan further said that Britain couldn't resist the Fascist powers without the help of Soviet Russia and the USA. Sanjayan criticized Britain, who defeated Germany in the First World War with the help of America and turned against America after the war by believing that Germany would never attack

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 15-23

⁶⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-27.

⁶⁸⁵ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, pp. 85-86.

⁶⁸⁶ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralacharithram Marxist Veekshanathil*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2019(1990), pp. 244-245.

⁶⁸⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, p.60.

Britain in the future. The pitiful condition of Britain who was begging before the USA again for some help was mocked bitterly by Sanjayan. He ridiculed Britain also for seeking the help of Soviet Russia, its greatest enemy.⁶⁸⁸ Sanjayan wrote a political satire titled, *Sukeerthiyude Swayamvaram* (Sukeerthi's *Swayamavara*) to show that the people of India admired national leaders like Gandhi and Nehru more than the world leaders. The satire is set in the backdrop of the *swayamvara* of Sukeerthi, a beautiful Indian princess. Many famous rulers in the world like Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Franco, Lyod George, Chamberlain, and Churchill have attended the *swayamvara* ceremony of Sukeerthi with the wish to marry her. But the princess decides to marry Jawaharlal Nehru who doesn't even attend the marriage ceremony. But Nehru declines her proposal and advises her to follow the footsteps of Gandhi.⁶⁸⁹

During the period from 1939-1947, which included the Second World War period, the people of India and the colonial British rulers were influenced by various mentalities and emotions. However, the mentalities of the people and the *Raj* during this period are limited as passing references in the works on the end of colonial rule in India. Sucheta Mahajan in her study, has pointed out that during the Second World War, the national leaders of India knew that Britain was fighting a losing battle and the sources of old imperial strength were drying up.⁶⁹⁰ Stanley Wolpert describes how the fall of Singapore to Japan in mid-February 1942 shook Britain and became the 'greatest disaster for Britain in its history.'⁶⁹¹ However, the most notable study that throws light on this aspect is by C. A. Bayly. Bayly in his study which explains the ideologies of the end of British rule in India and Burma presents the pathetic picture of Englishmen in

⁶⁸⁸ Sanjayan, *Sanjayan Hasyakrithikal*, Vol. IV, Kannur, 2012(2011), pp. 107-112.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-21.

⁶⁹⁰ Sucheta Mahajan, *Independence and Partition: The Erosion of Colonial Power in India*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 72. Eric Hobsbawm who was a youngster in 1939 says that "the outbreak of the War meant for most young men of my generation a sudden suspension of the future". Eric Hobsbawm, *Interesting times: A Twentieth Century Life*, London, 2002, p. 152.

⁶⁹¹ Stanley Wolpert, *Shameful Flight: The Last Years of the British Empire in India*, Oxford, 2006, pp. 13-32.

Burma, who was forced to flee during the Jap invasion, leaving their Indian servants and sometimes even their own family and children.⁶⁹²

Even before the war began, Britain had already lost the war in the minds of millions of India. The most serious losses for Britain in the war were in 1940 and 1941, the early phase of the war.⁶⁹³ Just after the war began, Japan bombarded two important warships of Britain, *HMS Repulse* and *HMS Prince of Wales*, and sank them. Winston Churchill, the British Premier openly admitted in the British Parliament that it was the greatest loss for the British navy in its history.⁶⁹⁴ This generated a strong feeling among the national leaders and the people of India that Britain would lose the war. In the mid-1930s, even the local people of Malabar had predicted the possible occurrence of a world war soon. Cherukad recounts that, Madhavji, a famous Malayalam satirist had told him during a private talk that 'the man with a half moustache, Hitler, will set fire to the roof of the world.'⁶⁹⁵ The feeling that Britain would not win the war was also prominent among the national leaders including Gandhi. Maulana Azad says that Gandhi was doubtful about the victory of Britain in the war and he had more inclination towards the view that Britain would lose the war.⁶⁹⁶ The myth of the brave, fearless, strong, and valorous white man was destroyed during the Second World War. The mask of the colonial British rulers fell off before the people of India. The people of India realized the cowardness of Englishmen. Thikkodian recounts that the local people of Malabar were too fond of Germany as their 'enemy's enemy' and they were delighted by seeing the advance of Germany in the war. He further recounts about 'the German bombers that were flying over London city and the pitiful fate of the British Premier, Secretaries and the royal family members who were hiding in underground bunkers to save their lives.'⁶⁹⁷

The fear of the British Empire during the World War was also reflected in their attitude towards the radical Congressmen, whom they regarded as a dangerous threat to the

⁶⁹² C. A. Bayly, 'Ideologies of the End of the Raj: Burma, India and the World, 1940-50', in Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy(eds.)*Decentring Empire: Britain , India and the Transcolonial World*, New Delhi, 2006, pp. 351-373.

⁶⁹³ M. K. K. Nair, *Aarodum Paribhavamillathe*, Kottayam, 2011 , p. 90.

⁶⁹⁴ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Bhoothavum Bhaviyum*, Kozhikode, 1954(1948), p.6.

⁶⁹⁵ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, p. 235.

⁶⁹⁶ Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁶⁹⁷ Thikkodian, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

colonial state in India. Consequently, the radical Congressmen were kept under preventive detention till the end of the war. The police arrested Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the then President of the K. P. C. C and the state president of the All-India Forward Bloc from the *Al-Ameen* Lodge, Kozhikode on 3 July 1940, on the very next day when Subhas Chandra Bose was arrested in Calcutta. He was put behind bars till September 1945. The government didn't release Abdu Rahman though there were huge protests in Malabar to release him. The Government had denied even basic human rights to him as they didn't give him parole to visit his ailing mother before her death. The main factor that compelled the Government to detain Abdu Rahman till the end of the war was that he was very close to Subhas Chandra Bose, both personally and politically.⁶⁹⁸ K. Damodaran, the then Secretary of the K. P. C. C was arrested from Tirur in November 1940. Damodaran, who was a Communist leader was not released even during the Communists adopted the 'People's War Line' from 1942 to 1944. At last, Damodaran was released from jail in October 1945, when the war was over.⁶⁹⁹

Several rumours about the defeat of Britain in the Second World War spread among the people of India. Most of the people of India believed that Britain was impotent to win over Germany and Japan in the war. Ishan Mukherjee explains how the rumours about Britain's defeat generated anti-British sentiment among the people of Calcutta.⁷⁰⁰ The people began to doubt the ability of the colonial state to protect its subjects during a crisis. During the war, the people began to see the colonial British rulers as cowards, who was running away by leaving their colonial subjects to their fate instead of protecting them.⁷⁰¹ David Hardiman explains how the rumours about German success and Britain's reverses in the war during the initial phase of the war were reflected in the life and politics of the people of Gujarat.⁷⁰² In the years the war began, wild rumours and alarming stories about Britain's defeat, the disappearance of

⁶⁹⁸ S. K. Pottakkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 567-586.

⁶⁹⁹ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, pp. 57&79.

⁷⁰⁰ Ishan Mukherjee, 'The Elusive Chase: ' War Rumour in Calcutta During Second World War', in Tanika Sarkar and Sekhar Bandyopadhyay(eds.), *Calcutta: The Stormy Decades*, New Delhi, 2015, pp.65-98.

⁷⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp.68&75.

⁷⁰² David Hardiman, *Histories For the Subordinated*, Delhi, 2006, p. 152.

the King and Queen from England, and the intention of Britain to leave India were circulated among the people of Malabar in the form of speeches, leaflets, and conversations.⁷⁰³ Head Constable Ukku Nair arrests Krishna Kurup, the newspaper seller in S. K. Pottekkatt's famous novel *Oru Theruvinte Katha*, which is set in the backdrop of the Second World War, for wandering through the street, shouting that the 'German Army has reached India.'⁷⁰⁴

The government sought various ways to prevent the circulation of rumours. The government had to bring the whole information and Communication system under its total control to make sure that only the news and opinions favouring Britain were circulating among the people. Thus, they made radio as a tool for this. By the experience during the war, the government came to realize the need of a reliable and effective information and communication system to avoid the circulation of rumours. The Government admitted that there was an increase in the circulation of wild rumours, when the *Mathrubhumi*, the leading newspaper in Malabar ceased publication in August 1942.⁷⁰⁵ The Madras Government had modified its rural broadcasting scheme as a war publicity measure and sanctioned the payment of half of the cost of 300 additional rural wireless sets for the duration of the war. The intention behind this was to prevent the spread of rumours and fake news.⁷⁰⁶ The Madras station of the All India Radio did considerable propaganda work during the war. During the war period, 1, 837 talks on the war were broadcasted by the Madras station, of which 187 talks were in Malayalam.⁷⁰⁷

Partha Sarathi Gupta in his study on the radio and the *Raj* has pointed out that during the war, radio listeners in India showed a great interest to listen the anti-British news, especially German broadcasts.⁷⁰⁸ Morgan Corriou in a study shows how the radio became a part of the state propaganda in Tunisia during the Second World War and

⁷⁰³ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of September 1940, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁷⁰⁴ S. K. Pottekkatt, *Oru Theruvinte Katha*, Kottayam, 2014(1960), p. 37.

⁷⁰⁵ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of September 1942, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁷⁰⁶ *Madras Administration Report, 1940-41*, Madras, 1942, Book No. A/1155, Regional Archives Kozhikode.

⁷⁰⁷ *Madras in 1942(Outline of the Administration)*, Madras, 1943, Book No. A/1156, Regional Archives Kozhikode.

⁷⁰⁸ Partha Sarathi Gupta, *Power, Politics and the People, Studies in British Imperialism and Indian Nationalism*, London, 2002, pp. 469-470.

the public attitude towards the radio.⁷⁰⁹ Japan informed the people world wide about its successful military operations and its gains in the war through the radio. During the war, Tokyo Rado was airing the announcement that Malaya already fell to Japan and Singapore would also come to its hands soon.⁷¹⁰ The people of Madras province were also eager to hear German broadcasts during the War. Even in 1940, enemy broadcasts created a feeling among the people that the Allies had already lost the war and this led to the circulation of several wild rumours. The Government alleged that during the war, the Socialists induced the people to listen to radio broadcasts by saying that they were more accurate than the newspaper reports.⁷¹¹ Thus, the officials demanded the Government to jam the enemy broadcasts.⁷¹²

Subhas Chandra Bose, who was leading the anti-British fight by living outside India addressed the people of India mainly through the radio. The news about his Indian National Army (INA) also reached India through radio.⁷¹³ The Indian soldiers in the British Indian Army got excited by hearing the heroic tales of Bose and INA through the radio. The military officials banned the listening of the radio by the Indian soldiers when they came to know this.⁷¹⁴ During the war, the British Government made attempts to include remarks defaming Subhas Chandra Bose in the scripts of the radio programs that were broadcasted in India. A radio program known as *Moving Finger* was aired by the Madras station during the war. A British official who prepared the script of this program included a remark in the script calling Subhas Bose a 'traitor.' But he had to remove that remark from the script due to the strong objection of G. P. S. Nair, a Malayali official in the Madras Radio Station.⁷¹⁵

During the War 'propaganda' is an important term for a government. There is a study by Sanjoy Bhattacharya on the state propaganda in Eastern India during the Second

⁷⁰⁹ Morgan Corriou, 'Radio and Society in Tunisia during the World War II', in Hieke Liebau et al. (eds.), *The World in World Wars: Experiences, Perceptions and Perspectives from Africa and Asia*, Lieden, 2010, pp. 369-400.

⁷¹⁰ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Bhoothavum Bhaviyum*, p. 10.

⁷¹¹ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of May 1940, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁷¹² Partha Sarathi Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 470.

⁷¹³ Sisir K. Bose and Sugata Bose(eds.), *Azad Hind: Writings and Speeches, 1941-43*, Calcutta, 2002; Sisir K. Bose and Sugata Bose(eds.), *The Essential Writings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose*, Calcutta, 1997; Sisir Kumar Bose, *Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose*, New Delhi, 2015(1986).

⁷¹⁴ Ayirodi Narayanan, *1941-Oru Indian Sainikante Athmakatha*, Kottayam, 2014, p. 55.

⁷¹⁵ G. P. S. Nair, *Radio Smaranakal*, Kottayam, 1974, p. 41.

World war.⁷¹⁶ The colonial British Government made attempts to cover up its defeatist mentality during the war and to make the people believe that Britain was advancing in the war. In 1942, 'a Victory House' was established in Madras for war publicity. A local 'Victory House' was established in Kozhikode in the model of the main 'Victory House'.⁷¹⁷ The Government allotted money to organize the presentation of local art forms like *Ottan Thullal*, *Chakiar Koothu* as part of the war propaganda.⁷¹⁸ A new post of a 'Propagandist Ballad' was created for war propaganda and a local man was appointed in the post.⁷¹⁹

During the war, there were rumours about the possible occurrence of another Mappila rebellion. This rumour spread rapidly among the officials in early 1942. In 1942, a rumour spread in Madras city that the British reverses in Malaya might create an unrest among Eranad Mappilas.⁷²⁰ The District Magistrate of Malabar took immediate action to convince the people that these rumours were baseless. The District Magistrate issued a press statement regarding the Malabar Special Police and planned for the propaganda against this type of rumours in the Mappila dominated *taluks* of Malabar.⁷²¹

The servicemen are the people who always have an opportunity to watch closely and to understand the mentality of the state, especially during a war. Thousands of young men from Indian villages, who were either employed or unemployed joined the British Indian Army during the World War. It was during the Second World War a particular group of people known as *pattalakkars* (soldiers) became common in the villages of Keralam. During the war, colourful posters with advertisements offering 'an earning while studies, good food, and good clothes' were put up in the public places. When the war intensified, the colonial British Government was forced to enlist more Indians in the army. The government made big promises to attract the Indian youth to the

⁷¹⁶ Sanjoy Bhattacharya, *Propaganda and Information in Eastern India, 1939-45: A Necessary Weapon of War*, New York, 2009.

⁷¹⁷ *Madras in 1942*.

⁷¹⁸ G. o. No.710, Public (War) Department, dated 19th March 1943, B. No.7, Sl. No.7, Madras Records(1920-56), Regional Archives Kozhikode.

⁷¹⁹ Go. No.652, Public Department, dated 1st March 1943, B. No.5, Sl. No.26, Madras Records(1920-56), Regional Archives Kozhikode.

⁷²⁰ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of February 1942, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁷²¹ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of March 1942, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

army.⁷²² But the government failed to keep its promises to the Indian soldiers and to provide better food, dress, and other facilities for them. This created discontent among the Indian soldiers in the British Indian Army. Anirudh Deshpande has studied about how the disillusionments and discontent among the Indian soldiers and the failure of the British military policy reflected in the post-War Indian politics.⁷²³ During the World War, the British Government was forced to adopt a policy of recruiting more Indians to the army. Thus, they had to relax the rules related to the physical requirements needed for an army recruit. Over 2 million Indians joined the Indian armed forces during this period. Most of them joined the army due to the absence of any other options to escape from the extreme pressure of poverty and unemployment.⁷²⁴

Many of the recruits from Malabar didn't have the basic physical requirements like enough height and weight needed for a soldier. Pavanan recounts that before going to attend recruitment camp, he was afraid that he, who didn't have minimum height and weight wouldn't be enlisted in the army.⁷²⁵ Kamtekar has rightly pointed out that 'the malnourished young men who enlisted in the army bore little resemblance to the ideal soldier of the British Indian Army.'⁷²⁶ Many of the recruits didn't have also the mental qualities that a soldier could possess like courage and a strong mindset.

As compared to the former World War, the Second World War between 1939 and 1945 was a more intense and bigger fight as it affected more territories and people. The Indian youth, who enlisted in the army during the war got the opportunity to travel to the places around the world. As the war was fought between the nations on different continents, often, they travelled across different continents. By this, an Indian soldier got a clear understanding of the world map, which was totally redrawn

⁷²² Pavanan, *Aadyakalasmarnakal*, Kottayam, 1990, p. 107.

⁷²³ Anirudh Deshpande, 'Hopes and Disillusionment: Recruitment, Demobilization, and the Emergence of Discontent in the Indian Armed Forces During the Second World War', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. XXIII, no.2, 1996.

⁷²⁴ Indivar Kamtekar, 'A Different War Dance: State and Class in India', *Past&Present*, August, 2002.

⁷²⁵ Pavanan, *Aadyakalasmarnakal*, p. 111. Nandanar, a famous Malayalam writer in his Autobiographical Novel, *Anubhavangal* explains the circumstances that forced him to join the army. Nandanar, *Anubhavangal*, Kottayam, 2016(1975).

⁷²⁶ Indivar Kamtekar, *op. cit.*

during the war and the post-war period. A soldier should know map reading.⁷²⁷ The soldiers got social acceptance as they were the people who travel around the world and possess much new information. The people showed respect to the servicemen as the people who sent money home every month. The new things and tales brought by the soldiers when they returned home always gave wonder and surprise to the villagers.⁷²⁸ The ex-servicemen had many new stories to tell. They got many listeners when they shared these stories in public spaces like tea shops.⁷²⁹ The information on the politics and geography of the world and Britain's reverses in the war were reached in the villages of Malabar through the soldiers who were returned home either on leave or after being demobilized. An ordinary villager in Malabar became familiar with the names of many places in the world by the tales they heard from these people. Ayirodi Narayanan, an ex-soldier recollects that 'Hitler boasted that he had a strong weapon in his hand and would ruin the enemy by using it.'⁷³⁰

M. Raghavan in his study on the famines in British Malabar from the beginning of the 18th century mentions the famine in Malabar during the Second World War in detail.⁷³¹ As Raghavan's study is purely statistical, he doesn't attempt to explain the emotional aspect of the famine. Samuel Aron, a prominent capitalist from Malabar in his autobiography recounts about the price level in the economy of Malabar during his childhood. Aron writes:

In those days the cost of living was very small. The prices of all commodities were meagre. You would get a bag of good quality rice for 4 and a half rupees or 5 and a half rupees. You would get good food in Kannur for today's 6 paise or the 1 anna of that time. This same price level has been remained almost unchanged till a few months after the beginning of the Second World War.⁷³²

This description by Aron is noteworthy because a successful entrepreneur always has a clear understanding of the market and the price level.

⁷²⁷ Ayirodi Narayanan, *op. cit.*, pp.63&69.

⁷²⁸ Kannan Peruvannan, *Chilambitta Ormakal: Theyyathinte Katha Theyyattakkarantheyum*, Ernakulam, 1997, p. 92.

⁷²⁹ Pavanan, *Aadyakalasmaranakal*, pp. 216-217.

⁷³⁰ Ayirodi Narayanan, *op. cit.*, p p. 147-148.

⁷³¹ M. Raghavan, *State Failure and Human Miseries*, Delhi, 2016, pp. 53-125.

⁷³² Samuel Aron, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

The Communists, who were in the forefront of the famine relief activities in Malabar expressed an opinion that after Bengal, Keralam was the region in India that affected the most by the famine during the Second World War.⁷³³ There was a huge shortage of rice in Malabar when the import of rice to Malabar was disrupted after Burma, the major importer of rice to Malabar was invaded by Japan in 1942.⁷³⁴ In 1938-39 alone, rice worth 499.31 lakh rupees was imported from Burma to Malabar.⁷³⁵ E. M. S. Namboodiripad commented on the Jap invasion of Burma that 'Kerala's rice granary was lost.'⁷³⁶ After this, the people of Malabar were forced to satisfy their hunger by consuming half of the rice actually required for them in a year. Inflation reached its highest in Malabar during the World War. Apart from rice, there was a huge rise in the prices of all the essential commodities. The prices of the essential commodities shot up by three to five times. The prices of some commodities rose by eight to ten times. There was an increase in the minimum cost of living of an ordinary family by three times or 300 percent.⁷³⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad says that to avoid other people starving to death, even the richest men in Keralam had to live by eating a three fourth of the total amount of rice needed for them.⁷³⁸ The Government introduced rationing in Malabar district in October 1944. The rice ration for an adult in the rural areas was fixed as 9 ounces per day.⁷³⁹ The control and rationing were also applicable to the dress to wear.⁷⁴⁰ For E. M. S. Namoodiripad, the food items of rice became 'a luxury' during this period.⁷⁴¹

Hunger became the most extreme reality for the people of Malabar during the Second World War. Hunger is also an experience. There are many emotions related to hunger that take shape in the human mindset. Sanjukta Ghosh attempts to explain the emotions of the famine victims in Calcutta in the study about the famine and survival

⁷³³ *Deshabhimani*, 6 May 1945.

⁷³⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Keralathile Bhakshanakshamathil Ninnun Purathekkulla Vazhi', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p. 320.

⁷³⁵ *Madras Administration Report, 1938-1939*, Madras, 1940, Book. No. A/1153, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁷³⁶ P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, p. 351.

⁷³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

⁷³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 328.

⁷³⁹ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of October 1944, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai

⁷⁴⁰ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, pp. 442-443.

⁷⁴¹ P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, pp. 345-346.

in Calcutta during and after the war. In this study, Ghosh argues even that the emotions of the famine victims were also a reason for the post-war communal riots in Calcutta.⁷⁴² The agrarian riots in post-war North Malabar were also an expression of the emotions of the famine victims. It is very significant that the Communist Party gained prominence in Chirakkal *Taluk* of North Malabar, the region that included the main deficit areas in Malabar.⁷⁴³ The total failure of the colonial British Government to solve the food crisis revealed that they were deeply ignorant about the agrarian system and the life of the people of Malabar. The Government became an utter failure in realizing the severeness of the food crisis that affected Malabar and taking adequate remedial measures. The Government thought that the food crisis would be solved by banning the export of paddy from Malabar to other regions.⁷⁴⁴ But by their deep knowledge and understanding of the people and the agrarian system in Malabar derived from their close contacts with the peasants, the peasant union leaders in Malabar like K. A. Keraleeyan could calculate exactly the total quantity of rice needed for the people of Malabar. Keraleeyan calculated the total amount of rice needed for the people of Kottayam *Taluk*.⁷⁴⁵ The 'Grow More Food Campaign' was intensified in North Malabar during this period. Forest lands and waste land were acquired from the *janmis* as part of this campaign. The peasant union leaders in Malabar could know which plot to be acquired as they had a profound knowledge of the nature of the soil, seasons, irrigation, and agricultural practices in Malabar. But the Government was

⁷⁴² Sanjukta Ghosh, 'Famine, Food and the Politics of Survival in Calcutta 1943-50', in Tanika Sarkar and Sekhar Bandyopadhyay(eds.), *Calcutta: The Stormy Decades*, pp. 229-30. There are many studies about the 'Great Famine' in Bengal during the Second World War and the most recent among them are by Janam Mukherjee and Srimanjari. Janam Mukherjee, *Hungry Bengal: War, Famine and the End of the Empire*, New Delhi, 2015; Srimanjari, *Through War and Famine: Bengal, 1939-45*, Delhi, 2009. Like Bengal, Keralam was also affected severely by the famine. But the famine in Keralam didn't get nationwide attention because the number of starvation deaths were less compared to Bengal. This was because of that the people of Keralam used food items such as tapioca, banana, and jackfruit and the items like wheat, bajra, and black gram to fill the shortage of rice.

⁷⁴³ G. O. No.2985, Development Department, dated 10th July 1944, B. No.32, Sl. No.90, Madras Records-Development Department, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁷⁴⁴ P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, pp. 335-336.

⁷⁴⁵ K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Nadeeldinamacharikuka', in K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, p. 35.

totally ignorant about this.⁷⁴⁶ The people would obviously lose faith in a government that failed to solve the food crisis that affected even their existence.

The government also failed in preventing the sale of paddy in the black market by the *janmis* and grain traders and dealers. There were illegal exports of paddy from the surplus *taluks* or the more paddy producing regions like Palakkad and valluvanad *taluks* in Malabar, despite the exports of paddy and rice from Malabar was strictly banned by the government. The Government cancelled the licenses of some grain dealers who were involved in such activities.⁷⁴⁷ To obstruct the illegal exports, the government established *chowkis* in the borders of the district.⁷⁴⁸ But the government couldn't control black marketing effectively by these actions. Consequently, the people and the political parties came forward to organize food committees to solve the food crisis and prevent black marketing. The activities of the food committees were concentrated on the prevention of black marketing and hoarding, compelling the traders to sell their products at a fair price, and ensuring the availability of essential commodities to the common people.⁷⁴⁹ Hunger is an emotion that unites the people. The activists of the Congress, the Communist party, and the Muslim League who was fighting each other worked in the food committees by putting aside their ideological differences.⁷⁵⁰

Obviously, a state will demand more resources from the people during the war as money and men. The government demanded the contribution to the war fund from the people of Malabar who got impoverished by inflation and frustrated by hunger. In 1940-41 alone, the Government extracted 3, 03, 388 rupees from the people of Malabar to the war fund.⁷⁵¹ The Communist Party organized protests against the forcible collection of the war fund.⁷⁵² The government was totally estranged from the

⁷⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁷ G. O. No.42, Development Department, dated 18th April 1943, B. No.31, Sl. No.1, Madras Records-Development Department, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁷⁴⁸ G. O. No.2159, Development Department, dated 19th May 1944, B. No.32, Sl. No.71, Madras Records-Development Department, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁷⁴⁹ K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, pp. 33-34.

⁷⁵⁰ P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, p. 339.

⁷⁵¹ *Madras Administration Report, 1940-41*, Madras, 1942, Book No. A/155, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁷⁵² M. N. Kurupa, *Op. cit.*, p. 207.

people when it did nothing to solve the food crisis and prevent inflation but began to demand more money and resources from the starving and penniless people. Advertisements asking the people to spend less, save money and contribute it to the Government were appeared during the War.⁷⁵³ Rajat Kanta Ray, a famous Indian historian who made the pioneering effort to explore the emotional aspect of the Bengal Renaissance has argued that everyone has many wishes that can't be fulfilled at a time. Thus, Ray further argues that an Individual can fulfil one of his wishes by suppressing another wish. In Ray's opinion, the fulfillment of the wish of an individual is a by-product of sublimation, and "conscious emotions are always shaped by repression."⁷⁵⁴ During the Second World War, the government demanded the people to repress many of their wishes, and the people was got frustrated by this.

In a study, Amit Kumar Gupta shows how the Bengali *Bhadralok* (Bengali middle class), which went through many crises between 1939 and 1952, like the World War, famine, communal riots, and the partition made use of this period of crisis as creative. In his study, he argues considering the experience of the Bengali middle class that crises will always bring new creativities. Gupta has studied in detail about the changes in the lifestyle, sensibilities, and creativities of the Bengali middle during the period from 1939 to 1952.⁷⁵⁵ The crisis during the Second World War similarly produced creativities in Malabar. During the Second World War period, many writers in Malayalam wrote plays, songs, and poems with hunger and famine as the main themes. Cherukad wrote the play, *Kanjikalam* (The Rice Gruel Pot) in which he depicted the intense hunger experienced by the people. Cherukad wrote another play titled, *Chekuthan* (The Devil) to mobilize the people against the black marketeers and wrote some *ottan tullals*, which were based on the famine, black marketing, and rationing during the War.⁷⁵⁶ K. P. G. Namboodiri wrote a *Bhakshanapattu* (The Food Song) in which he said that 'the repressive foreign rule can't feed the people and the

⁷⁵³ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1942-44.

⁷⁵⁴ Rajat Kanta Ray, *Exploring Emotional History: Gender, Mentality and Literature in Indian Awakening*, p. 11.

⁷⁵⁵ Amit Kumar Gupta, *Crisis and Creativities: Middle-Class Bhadralok in Bengal, C.1939-52*, New Delhi, 2009.

⁷⁵⁶ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, pp. 422-424.

food crisis can only be solved by the unity of the people.⁷⁵⁷ At that time, the writers including Cherukad and K. P. G. Namboodiri were sponsored by the Communist Party. The songs written by K. P. G. Namboodiri, Premji, P. Bhaskaran, Ponkunnam Damodran, and K. A. Keraleeyan as part of the campaigns of the food committees were published in the form of small books. The volunteers of the food committees recited these songs to the people and sold many copies of the books.⁷⁵⁸ It was during this period, the style of using art forms and literature to mobilize the people were successfully tried by the Communist Party for the first time in Kerala and it later became a part of their politics.

The crises like a war, famine, or a pandemic may bring sudden and total transformation in the lifestyle of the people. The people of Malabar went through through all these crises during the Second World War period. About 30, 000 people died by the cholera that broke out and spread in Malabar in June-August 1943.⁷⁵⁹ The crises brought a total change in the lifestyle of the people of Malabar. Pavanan, who returned to his village after serving as a soldier in the army recounts that he was terribly surprised by seeing the changes in his village. He remembers: 'the women who didn't wear blouses have worn blouses. Most of the people wore shirts. The people began to use sandals. Some people grew moustaches.'⁷⁶⁰ Due to the non-availability of kerosene during the war, old kerosene lamps were replaced by new lamps.⁷⁶¹ K. Madhavan also recounts about the changes in the life of the people in rural Malabar during the war. The landlords started to give the wages of the peasants in cash instead of paddy. The practice of giving *kuluthu*(rice gruel)for the peasants in

⁷⁵⁷ Andalat, *Swathanthrya Samarageethangal*, pp. 44-45.

⁷⁵⁸ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, pp. 423-424. Malayalam literature was deeply influenced by the economic crisis and famine during the War. The impact of the new thoughts and sensibilities that emerged in Kerala during the War was reflected in Malayalam literature. It is noteworthy that many of the famous works of the eminent writers of Malayalam like Thakzhi, Bashher, Kesava Dev, and S. K. Pottakkatt were written during the War period or in the post-War period. So there is a possibility of study in the model of Amit Gupta's study also in Kerala. There are several novels, short stories, and poems in Malayalam set in the Second World War and depict the famine during the War. The novels, *Marumakal*(The Niece)by Cherukad and *Thakarnna Hridayanagal*(The Broken Hearts)by Kovilan are some examples. Cherukad, , *Marumakal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018(1963); Kovilan, *Thakarnna Hridayanagal*, Thrissur, 2017(1946).

⁷⁵⁹ P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, pp. 348-39.

⁷⁶⁰ Pavanan, *Aadyakalasmaranakal*, pp. 215-217.

⁷⁶¹ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 25 April 1943.

the morning was stopped during the war period. Instead, a food item prepared of grinded corn became the breakfast. It was during the war, tea became common in Malayali breakfast. The villagers adopted new styles and fashions. According to K. Madhavan, the villagers began to use soaps and torches during the war period.⁷⁶²

The famine and food crisis during the Second World War in Malabar was not only affected Malabar but also the whole Keralam. Like Malabar, the princely states of Kochi and Tiruvitamkur were also affected by the famine. The Madars Government took a stand that, the people and Government of the Madras province were not obliged to provide rice and other resources to Kochi and Tiruvitamkur that were not part of the Madras province. The Madras Government directed that if the Governments in Kochi and Tiruvitamkur needed help, they could approach the princely states, which had a surplus of food.⁷⁶³ The people of Keralam had to face and solve the food crisis together and collectively as the famine affected the entire people of Keralam. Hunger as a common feeling created a sense of unity among the people of Keralam. A storng *Aikya Keralam*(United Keralam)feeling was generated among the people. E. M. S. Namboodiripad in his writings during the World War regarded the food crisis in the war years as a problem affecting 1 crore and 20 lakh people of Keralam and a problem that had to be solved collectively by the people of Keralam.⁷⁶⁴

2.17. The Jap Fear of 1942

One of the research articles by Indivar Kamtekar is set around an event that never happened. That event discussed by Kamtekar in his study is a 'major Japanese invasion of India in 1942' ⁷⁶⁵ Kamtekar's study is an analysis of how the scare of the people and the colonial state in India of a never happened Japanese invasion made the year 1942 eventful. The major successes and astonishing advance of Japan on the battlefield brought the war to the doorsteps of India. When Malaya, Singapore , and Burma were invaded by Japan the people began to feel that Japan would invade India anytime soon. Japanes ships appeared in the Bay of Bengal. Meanwhile, Andamans and

⁷⁶² K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 165.

⁷⁶³ P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, pp. 321-22.

⁷⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

⁷⁶⁵ Indivar Kamtekar, 'The Shiver of 1942', *Studies in History*, Vol. XVIII, no.1, 2002.

Nicobars were fell to the Japanese navy.⁷⁶⁶ The government anticipated a Japanese attack on India. The government assessed that though Japan wouldn't attempt to attack the whole India at least Calcutta would be invaded by Japan. Even the top leadership of the Congress had the same view. Anticipating an immediate attack of Japan, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the then President of the AICC recruited volunteers and divided Calcutta into several wards to resist it.⁷⁶⁷ With the fall of Burma in 1942, Bengal became the major battleground of the Allied war. Calcutta was bombarded by the Japanese aircrafts in December 1942.⁷⁶⁸

The studies by Indivar Kamtekar and Janam Mukherjee on the Jap fear of 1942 are urban-centered. Mukharjee's study is the case study of Calcutta and Kamtekar spends the major part of his study narrating about the fleeing of the people from the major cities of India fearing the Japanese attack. In 1942-43, Jap fear was also strong in the mindset of the people of Malabar district, a region that was extremely rural and hadn't any big cities. It is noteworthy that there wasn't any place in Malabar that was bombarded by Japan and the possibility of a Japanese attack on Malabar was very rare. Thus, we should make a close look to the several reasons for the rapid spread of the Jap fear in Malabar.

South Asian countries suffered the most from the Jap occupation and this region was totally ravaged by the Japanese invasion during the Second World War. South East Asia became the favourite destination of the Malayali migrants during the 1920s and 1930s, the decades just before the outbreak of the World War.⁷⁶⁹ Many Malayalis were living in Calcutta, the city in India where the probability of a Japanese attack was strong. They were forced to return to Keralam when the war became intense. When the War began, Madhavikutty, who was in her childhood was living with her family in Calcutta, where her father, V. M. Nair had a high profile job. She in her childhood memories, recalls the incident when her family was forced to return to Keralam during the Second World War. She says that at that time, for an ordinary villager in Keralam,

⁷⁶⁶ Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁷⁶⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 73-74.

⁷⁶⁸ Janam Mukherjee, 'Jap Attacks', in Tanika Sarkar and Sekhar Bandyopadhyay(eds.), *Calcutta: The Stormy Decades*, pp. 93-105.

⁷⁶⁹ Sam George and T. V. Thomas(eds.), *Malayali Diaspora : From Kerala to the Ends of the World*, p. 9.

'Calcutta was a place where the bomb falls.'⁷⁷⁰ The Jap fear was also spread in Madras city, where a lot of Malayalis were living.⁷⁷¹ The people of Madras felt that the city would be bombarded by Japan anytime. The people of the city got panic whenever they heard the sirens indicating the air attack. They had to live with a fear that the bomb would fall in the city at any moment. Consequently, there was an exodus of the people from the city.⁷⁷² Thus, the Jap fear spread to every nook and corner of even rural Malabar through the evacuees from South East Asia and the people returned to Malabar from the major Indian cities including Calcutta.

Among the evacuees arrived in Madras in 1942, 15, 808 were from Burma and 765 were from Malaya.⁷⁷³ U. A. Khader, a well-known Malayalam novelist was among the Malayali evacuees from Burma. Khader was born to a Mappila father and a Burmese mother. Khader's father who was a petty grocer in Burma returned to Malabar along with his son when Japan occupied Burma.⁷⁷⁴ The evacuees brought two types of tales, when they returned home that spreading the Jap fear. The first set of stories was about the brutalities of the Japanese soldiers to the people of Malaya and Burma which horrified the listeners. The second kind of stories were about the 'timid white men, ' who ran away fearing Japan. The evacuees from South East Asia brought to India information and rumours about the trembling British empire.⁷⁷⁵ K. P. Kesava Menon , a veteran Congress leader and one of the most prominent leaders of the Congress in Keralam during the beginning of the 1920s was living in Singapore, when Singapore was occupied by Japan.⁷⁷⁶ Kesava Menon, while narrating the Japanese invasion of South East Asia says that Britain failed to prevent it when Japan advanced to Malaya. In December 1941, Penang surrendered to Japan without a fight. When Penang was occupied by Japan, the Englishmen and women who were living there

⁷⁷⁰ Madhavikutty , *Balayakalasmarrankal*, p. 73.

⁷⁷¹ M. C. Nambudiripad, *Njan Orkunnu*, Thrissur, 2014, p. 102.

⁷⁷² G. P. S. Nair, *op. cit.*, p.61.

⁷⁷³ *Madras in 1942*.

⁷⁷⁴ U. A. Khader, *Aakashavanikkalam*, Kozhikode, 2017, pp. 33-36.

⁷⁷⁵ Durba Ghosh and Dane Kennedy(eds.)*Decentring Empire: Britain, India and the Transcolonial World*, p. 358.

⁷⁷⁶ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kalam*, p. 259.

there left hurriedly for Singapore.⁷⁷⁷ Kesava Menon writes: 'the people got shocked by seeing the timid and self-seeking white men, who ran away fearing the enemy without thinking about the security and safety of others.'⁷⁷⁸ For Menon, the effective war strategy of Japan, the valour of the Japanese army, and the shortage of aircrafts for Britain in the air war were the main factors that helped Japan to advance astonishingly in the War.⁷⁷⁹

Kesava Menon was a victim and an eyewitness of the Japanese occupation of Singapore. Britain had been making all the arrangements in the naval base of Singapore to resist the Japanese invasion for 20 years. Thousands of people worked in the naval base and crores were spent to strengthen it. The presence of the powerful naval base gave confidence to the people of Singapore that it would make them safe even from the threat of the most powerful aggressor. Especially in the war years, there was a massive influx of people to live in Singapore as Britain made the people believe that Singapore was a 'strong fortress that Japan couldn't break.' Consequently, there was a huge increase in the population of Singapore in the pre-war and war years. But Singapore surrendered before Japan without a fight. Britain accepted the terms of Japan when they signed the instrument of surrender. The fall of Singapore and the unconditional surrender of Britain before Japan were big shocks to the people of Singapore.⁷⁸⁰ Ever since Japan emerged as a super power in Asia several rumours about Japan were spread among the People of India. In October 1923, the Madras Government got the information that several false rumours about Japan were circulating among the people in Madras city.⁷⁸¹

When Malaya and Singapore were occupied by Japan, Subhas Chandra Bose made South East Asia as the base of the anti-colonial fight under his leadership. Most of the

⁷⁷⁷ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Bhoothavum Bhaviyum*, p. 7. Kesava Menon Published his memoir, *Bilathivisesham* during the First World War. This work was based on his experiences while he was studying in London. His memoir, *Bhoothavum Bhaviyum*(The Past and Future) is based on his experiences during the Second World War. Menon asserts that the Second World War was more intense and destructive than the First World War. The Second World War period was eventful for Menon, leaving a profound impact on his political and personal life.

⁷⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁷⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-19.

⁷⁸¹ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of October 1923, Tamil Nadu State Archives. Chennai.

members of the Indian National Army were Indians who joined the INA after the Japanese occupation of Malaya and Singapore.⁷⁸² Japan had upheld the ideology of 'Pan-Asianism.' Thus, Bose and the nationalists who led the anti-British struggle by living outside India sought Japanese assistance to fight the common enemy.⁷⁸³ Nellikka Achuthan, a Malayali lieutenant in the INA recounts that the Indians living in South Asia was treated well by the Japanese army. Achuthan further recalls that the special permission from the Japanese military officials that not to check his vehicle at any check post was displayed on the glass of his car.⁷⁸⁴ During the Jap invasion of South East Asia, whenever a Japanese soldier see an Indian, he would ask him that 'are you a man of Gandhi.' If his answer was an 'yes', the Indian would get a shake hand from the Japanese soldier. If his answer was negative, he would be slapped.⁷⁸⁵ There were many Malayalis in the INA.⁷⁸⁶ Because, when the INA was formed many Malayalis were living in South East Asia. Subhas Chandra Bose became a hero of the Indian youth during the 1930s.⁷⁸⁷ There were many admirers for Bose in Keralam even from the 1930s. At that time, the youth of Malabar used to wear the badges with Bose's photo and started to imitate Bose in their dressing style. Thikkodian shares an incident from his life when he wore a shawl over his shirt imitating Bose.⁷⁸⁸

A suicide squad of the Indian National Army and the Indian Independence League was formed and special training in spy work was given to the squad members at the Swaraj Institute in Penang. Among the volunteers who were selected for the special training at the Swaraj Institute, 13 were Malayalis. The leadership decided to send 20 volunteers, who completed the training successfully to India by splitting them into 4 batches of 5 men. There were 11 Malayalis among them. A batch of I. N. A volunteers including C. P. Eappan, Muhammad Ghani, Anandan Nair, K. A . George, and Vakkom

⁷⁸² Leonard A. Gordon, *Brothers Against the Raj: Sarat Chandra Bose and Subhas Chandra Bose- A Biography*, New Delhi, 2015(1997), pp. 302-342.

⁷⁸³ Sinnappah Arasaratnam, *Indians in Malaysia and Singapore*, Bomaby, 1970, pp. 103-104.

⁷⁸⁴ Nellikka Achuthan, *I. N. Ayum Njanum*, Translated by Raghavan Vengad, Kozhikode, 1969, p. 73.

⁷⁸⁵ Vakkom Sukumaran, *INA Hero Vakkam Khader*, Kottayam, 1995(1993), p.67.

⁷⁸⁶ K. Karunakaran Nair, *Who is Who of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1975.

⁷⁸⁷ Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India's Struggle Against Empire*, Cambridge, 2011, pp. 70-134.

⁷⁸⁸ Thikkodian, *op. cit.*, p. 103. Thikkodian is a Famous Malayalam playwright. His actual name is P. Kunhananthan Nair. N. N. Pillai, a famous Malayalam playwright and actor was living in Malaya when Japan invaded Malaya. He joined the INA. He narrates these incidents in his autobiography, *Njan*. N. N. Pillai, *Njan*, Kozhikode, 2018(1982).

Muhammad Abdul Khader reached Thanur in Malabar district on a Japanese Submarine. On the way, their submarine attacked and destroyed a few British ships. They were disembarked by the Jap navy at Tanur instead of Alappuzha or Kochi, where they were planned to disembark. From there, they had been caught by the coastal police. Initially, the police had a strong doubt that these men were Germans. Because, the police thought that it was easy for the German navy, who had been already occupied the Islands in the Mediterranean north of Africa to reach India by crossing the Red sea through the Suez Canal. The Japanese sab marine stopped at 7 km away from Tanur beach. From there, they travelled on a rubber boat to Tanur beach.⁷⁸⁹

This incident took place on 27 September 1942. This news was withheld by the Government without giving it to the press as the officials made an assessment that this news would create unnecessary panic among the public. But the people in Tanur and adjacent villages came to know about this incident. This created a feeling that Japan would launch an attack on Malabar at any moment. There were rumours that Japan had plans to make Madras as the base to attack Burma.⁷⁹⁰ Fear will create rumours. Several false rumours about Jap invasion were circulated also among the people of Malabar. The people of the coastal Malabar were so wary about the Jap attack as they knew that invasions by sea were very common during the Second World War. During the War, an office and staff quarters of the Air Raid Precautionary(A. R. P) Department of the Madras Government were opened in Thalassery. The Government was cautious about the possibility of a bomb attack by Germany and Japan in the coastal towns of Malabar like Thalassery, Kannur, and Kozhikode.⁷⁹¹ A big crowd was present on the spot when Vakkom Khader and his comrades got arrested from Tanur. The local people believed that the police arrested five Japanese men, who were speaking Malayalam.⁷⁹² Thus, a huge crowd gathered at the railway station to see Khader and his comrades when they were taken by the police to Kozhikode.⁷⁹³ Cherukad in his novel, *Muthassi* says that a rumour has been circulated among the

⁷⁸⁹ Vakkom Sukumaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-103.

⁷⁹⁰ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of September 1942, Tamil Nadu State Archives. Chennai.

⁷⁹¹ V. K. Kuttu, *Yudhanizhalile Balya Koumarangal*, Kannur, 2021, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁹² Vakkom Sukumaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-99.

⁷⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

people that a Japanese rubber boat appeared in the Arabian Sea and some Japanese men arrived at Feroke.⁷⁹⁴

The Indians in South East Asia who fought the British with the help of Japan held two different attitudes. Some of them were forced to co-operate with Japan only because of fear. They were indirectly against the decision of Bose to join hands with Japan to fight the British but were unable to express this opinion publicly because of the fear of Japan. However, many of the Indians in South East Asia had an opinion that Bose's decision to join hands with Japan was right and justifiable. K. P. Kesava Menon, a prominent leader of the Indian Independence League belonged to the first category. The Singapore unit of the IIL was formed at a meeting held at Kesava Menon's residence.⁷⁹⁵ Later, Kesava Menon became the Vice President of the IIL. He was a member of the four- member Council of Action of the IIL, of which Rash Behari Bose was the president. Menon was the head of the Publicity and Propaganda Department of the IIL and oversaw broadcastings from the League to the countries including India.⁷⁹⁶ However, Kesava Menon did not have a pro-Japanese attitude and he secretly opposed Bose's decision to accept Japanese assistance. Consequently, he resigned from the IIL, by protesting against the dictatorial actions of Japan. Then, the Japanese Government had been detained him from April 1944 to August 1945.⁷⁹⁷ At the same time, the Indians in South East Asia like Lakshmi Swaminathan, who was popularly known as Captain Lakshmi belonged to the second category. That is why she wrote in her autobiography that she was very glad to hear the news that the Japanese bombers destroyed two British cruisers, which were the symbols of pride of the British navy. Lakshmi Swaminathan says that at that time, she didn't have the urge to see Japan winning the war. But she was delighted when Britain was defeated by an Asian country in a battle that took place in Asia itself. She compares her feeling with the joy and excitement of a slave when he witnesses the fall of his powerful master.⁷⁹⁸ During the war, the anti-British activities of Subhas Chandra Bose were co-ordinated by A. C.

⁷⁹⁴ Cherukad, *Muthassi*, p. 333.

⁷⁹⁵ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinjakaalam*, pp. 236-237.

⁷⁹⁶ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Bhoothavum Bhaviyum*, pp. 97-99.

⁷⁹⁷ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinjakaalam*, pp. 244-251.

⁷⁹⁸ Captain Lakshmi, *Athmakatha*, Translated by B. B. Nair, Thiruvananthapuram, 1990, p. 34.

N. Nambiar, a native of North Malabar, who had been living in Europe for two decades.⁷⁹⁹

The colonial state used fear as an instrument to protect its interests and preserve its hegemony. The colonial state feared the growth of a pro-Japanese feeling among the people of India. Thus, they had to spread among the people the dreadful tales of the atrocious cruelties of Japan. The government published advertisements stating that the Japanese were dacoits, cruel, womanizers, and cheaters⁸⁰⁰ These advertisements depicted the vicious atrocities of the Japanese soldiers against the people of the countries invaded by them. An advertisement stated that after Japan occupied Hong Kong, every morning, the Japanese military officers used to behead the innocent Chinese men by lining them up at Kings Park.⁸⁰¹ The advertisements criticizing Japan's 'Pan-Asianism' also appeared. Some advertisements said that 'the Japanese are a disgrace to the people of Asia, who are peaceful, tolerant, and hardworking.'⁸⁰² The government extracted money to the war fund by spreading Jap fear among the people. Some of the advertisements by the government stated that it could resist a powerful enemy like Japan only if the people contributed to the war fund by spending less and saving money.⁸⁰³

The Communist Party, which was at the forefront of the anti-Jap campaign had a major role in spreading Jap fear in Malabar. The Communists vehemently opposed Japan as it was an enemy of Soviet Russia in the war. Consequently, the Communist organized a vigorous anti-Jap campaign in Malabar. The Communists started to brand the supporters of Subhas Bose as Japanese agents and traitors. The Communists regarded the people who held pro-Japan and pro-Bose views as *Anchampathikal* (Fifth Columnists). The Communists began to use effectively the local art forms for the anti-Jap campaign. For their anti-Jap campaign, the Communists preferred to use local art forms instead of organizing public meetings, rallies, and demonstrations. In the anti-

⁷⁹⁹ Vappala Balachandran, *A life in Shadow: The Secret History of ACN Nambiar, A Forgotten Anti-Colonial Warrior*, New Delhi, 2016, pp. 138-197. A. C. N. Nambiar was the son of Kesari Vengayil Kunhiraman Nayanar, a famous Malayalam writer, the former member of the Madras Legislative Council, and a prominent landlord in North Malabar.

⁸⁰⁰ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 27 February 1944.

⁸⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 12 March 1944.

⁸⁰² *Ibid.*, 5 March 1944.

⁸⁰³ *Ibid.*, 8 August 1943.

Jap meetings that held by the Communist Party, preference was given to the performance of art forms over political speeches. Earlier, the Congress Socialists and the Communists had used only songs and plays for their political campaigns. But all the popular art forms in Keralam was performed as part of the anti-Jap meetings. Elite art forms of Keralam like *Chakiar Koothu*, *Padakam* and *Ottan Tullal*, and rural subaltern artforms like *poorakkali* was performed in the anti-Jap meetings.⁸⁰⁴ Cherukad's autobiography and his novel, *Muthassi* set in the backdrop of the National Movement and the Communist Movement depict in detail the anti-Jap campaign led by the Communist Party.⁸⁰⁵ The poems like *Ooruka Vaal*(Pull Out the Sword) and *Lal Salam*(Red salute) by Subramanian Tirumumbu and the songs like *Vittayakka...Vittayakka*(Set Free...Set Free...) by K. A. Keraleeyan contained the lines that alerted the people about the threat from Japan.⁸⁰⁶ The people trusted the Communists more than the state. Thus, the active participation of the Communist Party in the anti-Jap campaigns in Keralam was a main factor behind the rapid spread of Jap fear in Malabar. For the Communists in Malabar who held strong pro-Soviet views, creating anti-Japan sentiment among the people was their ideological and political need.

2.18. Playing Cat and Mouse with the *Raj*

The Kerala Communist Party was formed in a meeting of the Congress Socialist Party leaders of Keralam held at Pinarayi in North Malabar in December 1939. In this meeting, a decision was taken by the leaders to convert the Kerala Congress Socialist Party, which was working within the Congress as its left wing into the Kerala Communist Party.⁸⁰⁷ As the Communist Party was banned at the all-India level, the Communists in Keralam were also denied the opportunity to work publicly. Thus, from January 1940 to July 1942, till the colonial British Government declared the Communist Party as legal, the Communists in Keralam were forced to work secretly by going underground.⁸⁰⁸ As the members of a political party, which was banned by the

⁸⁰⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, p. 157.

⁸⁰⁵ Andalath, *Swathanthrya Samarageethangal*.

⁸⁰⁶ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, pp. 387-420; Cherukad, *Muthassi*, pp. 333-341.

⁸⁰⁷ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

⁸⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

government, the opportunity to address the public in daylight was denied to the Communists. It was these Communist leaders, who were the former leftists in the Congress widened its popular base by working among the peasants and the workers and mobilizing them. The space to work openly among the public was closed for the Communists who had the experience of working among the people 'like the fish in the water. ' Their transformation from the young Congressmen, who aspired to court arrest and serve imprisonment during the Civil Disobedience struggle to the Communists who were struggling to evade arrests is a subject that evokes interest. The phase of the underground politics in the history of the Communist movement in Keralam from 1940 to 1942 was a stage of crisis for the Kerala Communists, which they had to survive both politically and emotionally.

The first state Committee of the Kerala Communist Party with P. Krishna Pillai as its Secretary decided that a few party leaders would work secretly and a few others would work publicly. Even at that time most of the office bearers of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee were Communist leaders. Thus, K. Damodaran , P. Narayan Nair Manju Nath Rao, and K. P. Gopalan was entrusted with the task of carrying on the activities of the K. PC. C.⁸⁰⁹ Soon, most of the leaders who were working publicly were arrested. Prominent leaders of the Communist Party including K. Damodaran, K. P. Gopalan, E. P. Gopalan, M. K. Kelu, K. K. Varier, C. Achutha Menon, and P. Narayanan Nair were arrested. Many Communist leaders, who were good organizers and capable of providing effective leadership for organizing and mobilizing the masses were arrested while they were working openly among the people. The things like running the newspaper of the party publicly, and the activities of the peasant and trade unions became totally impossible. The police began a massive hunt for the Communists.⁸¹⁰ Underground politics based on the tactic of fighting the colonial state by living in several hideouts and evading arrests was not new in India and was not an invention of the Communists. Underground politics as a style and method that had been used extensively by the revolutionary terrorists of India in the 20th century.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

As a banned organization that was declared illegal by the government, the Communist Party of India had been working secretly since its formation in the 1920s. Thus, when the Kerala Communist Party was formed, the Communist leaders decided that a centre that was working in the underground was also needed in Keralam to organize and co-ordinate the activities of the Communist Party. Krishna Pillai began the attempts to establish an underground centre for the Kerala Communist Party. E. M. S. Namboodiripad says that P. Krishna Pillai learned the tactics of underground politics while he was living in North India in the mid-1920s.⁸¹¹ According to one of his biographers, Krishna Pillai acquired the knowledge of underground politics from the North Indian revolutionary terrorists, who were his co-prisoners in jail during the Civil Disobedience struggle.⁸¹² I. C. P. Namboodiri also has an opinion that Krishna Pillai learned the techniques of underground politics from the members of the *Anushilan* Group, who were his co-prisoners in jail.⁸¹³ consequently, Krishna Pillai possessed the natural skills needed for an effective organizer of underground politics.⁸¹⁴ Krishna Pillai went underground in January 1940. Krishna Pillai gave practical training in the tactics of underground politics to party leaders and workers and by his tireless effort within a short time, the Communists across Keralam became familiar with this new style of politics.⁸¹⁵ But before a year had passed since the Communists began this new experiment in politics, P. Krishna Pillai, the chief organizer of the underground politics of the Kerala Communist Party was arrested. Krishna Pillai was caught by the police from Vaikkom in Tiruvitamkur, which was his native place in December 1940.⁸¹⁶

There was a reason behind Krishna Pillai, who had mastery in the tactics of underground politics being caught by the police. Like other leaders, Krishna Pillai was not allowed to live in a shelter for a long time as he was tasked with building the party organization by travelling across Keralam and Keeping contact with the party workers.

⁸¹¹ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, pp. 79-80.

⁸¹² Chandavila Murali, *Sakhavu P. Krishna Pillai*, p. 576.

⁸¹³ I. C. P. Namboodiri, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

⁸¹⁴ T. V. K, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

⁸¹⁵ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁸¹⁶ T. V. K, *op. cit.*, p. 106.

In underground life, the possibility of being caught was high for a leader who was constantly on the move.⁸¹⁷

An arrest warrant and wanted notice were issued for E. M. S. Namboodiripad for an offense of writing the introduction for a biography of martyr Jatin Das. From December 1940, after the arrest of Krishna Pillai E. M. S. Namboodiripad was working as the Secretary of the Kerala Communist Party. E. M. S evaded arrest and remained underground till 1942 when the government declared the Communist Party as legal by revoking the ban, and all the warrants against the Communist leaders were withdrawn by the government.⁸¹⁸ When the Kerala Communist Party was formed, there was a two year old summons case was pending against A. K. Gopalan. Thus, following the party instruction, without surrendering to the police, he went to Tamil Nadu. But A. K. Gopalan was arrested in March 1941. However, he escaped from Vellore Jail in September 1941. Then, for years, without being captured by the police he remained in underground till 1945.⁸¹⁹ It seems interesting that when P. Krishna Pillai and A. K. Gopalan, who were well experienced in the fieldwork were arrested but E. M. S. Namboodiripad succeeded in evading arrest. Because, the Party realized that unlike Krishna Pillai and A. K. Gopalan, E. M. S lacked the skill of working among the masses by being constantly on the move. Thus, the party leadership instructed E. M. S. Namboodiripad to avoid movements and remain in a shelter for a long time and to immerse in reading and writing books to ideologically strengthen the party.⁸²⁰

E. M. S. Namboodiripad says that underground life gave intense emotional stress to him.⁸²¹ In K. Madhavan's opinion, underground life was harsher than prison life.⁸²² The living condition of a Communist in the underground was worser than the life of a prisoner in jail. A. K. Gopalan who escaped from prison compares his underground life with his prison life and states that the condition in the jail was far better. He further says that his underground life were the days of 'hunger, depression, bad food, the annoyance by the C. I. Ds, lack of freedom, the days without air and light, sleepless

⁸¹⁷ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 80.

⁸¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

⁸¹⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, pp. 188-205.

⁸²⁰ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 80.

⁸²¹ *Ibid.*

⁸²² K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 149.

nights, and long journeys.’⁸²³ A. K. Gopalan asserts that at that time ‘a Communist, who was a coward would prefer jail life but a Communist, who was brave would choose underground life.’⁸²⁴

Following the violent incidents during the Anti-repression Day Agitations on September 15, 1940, including the Morazha incident, the colonial state began to treat the Communist leaders in Malabar as dangerous and notorious. After September 1940, the Communists became the biggest enemies and the most dangerous opponents of the colonial state. The police repression against the Communist Party in Keralam began in this period. Following the Morazha incident, many Communist leaders, fearing arrest went underground. E. K. Nayanar went underground for the first time fearing that he would be arrested in connection with the Morazha case. But he was not included on the list of accused in this case.⁸²⁵ After the Morazha incident, where a police inspector was murdered, arresting the Communists somehow became a matter of pride for the police. Thus, they began an extensive search in the villages in North Malabar for the Communists, who went underground. The police raids in search of the Communists became a routine in rural North Malabar.⁸²⁶ Immediately after the Morazha incident, K. P. R. Gopalan and V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, the main accused in the Morazha case went underground.

It was during this period, the Malabar Special Police, which later became the major instrument of the state for the repression of the Communist Party in Keralam was used for the first time to trace, arrest, and torture the Communists went underground. The practice that landlords and capitalists offering help to the police and the government to arrest the Communists, who were in underground also began in this period.⁸²⁷ Samuel Aron, a prominent capitalist and a Congress leader from Malabar and the leader rightists of the Congress offered assistance to the police to trace and arrest the Communists, who were the accused in the Morazha case.⁸²⁸ Raghavan Nayanar, a famous lawyer and a member of Vengayil *taravad*, a prominent

⁸²³ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 167.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸²⁵ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015(1994), pp. 11-15.

⁸²⁶ Anil Kumar A. V, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁸²⁷ V. M. Vishnu Bharateeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

⁸²⁸ Anil Kumar A. V, *op. cit.*

landowning family in North Malabar helped the M. S. P to arrest K. P. R. Gopalan and Vishnu Bharatheeyan.⁸²⁹ In underground politics, a hideout was known as a 'shelter. 'When the Moarazha incident took place, E. M. S. Namboodiripad and P. Krishna Pillai were living in a shelter near Morazha. They changed the shelter immediately after this incident.⁸³⁰

The Communists always selected their shelters carefully and wisely. Less crowded and isolated places were preferred as shelters.⁸³¹ The house of Nullikandi Pokkan at Mavilayi in Kannur was an important shelter of E. M. S. Namboodiripad. E. M. S lived there for a long time without changing the shelter. Pokkan's house was safe due to several reasons. There were no other houses near that house. The surroundings of the house were thickly covered by small trees and plants. The house owner, Pokkan didn't have many friends as he was not very social and friendly to others. Thus, there were not many visitors in this house and the chances of leaking information from Pokkan were also rare. Moreover, Pokkan was not a party worker.⁸³² K. Madhavan says that changing shelters frequently was safer than continuing in a shelter for a long time.⁸³³ The situation that several people hiding in a shelter was avoided as much as possible. A maximum of two people were allowed to hide in a shelter. Living alone in a shelter was comparatively safe. Because, if a leader got arrested, he would be caught alone.⁸³⁴

The Communist leaders selected the huts of the peasants and workers in the remote villages in Keralam as their shelters as they believed that these places were not easily traceable by the police. Thus, the underground life was an opportunity for many of the Communist leaders, who were high-caste Hindus and belonged to the prominent landowning families in Keralam to become familiar with the lifestyle of the peasants and workers and to have a direct understanding of their problems. Thus, the underground life gave the Communist leaders the practical knowledge of Marxism that incorporated the peasants and workers. Many of the Communist leaders who lived in the prosperity of the rich landowning families were forced to experience the taste of

⁸²⁹ V. M. Vishnu Bharateeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-162.

⁸³⁰ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 82.

⁸³¹ V. M. Vishnu Bharateeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 812.

⁸³² Jijo Cyriac, 'Olivukalathinte Ormakal', *Mathrubhumi E. M. S Anusmarana Pathippu*, 1998.

⁸³³ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 150.

⁸³⁴ *Ibid.*

hunger during their underground life. E. K. Nayanar recounts that there were many days in his underground life when he didn't have any food.⁸³⁵ K. Madhavan, who belonged to a prominent landowning family says that he became familiar with the peasant's diet when he was in underground.⁸³⁶ It is a well-known fact that Indian Brahmins are practicing strict vegetarianism. During his underground life, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, who was a member of an elite Brahmin family in South Malabar ate non-vegetarian food including fish and meat when he was living in the hut of a local peasant.⁸³⁷ P. Sundarayya praises E. M. S. Namboodiripad in his autobiography for living in the huts peasants and workers and eating their food that included fish and meat although being born as an elite Brahmin.⁸³⁸ The peasants and workers, who were low castes and poor had doubts about the sincerity of the Communist leaders as they were high caste Hindus who belonged to landowning families. Thus, this doubt was cleared up and the emotional distance between them vanished when the Communists chose the huts of the peasants and workers as their shelters. The peasants and workers started to truly trust the Communist leaders. E. M. S. Namboodiripad writes about this period that 'I got acquainted for the first time with the life of the people, whom Gandhi called the poorest.'⁸³⁹

At that time, the people who provided shelter for the Communists were also arrested and severely tortured by the police. However, the peasants and workers, who gave shelter to the Communists in their houses didn't pass any information about the Communists to the police despite they were being brutally beaten up and tortured by the police. Thus, the fearlessness expressed by the peasants and workers became one of the main factors that helped the rise of the Communist Party in Kerala. E. K. Nayanar asserts that 'As a fish can escape if there is water, severe police repression and raids don't make any harm to the Communists in underground if they have the support of the peasants.'⁸⁴⁰

⁸³⁵ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 35.

⁸³⁶ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, pp. 164-165.

⁸³⁷ Jijo Cyriac, *op. cit.*

⁸³⁸ P. Sundarayya, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

⁸³⁹ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 80.

⁸⁴⁰ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 37.

E. M. S. Namboodiripad dedicated his *A Short History of Peasant Movement in Kerala*, a small work published in English after he came out from underground to a local peasant family, which consisted of a father, mother, and their six children, which provided shelter to him during his 20 months long underground life. He dedicated this work also to many other peasant families, who helped the Communist Party to rise and grow even when the police unleashed brutal violence and repression.⁸⁴¹

The underground life gave immense mental stress to the Communist leaders like A. K. Gopalan, who had always worked among the masses and mobilized them by addressing them directly.⁸⁴² The Communists couldn't address the people in daylight and even they didn't have the freedom to travel during the daytime. They had to restrict their movements. Instead of traveling on the main roads, they had to travel through local lanes.⁸⁴³

The Communists in underground had to conceal their real identity. Most often, they disguised themselves as another person to escape from the eyes of the police.⁸⁴⁴ The Communist leaders from Malabar, who were wanted by the Police of Malabar often took shelter in the princely states of Tiruvitamkur and Kochi. But these Communist leaders adopted fake names or secret names while they were living in Tiruvitamkur and Kochi. E. K. Nayanar worked for the Communist Party in Tiruvitamkur for about four years in Tiruvitamkur using one or two fake names.⁸⁴⁵ Subramania Shenoy took shelter in Kochi and actively worked for the party by living there. A. V. Kunhambu while working for the Communist Party in Alappuzha under the fake name, Krishnan Nair, loved and married K. Devayani, a native of Alappuzha and a woman worker of the party.⁸⁴⁶ A. K. Gopalan, who was escaped from jail in September 1941 lived in North India and Calcutta from 1943. While living there, Gopalan did many jobs like an agent of a calendar company, a sub agent of an insurance agent, and the manager of a brick

⁸⁴¹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Keralathile Karshakaprasthanthainte Oru Laghucharithram', Translated by V. V. Dakshinamoorthy, in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. V(1944-1945), Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p. 26.

⁸⁴² A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 157.

⁸⁴³ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 35.

⁸⁴⁴ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 152.

⁸⁴⁵ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, pp.64-65.

⁸⁴⁶ K. Devayani, *Chorayum Kanneerum Nananja Vazhikal*, Payyanur, 2013(1983), pp. 31-40.

factory.⁸⁴⁷ The underground life in Tiruvitamkur and Kochi helped the Communists to widen their popularity outside Malabar and to gain the support of the people of the whole Keralam even before the formation of a unified Kerala state.

As the name of the communists got included in the most wanted list of the police, the police started to issue wanted notices for the Communist also offering impressive sums as rewards for the people, those who could help to arrest them. K. P. R. Gopalan, the main accused in the Morazha case became popular among the people of Malabar when the police issued a wanted notice for him offering Rs.500 as the reward for those who could catch him or provide any information about him.⁸⁴⁸ The details of the physical appearance of the wanted man and a few of his special identification marks were specified in the wanted notice. E. M. S. Namboodiripad had stammering problem. Thus, his stammering was mentioned as a special thing in the wanted notice issued for E. M. S. Namboodiripad. When E. M. S. Namboodiripad was hiding in a house, his identity was unknown to the members of that house. But soon E. M. S. Namboodiripad's hosts identified him as his stammering problem was specified in the wanted notice. But they didn't betray him.⁸⁴⁹ When the arrest of K. P. R. Gopalan became a matter of pride for the police, they began to arrest everyone who looked like K. P. R. Gopalan. The police issued wanted notices with the photo of the Communist leaders. A. K. Gopalan recounts an interesting incident that the police attempted to arrest a Brahmin from Mangalore railway station as he had a moustache similar to that of K. P. R. Gopalan.⁸⁵⁰ A new group of people known as *ottukar* (betrayers), who were the local people helped the police as informants to catch the Communists also became common during this period in the villages of Keralam.⁸⁵¹

As the underground politics was based on two main activities that were the attempts to arrest and evading arrest, the politics Malabar during this period became something like a 'hide and seek' or a 'cat and mouse game' between the Communists and the police. The police sought the assistance of the Special Branch and the Criminal

⁸⁴⁷ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, pp. 173-175.

⁸⁴⁸ P. Krishna Pillai, 'Kalthurangile Viplavakari', Appendix IV, in Anil Kumar. A. V, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

⁸⁴⁹ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 84.

⁸⁵⁰ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 159.

⁸⁵¹ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

Investigation Department to track, spy, and shadow the Communists, who went underground.⁸⁵² A Communist in the underground was always living with a fear that he would be caught by the police at any moment. Thus, during their underground life, they got scared whenever they saw anyone unknown to them as they thought that they were C. I. Ds following them. Even A. K. Gopalan, who is known as a courageous leader had this fear.⁸⁵³ Vishnu Bharatheeyan recalls such an incident during his underground life in his autobiography. At a night, he got scared seeing a milestone by thinking that the milestone was a C. I. D following him.⁸⁵⁴

In A. K. Gopalan's view, living in the underground by evading arrest as the imperialist government was in search of him with the intention to put him behind bars was an anti-imperialist struggle for a Communist.⁸⁵⁵ The Communist leaders who successfully evaded the arrest, though the police made a tireless effort capture them became heroes among the people. C. K. Kunhambu Nambiar, a Communist leader of Cheruvathoor got the nickname, *Shivaji* as he visited every house in the village and addressed the people without being caught by the police.⁸⁵⁶ A. K. Gopalan, who went underground after escaping from jail in September 1941, made his first public appearance after his long underground life in a meeting held at Perinthalmanna in 1945. A. K. Gopalan began his speech in this meeting by saying that 'I am that A. K. Gopalan, whom the police couldn't catch though they toiled very hard.'⁸⁵⁷ The police couldn't catch Subramania Shenoy, who went underground following the Morazha incident in September 1940. Shenoy had lived in the underground for six years and came back to Malabar only after the warrant and the case against him were withdrawn by the newly elected Congress Government of Madras in 1946.⁸⁵⁸ The police also

⁸⁵² The Criminal Investigation Department was established in Madras in 1906. Since, the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920 the C. I. D was used by the government to spy the nationalist activities and shadow national leaders, and secretly collect information about them. David Arnold, 'The Police and Control in South India', *Social Scientist*, Vol. IV, no.12, July, 1976.

⁸⁵³ A.K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 156.

⁸⁵⁴ V. M. Vishnu Baharatheeyan, *op. cit.* pp. 154-155.

⁸⁵⁵ A.K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*.

⁸⁵⁶ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhian Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 171.

⁸⁵⁷ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 175.

⁸⁵⁸ Keecheri Raghavan, *op. cit.*, , p. 40.

failed to arrest A. V. Kunhambu, a Communist leader who was on their most wanted list.⁸⁵⁹

In this period, the sufferings of the family members of the Communists were greater than that of the Communists in underground. E. M. Radha, E. M. S. Namboodiripad's daughter says that this period was the most turbulent phase in her father's life and the most miserable phase in her mother's life.⁸⁶⁰ The police kept the houses of the Communist leaders under their strict surveillance as they thought that the Communists would visit their homes. The police raided the houses of the Communist leaders very frequently. The police spread many fake news about the Communists in underground like that they were dead. E. M. S. Namboodiripad's wife had to go through a stage of emotional trauma caused by the mental shock from the ruthless behaviour of the police towards the family of E. M. S. Namboodiripad.⁸⁶¹ The police searched Vishnu Bharatheeyan's house and threatened his aged mother.⁸⁶² The police searched the house of K. P. R. Gopalan and threatened his 84- year- old father, aged mother, and his nephews, who were small children.⁸⁶³

Women provided shelter to the Communists despite knowing that they were inviting by this arrest and severe torture by the police. K. P. R. Gopalan was arrested when he was living in the house of a District Board school teacher at Chombal.⁸⁶⁴ Women took part in the underground politics of the Communist Party not only by giving shelter to the Communists. They took a prominent part in the distribution of the secret pamphlets of the Communist Party.⁸⁶⁵ The village women who were selling jaggery were the main couriers of the Communist Party.⁸⁶⁶ E. K. Nayanar recounts that during their underground life, the Communist leaders gave many important books on Marxism to the old women in the huts where they stayed to keep secretly in their custody. Many of these books were in English and they didn't even know to read them

⁸⁵⁹ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-283.

⁸⁶⁰ E. M. Radha, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁸⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 55-72.

⁸⁶² Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-172.

⁸⁶³ Sarada Teacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

⁸⁶⁴ Anil Kumar. A. V, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁸⁶⁵ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

⁸⁶⁶ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhiyan Communistinte Ormakal*, p. 169.

but they preserved them 'like their children' as they believed that these books were the 'party's invaluable property.'⁸⁶⁷

The lifestyle of the Communist leaders totally changed during this period. They got a lot of free time as they couldn't go out and travel in the daytime. Thus, they got time and opportunity to read many important works on Marxism and Communism. The free time got to the Communist leaders, who were always full-time-politicians had a deep impact on their later political life. A. K. Gopalan says that he didn't have the habit of reading newspapers and books till this period and a reading habit grew in him during his underground life. Before this, A. K. Gopalan didn't get the free time to read as he had devoted his entire time to work among the people.⁸⁶⁸ E. M. S. Namboodiripad asserts that he made use of his underground life as an opportunity to read the basic works on Marxism that were unknown to him till then. Thus, the free time got to him during his underground life made E. M. S. Namboodiripad as the most famous Marxist thinker and ideologue in India.⁸⁶⁹ Nayanar recalls that he read the works like John Reed's *Ten Days that Shook the World* and a few important works on Lenin during his underground life.⁸⁷⁰

2.19. The Perceptions of an Individual *Satyagrahi*

The Individual *Satyagraha* in 1940-41 was a movement that was staged in India just before the Quit India Movement at the call and leadership of Gandhi. But even the work of Sumit Sarkar, the most comprehensive and in-depth study of the Indian National Movement dismisses the Individual *Satyagraha* as irrelevant by mentioning it in a few sentences. He writes: "this was far and away the weakest and least effective of all the Gandhian national campaigns and stands in the sharpest possible contrast to what would happen a year later, in August 1942."⁸⁷¹ We cannot blame historians. Because even many of the top Congress leaders were uncertain about the effectiveness of the Individual *Satyagraha* as a form of struggle. Even Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the then president of the A. I. C. C. was doubtful about the efficacy of this

⁸⁶⁷ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 37.

⁸⁶⁸ AK. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 153.

⁸⁶⁹ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 84.

⁸⁷⁰ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 36.

⁸⁷¹ Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, New Delhi, 2014, p. 326.

movement. Azad shares an incident in Punjab in his autobiography to show the comic side of the Individual *Satyagraha*. No one was permitted to perform Individual *Satyagraha* without the prior permission of Gandhi or the Congress Working Committee. But a man in Punjab offered the *Satyagraha* without acquiring the prior permission of Gandhi and the Working Committee. When he was arrested, against the policy of the Congress, he defended himself in court. When he was convicted by the Magistrate and a fine of one *anna* was imposed on him, he paid the fine and avoided imprisonment. Following this incident, Azad visited Punjab and gave a clarification about the Individual *Satyagraha* to the Congress leaders of Punjab.⁸⁷² Thus, there might be various emotions that prompted an individual to take part in a movement that was regarded as ineffective even by the Congress president.

A political leader who devises a movement always keeps the intent and desire to make it a mass movement. But Gandhi designed and devised the Individual *Satyagraha* by shutting down all the possibilities of it becoming a mass civil disobedience. Thus, this movement was entirely individual-centred, not collective.⁸⁷³ Thus, as denoted by its name, as an individual-centred movement in all aspects, the emotions, attitudes, and experiences of the individuals who were part of this movement were significant.

Many of the Individual *Satyagrahis* had doubts about the practicability and effectiveness of this movement. N. K. Damodaran Nair, an Individual *Satyagrahi* from Ulliyeri, Kozhikode says that the Individual *Satyagraha* was a form of struggle that was very difficult to understand for a common man and he took part in this movement only because of his faith in Gandhi.⁸⁷⁴ Thus, the people were attracted to this movement only by their strong admiration towards Gandhi and their firm faith in him. Gandhi selected Vinoba Bhave, a Congress leader who was not very popular among the people as the first Individual *Satyagrahi* in India. The second Individual *Satyagrahi* was

⁸⁷² Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁸⁷³ *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. LXXIII, Ahmedabad, 1978, p. 157.

⁸⁷⁴ Memoirs of N. K. Damodaran Nair (Unpublished). N. K. Damodaran Nair (1913-1994) was a freedom fighter from Ulliyeri in Kozhikode district. He was a school teacher and an active worker of the Malabar Aided School Teachers Union. He suffered 5 months of imprisonment for participating in the Individual *Satyagraha*. He was the main accused in the 'Ulliyeri bridge demolition case' during the Quit India Movement.

Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the most popular Congress leaders of that time.⁸⁷⁵ K. Kelappan, the most popular Gandhian Congressman in Keralam at that time was the first Individual *Satyagrahi* in Malabar. Kelappan courted arrest by performing the *Satyagraha* at Koyilandi, his native place.⁸⁷⁶ Then, Ambalakattu Karunakara Menon, P. K. Moideenkutti, M. P. Damodaran, Dr. Chandu, M. Narayana Kurup, K. Madhava Menon, A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, and E. Ammukutti Amma courted arrest performing the *Satyagraha*.⁸⁷⁷ The left parties of India ridiculed this movement as useless and not beneficial to anyone.⁸⁷⁸ The leftists in the Congress, who became Communists by then also mocked this movement.⁸⁷⁹ However, the Individual *Satyagraha* was an opportunity for the rightists in the Congress, who were not taken part in any movements, courted arrest, or gone to jail for a long while, and whose activities were limited only to electoral politics and factional fights in the Congress to come again to the centre stage of the National Movement. Through this movement, they got the chance to court to arrest and go to jail again. Moreover, it was a an opportunity for the rightists to emerge to prominence in the Congress by showing that they were taking part in a movement that was ridiculed by many only because of their faith in Gandhi and their loyalty to him.

Gandhi specially instructed that the centre of the movement should be villages, not cities.⁸⁸⁰ Thus, the Individual *Satyagraha* movement helped the important rightist leaders, who were living in Kozhikode Town, to involve again in the rural politics of Malabar, which had been dominated by the left-wing for a long while. An Individual *Satyagrahi* had to walk by uttering the anti-war slogan until he was arrested by the police. He had to recite the following slogan: "it is wrong to help the British war effort with men or money. The only worthy effort is to resist all war with non-violent resistance."⁸⁸¹ In Hindi, the Individual *Satyagrahi* recited the slogan, *na ek bhai or na ek pie* (Not a Recruit and Not a Pie) which contained this idea.⁸⁸² The Individual

⁸⁷⁵ Sarvepalli Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 267.

⁸⁷⁶ C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, p. 258.

⁸⁷⁷ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

⁸⁷⁸ Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*, p. 494.

⁸⁷⁹ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*

⁸⁸⁰ *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. LXXIII.

⁸⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸² Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*

Satyagrahis in Malabar chanted the slogan in Malayalam which communicated the same idea.⁸⁸³

An Individual *Satyagrahi* who was arrested for performing the *Satyagraha* was allowed to perform the *Satyagraha* again after his release from jail. K. Madhava Menon was the first Individual *Satyagrahi* in Malabar who repeated the *Satyagraha*. Madhava Menon delivered an anti-war speech at Muthalakkulam *maidanam* in Kozhikode on 21 December 1941. But the police didn't arrest Menon and his co-*satyagrahis*. Thus, they wandered throughout the District by giving anti-war speeches. K. Kelappan who repeated the *Satyagraha* was also not arrested. Then, he began to walk through the villages of Malabar. According to K. A. Damodara Menon, when the police hesitated to arrest the *Satyagrahis*, the Individual *Satyagraha* became an 'anti-war foot march'.⁸⁸⁴ The rightists had not entered the villages of Malabar for political campaigning for some time. Since 1934, the rural politics in Malabar was totally dominated by the left. But, as part of the Individual *Satyagraha*, the leaders of the right-wing travelled on foot, across rural Malabar and addressed the people. Among the villages through which their foot march passed, there were a few villages in North Malabar, which were the strongholds of the Communist Party. When K. Kelappan, K. Madhava Menon, and Kuttimalu Amma organized public meetings as part of the Individual *Satyagraha* in the Communist strongholds of North Malabar, the Communists created disturbances in these meetings.⁸⁸⁵

The Individual *Satyagraha* differed from the other movements led by Gandhi as it had only law risks and small sufferings. Often, the *Satyagrahis* were not arrested by the police. They didn't have to suffer lathi charge. The sentences were from small fines up to an imprisonment of one year.⁸⁸⁶ Thus, the people who didn't get an opportunity to take part in any of the movement during the freedom struggle took it as an opportunity to participate in the freedom movement and to achieve the honour of being a freedom fighter.⁸⁸⁷ As this movement was launched by Gandhi after a long

⁸⁸³ Memoirs of N. K. Damodaran Nair.

⁸⁸⁴ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

⁸⁸⁵ Nettoor P. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

⁸⁸⁶ Rajendra Prasad, *op. cit.*

⁸⁹⁰ Files of Political Sufferers Rehabilitation Scheme(PSR), Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

interval, the youth had a strong doubt that he wouldn't call for another movement soon. When Gandhi launched the Individual *Satyagraha*, Fr. Joseph Vadakkan was a youth who was active in politics for some time but he didn't get an opportunity to take part directly in an agitation organized as part of the National Movement. Joseph Vadakkan was selected as an Individual *Satyagrahi*. However, he couldn't perform the *Satyagraha* as the movement was called off by Gandhi three days before the date that he decided to offer the *Satyagraha*.⁸⁸⁸

Leaders like Subhas Chandra Bose openly expressed their opinion that the World War period was the right moment to launch a mass civil disobedience movement. The Individual *Satyagraha* was a form of struggle that couldn't satisfy the Indian youth who were admiring Subhas Chandra Bose. Nettoor P. Damodaran who came to Malabar by abandoning his job in Madras didn't join the Individual *Satyagraha* as he felt that it was useless and ineffective. He states: 'I didn't get any inspiration and excitement from that movement.'⁸⁸⁹ However, he actively participated in the Quit India Movement and suffered imprisonment.⁸⁹⁰

As part of the Mass Contact Campaign of the Congress, which aimed to bring back the Muslims to the Congress, preference were given to the Muslim *Satyagrahis* while the selection of *Satyagrahis* for the Individual *Satyagraha*.⁸⁹¹ P. K. Moideenkutty, a Muslim Congress leader was also included on the first list of the *Satyagrahis* from Malabar. The Muslim leaders of the Congress were not active in the Individual *Satyagraha* in Malabar. When the movement began, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the leader of the nationalist Muslim group in the Congress was in jail. E. Moidu Maulavi, a veteran nationalist Muslim leader in Malabar says that he didn't participate in the Individual *Satyagraha* for two reasons. First, he was a member of the local self-government at that time. Gandhi suggested that the members of the local self-governments should not participate in the *Satyagraha*. The second reason was that he was suffering from arthritis at that time. But Maulavi took part in the Quit India struggle and suffered imprisonment. It is evident from the attitude of Moidu Maulavi that the Individual

⁸⁸⁸ Fr. Joseph Vadakkan, *Ente Kuthippum Kithappum*, Kozhikode, 2015(1974), pp. 82-83.

⁸⁸⁹ Nettoor P. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

⁸⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹¹ Vinita Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

Satyagraha Movement couldn't satisfy the nationalist Muslim leaders of the Congress in Malabar, who had expected the launch of a mass civil disobedience struggle by Gandhi.⁸⁹²

As we are addressing a movement that was individual centred in all aspects, a study of the Individual *Satyagraha* should consider the emotions and experiences of the people who took part in it. Strict restrictions were imposed on the personal life of an Individual *Satyagrahi* and he had to follow an austere lifestyle. He should know spinning. A *satyagrahi* should always carry with him a *charkha* and the materials that needed for spinning. He shouldn't wait for food at any place. He was not allowed to seek better facilities. He shouldn't visit home after becoming a *Satyagrahi*.⁸⁹³

K. Kunhirama Kurup, a famous Socialist leader from Malabar has recounted in his memoir about the impact of the Individual *Satyagraha* on his personal life. In his memoirs, Kurup remembers about the great losses in his personal life when he became an Individual *Satyagrahi*. Kunhirama Kurup was selected as an Individual *Satyagrahi* by Gandhi. It was during this time that all the members of Kurup's family were infected with smallpox and his father died of smallpox. But despite this, Kurup became an Individual *Satyagrahi* by resigning from his job as a teacher taking the advice of K. Kelappan that he should keep his promise to Gandhi. As part of the *Satyagraha*, Kurup walked from Orkkatteri up to Nilamabur, from where he was arrested by the police. Kurup had to suffer 6 months of imprisonment. When Kurup went to jail, his elder sister's husband, who was an Excise Inspector abandoned his sister. Due to this shock, Kurup's sister became lunatic.⁸⁹⁴ Kurup's memoirs show how his personal life was deeply impacted by a movement that was regarded as 'least effective' by historians and was ridiculed even by the then Congress president. Thus, when studying about a political movement, we should also consider the emotions and experiences of the people who took part in it.

⁸⁹² E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, p. 194. There is a study by Sanjay Swarnakar on the role of the Muslim community in the Individual Satyagraha in Bihar. Sanjay Swarnakar, 'Role of Muslim Community of Bihar in Individual Civil Disobedience Movement', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. LXXV, 2014.

⁸⁹³ I. K. Kumaran, 'Gandhiyan Kaalaghattathinte Prathinidhi', in C. P. Sivadasan(ed.), *Karmayogiyaya Kunhirama Kurup*, Vadakara, 1991, pp. 53-54.

⁸⁹⁴ K. Kunhirama Kurup, *Oru Socialistinte Ormakal*, Kozhikode, 2016, p. 77.

2.20. Emotional Side of the 'People's War' Line

The Communist Party of India changed its attitude towards the Second World War when Nazi Germany attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941 and the Soviet Union became a major participant in the war. The Communist Party argued that after the entry of the Soviet Union into the war, the basic character of the war was changed from an 'Imperialist War' to the 'People's War'.⁸⁹⁵ The colonial British Government legalized the Communist Party of India in July 1941.⁸⁹⁶ Consequently, the Communists wholeheartedly supported the war efforts of Britain and vehemently opposed the anti-British movements led by the Congress and Subhash Chandra Bose during 1942-44. In Malabar, the pre-'People's War' years were known for the fierce conflicts between the Communists and the colonial state. The colonial British Government regarded the Communists as its most dangerous opponents in Malabar. The government had even issued wanted notices by offering rewards for those who could help the government to arrest the Communists. Likewise, in the 'pre-People's War' years the Communists didn't make any compromises in their anti-imperialist fight. When the Second World War began, the Communists harshly condemned Britain's decision to participate in the war. Thus, when the bitter enemies became friends overnight and the Communists had to change their early position and opinions, these changes had an emotional aspect apart from the political aspect.

The Communists worked tirelessly and sincerely for implementing the 'People's War Line' in Keralam as they were controlled by two emotions. First, Communist leaders like E. M. S. Namboodiripad was very optimistic about the victory of Soviet Russia over Germany. This feeling gave the communists high hopes for a new world order in the post-war period.⁸⁹⁷ Second, the pro-Russian and pro-Chinese feelings of the Communists subdued their anti-British sentiment.⁸⁹⁸ The Communist leaders in Keralam came to know about the change in the Communist Party's attitude towards the war only after the party changed its line. It was a time when the Communists in

⁸⁹⁵ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 90.

⁸⁹⁶ Sanjoy Bhattacharya, 'An Extremely Troubled Relationship: The British Colonial State and the Communist Party of India', in Biswamoy Pati(ed.), *Turbulent Times: India, 1940-44*, Mumbai, 1998, p. 138.

⁸⁹⁷ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, pp. 87-88.

⁸⁹⁸ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, pp. 152-153.

Keralam were working sincerely to implement the party's earlier line. The Communist leaders in Keralam had a firm belief that the early line of the party towards the war was correct and suitable. It is noteworthy that the Anti-Repression Day Agitations and the Kayyur riot, where the Communists got into an open fight with the colonial British Government had happened in the years preceding the period when the party adopted the 'People's War Line. 'Thus, in a situation like this, the 'People's War Line' became very difficult to understand for the Communist leaders in Keralam and this sudden change in the party's line put them in an emotional dilemma.⁸⁹⁹

When the Communist Party adopted the 'People's War Line, ' the government withdrew the warrants against most of the Communist leaders and almost all the Communist leaders were released from prison. When the CPI was legalized by the Government, the Communist leaders who went underground also came out. E. M. S. Namboodiripad wrote that he felt a relief from the mental stress when he came out after spending 27 months in the underground. He hadn't seen his wife and little daughter even once during his 27 months long underground life. The government had confiscated the properties of E. M. S. Namboodiripad, when he went underground. But his properties were given back as the warrant against him was withdrawn by the Government.⁹⁰⁰ When the CPI changed its policy towards the war, P. Krishna Pillai, who was detained in the Sub Jail at Edalakkudi near Suchindram in today's Kanyakumari district was released in March 1942. Immediately after his release, Krishna Pillai married Thankamma, his lover. Krishna Pillai fell in love with Thankamma through the letters they exchanged, while he was in Edalakkudi Jail.⁹⁰¹

A. K. Gopalan, , who went underground by escaping from the jail even before the party adopted the 'People's War Line 'didn't come back to Keralam or became free by surrendering before the colonial British law despite the party being legalized. But A. K. Goopalan had a favourable attitude towards the new line of the party. A. K. Gopalan was in Vellore Jail, when Soviet Russia was attacked by Nazi Germany. Gopalan states that at that time he held a view that the party should reconsider its policy towards the

⁸⁹⁹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 91.

⁹⁰⁰ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, pp. 96-101.

⁹⁰¹ T. V. K, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-123.

war as the nature of the war was changed after this incident.⁹⁰² Though the Government changed its attitude towards the Communists and released almost all the Communist leaders a few important Communist leaders were kept in jail till the end of the war. K. Damodaran, one of the founders of the Communist Party in Kerala were detained by the Government even during the 'People's War' period. The Government justified Damodaran's detention by citing that he was against the 'People's War Line' of the party. K. Damodaran recounts: 'after the change in the line most of the pro-war Communists were set free. But a few including me had to continue in jail. The British secret police knew very well whom to be released and whom to be kept in prison.'⁹⁰³

Sanjoy Bhattacharaya has pointed out that that even in the People's War period, the Indian Communists were not in a complete truce with the colonial state and the relationship between the Communists and the colonial state was 'extremely troubled' in this period.⁹⁰⁴ The government was sceptical about the sincerity of the Communists towards the new line. Though insignificant in numbers, after the revolutionary terrorists, the Communists were the people whom the colonial state feared the most.⁹⁰⁵ Due to these factors, a total truce between the Communists and the colonial state became impossible. P. Narayanan Nair, a prominent Communist leader was arrested for the remarks he made in a speech that he delivered at the 'Eranad Taluk Relief Conference' held at Manjeri in Eranad Taluk in February 1943. He was arrested under section 38(1) of the Defence of India Act. The main accusation against him was that 'in the Mappila region, he called for the looting of granaries of the landlords. ' Narayanan Nair was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment in this case. During the 'Peoples War' 'period the Communist Party allowed its members to come out on bail if they were arrested.'⁹⁰⁶

The Communists had to change their earlier attitude towards the war after the party adopted the 'People's War' line. Consequently, they were forced to make a sudden change in their opinions, attitudes, and slogans. The Communists who vehemently

⁹⁰² A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, p. 202.

⁹⁰³ K. Damodaran and Tariq Ali, *op. cit.*

⁹⁰⁴ Sanjoy Bhattacharya, 'An Extremely Troubled Relationship: The British Colonial State and the Communist Party of India', in Biswamoy Pati(ed.), *Turbulent Times: India, 1940-44*, p p. 142-159.

⁹⁰⁵ Sumit Sarkar, *Communists and 1942*, *Social Scientist*, Vol. XII, no.9, September, 1984.

⁹⁰⁶ P. Narayanan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-156.

opposed the forcible collection of war funds and organized agitations against this began to support the collection of war funds after they had changed their line. The Communist Party admitted the government's claim that Britain needed a huge expense for the war and took the stand that the government was not squandering money in the name of the war.⁹⁰⁷ The party supported also military recruitment efforts during the war and adopted also the stance that supporting more men being recruited to the British Indian army. E. M. S. Namboodiripad directed the government to organize a propaganda to remove the 'misconceptions of the local people about the soldiers and to make the people conscious that soldiers were the people who were sacrificing their lives for their country.'⁹⁰⁸ In the People's War period, a great interest to join the army was generated among the young workers of the Communist Party . Pavanan recounts that he decided to join the army during the Second World War when the war became the 'People's War 'and he had a feeling that he was fighting for the victory of the Soviet Union.⁹⁰⁹

The slogans of the Communist Party changed. The party had to adopt the slogan, *Ee Yudham Nammude Yudham*(This War is Our War) instead of, *Yudham Venda*(Say No To War). Cherukad recalls about the intense self-loathing he suffered when he and his colleagues who once wrote anti-war slogans on the public walls all over his village were forced to do a vigorous campaign in favour of the war. Cherukad says that he was not fully convinced of the 'People's War Line' of the party and he faced explaining this new line to the ordinary party workers was a very difficult experience for him.⁹¹⁰ Cherukad in his novel, *Muthassi* depicts the heated argument on the 'People's War Line' between Gopalan and Radhakrishna Menon, who are the characters in the novel. Though both Gopalan and Radhakrishna Menon are Communists, Gopalan is in favour of the 'People's War Line' and Menon is against it. At the end of the argument, Menon

⁹⁰⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Janakeeyayudhathiloode Poornaswathanthryathilekku', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. III(1938-1942), Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, pp. 376-377.

⁹⁰⁸ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Britteeshukar Desheeya Aikayam Kettippadukkunnath Engane?', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, pp. 376-77.

⁹⁰⁹ Pavanan, *Aadyakalasmaranakal*, p. 108.

⁹¹⁰ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, pp. 378-380.

quits the Communist Party by saying to Gopalan that 'I am not the puppy of you and Russia.'⁹¹¹

The colonial British Government welcomed the "People's War Line' of the Communist Party with the intention that they could use the Communist Party as a weapon to counter the threat of a mass popular agitation that would be launched by the Congress soon.⁹¹² This intention came true in Malabar. When the Congress began the Quit India agitation in August 1942 the Communist Party not only kept aloofness from it but also made use of its all resources and adopted all possible means to make the Quit India agitation a total failure.⁹¹³ E. M. S. Namboodiripad states that by this stand, the Communist Party avoided the occurrence of a 'Second Malabar rebellion. 'He asserts that, unlike other parts of India, riots and disturbances didn't occur in Malabar only because of the strong presence of the Communist Party in Malabar politics and its vigorous campaigns against the Quit India Movement.⁹¹⁴ However, there were a few Communists who secretly supported the Quit India Movement. Krishnan Nambiar, a Communist from Payyannur secretly participated in the Quit India Movement.⁹¹⁵ P. R. Kurup, a prominent Socialist leader from North Malabar, in his autobiography, depicts a few instances of the Communist opposition to the Quit India Movement.⁹¹⁶

After adopting the 'People's War Line', a deep hatred was generated among the Communists for Japan, which was one of the main rivals of the Soviet Union and Britain in the War. Consequently, the Communists became the staunch critics of Subhas Chandra Bose, who was fighting against the British with the support of Japan. It is notable that the Communists of India sided with Bose both ideologically and politically, in the factional fight in the Congress between Gandhi's camp and Bose's camp during 1938-39 and they supported Bose to the presidency of the A. I. C. C.⁹¹⁷ But there was a total change in the attitude of the Communists towards Bose after

⁹¹¹ Cherukad, *Muthassi*, pp. 324-326.

⁹¹² Sanjoy Bhattacharya, 'An Extremely Troubled Relationship: The British Colonial State and the Communist Party of India', in Biswamoy Pati(ed.), *Turbulent Times: India, 1940-44*, p. 138.

⁹¹³ K. Kunhirama Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁹¹⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Communism Neenaal Vaazhum', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. IV, p. 296.

⁹¹⁵ V. P. Balakrishna Poduval, *Swathanthrya Samara Smaranakal*, Payyanur, 1991, p. 27.

⁹¹⁶ P. R. Kurup, *Ente Nadinte Katha Enteyum*, Kottayam, 1985, pp. 93-94.

⁹¹⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, p. 95.

they adopted the 'People's War Line.' E. M. S. Namboodiripad wrote: Bose is saying that Japan and Germany will make us free. But his policy and actions will lead us to the enslavement by Germany and Japan, to the ruin of democracy, to the victory of Fascism, which enslaves us like they did to all other people.⁹¹⁸ Thus, during the 'People's War' period, opposing Bose, who was the hero of the millions of Indian youth was a major challenge for the Communists.⁹¹⁹

When the Communist Party opposed Bose and the Quit India Movement, many people came to believe the allegations raised against the Communists by their opponents that they were 'traitors' British agents', and 'betrayers.' The Congressmen and the Congress Socialists began to call the Communists as 'the betrayers of freedom, 'Russia's Fifth Columnists, 'Amery's boot lickers', 'traitors', and 'the pet dogs of Britain.'⁹²⁰

The Communist leaders knew very well that many people believed the allegations against the Communists that they 'betrayed the national interests and 'back stabbed the national movement.' Thus, they named symbolically the mouthpiece of the Communist Party of Kerala as *Deshabhimani*, which means 'patriot.' The central leadership of the Communist Party instructed the state leadership to form 'Patriotic Propaganda Squads' and to start a public campaign to make the people believe that the Communists were not against the national movement and national interests.⁹²¹

During the 'People's War' Period, as a big blow to the Communists of Kerala, the Nationalist Muslim group of the Congress led by Muhammad Abdu Rahman, their major ally even from the period while the Communists had worked as the leftists in the Congress, totally estranged from them. The attitude of the Communist Party towards the Quit India Movement enraged Abdu Rahman.⁹²² Abdu Rahman who held strong anti-British views and was a prominent leader of the Forward Bloc and a strong supporter of Bose couldn't tolerate a political line based on the co-operation with the

⁹¹⁸ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Janakeeyayudhathiloode Poornaswathanthryathilekku', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. III, p. 362.

⁹¹⁹ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, p. 381.

⁹²⁰ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, p. 382; *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 4 November 1945.

⁹²¹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, pp. 94-99.

⁹²² V. S. Keralayyan, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

British. This feeling forced Abdu Rahman to leave the Communists, who were his friends and former allies in politics.⁹²³

During the 'People's War' Period, the first Kerala State Conference of the Communist Party was held at Kozhikode in March 1943. Following this, the First All India Congress of the C. P. I was held in Bombay in May 1943. Within a few weeks after the conclusion of the First Congress, a shocking and unexpected incident took place in the Communist Party of Keralam. P. Krishna Pillai, the Kerala state secretary of the Communist Party dismissed the state committee by taking over all the powers himself. For, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, this was the climax of the extreme mental pressure that was experienced by the Communist Party leaders in Keralam during the 'People's War' period. Unlike other regions of India, most of the leaders and workers of the Communist Party in Keralam didn't belong to the class represented by intellectuals who emerged from the educated middle-class people but were peasants, workers, and petty officials. P. Krishna Pillai represented this section of people. He belonged to a poor family. He was not an intellectual. He didn't even have High School level education. Thus, the leaders like P. Krishna Pillai and the workers of the party most of whom were peasants and workers faced extreme difficulty in understanding, accepting and practicalizing the 'People's War Line.' The practical experiences of the Communist leaders made them feel that the 'People's War Line' was wrong. But the leaders like Krishna Pillai tried their best to spread the ideology of the 'People's War' among the people by suppressing this feeling. However, the intense mental pressure caused by this compelled Krishna Pillai to dismiss the Kerala state committee of the Communist Party.⁹²⁴

Many of the important Communist leaders admitted that the popular sentiment was against the 'People's War Line.' Thus, E. M. S. Namboodiripad says that it was like to 'swim against the tide.'⁹²⁵ Uroob in his novel, *Sundarikalum Sundararanmarum*(The

⁹²³ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, p.638.

⁹²⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, pp. 199-209.

⁹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 216-221.

Beautiful and the Handsome) depicts the emotional dilemma and intense mental pressure suffered by the Communists in Keralam during the 'People's War' period.⁹²⁶

2.21. Freedom and the Tussle for Power

When the Congress came to power in the provinces in 1937, the people began to strongly feel that Britain would leave India sooner and the Congressmen would be the future rulers of India. The bureaucrats also knew that the transfer of power to the Congressmen was only a matter of time. As the war completely shattered the British economy and put a complete end to the dominance of Britain in world politics, the people felt that they didn't have to wait long for freedom. During the Second World War, even other nations began to consider the Congress leaders as the future rulers of India. Many reporters of the foreign presses were present at Wardha to report the decisions taken by the Congress Working Committee meeting held there in August 1942.⁹²⁷ The major newspapers in London started to publish the statements of the Congress president with great importance.⁹²⁸ When Maulana Azad, the then Congress president, and other important Congress leaders were arrested in August 1942, the U. S. A. strongly condemned it.⁹²⁹ The Congress leaders realized that the war ruined the British economy and the dominance of Britain in world politics was lost.⁹³⁰ As the war ended, Congress leaders began to make predictions about the time that Britain would take to leave India. In September 1945, Jawaharlal Nehru predicted that Britain would leave India within 2 to 5 years.⁹³¹

The autobiographies and memoirs of Congress leaders provide many instances of that during the 1940s, the people and bureaucrats considered the Congressmen as the future rulers of India. When during the Quit India Movement Maulana Azad was transferred from Ahmednagar prison to Bankura, the wife of the Superintendent of Police of Asansol requested Azad to sign in her autograph book.⁹³² During this period, top Congress leaders were highly influential in the administration. They were powerful

⁹²⁶ Uroob, *Sundarikalum Sundaranmarum*, Kottayam, 2016(1958).

⁹²⁷ Maulana Abdul Kalam, *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.

⁹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁹³⁰ Sucheta Mahajan, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁹³² Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

even to put pressure on the Government to transfer a top official. K. A. Damodara Menon recounts an incident during the Second World War. S. Y. Krishna Swami, the then Collector of Malabar district asked K. A. Damodara Menon to come and meet him at his residence. Menon gave a reply that he would come if the Collector would send a car to pick him. But the Collector refused Menon's demand and threatened Menon to obey his order and said that otherwise he had to face the consequences. Menon sent a complaint about the Collector to the Chief Secretary of the Madras Government. Considering Menon's grievance, the Government transferred the Collector. MacEwan, the newly appointed Collector, who was an Englishman sent a car to bring Menon to his residence. It is notable that this incident took place after the resignation of the Congress ministry of Madras. Thus, Menon's complaint was considered by the Government and necessary action was taken when the Congress was not in power.⁹³³

The Congress leaders who were detained during the Quit India Movement got better treatment and consideration in jail. The Jail officials started to treat Congressmen with respect and they got special consideration in jails. M. P. Narayana Menon, who was detained in Vellore Jail during the Quit India Movement came to know how much the conditions in Vellore Jail in 1942 had changed from that of in 1921. The Jail I. G directly inquired Narayana Menon that whether the conditions in the jail were satisfactory to the Congressmen. Menon informed him that the conditions in the jail were very satisfactory.⁹³⁴ The jail officials and the policemen realized that the Congressmen would be their masters in the future.

By the end of June 1945, the Congress leaders of Malabar were released from jails. Among the Congress leaders who were released including K. Kelappan, K. A. Damodara Menon, K. Madhava Menon, M. P. Narayana Menon, C. K. Govindan Nair, and Moidu Maulavi.⁹³⁵ However, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who was considered as a radical Congressman was released only in September, after the war ended.⁹³⁶ K. Kelappan wrote that he and other Congress leaders came out of prison in 1945 with a

⁹³³ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-92.

⁹³⁴ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-185.

⁹³⁵ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

⁹³⁶ M. Rasheed, *Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*, p. 160.

feeling that India would get freedom sooner.⁹³⁷ The politics of Malabar witnessed an interesting and paradoxical change at that time. Many who were friends when they went to jail became enemies by the time they got out of jail. Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who had opposed the rightists in the Congress with the support of the leftists before he went to jail in 1940 became an opponent of the Communist Party in politics when he came out from jail in 1945. The rightist leaders of the Congress, who were the former opponents of Abdu Rahman in the Congress Party became his friends and co-workers. In the elections held in the post-war period Abdu Rahman worked along with his former rivals and actively participated with them in the election campaigns of the Congress. During his speech at a Public meeting held at Kottakkal, on 20 October 1945, Abdu Rahman called the Communists as the 'fifth columnists in India's freedom movement.' In another meeting, Abdu Rahman didn't allow the Communist Party workers to garland him. The *New Age* in December 1945, regarded Muhammad Abdu Rahman as the 'biggest anti-imperialist in Keralam.'⁹³⁸ Thus, the strong anti-British mentality of Abdu Rahman estranged him from the Communists, who were facing the political allegation that they had compromised with imperialism during the war period.

The Congress had a landslide victory in the elections held to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1945-46. The Congress swept the general seats in the elections. The feeling of the people that the Congress victory would be sure helped the Congress to achieve such a tremendous victory. In every election, the people tend to vote for the party who have a high probability of winning the elections and this is a major factor that will affect the results. Leela Damodara Menon recounts that during the elections of 1945-46, there was a saying among the people that 'if the Congress will field a broom as its candidate and give it the yellow box, it will also win.'⁹³⁹ Not only the people but the leaders of the Communist Party didn't have the hope and confidence about the victory of the Communist Party, the major opponent of the Congress in the

⁹³⁷ K. Kelappan, 'Jeevithavum Njanum', in *Kelappan Smarka Grantham*, Kozhikode, 1972, p. 80.

⁹³⁸ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp.636&638.

⁹³⁹ Leela Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

elections. E. M. S. Namboodiripad openly admitted that they contested the elections without any hope.⁹⁴⁰

The Communist Party entered the electoral politics of Keralam through the elections of 1945-46. The former leftists in the Congress, who couldn't contest in the elections of 1937 as the rightists had denied tickets to them, got the opportunity to contest in the elections of 1945-46 as the candidates of the Communist Party. Prominent Communist leaders who later won many elections contested the elections for the first time in 1945-46. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, A. K. Gopalan, C. H. Kanaran, and K. P. Gopalan were candidates in the elections. All of them lost to Congress candidates.⁹⁴¹ Though the Communist Party contested in five out of the six general seats they lost all the seats. All the five Communist candidates who lost the elections were popular and prominent leaders. The Communist candidate who got the lowest vote share was E. M. S. Namboodiripad.⁹⁴² Though the Communist Party leaders had expected K. P. Gopalan would win, he also lost.⁹⁴³

During the elections, the Congress leaders campaigned that they were the real freedom fighters and the Communists were the people who betrayed the freedom movement. In the years towards freedom, claiming the legacy of the freedom movement became an urgent need of the Congressmen. They began to claim that they were the people who suffered and sacrificed the most for the country. The Congressmen faced the election with election taglines like 'those who have suffered for the country are asking for votes' and 'support the warriors who are fighting for the country.'⁹⁴⁴ During the election, the Congress Party spread the allegation that the Communist Party had betrayed the freedom movement. As part of the election campaign, the Congress Party sponsored a play mocking the anti-Bose attitude adopted by the Communist Party during the 'People's War' period. The plot of the play was that the Communists instigate the police to arrest a woman by saying that

⁹⁴⁰ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, p. 265.

⁹⁴¹ G. D. Nair, *C. H. Kanaran: Samaravum Jeevithavum*, Kozhikode, 2015, p. 59.

⁹⁴² EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*, p. 116.

⁹⁴³ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*.

⁹⁴⁴ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 17 March 1946.

the woman is Subhas Chandra Bose who is disguised as a woman.⁹⁴⁵ This campaign yielded results. The people accepted Congressmen as the real freedom fighters as they were released from jails just before the elections by serving long-term imprisonments as part of the Quit India Movement. The Congress Party claimed the legacy of the freedom struggle and the people accepted its claim. The Communists, who had suffered imprisonment and police repression in the past by taking part in the freedom struggle, by the 'People's War Line' and the anti-Bose and anti-Quit India attitude they had adopted, spoiled their chances to claim the legacy of the National Movement.

Those who contested the elections as the Communist candidates were the prominent leaders who once held top positions in the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee. They were popular leaders who were familiar to the people without an introduction. Most of the Congress candidates didn't have the popularity and charisma of the Communist candidates. But the Communist Party lost the elections. Because, the people voted for the party not for the candidates. A. K. Gopalan, who was a Communist candidate in the elections of 1945-46 says that during the election campaign, some voters approached him and said that as a candidate he was better than his rival Congress candidate but their votes were not for the candidates but for the Congress Party.⁹⁴⁶

During the 1940s, the Congressmen were more anti-Communist and the Communists were more anti-Congress than anti-British. Because they realized that the Congress Party and the Communist Party would become the main rivals in the electoral politics of Kerala in the post-independent period. When explaining the entry of the Communist Party into electoral politics, Dilip Menon writes: 'a brief foray into electoral politics in the 1946 Provincial Legislative Assembly elections proved disastrous.'⁹⁴⁷ Though the election results of 1945-46 extremely disappointing to the Communists, due to several reasons, this election was crucial in the rise of the Communist Party in the electoral politics of Kerala. First, by their performance, the Communist Party convinced the people that the Communist Party was the major

⁹⁴⁵ K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Kudiyanmarude Kazhuthil Kayaru', in K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, p. 92.

⁹⁴⁶ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithkatha*, p. 178.

⁹⁴⁷ Dilip M. Menon, *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India*, p. 179.

opposition party and that it was an important force in the politics of Malabar. In the elections, all the candidates of the Communist Party got back their deposits. In the elections of 1937, most of the rival candidates of the Congress candidates lost their deposits. Even E. M. S. Namboodiripad, the Communist candidate who secured the lowest percentage of votes got back his deposit.⁹⁴⁸ Second, the elections of 1945-46 was the first election contested by the Communist Party. Though the leftist leaders of the of the Congress actively participated in the election campaign in 1937, none of them had got the chance to contest the elections. Thus, in 1945-46, they got the opportunity to contest the elections and address the people as the candidates in the elections. The elections of 1945-46 provided the practical experience of electoral politics for the Communist leaders who won many elections in the future. The election campaign helped the Communist Party to explain its ideology and politics before the people.⁹⁴⁹

As pointed out by Ayesha Jalal, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's long drawn and tireless attempt to emerge as the 'sole spokesman' of Indian Muslims achieved final success by the elections of 1945-46.⁹⁵⁰ The election results of 1937 even questioned the existence of the Muslim League in Malabar. Even B. Pokker, one of the most prominent leaders of the Muslim League in South India lost the elections of 1937 despite being backed by the Congress.⁹⁵¹ But like in other regions of India, the elections of 1945-46, made the Muslim League under the leadership of Jinnah as the most popular and influential political group among the Muslims in Malabar. The League swept all the Muslim-reserved seats in Malabar. All the rival candidates of the League lost their deposits.⁹⁵² Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who was released from jail in the first week of September was the trump card of the Congress against the politics of the Muslim League in Malabar. In the period from his release to his untimely death on 23 November 1945, which was less than three months, Abdu Rahman devoted his

⁹⁴⁸ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormakurippukal*.

⁹⁴⁹ Paloli Muhammadkutty and P. Zakir Hussain, *Chuvanna Mannum Nadanna Pathakalum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017, pp. 12-13.

⁹⁵⁰ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge, 1985.

⁹⁵¹ K. P. Kunhimoosa, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁹⁵² *Chandrika*, 29&30 March 1946.

entire time and energy to vehemently oppose the League and its Pakistan demand and to bring back the Mappilas who were attracted by the politics of the League to the nationalist Muslim politics. In the elections of 1945-46, the Nationalist Muslim group in the Congress contested the elections against the League candidates as the nominees of a party known as the *Muslim Majlis*. In the elections held to the Central Legislative Assembly in October-November 1945, knowing that their defeat was sure, no Muslim leader from Malabar was willing to contest as the Congress-*Majlis* candidate against Sattar Sait, a prominent national leader of the Muslim League. At last, Muhammad Abdu Rahman chose Palat Kunhikoya as the Congress-*Majlis* candidate against Sait. Kunhikoya lost his deposit in the elections. The central leadership of the Congress knew well that the most capable leader in Malabar to fight the threat of the Muslim League was Muhammad Abdu Rahman. Consequently, full freedom was given to him in selecting the Congress candidates against the League.⁹⁵³

For Gyanendra Pandey, in the years towards freedom and partition, the Congress leader whom the Muslim League hated and targeted the most was not Gandhi and Nehru but Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad. The League leaders called Azad a 'renegade'.⁹⁵⁴ Likewise, Muhammad Abdu Rahman was the main enemy of the Muslim League in Malabar. After the release of Muhammad Abdu Rahman from jail, the Muslim League of Malabar devised a special propaganda that targeted Abdu Rahman both personally and politically. The workers of the Muslim League always tried to create disturbances in the public meetings where Abdu Rahman was speaking. The League workers organized processions to the meeting places where Abdu Rahman was speaking and created disturbances in the meetings; they insulted him publicly with obscene words; pelted stones at him; put black garlands on him and wrote him threatening letters. The League leaders called Abdu Rahman 'a traitor' and 'a betrayer of the community'.⁹⁵⁵

⁹⁵³ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp.630-635.

⁹⁵⁴ Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism, and History in India*, Delhi, 2001, pp. 21-47.

⁹⁵⁵ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 594-604. The autobiographies of Moidu Maulavi and P. R. Kurup give details of the anti-Abdu Rahman campaign of the League.

Muhammad Abdu Rahman died in November 1945, before the campaigning for the Madras Legislative Assembly began. The untimely demise of Abdu Rahman, the most popular and prominent Muslim leader of the Congress in Malabar was a big shock for the Congress. Muhammad Abdu Rahman was the most influential Congress leader among the Mappila Muslims of Malabar even from the 1920s. However, before his death, Abdu Rahman had informed the A. I. C. C leadership that the Muslim League would sweep the Muslim reserved seats in Malabar in the provincial elections of 1945-46. Abdu Rahman realized that a strong pro-Muslim League mentality was taking shape among the middle class and upper class Muslims of Malabar, who had the right to vote.⁹⁵⁶ K. A. Ibrahim, Muhammad Abdu Rahman's brother was a Congress-*Majlis* candidate in the elections of 1945-46 but he had a miserable defeat in the elections.⁹⁵⁷ The clean sweep of the Muslim reserved seats by the Muslim League implies also the fact that a pro-Pakistan mentality was strong among the middle-class and upper class Mappilas. The Muslim League had faced the election with the words that 'a vote in the green box is a vote for Pakistan.'⁹⁵⁸ But the pro-Pakistan mentality among the Mappilas was not fully expressed. None of the Mappilas of Malabar, who had voted for the League went to Pakistan after the partition. Because partition was not only based on the population but also was geographical. For South Indian Muslims, going to Pakistan by leaving their home and assets was practically impossible. Muhammad Abdu Rahman had realized earlier that Pakistan was an impractical idea for the Muslims of South India. Due to these factors, the middle class and the upper class Mappilas, who had voted for Jinnah's Muslim League in the elections of 1945-46, didn't go to Pakistan in 1947.⁹⁵⁹

When it became sure that the Congressmen would be the rulers of independent India, the Congress leaders began to show the haughtiness and pomp of the ruling class. The tussle for seats, ministership, and party positions became very common in the Congress Party and the infighting in the party intensified during this period. After the elections of 1945-46, K. Kamaraj supported K. Madhava Menon to the ministership in

⁹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.629-630.

⁹⁵⁷ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athamakatha*, p. 219.

⁹⁵⁸ *Chandrika*, 12 March 1946.

⁹⁵⁹ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp.621-624.

Madras but T. Prakasam's choice was R. Raghava Menon. After a big tussle R. Raghava Menon became a minister in T. Prakasam's ministry. When Prakasam ignored Kamaraj's interest to induct K. Madhava Menon in the ministry, Kamaraj began attempts to throw Prakasam out of power. As Kamaraj's moves became successful, Prakasam ministry was forced to resign soon and a new ministry led by O. P. Ramaswami Reddiyar came to power in Madras. The new ministry had the support of Kamaraj and K. Madhava Menon was a minister in this ministry.⁹⁶⁰ When Raghava Menon achieved a temporary success in the tussle between him and Madhava Menon for the ministership, *Chandrika*, the mouthpiece of the Muslim League in Malabar reported this news under an interesting headline, *Mannum Chaari Ninnavan Pennum Kondu Poyi*.⁹⁶¹ In the factional fight between Prakasam group and its opposite group, K. Kelappan supported Prakasam. This worsened the relationship between Kelappan and Madhava Menon.⁹⁶²

During this period, many Congress leaders abandoned their simple lifestyle and adopted a luxurious lifestyle. They adopted a new way of living suitable for the ruling class. When the new Congress ministry proposed a huge enhancement in the salary of the MLAs and the ministers, the Muslim League and the Communist Party opposed it. Muslim League leaders while speaking in the Madras Legislative Assembly by opposing this decision, advised the Congress leaders to follow the Gandhian lifestyle.⁹⁶³ A. K. Gopalan in one of his speeches harshly criticized the Congress ministers who raised their salaries on a large scale and led a luxurious life with good houses, good clothes, and cars.⁹⁶⁴ N. C. Sekhar, another main Communist leader in one of the statements published in the *Deshabhimani* during the municipal worker's strike in Kozhikode city in April 1946 launched a scathing attack on the Congress MLAs and MLCs who raised their salaries on a large scale and cruelly ignored the demand of the municipal workers for an increase in their wages. Sekhar in his statement lashed out at K.

⁹⁶⁰ Nettur P. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 209-214.

⁹⁶¹ *Chandrika*, 20 June 1946. This popular Malayalam saying means that when there is a tussle between a few people over something, a passive spectator of the tussle takes away the thing.

⁹⁶² K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 221-222.

⁹⁶³ M. K., 'Urulakkupperi', in *Seethi Sahib Smaraka Grantham*, Malappuram, 2018(1961), p. 128.

⁹⁶⁴ G. O. NO.1587, Home Department, dated 21st April 1947, Selected Records, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

Madhava Menon and K. A Damodara Menon who opposed the municipal worker's strike.⁹⁶⁵

In the years towards freedom, all the landlords and capitalists switched their allegiance to the Congress and they became the sponsors and supporters of the Congress Party. The landlords knew well that after the end of the British rule, they would become the sole enemies of the peasants and the capitalists believed that after the independence, the working class under the leadership of trade unions would organize more powerful strikes and agitations against them. Thus, they began attempts for getting the support of the Congressmen, who were the new rulers. The workers in the Aron Mills, Pappinisseri went on strike on 26 February 1946 by expressing support to the R. I. N mutiny.⁹⁶⁶ Samuel Aron, the mill owner who was also a Congress leader sacked all the workers who participated in the strike. The workers of the mill began a strike with the demand of the reinstatement of the sacked workers. Aron was not against the workers saying 'Quit India' to the British but he didn't like his workers organizing strikes and demonstrations for any cause.⁹⁶⁷ During the strike, the police controlled by the Congress Government in Madras sided with Aron and lathi-charged and assaulted the workers.⁹⁶⁸ P. Krishna Pillai, the leader of the strike was assaulted by Aron's men and his head was injured and stroke with a bandaged head.⁹⁶⁹

The police are always too loyal and faithful to the ruling class. During the 1940s, even before India's independence, the police had realized that the Congressmen would be their new masters. Thus, during this period, the policemen began to show respect and loyalty not only to the Congress ministers and MLAs but also to the Congress leaders. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, the then Congress President recounts an incident when a police constable saluted him.⁹⁷⁰ During 1946-47, when the Congress was in power in Madras, the members of the Malabar Special Police, the most loyal force of the

⁹⁶⁵ N. C. Sekhar, 'Municipal Thozhilali Samaram', in C. Bhaskaran(ed.), *N. C. Sekhar: Thiranjedutha Lekhanangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012(2005), pp. 57-59.

⁹⁶⁶ G. D. Nair, *Malabarile Trade Union Parasthanathinte Charithram*, p. 58.

⁹⁶⁷ *People's Age*, 16 June 1946, cited in Sumit Sarkar(ed.), *Towards Freedom: Documents on the Movement for Independence in India, 1946*, New Delhi, 2009, p. 477.

⁹⁶⁸ *Deshabhimani*, 26 May 1946.

⁹⁶⁹ Chuttu Raman, 'Mangatha Ormakal', in C. Bhaskaran(ed.), *Sakhakkaludeyum Sakkavu*, pp. 126-127.

⁹⁷⁰ Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-135.

colonial British Government became staunch loyalists of the Congress Government in Madras. The Congress Government used the MSP as a tool to suppress the Communists, the workers' strikes, and the peasant agitations organized by them. The Congress Government in Madras deputed special batches of the M. S. P for Communist repression.⁹⁷¹ During this period, the M. S. P was used by the Congress Government for the repression of strikes and agitations outside Malabar. For instance, the Congress Government under Prakasam assigned the task of repressing the strike of the South Indian railway workers at Golden Rock in Madras to the M. S. P. K. Anandan Nambiar, a Communist leader hailed from Kannur was the main leader of the railway strike at Golden Rock.⁹⁷²

2.22. Conclusion

The success of every political struggle depends upon the attitude of the people, whom the struggle is addressing. Thus, the Indian National Movement should be studied by linking it with the attitudes of the people of India. The shift from one strategy of politics to another refers to not only an ideological change but also a mentality change. Because, when people adopt a new ideology, the people don't change only their ideology their attitudes and mentalities also change. For instance, the same young Congressmen of Malabar who went to jail and suffered imprisonment by actively taking part in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-34, a movement that was solely based on Gandhian non-violence became Communists in a short time. The people didn't change here but their ideologies and mentalities changed. The case of the Mappilas during 1920-21 is another prominent example. The Mappilas of Malabar, who led armed revolts against the *Raj* even in the 19th century held profound faith in Gandhian non-violence and expressed extreme loyalty to it at the beginning of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920-21. However, this attitude change of the Mappilas was not permanent. Their commitment to Gandhian non-violence lasted for only a few months. The same Mappilas who had expressed a strong commitment to Gandhian non-violence took up arms and led an armed rebellion against British rule.

⁹⁷¹ File No.44, List No.2, Sl. No.2 , MSP Records, Regional Archives, Kozhikode; E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Janmimare Sahayikkan MSPkkar' in P. Govinda Pillai (ed.), *Emsinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. VII (1946-47), Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, pp. 223-225.

⁹⁷² GO. NO.2318, Home Department, dated 11th June 1947, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

Thus, the ups and downs during the National Movement in Malabar depended upon the changes in the attitudes of the people. The attitude changes of the Mappilas helped the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement to gain immense popular support in Malabar. The negative attitude of the people towards the Congress-led National Movement limited the nationalist activities in Malabar during period between the Malabar rebellion of 1921 and the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 Movement only to Gandhian constructive works. The Congress leaders in Malabar couldn't launch any mass agitations in Malabar during this period except the Simon Boycott Movement as the negative attitude of the people became a major obstacle before them. The Civil Disobedience Movement became a huge success in Malabar because the negative attitude of the people to the National Movement changed by that time. Similarly, in the post-Civil Disobedience phase, the popular base of the Congress- led National Movement in Malabar was strengthened and widened due to the attitude change of the peasants and workers.

A good leader should know the mood of the people. He should have the skill to identify whether the people are mentally prepared to take part in a political struggle and whether they have the emotional maturity to understand and accept the ideology of the movement. Gandhi attempted to view the masses in this perception. He launched every movement by realizing the moods and attitudes of the masses. Gandhi would call off a movement if he identified that his assumption about the people's attitude to the movement was wrong or when he came to know that the people's attitude had changed. Among the Congress leaders of Malabar, K. Kelappan was the one who strongly argued in favour of the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar in 1930. Kelappan, who was very active in the constructive works in the post-rebellion period knew well about the attitude change of the people, which led him to the assumption that the Civil Disobedience Movement would be a huge success in Malabar. It is very difficult to identify the changes in people's mindsets that take place because of a political change. For instance, historians tend to describe the provincial Congress Governments of 1937-39 by the achievements of these ministries and the administrative reforms during this period. But the psychological change among the people during this period was more significant and noteworthy.

The landslide victory of the Congress in the elections of 1937 and the Congress rule in the provinces during 1937 and 1939 generated a feeling among the people that Britain would leave India soon and the future rulers of India would be the Congressmen. The landslide election victories of the Congress in 1937 and 1945-46 made the people feel that their assessment about the huge popular support to the Congress was not their feeling but the reality.

During the period from 1900 and 1947, in every phase of the growth of the National Movement, the fear of the people towards the colonial state had been eroding. We can have many instances from the politics of Malabar during 1900-47 to support this argument. It was the fearlessness expressed by the people that gave strength and confidence to Gandhi to begin mass agitations against the *Raj*. The realization about the defeatist mentality of Britain in the 20th century and that the strength of the British Empire was eroding is also a major factor behind the fearlessness expressed by the people.

Most often, history is about what happened and its causes and impact. Thus, an emotion or feeling will be recorded in history only when it is expressed in the form of an event. The mentalities behind a political movement may take shape even before the beginning of the movement. The mentalities that weren't expressed in the form of an ideology or movement are also significant in history. For instance, some young Congressmen tried to establish a revolutionary terrorist group in Malabar in the early 1930s but their attempt failed miserably. Though revolutionary terrorism couldn't grow as a movement in Malabar, admiration for revolutionary terrorism had existed as a feeling among the young Congressmen of Malabar and it became an important factor that made them left minded in their later life. The strong fascination of the young Congressmen of Malabar with revolutionary terrorism and Socialism during the early 1930s dragged their mindsets closer to radical politics.

Chapter 3

Ideologies and Expressions

3.1. Introduction

The identity of a political movement is its ideology, strategy, and the methods and techniques of agitation it adopts. In a study on the nature of the early phase of the nationalist movement in India, Bipan Chandra has identified certain basic elements of a political movement: political objectives, program, ideology, strategy, methods, and techniques of political struggle, social base, and class character.¹ The establishment of British rule in India was ideological as well. The British rule in India was contrary to the high ideals based on Liberalism and democracy that the British Empire upheld. Thus, as Thomas Metcalf has argued, the British had to generate a set of ideologies to justify their rule in India. Metcalf further contends that “at no time was the British vision of India ever informed by a single coherent set of ideas.”² As the foundation of the colonial state in India was ideological, the encounter with the Indian National Movement and the colonial state was also ideological. Like the ideologies of the *Raj*, the ideologies of the National Movement were different in the different phases of the struggle for freedom. For Bipan Chandra, the National Movement was a complete ideological struggle in its early phase.³

In the case of the Indian national movement, for several reasons, its strategy, methods, and techniques of agitation were more important than its ideology. Bipan Chandra identifies ‘some basic elements of continuity’ in the ideologies and strategies of the Indian National Movement from the Moderate phase to the Gandhian phase.⁴ Sumit Sarkar has argued that the most important contribution of the 19th century to the National Movement was an ideology.⁵ In Amales Tripathi’s opinion, the economic thought of the Extremists, who adopted a different strategy from that of the Moderates was not original but borrowed from the ideology of ‘Economic Nationalism’

¹ Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2009(1979), p. 126.

² Thomas R. Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, New Delhi, 1995, p. x.

³ Bipan Chandra, *The Writings of Bipan Chandra*, New Delhi, 2012, pp. 126-28.

⁴ Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*, p. 85.

⁵ Sumit Sarkar, *Essays of a Life Time: Reformers, Nationalists, Subalterns*, Ranikhet, 2018, p. 85.

by the Moderates.⁶ Though, Bipan Chandra says that the overall strategy of the National Movement was the same, a fact is undeniable that the methods of struggle were different in each stage.

The methods and techniques of struggle of a political movement are more important than its ideology. Because ideologies are expressed before the public in the form of methods and techniques of agitation. Moreover, a common man will identify a political movement according to the methods of agitation it adopts. The Extremists in the Congress had begun the early attempts to bring the masses into the National Movement but it was Gandhi, who achieved a notable success in this. The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal during the beginning of the 20th century was known for the different methods and techniques of agitation adopted by it.⁷ M. P. Sreekumaran Nair's argument that Gandhi was "primarily a political 'engineer' and not a political theorist" is notable.⁸ During the two important phases of the National Movement, the Extremist phase and the Gandhian phase, when it enjoyed the support of the masses, the National Movement was known for the methods and techniques of struggle it adopted than its ideology.

The attitude of a leader towards a state will be reflected in the methods of agitation he devises. Stanley Wolpert in a study, argues that Tilak and Gokhale were different not only in their political thoughts but also in the techniques and methods of agitation they adopted.⁹ The nature of the method of agitation to be adopted against the colonial state was a matter of debate and dispute among the national leaders. There is a study by M. P. Sreekumaran Nair on the conflict between the constitutionalists in the Congress, who adopted constitutionalism as a way of struggle and Gandhi, who devised and proposed a different strategy and method for the anti-colonial struggle.¹⁰ Sumit Sarkar has identified certain high points in the Indian freedom struggle where the National Movement gained immense strength. These phases were: 1903-1908,

⁶ Amal Tripathi, *The Extremist Challenge: India between 1890 and 1910*, New Delhi, 1967, p. 107.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 107-105.

⁸ M. P. Sreekumaran Nair, *Reappraisals: Studies in Indian National Movement*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p. 41,

⁹ Stanley A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale: Revolution and Reform in the Making of Modern India*, New Delhi, 1991(1989).

¹⁰ M. P. Sreekumaran Nair, *Values in Conflict*, Ottapalam, 2000 (1973).

1919-22, 1928-34, 1942, and 1945-46.¹¹ The National Movement in its Gandhian phase adopted a struggle-retreat pattern, which was regarded by Bipan Chandra as the 'Pressure-Compromise-Pressure (P-C-P)' or 'Struggle-Truce-Struggle' (S-T-S) strategy. The methods of agitation adopted during the stages of struggle were entirely different from those of in the stages of truce. However, the ideology of the National Movement remained unchanged in both phases.¹²

During the late 19th century, the Indian National Congress emerged as the first pan-Indian organization with an all-India character. However, the Indian National Congress had limitations as an all-India Movement. Gordon Johnson has pointed out that the Congress 'didn't have a single coherent ideology ever in its history.'¹³ Though, Gandhis' attempts to make the Congress an all-India movement became successful by the 1920s, regional variations prevailed in the Congress-led National Movement as there were many occasions when local politics expressed the opposite trends of national politics. The regional variations were expressed not in the form of ideologies but as methods of agitation. There were five different phases in the National Movement in Malabar between 1900 and 1947: The first phase began with changes like the birth of a middle class with nationalist feeling, the beginning of the nationalist activities, and passed through the Khilafat Non-Co-operation Movement and ended with the rebellion of 1921; the second phase lies between the end of the Rebellion in 1922 and the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930; the third phase was the period of the Civil Disobedience struggle, from 1930-34; the next phase began with

¹¹ Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India: 1885-1947*, New Delhi, 2014, pp. 2-3.

¹² Sumit Sarkar has a different opinion from that of Bipan Chandra regarding the 'P-C-P' or 'S-T-S' strategy. Bipan Chandra regarded the stage of truce as a 'breath-taking time.' In his opinion, Gandhi realized that the capacity of the suffering of the masses was limited, and regular intervals between mass movements were inevitable. For him, the stage of the retreat was a preparatory stage for the upcoming stage of the popular agitation. But Sumit Sarkar in his study explaining the logic of Gandhian Nationalism in the backdrop of the Civil Disobedience struggle of 1930-31 and the Gandhi Irwin pact, argues that Gandhi accepted the 'truce' in 1930 because of 'bourgeois pressures for compromise.' Sarkar further argues that the end of the Swadeshi Movement, an ant-British movement with immense strength was not due to the repression by the colonial state or a result of the concession given by the state but due to factors like 'the lack of an agrarian program and the 'lack of integration between national and social discontent.' Bipan Chandra, *Indian National Movement; Long Term Dynamics*, New Delhi, 2013; Sumit Sarkar, *A Critique of Colonial India*, Calcutta, 2000 (1985).

¹³ Gordon Johnson, *Provincial Politics and Indian Nationalism: Bombay and the Indian National Congress, 1880 to 1915*, Cambridge, 1973, pp. 194 & 196.

the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party and ended in 1940; the final phase was from 1940 to 1947, a period when the Communist Party began to work independently from the Congress and became the major alternative for the Congress politics.

3.2. The Emergence of Nationalism

The direct activities as part of the Indian National Movement began in Malabar only during the second decade of the 20th century.¹⁴ A notable change that took place in Malabar during the 1880s, the period when the Indian National Congress was formed, was the emergence of an English-educated middle class that embraced the trends of colonial modernity. A recent study by K. Sreejith on the emergence of a middle class in Malabar is based on the period from 1871, the year of the first census to 1947.¹⁵ There is a general opinion that colonial modernity in India was limited in many aspects. The use of concepts like 'our modernity' by Partha Chatterjee and 'fractured modernity' by Sanjay Joshi support this opinion.¹⁶ Malayalam novels appeared first during the late 19th century, the period known in Indian history for the birth of nationalism and the Congress, the emergence of a middle class, and the arrival of colonial modernity. Benedict Anderson has argued that there was a link between the birth of the novels and the emergence of nationalism. For Anderson, the novel "provided the technical means for re-presenting the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation."¹⁷ Thus, both the novel and the nation are imagined things.

In Sudipta Kaviraj's view, the novels of Bankim Chandra represented 'a fragile nationalist imagination.'¹⁸ It was the territory of British India, linked by railway, postal system, and telegraph that was imagined as the territory of the Indian Nation by the

¹⁴ K. N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar, 1836-1921*, 1992, p. 116.

¹⁵ K. Sreejith, *The Middle Class in Colonial Malabar: A Social History*, New Delhi, 2021.

¹⁶ Partha Chatterjee, *Our Modernity*, Rotterdam/Dakar, 1997; Sanjay Joshi, *Fractured Modernity: Making of a Middle Class in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 2001. M. S. S. Pandian in a study shows how the caste identity created limitations for colonial modernity. M. S. S. Pandian, 'One Step Outside Modernity: Caste in the Middle-Class Imaginary', in Sanjay Joshi(ed.), *Middle Class in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 2010, pp. 240-257.

¹⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London, 2006(1983), p. 25.

¹⁸ Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Unhappy Consciousness: Bankim Chandra and the Formation of Nationalist Discourse in India*, Delhi, 1995, p. 162.

early nationalists. The early Malayalam novels propose a clear understanding of the territory of British India. The long Indian tour of Madhavan, the hero of Chandu Menon's novel *Indulekha* (1889), touches the capital cities of the presidencies of Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. Madhavan or otherwise Chandu Menon, the novelist is familiar with the geography of British India. Madhavan knows very well the routes of the trains and ships in British India. Madhavan who plans a long tour to overcome the pain of his love failure selects the places of North India and Burma as the destinations. Places like Burma, Varanasi, Allahabad, Agra, Delhi, and Lahore are part of his tour programme.¹⁹ *Indumathi Swayamvaram* is a Malayalam novel written by Padinjare Kovilakathu Ammaman Raja, a member of the Samutiri ruling family. This novel was published in 1890, a year after the publication of *Indulekha*. It is noteworthy that the background of the novel is not Kerala but the novel is set in the backdrop of Kashmir, which is located in the other end of India. Places like Jhelum, Peshawar, Delhi, and Varanasi are mentioned in the novel. Like Madhavan, Sukamran, the hero of the novel is also familiar with the routes of the trains in British India.²⁰ The places like Varanasi, Ujjain, and Rameswaram are mentioned in Chandu Menon's incomplete novel *Sarada* (1892).²¹

Dilip Menon and Udaya Kumar have pointed out that an important theme of the early Malayalam novels is travel.²² Travel is not confined within the boundaries of Kerala but they explore the whole of India. The characters of the early Malayalam novels survive the crises in their lives by leaving home and traveling. They are visiting different places in British India. Railway and the new communication system introduced by the British Government in the 19th century opened the possibilities for the newly emerged middle class in India to expand their world beyond the borders of their regions.²³ While writing on the social background of the emergence of Indian

¹⁹ O. Chandu Menon, *Indulekha*, Kottayam, 2016(1889).

²⁰ Padinjare Kovilakathu Ammaman Raja, *Indumathi Swayamavaram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013 (1890).

²¹ O. Chandu Menon, *Sarada*, Kottayam, 2017(1892).

²² Dilip M. Menon, *The Blindness of Insight: Essays of Caste in Modern India*, New Delhi, 2011(2006), p. 88; Udaya Kumar, 'Seeing and Reading: The Early Malayalam Novel and Some Questions on Visibility', in Meenakshi Mukherjee(ed.), *Early Novels in India*, New Delhi, 2002, pp. 173-174.

²³ Sumit Sarkar, *Modern Times: India 1880s-1950s Environment, Economy, Culture*, Ranikhet, 2013, p. 311.

nationalism, A. R. Desai says that 'the establishment and spread of railways appreciably contributed to the forging of the Indian people into a modern nation.'²⁴ With the introduction of railway, post, and telegraph, distance between regions became easily coverable. Non-Malayalis appeared in the early Malayalam novels as important characters. The meetings of Malayali characters and non-Malayali characters in the novels usually take place during their train journeys. One of the most notable things in the early Malayalam novels is that the characters irrespective of the regional, linguistic, religious, caste, and class differences are speaking Malayalam. In the novel *Indulekha*, Panchu Menon, the *karanavar* of Champazhiyott Poovalli Veedu, who represents traditional values, and Babu Govinda Sen, a rich businessman and Congress leader from Bengal, who represents liberal and modern values are speaking in Malayalam. P. K. Balakrishnan has rightly observed that Raman Menon, Sarada and Sankaran, the characters in the novel *Sarada* 'are Indians, not Keralites.'²⁵

The plots and premises of most of the late 19th century Malayalam novels including *Indulekha* were selected from the social life in the late 19th century Kerala. The society and middle-class life in the late 19th century were depicted in these novels. If a writer has a disinterest towards the situation that prevails in his contemporary society, he will be forced to select his themes from the past or to imagine a new world in his work. The subject of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's novel *Anandmath* (1882) is based on the incidents that occurred during the 1770s. Bankim Chandra had a strong aversion towards the style of politics in Bengal during the 1870s and 1880s that was based on forming associations and giving petitions. Tanika Sarkar says that "this reinforced the necessity of an imagined history" and Bankim Chandra's novel was closer to the ideology of militant nationalism that emerged in the early 20th century.²⁶

When writing his novels, Chandu Menon was familiar with the moderate Congressmen and their politics during the late 19th century. G. Arunima has argued that, "through the device of transforming Madhavan Chandu Menon creates a prototype for the

²⁴ A. R. Desai, *The Social Background of Indian Nationalism*, London, 1946, p. 112.

²⁵ P. K. Balakrishnan, *Chandu Menon: Oru Padanam*, Kottayam, 2018(1957), p. 74.

²⁶ Tanika Sarkar, 'Birth of a Goddess: "Anandamath", and Hindu Nationhood', *Economic and Political Weekly*, VolXLI, no.37, September, 2006.

‘modern’ Malayali man-educated, independent, and moderately national.”²⁷ It is clear from the 18th chapter of *Indulekha* that Madhavan is a moderate Congressman, who is highly critical of the Extremists.²⁸ Bankim Chandra had held the posts of deputy collector and deputy magistrate under the British Government. Thus, Tanika Sarkar says that Bankim’s novels are expressing ‘Bengali guilt about ‘loyalism’ about having accommodated and colluded with foreign rule.’²⁹ Chandu Menon, wrote *Indulekha* when he was working as a *munsif* at Parappanangadi.³⁰ But as Bankim did, Chandu Menon doesn’t express the collaborator’s ‘guilt’ through Madhavan. The political consciousness of Madhavan is that of a moderate Congressman. The 18th chapter of *Indulekha* ends with Madhavan’s strong statement: ‘I will not be a friend of the Congress if a situation arises when the Congress despises the British Government unnecessarily and untruthfully.’³¹ K. N. Panikkar argues that *Indulekha* represents a historical process that had ‘dual aspect’, the “acceptance of the British rule on the one hand and the transition to national consciousness on the other.”³²

The early Malayalam novels also represent the perceptions and thoughts of their authors. According to M. Gangadharan, 17 people from Malabar attended the Congress session held in Madras in 1887 as delegates.³³ Appu Nedungadi wrote his novel *Kundalatha* in October 1887, when he was living at Linghi Chetty Street, Madras. This novel is not based on the late 19th century Kerala and doesn’t give any indications about early nationalist consciousness or the activities of the Congress. This novel is set during the pre-modern phase and in the imaginary regions of Kalingam, Kundalam, and Dhramapuri.³⁴ Appu Nedungadi, the author of *Kundalatha* was a

²⁷ G. Arunima, ‘Writing Culture: Of Modernity and the Malayalam Novel’, *Studies in History*, Vol. XIII, no.2, 1997.

²⁸ O. Chandu Menon, *Indulekha*, pp. 341-385.

²⁹ Tanika Sarkar, *Hindu Wife, Hindu Nation: Community, Religion Cultural Nationalism*, New Delhi, 2001, p. 140.

³⁰ P. K. Balakrishnan, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

³¹ O. Chandu Menon, *Indulekha*, p. 385.

³² K. N Panikkar, *Culture, Ideology, Hegemony: Intellectuals and Social Consciousness in Colonial India*, New Delhi, 1995, p. 144.

³³ M. Gangadharan, *Malabar Rebellion*, Kottayam, 2008, p. 43.

³⁴ Appu Nedungadi, *Kundalatha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013(1887).

holder of the 'Rao Bahadur' title and had served as a government pleader and public prosecutor and a man with a strong pro-British anti-Congress attitude.³⁵

For Partha Chatterjee, Indian nationalism was imagined with the presence of two separate domains. The 'outside' or material domain, where the West had the superiority, and the 'inner' or spiritual domain, which was entirely free from the influence of the West and representing Indian cultural identity.³⁶ The most frequently mentioned place in early Malayalam novels after Madras is Varanasi. It is noteworthy that instead of 'Banaras' its old name 'Kashi' has been used in the novels. In both the novels, Chandu Menon mentions Varanasi.

In K. N Panikkar's opinion, the middle class of Malabar attempted to create an 'alternative modernity' instead of colonial modernity during the late 19th century.³⁷ Apart from the creation of an 'alternative modernity' the total negation of colonial modernity was also a form of resistance and *Parangodi Parinayam*, a Malayalam novel by Kizhakkepattu Ramankutti Menon, which was published in 1892 is the best example for this. This novel is a parody that ridicules the novels like *Indulekha*, *Meenakshi*, and *Saraswathi Vijayam*. Parangassa Menon, the hero of the novel has the opposite personality of Madhavan. Parangassa Menon is a traditional Malayali youth, who doesn't have English education. But he knows Sanskrit. He is a good farmer. Parangassa Menon refuses the proposal of Parangodi, who is an English-educated modern woman like Indulekha, and marries a girl, who doesn't have English education.³⁸ Parangassa Menon says: 'I am not a white man. My mother tongue is Malayalam. I have no relation with the white man. Then I don't understand what is special about knowing English.'³⁹

The Basel Evangelical Mission, a German missionary organization, which began its activities in Malabar in the 1840s had some major industrial initiatives in Kannur and Kozhikode. Though the Basel Mission played a crucial role in the transformation of the

³⁵ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keralaleeyar-II*, Kottayam, 1976, pp. 9-15.

³⁶ Chatterjee raises the question 'Whose imagined community?'. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Post-Colonial Histories*, New Jersey, 1993, pp. 3-13.

³⁷ K. N. Panikkar, *Colonialism, Culture and Resistance*, New Delhi, 2007, pp. 13-14.

³⁸ Kizhakkepattu Ramankutti Menon, *Parangodi Parinayam*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013 (1892).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

social life and the development of the economy in Malabar it never made attempts to come into confrontation with the British Government or to spread anti-British sentiment among the people. The late 19th century was a juncture in world politics when Germany and Britain were fighting each other for the possession of colonies and protecting imperial interests.⁴⁰ The *Sukumari* was a Malayalam novel written by Joseph Muliyl, a member of the Basel mission and a *Tiyya* convert to Christianity, and was published in 1897. Though this novel was written to propose a new social order that was free from the rigidities of the caste system and to preach the ideals of the Basel mission, there are a few occasions in the novel when the novelist ridicules colonial modernity and the blind imitation of the lifestyle of Englishmen. The novelist mocks the attempts to follow the lifestyle based on the practice to 'speak in English, smile in English, wear in English, and walk in English.'⁴¹

The spread of colonial modernity gave a Victorian model lifestyle to the Indian middle class based on 'discipline', 'routine', and 'order.'⁴² The Congress politicians of the Moderate phase had some distinct characteristics. Most of them had a law degree and were educated in the presidencies or abroad, and modern in look and outlook, and looked like 'perfect gentlemen' in the British gaze. They were acceptable to the higher British officials. Madhavan is an example of the 'gentleman politician' of the Moderate phase and Chettur Sankaran Nair is a real-life example. But Madhavan is not a perfect prototype of Sankaran Nair.

For Gauri Viswanathan, the introduction of English education in India backfired on the British.⁴³ It is seen that the English-educated Indians were the makers of Indian Nationalism. Though, not anti-government or anti-British, Madhavan is a rebel in his family, who is questioning the dictatorial tendencies of his *karanavar*. Panchu Menon, Madhavan's *karanavar* openly expresses the opinion that Madhavan's impudent behaviour is a consequence of his English education. Arunima's argument that English

⁴⁰ Jaiprakash Raghaviah, *Faith and Industrial Reformation: Basel Mission in Malabar and South Canara*, Delhi, 2018.

⁴¹ Joseph Muliyl, *Sukumari*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013(1897), p. 99.

⁴² Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Difference Deferral of a Colonial Modernity: Public Debates on Domesticity in British Bengal', in David Arnold and David Hardiman(eds.), *Subaltern Studies VIII, Essays in Honour of Ranajit Guha*, Delhi, 1994, p. 55.

⁴³ Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks Of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*, Delhi, 1998, p. 143.

education in *Indulekha* 'is a metaphor for a modern attitude, one that Chandu Menon considered essential for young people' is relevant here.⁴⁴ In short, English education gave a new attitude to the youth and the tendency to object and dissent was part of it.

The thoughts and perceptions of the early Malayalam novelists reached many people due to the wide popularity that was achieved by the novel as a literary style. Novels had a good number of readers in the late 19th century Keralam. All the copies of the first edition of *Indulekha* which began sale in January 1890 were sold by March 1890.⁴⁵ All 10, 000 copies of *Parangodi Parinayam* were sold within three months after the publication.⁴⁶

In India, it was from the presidencies, that nationalist politics spread to districts. The politics of each district absorbed the features of the politics of its presidency, of which it was a part.⁴⁷ Malayali life, especially the life of the Malayali youth was closely linked with Madras City. From the second half of the 19th century, the higher education of the middle-class Malayali youth was mostly in the higher educational institutions in Madras city. From the 1870s, there was an influx of students to Madras City from different parts of the Madras Presidency. In 1914, more than 3, 000 students were studying in different colleges in Madras City.⁴⁸ The middle-class youth preferred to study in the famous colleges in Madras City like Madras Presidency College, Madras Christian College, and, Madras Law College. Early Malayalam novels hint at this trend. The Heroes of the early Malayalam novels like *Indulekha* by Chandu Menon, *Meenakshi*(1890)by Cheruvalath Chathu Nair, *Saraswathi Vijayam*(1892) by Potheri Kunhabu, and *Lakshmi Kesavam*(1892) by Komattil Padu Menon are the alumnus of the colleges in Madras City. Notably, Madras City is a second home to Madhavan.

⁴⁴ G. Arunima, ' Glimpses from Writer's World: O. Chandu Menon, His Contemporaries, and Their Times', *Studies in History*, Vol. XX, no.2, 2004.

⁴⁵ O. Chandu Menon, *Indulekha*, p. 107.

⁴⁶ Kizhakkepattu Ramankutti Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

⁴⁷ D. A. Washbrook, *The Emergence of Provincial Politics: The Madras Presidency, 1870-1920*, New Delhi, 1976, p. 219.

⁴⁸ Cheruvalath Chathu Nair, *Meenakshi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013(1890); Potheri Kunhambu, *Saraswathi Vijayam*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013 (1892); Komattil Padu Meon, *Lakshmi Kesavam*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013(1892). The Malayalam novels published in the early 20th century followed the same trend. Vikramanunni Nair the Hero of Karat Achuta Menon's novel *Viruthan Sanku*(1913) is a student in Madras. Karat Achuta Menon, *Viruthan Sanku*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016.

Chettur Sankaran Nair was a student of Madras Presidency College, Madras Christian College, and Madras Law College.⁴⁹

The reasons for the late beginning of the nationalist political agitation in Malabar, the home district of C. Sankaran Nair, who was the president of the Amaravati session of the Congress in 1897 should deserve the special attention of a historian. The *Native News Paper Reports* prepared by the government give the details of the early nationalist activities in Malabar. According to a report published in *Kerala Patrika*, on 5 December 1891, in a meeting held in Kozhikode, C. Sankaran Nair and C. Kunhirama Menon, the editor of *Kerala Patrika* were selected as the delegates for the Congress session in 1891 and a committee was formed to collect public subscriptions to meet the expenses connected with the Congress.⁵⁰ After 20 years, on 10 May 1911, *West Coast Spectator*, a local English newspaper wrote: "It is feeling of deep shame and humiliation that we have to admit that our district has so far as its public life is concerned is in a state of stagnation. We are afraid that the average Malayali is still a political invertebrate."⁵¹

A. K. Pillai gives a list of the early Congress leaders from Kerala. Malayalis like Chettur Sankaran Nair, G. P. Pillai, V. Rairu Nambiar, C. Kunhirama Menon, Mandathu Krishnan Nair, C. Kunhirama Menon, Dr. T. M. Nair, S. K. Nair, C. Karunakara Menon, K. P. Achutha Menon, and K. U. Karunakara Menon attended some of the Congress sessions from 1885.⁵² But most of them were living outside Keralam. J. H. Broomfield in his study argues that the *Bengali Bhadrakalok* didn't show interest in settling in Calcutta City but they had always a tendency to return to their villages.⁵³ But the case of Malabar was different. The Malayali youth who had a law degree preferred to practice in the Madras High Court. The reason behind this was that a lawyer who was practicing in the High Court could earn much more than a lawyer of the district court.⁵⁴ C. Sankaran Nair was enrolled as a lawyer in the Madras High Court in 1880. At that time, there was nobody from Malabar other than him practicing in the High Court. On the day he

⁴⁹ K. P. S. Menon, *C. Sankaran Nair*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2021(1971), pp. 1-7.

⁵⁰ *Kerala Patrika*, 5 December 1891, NNPR, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁵¹ *West Coast Spectator*, 10 May 1911, NNPR, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁵² A. K. Pillai, *Congressum Keralavum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1982(1935), p. 12.

⁵³ J. H. Broomfield, *Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth Century Bengal*, Bombay, 1968, p. 11.

⁵⁴ D. A. Washbrook, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

was enrolled as a lawyer, Sankaran Nair got 8 to 10 cases.⁵⁵ Padannakkott Rairu Nambiar, one of the early Congressmen from Malabar had practiced in the Madras High Court for a long time.⁵⁶ The young Malayali lawyers chose to practice in the district court only if their attempt to practice in the High Court became unsuccessful. For instance, Appu Nedungadi had practiced at the District Court, Kozhikode for some time. But after a few years, he went to Madras and began to practice in the High Court. Then, after a few years, he came back to Kozhikode and resumed his practice at the District Court as he didn't get good practice in the High Court.⁵⁷ In short, the early Congress leaders from Malabar didn't show interest in settling in their home district and starting Congress work there.

Interestingly, the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal which had an all-India appeal didn't arouse any enthusiasm in Malabar.⁵⁸ However, the autobiographies of Moyarath Sanakaran and Samuel Aron give some instances of the impact of the Swadeshi Movement on the middle class of Malabar. Moyarath Sankaran, who was a student during the Swadeshi Movement recounts that he was interested in issues like the partition of Bengal, Boycott, *Vande Mataram*, and Swadeshi. He borrowed a book, which contained a collection of speeches by the Congress on these issues from his classmate Karunakaran Nair and read it.⁵⁹ He further says that he selected Calcutta for his higher studies due to its attraction as the birthplace of the Swadeshi Movement. An Agricultural-Industrial exhibition was held at Kannur in 1907 due to the influence of the Swadeshi agitation. Samuel Aron says that this exhibition created a change in the attitude of the local entrepreneurs.⁶⁰

There were three important reasons for the late beginning of the nationalist politics in Malabar. Firstly, the political trends in the presidencies would be reflected in district politics. In Christopher Baker's opinion, the provincial politics of Madras from the late 19th century to the second decade of the 20th century "did not have much substance

⁵⁵ C. Sankaran Nair, *Autobiography of Chettur Sankran Nair*, Ottapalam, 1998(1966), p. 17.

⁵⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, Kozhikode, 2014, p. 17.

⁵⁷ K. P. Kesava Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁵⁸ K. N. P anikkar, *Against Lord and State*, p. 118.

⁵⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

⁶⁰ C. Samuel Aron, *Jeevitha Smaranakal*, Kannur, 1974, pp. 34-37.

and thus could not add little weight to the national cause.”⁶¹ This limitation also influenced the local politics of Malabar. Secondly, a section of youth, who had a genuine interest in nationalist politics emerged across India during the beginning of the 20th century. Sumit Sarkar argues that the backbone of the Swadeshi agitation in Calcutta City was students and the youth.⁶² There were also some youngsters of this type in Malabar as well and Moyarath Sankaran was an example. But in Malabar, there were no notable political leaders and no political movement with an ideology and programme that could attract these youngsters. The District Congress Committee established in Malabar with C. Kunhirama Menon as the secretary failed to gain popularity due to this factor.⁶³

The third reason was that as pointed out by Baker, when compared to Calcutta and Bombay, the lack of popular and influential Congress leaders like Tilak, Gokhale, S. N. Banerjee, Malaviya, Bipan Pal, and Lajpat Rai was a major limitation of South Indian politics.⁶⁴ This problem also affected the progress of the politics of Malabar. But the leadership void in South India was filled by Annie Besant, an Irish woman in the second decade of the 20th century. Annie Besant, who was selected as the president of the Theosophical Society in 1907, settled in Madras City by making Adayar the headquarters of the Society. By the second decade of the 20th century, Besant began to show interest in politics.⁶⁵ She joined Congress in 1914. She had all the essential qualities to emerge as a prominent and popular leader. S. N. Banerjee praised Annie Besant for her qualities like ‘eloquence, forceful personality, indefatigable industry, power of organization, and her ability to bring different groups together.’⁶⁶ Annie Besant had a lot of admirers in Malabar. Moyarath Sankaran writes that “all were unanimous in praising her incomparable talent of writing, making speeches, and organizing political agitations.”⁶⁷ The Home Rule League was founded in September

⁶¹ Christopher John Baker, *The Politics of South India, 1920-37*, Cambridge, 1976, p. 22.

⁶² Sumit Sarkar, *Writing Social History*, Delhi, 1997, p. 180.

⁶³ A. K. Pillai, , *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

⁶⁴ Christopher Baker, *op. cit.*

⁶⁵ David Arnold, *The Congress in Tamilnad: Nationalist Politics in South India, 1919-1937*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 22.

⁶⁶ Surendranath Banerjee, *A Nation in the Making*, Calcutta, 1963(1925), p. 221.

⁶⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *The Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, Translated by Radhika P Menon, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, p. 74.

1916 with Annie Besant as the president and its first meeting was held at YMIA, Madras.⁶⁸

Apart from the popularity and leadership skills of Anni Besant, several other factors helped the Home Rule League to acquire popular support in several districts of Madras Presidency including Malabar. These factors are mentioned by Washbrook. The most important factor was that Besant was the president of the Theosophical Society which had many followers across the districts of Madras.⁶⁹ The activities of the Theosophical Society were also active in Malabar. Some of the prominent people in the important towns of Malabar were theosophists. For instance, Advocate Sankara Iyer in Thalassery, and Advocate Subramania Iyer and V. K. Raman Menon in Vadakara were active theosophists. It was through these leaders the Home Rule League gained influence in these regions.⁷⁰

Another factor was that Besant addressed the interests and aspirations of the youth and students with great importance. The support of the youth and students was the major source of strength of Besant's Home Rule League. In some of her speeches, Besant cited the examples of 'young Italy' and 'young Russia' and reiterated the need to show the willingness of the youth and students 'to sacrifice themselves for the cause of their country.'⁷¹ The Confidential Reports of the government reported that the activities of the Home Rule League created a grave outbreak of insubordination among the students in Malabar.⁷²

A third factor was that the early national leaders didn't show interest in visiting districts but always limited their political tours to the capitals of the presidencies. However, Besant's style marked a change from this as he travelled across the Madras Presidency and attended and spoke at the conferences and public meetings held in districts. By the Home Rule League Besant gave an ideology for the National Movement and introduced the strategy and methods of political agitation to the

⁶⁸ Rajkumar, Annie Besant's Rise to Power in Indian Politics, New Delhi, 1981, p. 108.

⁶⁹ D. A. Washbrook, *op. cit.*, p. 290.

⁷⁰ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 56.

⁷¹ A Note on the Discussion of the Question in the Governor General's Executive Council, HFM, Vol.64, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁷² Selected Extracts from the Confidential Government Records on the Home Rule Movement of Annie Besant in Madras, HFM Vol.64, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

people of Malabar. The forms of agitation like resolutions, petitions, walkouts, and public meetings became common in Malabar during the Home Rule phase. It was under the leadership of the Home Rule League that public meetings were organized for the first time in the villages of Malabar.⁷³ However, the strategy and methods of agitation adopted by the Home Rule League of Besant were similar to those of the Moderates in the Congress.

Annie Besant was the name that had been heard the most by a Malayali who was born before the second decade of the 20th century about the National Movement. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, who was born in 1909 reminisces that during his childhood the names he had heard as the symbols of the National Movement were 'Annie Besant', 'Tilak', and 'Home Rule'. The term 'Home Rule' was mentioned occasionally during the talks in the family and friend circles of E. M. S. Though E. M. S didn't understand these conversations fully, he guessed that Home Rule means 'the rule of natives instead of white men's rule.'⁷⁴ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, who was not in politics in 1914, says that at that time he knew the names of Gandhi, Tilak, and Besant and terms like 'Home Rule' and 'Dominion Status.'⁷⁵ At that time, acquiring information on the National Movement and creating one's perceptions about the names and concepts related to it was a silent act of participation in the National Movement.

3.3. The First Generation of Politicians

The first generation of politicians emerged in Malabar through the Home Rule League during the second decade of the 20th century. The political leaders of this age who entered politics through the Home Rule League had some common characteristics. The most notable thing is that most of them were youngsters, who were born in the final decades of the 19th century. Most of them were *vakils*(lawyers) who did their higher studies outside Keralam and they belonged to the middle class. Cornard Wood identifies a few characteristics of the early political leaders of Keralam. He has pointed out that most of them were *vakils* and were Nairs or *Pattars*(Tamil Brahmins).⁷⁶ The

⁷³ K. Damodaran and C. Naryana Pillai, *Keralathile Swathanthrya Samaram*, 2021(1957), Thiruvananthapuram, p. 10.

⁷⁴ EMS *Athmakatha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017, p. 40.

⁷⁵ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *Adimakalengane Udamakalayi*, Kannur, 2018(1980), p. 22.

⁷⁶ Cornard Wood, *The Moplah Rebellion and its Genesis*, New Delhi, 1987, p. 125.

early political leaders of Malabar like K. P. Kesava Menon, K. Madhavan Nair, U. Gopala Menon, P. Achuthan, M. P. Narayana Menon, T. R Krishnaswami Iyer, and P. Ramunni Menon were lawyers.

There is a study by Anandita Mukhopadhyay on the impact of the colonial legal system on the Bengali *bhadralok* life.⁷⁷ The increase in the number of cases related to land disputes and property disputes inextricably linked the landowning families of Malabar to the colonial legal system. As every landowning family had several land dispute cases the service of a lawyer became their necessity. Consequently, the heads of landowning families began to think that if there was a lawyer in their families, it would be helpful for them to win cases. This induced them to send their sons or nephews to study law. This situation is depicted in the autobiography of Moyarath Sankaran and Chandu Menon's novel *Sarada*. After the second decade of the 19th century, becoming a lawyer became one of the most aspired professions that would give a high social status and good income. Thus, at that time, many parents in Malabar wanted their children to become lawyers. V. K. Krishna Menon was born at Panniyankara in Kozhikode in May 1896. His father Komath Krishna Kurup was a reputed lawyer in North Malabar. Thus, he wished to make his son a famous lawyer.⁷⁸ Kanaran Nair, K. Kelappan's father was a *gumasthan* who was working at Payyoli. He wanted to make his son a lawyer.⁷⁹ Manjeri Rama Iyer's father Manjeri Sunduram Iyer was a famous lawyer in Kozhikode.⁸⁰

The District Court of Kozhikode became a focal point for the young lawyers from different parts of Malabar. Many young lawyers from different parts of the District came to Kozhikode Town and settled there to practice at the district court. K. P. Kesava Menon from Palakkad, K. P Raman Menon from Cherppulassery, Manjeri Rama Iyer from Manjeri, and K. Madhavan Nair from Malappuram came to Kozhikode Town and settled there for practicing at the district court. The first common factor between

⁷⁷ Anandita Mukhopadhyay, *Behind the Mask: The Cultural Definition of the Legal Subject*, New Delhi, 2006.

⁷⁸ V. K. Madhavankutty, *V. K. Krishna Menon*, Kozhikode, 2010, pp. 9-24.

⁷⁹ M. P. Manmathan, *Kelappan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016(1984), pp. 25-26.

⁸⁰ S. P. Sen(ed.), *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1973, p. 209.

them was they were lawyers practicing in the same court.⁸¹ The profession of a lawyer was very favourable for beginning the career of a politician. As lawyers, they could meet people from different sections of society and befriend them. Lawyers, who were called *vakils* by the local people held a reputable position in society. Manjeri Rama Iyer, who was the president of the Home Rule League of Malabar, and K. P Raman Menon, president of the District Congress Committee were eminent lawyers in Kozhikode Town.⁸² Manjeri Rama Iyer, who was born in Manjeri in July 1875, after passing the B L degree, had been practicing at the district court since 1899.⁸³ K. P. Raman Menon who was born in February 1867 as a member of the Palat family, a well-known Nair family at Cherppulassery, had been practising at the district court since 1892.⁸⁴

The skills and traits of a lawyer are suitable for a politician. The oratory skills acquired as a lawyer helped the early political leaders to speak well in public meetings. Manjeri Rama Iyer appeared for the defense side in many sensational cases in Malabar and Tiruvitamkur. Iyer had a special skill in cross-examination.⁸⁵ Keasva Menon says that the experience as a lawyer helped U. Gopala Menon to develop a remarkable oratory skill.⁸⁶ Thus, by defending their clients before the British judges, the young lawyers of Malabar gained the qualities like oratory skills, critical thinking, and courage needed for a good politician.

The district court became a common space for young lawyers with an interest in politics to gather and share their ideas. K. P. Kesava Menon, who returned home after doing his higher studies in London started to practice at the district court in August 1915.⁸⁷ K. Madhavan Nair, who was practicing at the Munsif Court of Manjeri, shifted

⁸¹ Among the early political leaders of Malabar P. Ramunni Menon practiced at the the courts in Palakkad and Ottapalam. T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer started his practice at Chavakkad Bar.

⁸² A. K. Pillai. *op. cit.*, p. 13.

⁸³ P. K. K. Menon, *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, Voll. II(1885-1938), Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, pp.69-70.

⁸⁴ K. Karunakaran Nair, *Who is Who of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1975, p. 502.

⁸⁵ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

⁸⁶ K. P. Kesava Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

⁸⁷ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, Kozhikode, 2016(1957), p. 44.

his practice to the district court in 1915.⁸⁸ K. Madhavan Nair, K. P Kesava Menon and P. Achuthan, who later became notable Congress leaders met together for the first time as the young lawyers of Kozhikode Bar.⁸⁹ The Bar Library became a space for the lawyers to gather and hold discussions.⁹⁰ The young lawyers in Kozhikode Town used to meet every Sunday. The meetings were held at the houses of each. After having tea, a discussion of about two hours would be held on a particular topic. Apart from young lawyers, the Sunday meetings were also attended by senior lawyers. Though the Sunday meetings were not held on behalf of the Home Rule-Congress Movement, these meetings helped to arouse interest among the young lawyers in the activities of the Home Rule Congress Movement.⁹¹

A question that should be answered is that from where the young politicians of Malabar acquired the basic skills and principles of public life and the basics of organized political activity. By citing the examples of the Malabar Marriage Association, *Kerala Janmi Sabha*, the *Uttara Kerala Sabha*, K. N. Panikkar argues that “the early efforts at public organization were through caste and class-based bodies.”⁹² These organizations were active from the late 19th century and formed by the attempts of landlords and the middle class. The early political leaders were the members of notable landowning families or belonged to the middle class. K. Kelappan began his public life as the first president of the Nair Service Society. He was the president of the N. S. S from 1914 and 1916.⁹³ Moyarath Sankaran’s uncle, Moyarath Anandan Nambiar was an active worker of the *Uttara Kerala Nair Samajam*.⁹⁴ Though Kelappan began his public life as a leader of the N. S. S, he became famous as a Congress leader. K. Kelappan, who went to Bombay to study law in 1917, returned to Malabar by abandoning his studies to participate in the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement.⁹⁵ Moyarath Sankaran began his public life as an active worker of the Home Rule-Congress Movement.

⁸⁸ C. K. Moosad, *K. Madhavan Nair*, Kozhikode, 1987, p. 43.

⁸⁹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, p. 48.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 46

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

⁹² K. N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State*, p. 117.

⁹³ M. P. Manmathan, , *op. cit.*, pp. 53-56.

⁹⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 17-18.

⁹⁵ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp.61-65.

Though the caste and class-based organizations had become a model of organized political activity to the early political leaders of Malabar, the youth of Malabar learned the basics of organized political activity and gained nationalist consciousness, when they were studying in Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta. The national leaders before Besant and Gandhi didn't have a style of visiting villages and small towns. Thus, the Malayali youth who were studying in Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta met the national leaders for the first time and heard their speeches from these cities. K. P. Kesava Menon saw Gopala Krishna Gokhale and Bipin Chandra Pal for the first time and heard their speeches, while he was studying in Madras.⁹⁶ Most of the early political Congress leaders of Malabar were students of the famous colleges in Madras City and law graduates. However, the case of Moyarath Sankaran was different. He was a student of the National Medical College of Calcutta. Though Moyarath Sankaran couldn't complete his studies, the days he had spent as a student in Calcutta city were an opportunity for him to meet the top Congress leaders like Surendranath Banerjee and hear their speeches.⁹⁷

Due to the influence of the Swadeshi Movement, during the early 20th century, there was a trend of forming of debating societies among the students for the discussion of native rights.⁹⁸ Though it is not clear, whether it was due to the influence of the Swadeshi Movement, debating societies were formed among the students in Malabar during the early 20th century. K. P. Kesava Menon, while studying at Kerala Vidya Shala (Samutiri College) was the secretary of the debating society in the college.⁹⁹ Moyarath Sankaran was a leader and an active participant in the debating society of his school.¹⁰⁰ Thus, participation in debating societies influenced the public life of the early political leaders.

The early political leaders were alumni of educational institutions in the important towns of Malabar like Kozhikode, Palakkad, and Thalassery. K. P. Kesava Menon, a native of Palakkad came to Kozhikode for the first time to study at the Samutiri

⁹⁶ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 31-34.

⁹⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 45-51.

⁹⁸ David Hardiman, *The Coming of the Devi: Adivasi Assertion in Western India*, Delhi, 1987, p. 166.

⁹⁹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, p. 25.

¹⁰⁰ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 26-35.

College. He was a student at Samutiri College for about eight years.¹⁰¹ K. Kelappan, hailed from Muchuknu near Koyilandi studied at B. G. M. Parsi High School and Kerala Vidya Shala.¹⁰² K. Madhavan Nair and T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer were former students of Victoria College, Palakkad.¹⁰³ The education in towns gave a progressive outlook for the middle-class youth. E. B. Hills, the principal of Kerala Vidya Shala and G. Subba Rao, the vice principal were theosophists and ardent supporters of Besant.¹⁰⁴ Manjeri Rama Iyer had taught at the Samutiri College for a short period. He taught mathematics there. K. Kelappan was a winner of a Pythagoras Mathematics Competition conducted by Rama Iyer and the prize to the winner was distributed by Annie Besant.¹⁰⁵

Annie Besant's Home Rule League accommodated the youth who had a genuine interest in politics and provided them a platform to express their sentiments and ideas. The internment of Besant in 1917 made her a leader of every section and the youth attracted to her Home Rule League on a larger scale. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was a young man at that time has recounted in his autobiography, the new vigour among the Indian youth created by Besant's arrest.¹⁰⁶ The internment of Besant also enraged the youth of Malabar. Moyarath Sankaran writes that Besant's arrest was an incident that 'upset him terribly.'¹⁰⁷ The meetings and conferences organized by the Home Rule League became a common platform for the young politicians of Malabar to meet each other. The young politicians who later became notable Congress leaders of Malabar became familiar to the people as political leaders through their national participation in the Home Rule League.¹⁰⁸ E. Moidu Maulavi recounts that he first met

¹⁰¹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*.

¹⁰² M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

¹⁰³ C. K. Moodad, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14; N. Gopalakrishnan Nair, *T. R. Krishnaswami*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012, pp. 14-15.

¹⁰⁴ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁵ C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, Kottayam, 1982, p. 37. Manjeri Rama Iyer was a former student of the Samutiri College. He had also served as the vice Principal and acting principal of the Samutiri College for some time.

¹⁰⁶ Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, New Delhi, 2004(1936), pp. 34-36.

¹⁰⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *The Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁸ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 56.

K. Madhavan Nair and heard his speech during the years of the Home Rule Movement.¹⁰⁹

K. P Kesava Menon states that the Mappila Muslims entered the National Movement only during the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement and the only Mappila Muslim leader of the National Movement in the pre-*Khilafat* phase was Ponmadath Moideen Koya.¹¹⁰ However, apart from Moideen Koya, there were a few other Mappila Muslims, who had supported the Home Rule-Congress Movement. The assistant secretary of the Home Rule League Committee, of which Manjeri Rama Iyer was the president was one P. A. Kunhahammad. Kunhahammad was also the assistant secretary of the District Congress Committee, of which K. P Raman Menon was the president.¹¹¹ P. S. Bappan Koya Haji, belonged to a prominent Muslim family in Kozhikode was an adherent of the Home Rule League since his high school time.¹¹² Ponmadath Moideen Koya was born at Panniyankara in Kozhikode in 1866 as a member of the prominent Ponmadath family. He had a big stationary shop at Kallay Road, Kozhikode. As an active worker of the Home Rule League, he came to be known as 'Home Rule Moideen Koya'.¹¹³ Moideen Koya had attended the Second District conference held in Kozhikode in 1917.¹¹⁴

V. K. Krishna Menon, one of the most prominent Indian politicians of the 20th century was also a native of Malabar. Menon also began his political career as a worker of the Home Rule League. Krishna Menon, who was in Madras from 1915 to 1920 was an active participant of the Home Rule Movement in Madras. From 1920 to 1924, by living in Kozhikode Town, Menon coordinated the activities of the Theosophical Society and Scout Movement in Malabar.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁹ E. Moidu Maulavi, 'Ente Sahapravarthakanum Samakalikanum Visishya Upadeshtavumaya K. Madhavan Nair', in *K. Madhavan Nair Shathabdi Smaranika*, Kozhikode, 1982, p. XXiii.

¹¹⁰ 'An Interview With K. P. Kesava Menon, 12 Januray 1974', Appendix I, in M. Gangadharan, *Op. cit.*, p. 275.

¹¹¹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*

¹¹² P. P. . Ummer Koya, *Dheerathmakal*, Kozhikode, 1984, p. 26.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100.

¹¹⁴ P. P. Mammed Koya Parappil, *Kozhikkotte Muslimgalude Charitharm*, Kozhikode, 1994, p. 345.

¹¹⁵ T. J. S. George, *V. K. Krishna Menon*, Translated by K. N. Gopalan Nair, Kozhikode, 2017(1964), pp.62-87.

Most of the leaders of the Home Rule League of Besant were youth, who were in their late twenties or early thirties. The Swadeshi agitation was a political movement that deeply influenced and strongly attracted the Indian youth and students.¹¹⁶ When the Swadeshi agitation began in Bengal, the youngsters of Malabar who were born in the late 19th century were studying in Madras City. K. P. Kesava Menon and M. P. Narayana Menon were studying in Madras during the period of the Swadeshi agitation. Kesava Menon remembers that 'I began my studies in Madras in an age that had created a stir in Indian Politics.'¹¹⁷ It is obvious that this turbulent phase also influenced the youth of Malabar.

3.4. The Historic Walkout

The walkout of K. P Kesava Menon from a meeting chaired by the District Collector which was held during the First World War is regarded by many as a turning point in the history of the freedom movement in Malabar. Walkout had been used by the moderate Congressmen as a form of protest in British Indian legislatures. The name of Pherozeshah Mehta, a veteran Congress leader from Bombay was associated with the most effective use of this form of protest.¹¹⁸ During the freedom struggle, a walkout was a form of protest that was used usually inside legislatures. An individual or a group of people walk out from a space to show their protest when they realize the authority controlling the space does not consider their demands or requests. Walkout is a more radical form of protest and a kind of non-cooperation.

During the First World War, the Governor of Madras decided to visit Malabar. Some prominent people in Kozhikode decided to gift him a money purse for war purposes on behalf of the public. To discuss this, at the request of some prominent persons in Kozhikode, C. V. Narayana Menon, the Municipal Chairman convened a public meeting at Kozhikode Town Hall. F. B. Evans, the District Collector, chaired the meeting. K. P. Kesava Menon, who attended the meeting began to speak in Malayalam by expressing his opinion on a resolution presented in the meeting. But the District Collector, who was also the chair asked him to speak in English. But when Kesava Menon's request to

¹¹⁶ Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908*, Ranikhet, 2010(1973).

¹¹⁷ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, p. 31.

¹¹⁸ V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, *Life and Times of Sir Pherozshah Mehta*, Mylapore, 1945.

allow him to speak in Malayalam was strongly refused by the chair he walked out. Most of the people who were present in the meeting also walked out with Menon.¹¹⁹

Kizhakke Potta Kesava Menon was born in 1886 in Palakkad as the son of a junior prince of the Palakkad royal family. After doing his higher studies in London, he returned to Malabar and began practice at the district court, Kozhikode in August 1915. After that, till moving to Madras, Kesava Menon had been in Kozhikode.¹²⁰ At that time Menon was also the secretary of the district committee of the Home Rule League and District Congress Committee.¹²¹ Among the early political leaders of Malabar, Kesava Menon was the only one who did his higher studies in London. During the beginning of his political career, Kesava Menon made it a style to speak in Malayalam in the public meetings he attended. A meeting was held at the Christian College, Kozhikode to celebrate the birthday of Srimulam Tirunal, the ruler of Tiruvitamkur, Kesava Menon was one of the key speakers at that meeting. The meeting was presided over by Appu Nedungadi, a staunch British loyalist. Menon spoke there in Malayalam. This incident was a pleasant surprise to Nedungadi. After the meeting, he appreciated Menon.¹²² The incidents that a young lawyer and politician, educated in London was speaking in Malayalam instead of English in public meetings were politically and culturally relevant.

Kesava Menon's walkout and his Malayalam speech of that day was a powerful protest that had several aspects. It was a bold political statement that a Malayali would speak in Malayalam in a space where the Malayalis had a majority. In A. K. Pillai's version of the incident, Kesava Menon said, 'I have the right to speak in Malayalam in a meeting of Malayalis.'¹²³ The major representatives of the District Government including the District Collector, District Judge, and the District Police Superintendent were present in the meeting. Some of the prominent landlords in Malabar like Kavalappara Mooppil

¹¹⁹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 53-54; A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.* Kesava Menon says that this incident took place in 1917. There is a lack of clarity about this incident. But this incident is mentioned in the autobiographies of Kesava Menon and Moyarath Sankaran and the work *Congressum Keralavaum* by A. K. Pillai, the first official history of the Congress in Keralam published in 1935. Moyarath Sankaran was an eye witness to the incident.

¹²⁰ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 44&61.

¹²¹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*

¹²² K. P. Kesava Menon, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keralaleeyar*, p. 10.

¹²³ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*

Nair and Diwan Bahadur Kelu Eradi were also there. All of them were sitting on the stage. K. P. Kesava Menon, Manjeri Rama Iyer, and K. Madhavan Nair were sitting in the first row. However, most of the audience were common people. Kesava Menon attempted to oppose a resolution in the meeting that was presented by Kavalappara Mooppil Nair and supported by Kelu Eradi.¹²⁴ Thus, his walkout and the Malayalam speech of that day was a strong political statement. It is noteworthy that this walkout didn't take place inside an assembly hall but in a public meeting. This incident made Kesava Menon popular in Kozhikode Town. A rumour that Kesava Menon was going to be arrested spread in the Town.¹²⁵

One's walkout will be meaningful when other people follow him and walk out with him. Most of the people who attended that meeting also walked out with Kesava Menon. The people who remained there after the walkout were only government officials and their supporters.¹²⁶ There were some students among the audiences and Moyarath Sankaran was one among them. They also walked out with Menon.¹²⁷

Moyarath Sankaran writes that all other speakers in that meeting except Kesava Menon spoke in English and were dressed in formal suits. He further says that Menon came to the meeting in Malayali attire.¹²⁸ Dress is often a political statement.¹²⁹ During the freedom movement, clothing became a political statement. From the late 19th century, the Malayali middle class showed a tendency to imitate the Western style of dressing. The English-educated Malayali followed a common dress style that included 'a black coat, white sox, and silk turban. 'This dress style was also followed by British loyalists'.¹³⁰ In each space under the control of the state, the state decides what the

¹²⁴ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, p. 54. F. B. Evans was the Collector of Malabar district from October 1915 to February 1919.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹²⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 54.

¹²⁸ Moyarath Sankaran, *The Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, p. 74. Though Moyarath Sankaran says that Kesava Menon had attended the meeting in 'Malayali attire', he doesn't specify what Menon's dress was. This thing is not mentioned by Kesava Menon in his autobiography.

¹²⁹ Betty Luther Hillman, *Dressing for the Culture Wars: Style and Politics of Self-Presentation in the 1960s and 1970s*, London, 2015; Beverly Lemire and Giorgio Riello(eds.), *Dressing Global Bodies: The Political Power of Dress in World History*, Oxon, 2020.

¹³⁰ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 49-50.

people should wear.¹³¹ The colonial British Government had proposed some strict norms about the style of dressing of the people in each space and the British held some perceptions about what Indians should wear. Thus, a deviation from this became a form of protest for the youth. M. P Narayana Menon, while he was studying at the Madras Presidency College used to go to the college wearing a *sherwani*, *kurta*, and Turkish cap, which was regarded as Muslim dress. The principal, who found that M. P. Narayana Menon, an upper-caste Hindu dressed in Muslim style as an inappropriate act questioned this. But Narayana Menon gave a reply that 'the principal who does not feel anything unusual when an Indian dresses in European style does not need to feel it inappropriate when a Hindu dresses in Muslim style.'¹³² A similar incident occurred in the life of V. K. Krishna Menon. When Krishna Menon was studying at the Madras Law College, his principal was very strict about the dress code of the students in the college. He strongly insisted that the students had to come to the college following the prescribed dress code. The principal felt extreme discontent when Krishna Menon came to the college wearing *jubba* and *mundu*, which was regarded as a South Indian Dress.¹³³

3.5. The Scuffle in an Urban Space

During the First World War, with the beginning of the Home Rule Movement, Kozhikode Town became the focal point of the National Movement in Malabar. The *Malabar (Gazetteer)* describes Kozhikode Town as:

Calicut, the capital of Malabar, the sixth town and one of the principal ports of the Madras Presidency. Besides being a municipality, a cantonment, and the headquarters of all branches of administration, it is the seat of the District Judge of South Malabar, the registrar of Calicut, and the executive engineer of the West Coast division. There are two district *munsifs* and Subordinate Judges.

¹³¹ Ruthann Robson, *Dressing Constitutionally: Hierarchy, Sexuality, and Democracy from Our Hair to Shoes*, Cambridge, 2013.

¹³² M. P. S. Menon , *Malabar Samaram: M. P. Narayana Menonum Sahapravarthakarum* , Kozhikode, 2005(1992), pp. 29&31.

¹³³ T. J. S . George, *op. cit.*, p.69.

The town is also the headquarters of the income tax officer, assistant registrar of cooperative societies, and the assistant director of fisheries.¹³⁴

Thus, the same Kozhikode Town, which was the nerve centre of the district administration and had the residences of top officials including the District Collector, and had many buildings as the notable symbols of the colonial government became a hub of nationalist political agitation and young Home Rule-Congress activists from the First World War period. From 1916, the Home Rule League-Congress leadership organized conferences, public meetings, and processions in Kozhikode Town and they needed public spaces to hold these. Consequently, conflicts arose between the District Government and the Home Rule-Congress leaders over the allotment of public spaces. Rajat Ray in his study on Calcutta City politics from 1875 to 1939 explains the conflict between imperialist interests and nationalist interests in Calcutta city politics.¹³⁵

The outbreak of the First World War brought significant changes in the life and politics of the people of Malabar. The *New India* of Annie Besant reported that “the present peculiar conditions of Malabar are not any depressing but are likely to lead one to suppose that all of the districts in this Presidency, no district is affected by the present war than Malabar.”¹³⁶ In the First Malabar District Conference held at Palakkad in 1916, K. P Raman Menon invited the District Conference of 1917 to Kozhikode.¹³⁷ As a conference hosted by Kozhikode Town, the capital of British Malabar and one of the important towns of South India, the Second District Conference got wide public attention all over South India. The reports related to the District Conference were published in local and South Indian newspapers with great importance. High hopes arose among the people about the conference as the presence of Annie Besant, C. P Ramaswami Iyer, and G. S Arundale were expected at the Conference.¹³⁸ Several rumours about the conference were circulated among the people across South India. There were many rumours about the presidentship of the conference. There was even

¹³⁴ C. A. Innes and F. B. Evans, *Malabar*(Gazetteer), Thiruvananthapuram, 1997 (1908), p. 408.

¹³⁵ Rajat Ray, *Urban Roots of Indian Nationalism: Pressure Groups and Conflict of Interests in Calcutta City Politics, 1875-1939*, New Delhi, 1979.

¹³⁶ *New India*, 23 Januray 1915, NNPR(1914 December-1915 February), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

¹³⁷ *New India*, 10 May 1916.

¹³⁸ *West Coast Spectator*, 29 March 1917, NNPR(March-April 1917), Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

a rumour that the conference would be held under the presidency of Bal Gangadhar Tilak.¹³⁹ At last, It was decided to hold the District Conference under the presidentship of C. P Ramaswami Iyer, a young lawyer and a prominent leader of the Home Rule League in Madras. Ramaswami Iyer was one of the most famous lawyers of Madras Bar at that time and a leader of the 'Mylapore Clique', one of the prominent groups in Madras politics.¹⁴⁰ Iyer had many admirers among the public of Kozhikode Town. A local English newspaper of that time called Ramaswami Iyer 'The Young Lion of Madras Bar'.¹⁴¹ However, nominating a leader from outside the District to preside over the District Conference drew criticism.¹⁴² A criticism that the politics of Malabar was 'Adayar centred' was raised.¹⁴³

The Second District Conference generated new enthusiasm among the people of Kozhikode and the youth, who were interested in Home Rule-Congress politics. K. P. Raman Menon, an eminent lawyer in Kozhikode Town was selected as the chairman of the Reception Committee of the District Conference decided to be held on 23 and 24 April 1917. K. P. Kesava Menon and P. Achuthan, two young lawyers were the secretaries of the Reception Committee.¹⁴⁴ P. Achuthan, who was known as 'Achuthan Vakil' among the people of Kozhikode Town and later became a notable Congress leader began his political career as the secretary of the Reception Committee of the District Conference. P. Achuthan, who was born at Kannoli Veetil in Kozhikode in 1883 belonged to the *Tiyya* Community, which was a substantial section of the population of Malabar but was regarded as a low caste. The entry of Achuthan to the National Movement was a big gain as at that time the main leaders of the *Tiyya* community in Malabar were strongly opposing the Home Rule-Congress Movement.¹⁴⁵ At that time, Moyarath Sankaran, who later became a Congress leader was living in Kozhikode with a desire and intention of joining the National Movement. He took membership in the

¹³⁹ *Justice*, 23 April 1917, NNPR (March-April 1917).

¹⁴⁰ According to D. A. Washbrook there were two prominent groups in Madras politics in the early phase. They were the 'Maylapore Clique and the' Egmore Clique. C. Sankaran Nair was an important leader of the 'Egmore Clique'. D. A. Washbrook, *op. cit.*, p. 239-240.

¹⁴¹ *West Coast Spectator*, 29 March 1917, NNPR (March-April 1917).

¹⁴² *West Coast Reformer*, 30 March 1917, NNPR (March-April 1917).

¹⁴³ *West Coast Reformer*, 1 April 1917, NNPR (March-April 1917).

¹⁴⁴ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

¹⁴⁵ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keralaleeyar*, pp. 33-34.

Home Rule League and the Congress in February 1917, just before the District Conference. He took part in all the activities related to the conference from the collection of funds to putting up the *pandal*.¹⁴⁶

As a massive participation of the people was expected in the conference, the organizers of the conference had to find a big space as the venue. Hence, they selected Mananchira *maidanam*, located near the Huzur office at the heart of the Town as the venue. But when F. B Evans, the District Collector denied the permission to use Mananchira *maidanam* as the venue of the conference, the organizers had to find another place.¹⁴⁷ Finding another suitable place became a big challenge for the Reception Committee chaired by K. P Raman Menon and they sought different options. The extensive search of the organizers for a suitable place to hold the conference became a talk among the people. The search of the Reception Committee for a suitable place was regarded by a local newspaper as 'like Japhet in search of his father.'¹⁴⁸ At last, the conference was held at the Tennis Court in the compound of K. P. Raman Menon's house.¹⁴⁹ Consequently, this conference was known as the 'Tennis Court Conference.' The incident was even compared to the famous 'Tennis Court Oath' in 18th-century France. As the 'Tennis Court Oath' was a crucial incident that led to the French Revolution of 1789, some argued that "it is strong that history repeats itself even in some of its minor details."¹⁵⁰

But all these great expectations had a tragic end as the Second Malabar District Conference didn't bring any radical shift in the politics of Malabar. Annie Besant, the most popular political leader in South India at that time had attended the Second District Conference. To attend the conference, Annie Besant and Ramaswami Iyer arrived at Kozhikode on the evening of 22 April.¹⁵¹ The controversies and rumours around the conference and the first major political conference hosted by Kozhikode Town attracted a huge number of people to the Second District conference. The meeting was attended by 320 delegates. But apart from the delegates, common

¹⁴⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 56.

¹⁴⁷ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

¹⁴⁸ *West Coast Spectator*, 5 April 1917, NNPR(March-April 1917).

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁰ *Justice*, 26 April 1917, NNPR(March-April 1917).

¹⁵¹ *New India*, 23 April 1917.

people had also attended the Conference as visitors. Thus, the total number of participants in the conference was more than a thousand.¹⁵² There was no chance that an incident took place as part of Besant's Home Rule Movement to grow into a powerful popular movement. Because, Besant's Home Rule League had limited popular support in North Malabar, and it didn't have any influence in the rural areas of Malabar.¹⁵³ The *Justice* regarded the Home Rule League of Malabar as an organization of 'Palakkad *Pattars* and Calicut *Vakils*. '¹⁵⁴ Thus, due to the limited and narrow popular base of the Home Rule Movement, the enthusiasm created by the Second District conference in Kozhikode Town couldn't spread to the villages. The *Justice*, an outspoken critic of Besant, ridiculed the District Conference by writing that "when travelling circuses are not available, the Calicut people naturally took Besant's show as a good substitute."¹⁵⁵

3.6. Political Trends in the Resolutions

The style of holding annual conferences with selected delegates was introduced in India by the Indian National Congress, India's first pan-Indian political organization. For John R. McLane, holding annual conferences of three to four days in the final week of the year with the delegates from different parts of India and making speeches and passing resolutions on many important political issues of the day such as Indianization of the civil service and the expansion of the legislative councils was the most important aspect of the political strategy of the Indian National Congress from 1885 to 1905.¹⁵⁶ From 1916 to 1920, five annual district conferences with selected delegates were held in Malabar. In its early phase, the Indian National Congress used resolutions as an important political tool for expressing its opinion on key political issues and raising demands before the government. Resolutions on various political, social, and economic issues were presented and passed in all the five district conferences held in Malabar. Resolutions reflect the political trends of the time. The most notable feature of the resolutions passed in the district conferences is that they expressed opinions on

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁵⁴ *Justice*, 28 April 1917, NNPR(March-April 1917).

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ John R. MacLane, *Indian Nationalism and the Early Congress*, Princeton, 1977, p. 50.

several key issues in local, national, and international politics. As these conferences were held during the war period and the early post-war period, the resolutions related to the war like war loans and recruitment had been brought to discussion in the district conferences. Most of the resolutions were related to local issues. Resolutions on key local issues like infrastructural development, education, more powers to local bodies, reforms in the *marumakkathayam* system, admission to all students in the Samutiri College irrespective of the caste differences, the grievances of local *janmis*, and the resettlement in the District were moved and passed in the district conferences. The main demand of the Congress, the expansion of legislatures by including more Indians, and the key issues in national politics like the changes in the Arms Act and the abolition of the indentured system were raised in the district conferences as resolutions.¹⁵⁷

The Home Rule -Congress leaders realized that the support of the Mappila Muslims, a substantial section of the population of Malabar was inevitable to strengthen the popular base of the National Movement. Thus, the resolutions demanding the repeal of the 'Mappila Outrages Act' were moved and passed in all the district conferences from the Second District Conference held in 1917. Kunju Pokker Kutti Moved the resolution demanding the repeal of the 'Mappila Outrages Act' in the Second District Conference, which was seconded by Eswara Iyer. The Resolution was passed unanimously.¹⁵⁸ In the Third Malabar District Conference held at Thalassary in 1918, K. T. Chandu Nambiar, a prominent landlord in North Malabar moved a resolution raising the same demand. This resolution was seconded by C. Komu Menon and supported by P. Moideen Koya.¹⁵⁹ In the Fourth District Conference held at Vadakara, the resolution with the same content was moved by P. Moideen Koya.¹⁶⁰

Most often, the proceedings of the district conferences were ended with the singing of *Vande Mataram*.¹⁶¹ Though the number of delegates and participants, who attended the district conferences held at Thalassery and Vadakara was comparatively small, the

¹⁵⁷ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-31.

¹⁵⁸ *New India*, 26 April 1917.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 10 May 1918.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 8 May 1919.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 10 May 1916.

resolutions passed in these conferences were politically relevant. The resolutions adopted by these conferences marked the beginning of the shift from the moderate politics of Annie Besant. These resolutions embraced the trends of national politics and the mood of the nation. In the District Conference held at Thlassery in 1918, K. P. Raman Menon moved a resolution supported by K. P. Kesava Menon. This resolution demanded the immediate enactment of a parliamentary statute to recommend the measure for the establishment of a fully responsible government in India.¹⁶² A resolution expressing deep sympathy to the Kheda agriculturalists was moved by K. P. Ramakrishna Iyer and a resolution demanding the annulment of the repressive legislations was moved by K. P. Raman Menon. G. Damodara Rao moved a resolution that asked for granting amnesty to political prisoners and the release of Ali brothers. A resolution expressing support for the Swadeshi campaign and putting forward the demand of giving preference to Indian goods over foreign commodities was also moved.¹⁶³

The Fourth Malabar District Conference was held in Vadakara on May 5 and 6 1919, when Indian politics was passing through one of its most turbulent phases with the incidents of Gandhi's Rowlatt *Satyagraha* and Jallianwala Bagh. The conference had only about 270 delegates.¹⁶⁴ However, the deep resentment towards the Rowlatt Acts, the anguish in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the discontent towards the repressive policies, and the support for Gandhi had been expressed in the presidential address of K. P. Raman Menon and a resolution moved by L. A. Subramania Iyer. K. P Raman Menon, who presided over the Conference in his presidential address reviewed the whole political atmosphere in India and criticized the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms by calling them 'disappointing'. He strongly condemned the passing of the Rowlatt Acts and the arrest of Gandhi.¹⁶⁵ L. A. Subramania Iyer by a resolution thanked Gandhi for starting the Rowlatt *Satyagraha* and urged the people to carry on this agitation under Gandhi's leadership. This resolution was opposed by M. S Rama Iyer, C. Sankara Iyer, and Rao Sahib C. Karunakara Menon. When all other resolutions passed unanimously

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 10 May 1918.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. pp. 28-30.

¹⁶⁵ *New India*, 8 May 1919.

by the conference, this resolution was put to vote and passed.¹⁶⁶ The resolutions in the district conferences were often presented in Malayalam and the opinions and the amendments on them by the delegates were also expressed in Malayalam. At the Manjeri Conference, Manjeri Rama Iyer translated the speech of Annie Besant into Malayalam for the local audience.¹⁶⁷

Resolutions adopted by a conference are the key factor that decides the nature of the conference. In the Vadakara District Conference, Nilambur Ilaya Raja invited the District Conference of 1920 to Manjeri, the headquarters of Eranad *Taluk*.¹⁶⁸ The Fifth Malabar District Conference held at Manjeri in April 1920, became a turning point in the National Movement of Malabar in several ways. The Conference was held in an atmosphere, where the discussions and expectations about the Non-Co-operation Movement to be launched by Gandhi dominated the Indian Political scenario. By that time, an attitude favourable to Gandhi's Non-Co-operation Movement was generated among the youth of Malabar. At the same time, Annie Besant and her supporters vehemently opposed the Non-Cooperation Movement. Thus, the political activists of Malabar split into two separate camps, the supporters of the Non-Co-operation Movement and those who were against it. The District Conference was held at Manjeri, the headquarters of Eranad *Taluk*, a Mappila majority *taluk* when the sentiments of Indian Muslims were extremely hurt by the *Khilafat* problem.¹⁶⁹ It is also noteworthy that the District Conference was hosted by a region dominated by the Mappila tenants when there were strong demands that the National Movement take up tenants' grievances as a major issue. The patrons of the district conferences were landlords and local rulers of the respective regions. Consequently, due to the strong opposition from the landlords and local rulers, no resolution related to the *janmi-kudiyan* dispute was brought to the attention of the conferences. In the Kozhikode Conference, the demand of the landlords and local rulers that the *janmi-kudiyan* issue wouldn't be taken for discussion in the Conference was accepted. The *janmi-kudiyan* problem was not discussed even in the Vadakara Conference, which was held under

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 30 April 1920.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 8 May 1919.

¹⁶⁹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-34.

the presidency of K. P. Raman Menon, a leader of the tenancy movement in Malabar.¹⁷⁰

The support and influence that Annie Besant had among the youth of South India lost, due to her decision to welcome the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and to oppose the Non-Co-operation Movement. The campaign against Besant's politics in Madras was led by two young Congressmen, S. Sathyamurti and C. Rajagopalachari.¹⁷¹ Annie Besant thought that the adoption of an anti-Non-Co-operation stance by the District Conference would be her major political victory. Consequently, she decided to attend the District Conference and for this, she came to Manjeri at about noon on 27 April 1920.¹⁷² Manjeri Rama Iyer, an ardent supporter of Besant made a tireless attempt to ensure that the maximum number of delegates in favour of Besant's politics would participate in the Conference.¹⁷³ At the Manjeri Conference, the most vehement opposition to Besant's politics was from K. Madhavan Nair, K. P. Kesava Menon, and M. P. Narayana Menon, three important young Congress leaders of Malabar. K. Madhavan Nair had requested Kesava Menon, who was in Madras that he should attend the District Conference. M. P. Narayana Menon, a young lawyer and Congress leader, who was very popular and influential among the Mappilas of Eranad was one of the main organizers of the District Conference.¹⁷⁴

Among the district conferences, the Manjeri Conference was the largest one in terms of the number of participants. The Conference was attended by 1300 delegates, which was a record.¹⁷⁵ Most of the delegates were Mappilas.¹⁷⁶ While attending the Conference, Besant had two intentions: to make sure that the Conference would adopt a decision against the Non-Co-operation Movement and to avoid a situation that the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms would be completely refused by the Conference. Besant and her supporters had realized that the majority of the delegates were Mappila tenants and their motives would be fulfilled only by the support of the Mappilas. Thus,

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 21&31.

¹⁷¹ David Arnold, *o p. cit.*, pp. 23-24; D. A. Washbrook, *op. cit.*, pp. 310-312.

¹⁷² *New India*, 30 April 1920.

¹⁷³ K. Madhavan Nair, *Malabar Kalapam, Kozhikode*, 2016(1971), pp.64-65.

¹⁷⁴ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.

¹⁷⁵ *New India*, 4 May 1920.

¹⁷⁶ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp.65-66.

at the conference, Besant adopted a stand favourable for the Mappilas in the *Khilafat* issue. She was also ready to support the Mappilas in their demands for tenancy reforms.¹⁷⁷ On 29 April 1920, considering the majority opinion, the resolution on the *Khilafat* problem was taken for discussion as the first resolution in the conference. The resolution was moved by P. Komu Menon, a Retired Excise Commissioner.¹⁷⁸ He presented the resolution in Malayalam. The resolution urged to settle the Turkish question by the fair and legitimate sentiments of Indian Muslims. The resolution also stated that if this problem was not solved accordingly, they would adopt a policy of non-cooperation with the British Government, as resolved by the *Khilafat* conference held in Madras under the presidentship of Shaukat Ali. T. V. Sundara Iyer seconded the resolution. Annie Besant proposed an amendment. Though Besant accepted the first part of the resolution, she requested to reconsider the proposal in the resolution to adopt a policy of non-co-operation with the government and she proposed this as an amendment in the resolution. This amendment was seconded by Shanmukha Mudaliar and Manjeri Rama Iyer and opposed by Abdul Khader, Moideen Koya and K. Madhavan Nair. The amendment was put to vote and lost by a large majority.¹⁷⁹ K P Raman Menon moved a resolution calling the Acts of 1919 as 'disappointing, inadequate, and unsatisfactory.' Besant proposed an amendment requesting the removal of these words. The amendment was seconded by Nilambur Elaya Raja. The amendment was also put to vote and lost.¹⁸⁰ Opposing a resolution and proposing amendments to it was a form of dissent. M P Narayana Menon gained popularity with his speech opposing a resolution on war loans in the Second District Conference. The young Congressmen often showed a tendency to oppose the resolutions and propose amendments. For instance, when Moyarath Sankaran and K. Appu Nair attempted to oppose a resolution congratulating Britain for the victory in the World War in the Vadakara Conference, K. P Raman Menon, the president of the conference dissuaded them.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁷ *New India*, 4 May 1920.

¹⁷⁸ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁷⁹ *New India*, 4 May 1920.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p.60.

A resolution in favour of the tenants was also adopted by the conference. K P Raman Menon moved a resolution stating that “it is high time to legislate safeguarding the interests of the tenants in Malabar.” However, by representing the landlords K. C. Veera Raya Raja said to the president that taking such a resolution for discussion in a conference where the landlords were small in number and the tenants had a majority was not fair. K. T. Chandu Nambiar spoke representing the landlords. A protest signed by 21 landlords was given to the president. The resolution was put to vote and passed.¹⁸²

For several reasons, the Manjeri Conference in 1920 was a major turning point in the National Movement of Malabar. The conference represented a total shift from the politics of Besant to Gandhian politics. The conference was an open declaration of the youth of Malabar that they were moving to Gandhian politics. The Manjeri Conference provided the beginning of the entry of the masses into the National Movement in Malabar. The resolutions adopted by the conference by combining the *Khilafat* issue, an international problem, the non-cooperation, a national problem, and the *kudiyan* issue, a local problem attracted the attention of the masses. The Malabar rebellion occurred due to the influence of these three issues.

3.7. The Non-Cooperation Movement and the Beginning of Gandhian Politics

It was the Rowlatt *Satyagraha* in March-April 1919, which gave Gandhi nationwide popularity all over India and made him an all-India leader. Gandhi succeeded in his attempt to expose the state terror before the disillusioned and frustrated people.¹⁸³ While writing on the Rowlatt *Satyagraha*, commenting on Gandhi’s rise to prominence, Ravinder Kumar argues that Rowlatt *Satyagraha* was the first country-wide agitation against the British Government and it transformed the Indian National Movement from the movement of the classes to a movement of the masses and led to the emergence of Gandhi as the dominant figure in Indian politics.¹⁸⁴ Apart from David Hardiman and Ravinder Kumar Judith Brown and Gordon Johnson explain the reasons

¹⁸² *New India*, 4 May 1920.

¹⁸³ David Hardiman, *The Non-Violent Struggle for Indian Freedom, 1905-19*, Gurgaon, 2018.

¹⁸⁴ R. Kumar, ‘Introduction’, in R. Kumar(ed.), *Essays on Gandhian Politics: The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919*, London, 1971, p. 4.

that made Gandhi as the most dominant figure in Indian politics.¹⁸⁵ No evidence is available to know how the people of Malabar responded to Gandhi's call for an all-India *hartal* on 6 April 1919. However, the resentment against the Rowlatt Acts and the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre was strong at least among the middle class of Malabar and the autobiography of Moyarath Sankaran refers to this. There were fundraising campaigns all over India to help the families of the victims of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre and for this purpose, a play was performed at Kozhikode Town Hall. This play was written by Nandiyelath Padmanabha Menon, a lawyer and activist hailed from Kodungallur, who was practicing in Kozhikode.¹⁸⁶

Gandhi became popular among the masses of Malabar during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-Operation Movement in 1920-22. A *hartal* was observed in Kozhikode Town in February 1921, to protest against the arrests and imprisonment of Yakub Hasan, K. Madhavan Nair, U Gopala Menon, and Ponmadath Miodeen Koya, who were prominent *Khilafat*-Congress leaders. Gandhi made clear that *hartal* was not an idea or form of agitation invented by him in 1919. Gandhi wrote that "*hartal* is an ancient Indian institution for expressing national sorrow."¹⁸⁷ The practice of showing protest by closing shops and stopping all activities existed in India even before 1919. Before 1919, there were incidents in India, when the people protested against the imprisonment of their leaders by closing shops and stopping all activities. For instance, in 1883, to show their protest against the imprisonment of Surendranath Banerjee, the people of Calcutta City closed their shops, and business was suspended in the Indian part of the city.¹⁸⁸

On 16 February 1921, Yakub Hasan, a prominent *Khilafat* leader, who visited Kozhikode and other important *Khilafat*-Congress leaders in Malabar, K. Madhavan Nair, U. Gopala Menon and Ponmadath Miodeen Koy were arrested and sentenced by

¹⁸⁵ Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics, 1915-1922*, Cambridge, 1972; Richard Gordon, 'Non-Co-Operation Movement and Council Entry, 1919-20', *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. VII, no.3, 1973.

¹⁸⁶ P. Bhaskaran, *Athmakatha*, Kozhikode, 2015, p. 21. Nandiyelath Padmanabha Menon is the father of P. Bhaskaran, a famous Malayalam poet, lyricist, and filmmaker.

¹⁸⁷ *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XI (April 1918-July 1919), Ahmedabad, 1965, p. 278.

¹⁸⁸ S. N. Banerjee, *op. cit.*

the District Magistrate to six months imprisonment under section 107.¹⁸⁹ To protest against this, a *hartal* was observed in Kozhikode Town on the next day.¹⁹⁰ For Gandhi, "to declare a *hartal* is no small matter."¹⁹¹ Because the success of a peaceful *hartal* depends upon the complete cooperation of the people. The cause of a *hartal* should be convincing for the people and they should be sympathetic towards its cause. The *hartal* observed in Kozhikode Town was complete. All the shops in the Town remained closed, the lawyers and clients were absent from the courts, and the students boycotted classes.¹⁹² Donald Ferrell in his case study of the Rowlatt *Satyagraha* in 1919 in Delhi, argues that it was their economic grievances that impelled the merchants of Delhi rather than the political reasons to cooperate with the *hartal* of 6 April. According to him, the Muslim merchants in Delhi had joined the Rowlatt *hartal* with some reluctance.¹⁹³ Most of the traders and shop owners in Kozhikode Town were Mappila Muslims. They fully cooperated with the *hartal* and they were motivated only by political reasons to do so. The stature of the arrested and imprisoned leaders was important. Yakub Hasan was one of the most prominent Muslim leaders of India at that time. K Madhavan Nair was the secretary of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee. U. Gopla Menon was a native of Kozhikode Town and an eminent lawyer. Ponmadath Moideen Koya was the most important Muslim leader of the National Movement in Malabar at that time. Moreover, Moideen Koya was a well-known trader in Kozhikode Town. According to A. K. Pillai, the way they were arrested also enraged the public. The District Government arrested four important political leaders who were well known and respected among the people by using section 107, which was usually used against K. Ds.¹⁹⁴

The first use of many other techniques of agitation in Malabar was also related to the same incident. Methods of agitation, such as civil disobedience, courting arrest, going to jail, and serving imprisonment, were used for the first time during this incident.

¹⁸⁹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.

¹⁹⁰ C. Gopalan Nair, *The Moplah Rebellion 1921*, Kozhikode, 1923, p. 12.

¹⁹¹ *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XI (April 1918-July 1919).

¹⁹² E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, Thrissur, 1964, p. 15.

¹⁹³ Donald W. Ferrell, 'The Rowlatt Satyagraha In Delhi', in R. Kumar (ed.), *Essays on Gandhian Politics: The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919*, pp. 209&213.

¹⁹⁴ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

They were sentenced to imprisonment for refusing to give security for they didn't have an intention to disobey the order issued by the District Collector under section 144.¹⁹⁵ They voluntarily decided to go to jail and serve imprisonment by refusing to give any security.¹⁹⁶ In another notable incident related to this, C. V. Narayana Menon, the Chairman of Kozhikode Municipal Council resigned in protest against the arrest and imprisonment of the leaders.

There is a tendency to limit the Khilafat-Non-Cooperation Movement in Malabar just to the narration of events of the rebellion of 1921. The period of the *Khilafat* Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920-22 was a very important phase of the National Movement in Malabar. These years were important not only because of the occurrence of the Malabar rebellion. It was during this period that the political leaders of Malabar learned the basics of Gandhian politics. Apart from pan-Islamism and anti-landlordism the politics and the people in Malabar were also influenced by Gandhian nationalism during this period. In a recent and in-depth study of the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920-22, David Hardiman explains certain characteristic features of this movement. We can locate most of these also in the politics of Malabar during 1920 and 1922. For Hardiman, peasant awakening and the anti-land lord struggles were notable features of the Non-Cooperation Movement.¹⁹⁷ K. Madhavan Nair writes that although the tenancy movement had begun a long time ago in Malabar, it gained strength just a year before the outbreak of the rebellion of 1921.¹⁹⁸ After the Manjeri Conference in April 1920, the *Kudiyan Sangham* was formed in Kozhikode by the attempts of K. P. Raman Menon and some others. K. V Gopala Menon, P. K Kunhirama Menon and C. K. Nair were its secretaries. This organization formed local *kudiyan sanghams* in Malabar and organized the conferences and meetings of the tenants. The *Kudiyan Sangham* gained popular support after its leadership was taken over by M. P.

¹⁹⁵ C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*

¹⁹⁶ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

¹⁹⁷ David Hardiman, *Non Cooperation in India: Non-Violent Strategy and Protest, 1920-22*, New Delhi, 2021, pp.65-108.

¹⁹⁸ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p .91.

Narayana Menon, a young Congress leader who abandoned his legal practice and became a full-time politician.¹⁹⁹

It was not easy for the Congress leaders of Malabar who were lawyers to gain the support and trust of the Mappila tenants. Because the lawyers were the people whom the Mappila tenants hated the most as they were helping the *janmi* landlords to evict the Mappila *kudiyans*.²⁰⁰ At that time most of the Congress leaders, who were practising as lawyers appeared for the landlords against the tenants and they did so because the landlords could give them more fees. C. Sankaran Nair was the favourite and most trusted lawyer of the Zamindars of Madras.²⁰¹ However, at the same time, it was easy for a lawyer to establish ties with the Mappila tenants. Because the Mappila tenants always needed the service of a lawyer to handle their eviction cases. Variankunnath Kunhammad Haji had several civil cases related to his mother's properties. Thus, for these cases, Haji came into contact with Congress leaders, who were also lawyers.²⁰²

M. P. Narayana Menon hailed from Angadippuarm became secretary of the Eranad Taluk Congress Committee in 1919. He was a lawyer at Perinthalmanna Court. He gained the trust and support of the Mappila tenants by taking up their cases and appearing for them against the *janmis* in the cases. When other young Congress leaders preferred to practice at the District Court and settled in Kozhikode Town for this purpose, and made Kozhikode Town, the centre of activities, Narayana Menon lived at Perinthalmanna and his activities were concentrated in the villages of Eranad-Valluvanad Taluks.²⁰³ When other Congress leaders sided with the *janmis* in the disputes between the *janmis* and *kudiyans*, Narayana Menon sided with the *kudiyans* people. At Kodoor, there was a dispute between Paruthikkunnam Pokker, a *kanakkudiyans* of Arakkal Kuttimalu Amma and the *verumpattakudiyans* of his land. In the dispute, K. Madhavan Nair supported Pokker and the Muslim religious leaders issued a *fatwa* supporting him. However, Narayana Menon and Kattilasseri

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.

²⁰⁰ Cornard Wood, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-128.

²⁰¹ D. A. Washbrook, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

²⁰² K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, Shaheed Variankunnath Kunhammad Haji, Kozhikode, 2021(1992), p. 38.

²⁰³ M. P. S. Menon, *Op. cit.*

Muhamamad Musliar stood firm behind the *verumpattakkudiyans*. At last, Narayana Menon and Kattilassri Musliar succeeded in settling the dispute in favour of the tenants. M. P Narayana Menon, who was an upper caste Hindu was trustworthy for the Mappilas as he maintained many Mappila friends and dined with the Mappilas. Thus, they became members of the *kudiyang sanghams* under the leadership of Narayana Menon.²⁰⁴

David Hardiman identifies three types of leadership for the Non-Co-operation Movement. The overall leadership of the movement was provided by Gandhi. The leaders like Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, M. M Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, Rajendra Prasad, Chittaranjan Das, Vithalbhai Patel, Vallabhai Patel, C. Rajagopalachari, and Konda Venkatappayya were the second type of leaders.²⁰⁵ The third type was the local level leaders which according to Hardiman, "a wide range of local activists with varying degrees of adherence to the Congress and *Khilafat* hierarchies."²⁰⁶ Many notable Congress leaders in Keralam like K. Kelappan, T. R Krishnaswami Iyer, A. K. Pillai, Moyarath Sankaran, Kurur Neelakantan Nambodiripad, K. Madhava Menon, T. V Chathukutti Nair, C. H Govindan Nambiar, and V. M Vishnu Bharatheeyan entered the National Movement by the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement. The leaders like K. Madhavan Nair, K. P. Kesava Menon, P. Achuthan, and George Joseph, who were active in the Home Rule League also came to the leadership of Gandhian politics during this period.²⁰⁷ All these leaders belonged to the middle class.

The most significant political change during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement was the entry of the Mappila Muslims to the National Movement in Malabar. As the Mappilas were a dominant section of the population of Malabar their backup was

²⁰⁴ A. K. Kodoor, *Anglo Mappila Yudham 1921*, Malappuram, 2020(1999), p. 332.

²⁰⁵ David Hardiman, *Non Cooperation in India: Non-Violent Strategy and Protest, 1920-22*, pp. 234-248.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 241.

²⁰⁷ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 50. George Joseph (1887-1938), a well known Christian Nationalist leader from Keralam was not a native of Malabar. He was born at Chengannur, which was part of Tiruvitamkur. He studied in London and became an eminent barrister. George Joseph began his legal practice in Madras and later shifted the practice to Madurai. He was very active in the Home Rule League led by Annie Besant. However, later he became an ardent follower and close associate of Gandhi by actively participating in the Non-Co-operation Movement. He was the editor of the *Independent* and *Young India*. He was a leader of the Vaikom *Satyagraha* and was arrested and imprisoned in relation to that. George Ghevarghse Joseph, *George Joseph: The Life and Times of a Kerala Christian Nationalist*, New Delhi, 2003.

inevitable to strengthen the popular base of the National Movement. It is noteworthy that it was the *Khilafat* Movement that brought even Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the most prominent nationalist Muslim leader of Malabar to the nationalist politics. Following the instruction of Maulana Muhammad Ali, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who was studying at the Jamia Milia, Aligarh, came to Malabar by abandoning his studies in 1921.²⁰⁸ Moidu Maulavi recounts an interesting incident about Muhammad Abdu Rahman. During the Home Rule Agitation, Abdu Rahman was studying at the Basel Mission School, Kozhikode. At that time, a political meeting under the presidentship of K. Madhavan Nair was held at the lodge college students. When the meeting was attended by most of the college students in Kozhikode, Abdu Rahman stayed aloof from the meeting. E. Moidu Maulavi also began his political career during the *Khilafat* Movement. Moidu Maulavi, hailed from Marancheri in Ponnani *Taluk* made Kozhikode Town as the center of his activities.²⁰⁹

The Mappila Muslim leaders of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement were of two types. The first category was the leaders in Kozhikode Town. Ponmadath Moideen Koya, T. Hasan Koya Molla, Melekkandi Moidu, P. S. Bappan Koya Haji, Puthiyakath Kadikkoya, Morppalaveettil Abdulla Koya, and P. S. Bappan Koya Haji were the leaders of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement from Kozhikode Town. Kozhikode Town was also the center of activities of Muhammad Abdu Rahman and some Mappila youth, who were his followers.²¹⁰ Most of the Mappila leaders in Kozhikode Town were traders. Mushirul Hasan in a study on life in colonial Awadh, argues that “if Islam cements the *Qasba* structure pluralism and syncretism were the bricks it built” and “strident expression of orthodoxies in the *Qasabs* were relatively minimal.”²¹¹ Likewise, Kozhikode Town in its entire history was free from communal tensions and known for its secular character. Thus, the nationalist politics in Kozhikode Town from its beginning maintained a secular character. This helped Muhammad Abdu Rahman to emerge as the most prominent leader of the Mappila Muslims of Kozhikode Town. Not only in Kozhikode Town but in other important towns like Thalassery, many

²⁰⁸ E. Moidu Maulavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 3&14.

²⁰⁹ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, Kottayam, 1981, pp. 7&19.

²¹⁰ P. P. Ummer Koya, *op. cit.*

²¹¹ Mushirul Hasan, *From Pluralism to Separatism: Qasabs in Colonial Awadh*, New Delhi, 2007, p. 24.

prominent Mappilas were in the leadership of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement. In Thalassery, V. C Mayin, Upipi Sahib, Cheriya Alippi Keyi, Kunhimayin Haji were the leaders of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement.²¹²

The nature of the Mappila leadership in the rebellion areas was different from that of the towns. Because, many of the leaders of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation campaign in Eranad-Valluvand *Taluks* were *musliars* or *maulavis* taught at mosques. Ali Musliar, K. M. Maulavi, Kattilasserri Muhammad Musliar, Madambatt Avarankutti Musliar, A. N. Pareekkutti Musliar, Karadan Moideen, Pangil Amhamedkutti Musliar, Palakkathodi Abubaker Musliar were examples of this type of leadership. But not all the leaders of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement in the rebellion areas were religious leaders. For instance, Vadakke Veetil Mammad, the secretary of the Khilafat Committee in Pookottur was a *kariasthan* and a *kudiyar* of Nilambur *Kovilagam*.²¹³ Kunhi Kadir, a *Khilafat* leader from Tanur was a big grain trader in Tanur Town.²¹⁴ K. P. Kunhi Pokker Haji, the leader of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement in Tirurangadi was a cloth merchant.²¹⁵ The influence of religion was strong and noticeable among the leaders in the rebellion areas.

Gandhi was a leader who realized that a political movement needed the backup of sufficient funding and a strong financial foundation. Thus, mass fundraising campaigns were part of the Gandhian nationalist movement. A factor that made the financial foundation of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement in Malabar was that most of its leaders were well-known traders in Kozhikode Town. T. Hasan Koya Molla was the treasurer of the District Khilafat Committee in Malabar, of which Muhammad Abdu Rahman was the secretary and Kattilasserri Muhammad Musliar the president.²¹⁶ Hasan Koya Molla was a well-known trader in Kozhikode Town. He was one of the partners and the co-founder of C. A. Kunhimoosa Company, the first Swadeshi

²¹² Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 70-71.

²¹³ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, K. M. Maulavi, Kozhikode, 2005(1985); *Malabar Kalapam 1921: Smaranaklum Padanangalum*, Tirurangadi, 2015; A. K. Kodoor, , *Op. cit.* In a recent study, Sivadasan. P highlights the remarkable role played by Tanur village and Tanur Kunhi Kadir in the Malabar rebellion. Sivadasan. P, 'Nationalism and the Politicization of Rural Spaces: Reading Tanur and Kunhi Kadir in the Malabar Rebellion', *Proceedings of the South Indian Congress*, 2020.

²¹⁴ P. A. Salam(ed.), *Charithram Thilakkunna Pookkottur*, Pookkottur, 2019, p. 129.

²¹⁵ *Malabar Kalapam 1921: Smaranaklum Padanangalum*.

²¹⁶ S. K. Pottekatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, Kozhikode, 1978, p. 44.

company in Malabar started in 1905. This company was focused on the sale of hill products. Molla was also a partner of a transport company that ran a bus service.²¹⁷ Melekkandi Moidu was another trader in Kozhikode Town, who funded the *Khilafat-Non-Co-operation Movement*. Moidu was a native of Thalassery, who came to Kozhikode for business purposes. He became a well-known and wealthy trader by the stationery business started at Valiyangadi. Moidu was the owner of an importing agency dealing with the sale of matchboxes, soap, and cigarettes and consequently, he came to be known as *Theppettikkaran Moidu* (Match Box dealer Moidu).²¹⁸

The mass fundraising for political purposes began in Malabar during the *Khilafat-Non-Co-operation Movement*. Landlords, local rulers, and traders contributed to the *Tilak Swarajya Fund*. Due to the delay in the distribution of the receipt books, the collection to *Swarajya Fund* began a little late in Malabar. In Kurumbranad *Taluk*, Valiya Raja of Kadathanad *Kovilagam* had offered Rs.1, 000, the Raja of Purameri Kovilagam Rs.500 and, E. K Sankara Varma Raja Rs.250 to the *Swarajya Fund*.²¹⁹ The capitalists in Kannur like Samuel Aron, M. Dasappa Kammath, Jamna Das Seth, and Purushotham Gokal Das contributed huge sums to the *Swarajya Fund* and financially supported the Non-Co-operation Movement.²²⁰ Madhavan Nair writes that within days after the fund collection began, the people of Malabar contributed about Rs.20, 000 to the *Swarajya Fund*.²²¹

To achieve political cooperation between the Hindus and Muslims was the main goal of the National Movement since its beginning. For Gail Minault, the Hindu-Muslim harmony was “widespread, remarkable, surprising to the government and even Indian political leaders.”²²² In Malabar, before the rebellion, the Hindu-Muslim unity and political cooperation were remarkable and strong. The local people called the Hindu non-cooperators of that time too as *Khilafathukar*(Khilafatists).²²³ During the *Khilafat-*

²¹⁷ P. P. Ummer Koya, *op. cit.*, pp.6-7.

²¹⁸ P. P. Mammad Koya Parappil, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

²¹⁹ ‘Letter from C. H. Govindan Nambiar to Moyarath Sankaran, dated 26.11.1946, Appendix IV, in Kaviyoor Rajagopalan, *Moyarath Sankaran*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1986, p. 143.

²²⁰ Samuel Aron, *Op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

²²¹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

²²² Gail Minault, *The Khilfat Movement; Religious Symbolism and Mobilization in India*, Delhi, 1982, p. 170.

²²³ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 72.

Non-Co-operation Movement Non-Muslim leaders were also permitted to speak in mosques. The remarks in the speeches of M. P. Narayana Menon delivered at Odompatta and Pandikkad mosques were cited as evidence against him in the judgment.²²⁴ Moyarath Sankaran and a few other Hindu Congress leaders along with E. Modu Maulavi spoke in the mosques in different parts of Kurumbranad *Taluk* like Nadapuram, Kuttiadi, and Payyoli. When Moidu Maulavi stressed the importance of non-violence in his speeches others reiterated the inevitability of the Hindu-Muslim unity.²²⁵ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, who began his political career as the secretary of the *Khilafat* Committee in Kunhimangalam remembers: "I was very close to the Muslims. I was among them most of the time and stayed in their houses. At that time, eighty per cent of my friends were Muslims."²²⁶ It is noteworthy that Vishnu Bharatheeyan belonged to the *Nambeesan* community, a temple caste.

C. A. Bayly in a case study of the Allahabad district, has pointed out that the establishment of the *Khilafat* Congress committees in district towns and large villages was a main feature of the Non-cooperation Movement, and for this *Khilafat* Committee agents held campaigns in the countryside and country towns in the Eastern United Provinces.²²⁷ According to a report published by K. P. Kesava Menon, there were 18, 007 Congress members and 189 Congress Committees in Malabar in June 1921. There was a *Khilafat* committee in every Mappila area and the number of *Khilafat* Committees in Eranad and Ponnani *Taluks* only was about 100. By August 1921, the number of the Congress committees rose to 230.²²⁸ These committees were established by the *Khilafat*-Congress volunteers, who travelled through the villages of Malabar. The volunteers deputed by the K. P. C. C undertook activities like the establishment of primary Congress committees, enrolling members in the Congress, collection of funds, and the propagation of *charkha* and *khadi*. British officials such as R. H. Hitchcock regarded the *Khilafat*-Congress volunteers, who established *Khilafat*-

²²⁴ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

²²⁵ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 75-76.

²²⁶ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

²²⁷ C. A. Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics, Allahabad, 1880-1920*, London, 1975, p. 255.

²²⁸ C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

Congress Committees by travelling through the villages as 'itinerant preachers' and their activities as 'itinerant preaching'.²²⁹

The idea of preaching was not new to the Mappila religious leaders as preaching was a part of Islam. Thus, it was natural for the government officials to feel similarities in deputing Congress volunteers to the villages to spread the ideology of the Congress and deputing preachers to spread religion in different regions. Special training was given by the K. P. C. C. to the Congress workers who were selected to work as volunteers in villages. The Congress workers, who had completed volunteer training were deputed not in their villages or even in their *taluks*. The K. P. C. C deputed Moyarath Sankaran, C. H Govindan Nambiar, and Gopalakrishna Kurup in Vadakara to spread the activities of the Congress in the villages of Kurmbranad *Taluk*. At the same time, K. Kelappan a native of Kurumbranad *Taluk* was sent to Ponnani with K. V Balakrishna Menon. Most of the *Khilafat*-Congress Committees in Eranad and Valluvand *Taluks* were established by M. P. Narayana Menon and Kattilasseril Muhammad Musliar.²³⁰ In Chirakkal *Taluk*, the campaign to establish Congress committees was led by S. Chidamabara Nath, a lawyer from Madurai and an Arya Samajist. He had also served as the secretary of the Chirakkal Taluk Congress Committee.²³¹ Apart from the *Khilafat*-Congress volunteers, the *Khilafat* leaders, who were also Muslim religious leaders played a remarkable role in the spread of the ideology of non-co-operation to the villages of Malabar.²³² K. Koyatti Maulavi uses the Malayalam words *pracharakar* and *pracharavela* to denote the volunteers tasked with the *Khilafat*-Congress campaign and their activities. According to Koyatti Maulavi, Chekku Molla from Kondotti was an important *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation campaigner.²³³ K. M. Mauvali led the campaign to establish *Khilafat*-Congress

²²⁹ R. H. Hitchcock, *Peasant Revolt in Malabar: A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921* by R. H. Hitchcock, New Delhi, 1983(1925), p. 20.

²³⁰ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 75-76.

²³¹ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

²³² Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 81; K. K. Govindan Master, *Swathanthrya Samara Senani C. H. Govindan Nambiar*, Kozhikode, 2012, pp. 21-22.

²³³ K. Koyatti Maulavi, *1921 Malabar Lahala*, Kozhikode, 2021, pp. 22-23.

committees by travelling through Eranad, Valluvanad, Ponnani, and Kozhikode Taluks.²³⁴

The main techniques of agitation of the Non-Co-operation campaign such as boycotts, picketing, processions and demonstrations, public meetings, and Swadeshi were also used in Malabar. Most of the methods of agitation proposed by Gandhi during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement had been used during the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal in 1905. The birth of the idea of 'passive resistance' and its two main forms, boycott and Swadeshi were during the Swadeshi Movement. This fact is pointed out by David Hardiman in his study on the non-violent agitations in India before the Non-Co-operation Movement and Sumit Sarkar in his in-depth study of the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal during 1903-1908. For Sumit Sarkar, boycotts, swadeshi, picketing, and the propagation of national education were important forms of protest during the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal.²³⁵ However, as Malabar was not part of the Swadeshi agitation, the first use of these forms of protest in Malabar was during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation campaign. The boycott of courts, educational institutions, and legislatures was an important form of protest during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement. A. K. Pillai and K. P. Kesava Menon give a list of lawyers who gave up their legal practice and the students who abandoned their studies as part of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement. The lawyers who gave up their legal practice included K. P. Kesava Menon, K. Madhavan Nair, U. Gopala Menon, P. Achuthan, Ambalakkattu Karunakara Menon, K. V. Gopala Menon, S. Chidamabra Nath, K. Kesavan Nair, T. V. Sundara Iyer, T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer, M. P. Narayana Menon, V. U. Govindan Nair, and P. Ramunni Menon. K. Kelappan, A. K. Pillai, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, K. P. Appa Nair, T. V. Chathukutti Nair, R. V. Sharma, Manikyath Gopala Menon, K. V. Gopala Menon, S. K. Kombrobail, Kurur Nilakantan

²³⁴ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *K. M. Maulavi*, p. 52.

²³⁵ David Hardiman, *The Non-Violent Struggle for Indian Freedom, 1905-19s*; Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908*. P. Sivadasan argues that there was a reflection of the Swadeshi Movement in Keralam. It became visible in schools, colleges and urban spaces. Many national schools and local industries appeared in Malabar during this period. P. Sivadasan, 'The Swadeshi Movement and Mass Nationalism in Kerala 1905-1910: An Inquiry', *The Proceedings of the South Indian Congress*, 2008.

Namboodiripad, and Moothedath Narayana Menon abandoned their studies to take part in the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement.²³⁶

There are different opinions about the first Congress leader who suspended his legal practice as part of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation campaign. In the early phase of the movement, the Congress leaders in Malabar, who were also lawyers were reluctant to give up their legal practice. Gandhi and Shaukat Ali, who visited Kozhikode in August 1920, called upon the lawyers to suspend their practice and boycott courts. However, no Congress leader was willing to suspend their practice following this. According to Madhavan Nair, he suspended his legal practice in January 1921 and soon, U. Gopala Menon also suspended his practice.²³⁷ However, A. K. Pillai says that the first Congress leader, who suspended his legal practice as part of the Non-Co-operation Movement was K. P. Kesava Menon.²³⁸ K. P. Kesava Menon, who was practicing in Madras came to Kozhikode abandoning his practice following the arrest of Yakub Hasan, K. Madhavan Nair, Gopala Menon, and Moideen Koya on 16 February 1921.²³⁹ R. H. Hitchcock wrote that on the day of the arrests of these leaders “Mullasserri Gopala Menon, a well-known *vakil*, proclaimed on maidan and the beach that he and others would suspend their practice till the swaraj was attained.”²⁴⁰ By expressing support to the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement, K. P. Raman Menon withdrew his nomination submitted for the Legislative Council elections.²⁴¹

Picketing, a Gandhian method of protest, which was widely used during the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930 was first used in Malabar during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation campaign. Picketing was mainly focused on liquor shops. There are detailed descriptions of the liquor shop picketing during the Non-Co-operation Movement in Moyarath Sankaran’s autobiography. Moyarath Sankaran, who was very active in the liquor shop picketing and showed a special skill in picketing came to be known as a ‘picketing hero.’²⁴² Usually, the number of picketers was less than five. The

²³⁶ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 78-79; A. K. Pillai, , *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

²³⁷ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

²³⁸ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

²³⁹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 76-77.

²⁴⁰ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*

²⁴¹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*

²⁴² Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 84.

picketing of liquor shops was organized at Thikkodi, Thalassery, and Kozhikode. However, mass picketing of liquor shops with more picketers was held in Kozhikode Town. In a notable incident, a group of about 40 Congressmen started a *jatha* from the Congress Office, Kozhikode, and picketed a liquor shop in Kozhikode Town. The members of the *jatha* included important Congress leaders like K. Kelappan, P. Achuthan, M. P. Narayana Menon, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, E. Moidu Maulavi, and Kozhippurath Madhava Menon. The volunteers picketed the liquor shops by splitting into batches of four people. The picketing gravely provoked the District Government. Consequently, Rule 144 was declared in Kozhikode Town. The government also ordered P. Achuthan to leave Kozhikode in 12 hours and not to return until further order.²⁴³

Processions, protest marches, and public meetings became common in the agitations during this period. These methods of agitation were introduced in Malabar during the Home Rule Movement. During the Home Rule Movement, public meetings and *jathas* in the countryside were very rare. Because the Home Rule Movement didn't have the popular support to organize massive public meetings and big *jathas* in the villages. During the Non-Co-operation, massive public meetings held in villages instead of conferences with a limited number of delegates held in cities became common in Malabar. The Congress leaders such as K. P. Kesava Menon, K. Madahavan Nair, Moyarath Sankaran, Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, and E. Moidu Maulavi share their experiences of holding public meetings and speaking in them. These public meetings helped the Congress led-National Movement to spread to the villages of Malabar. The public meetings held in villages in connection with issues of national importance and the speeches delivered there created nationalist feeling among the rural people. On 1 August 1921, a public meeting to observe the first death anniversary of Bal Gangadhar Tilak was held at the yard of Puthanalkkal Kavu Bhagawati Temple. The meeting was organized by Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, the president of the local Congress Committee, and T. Kesavan Nair,

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-86.

the secretary of the local Congress Committee. Though the meeting was held at the yard of the local temple Mappilas also participated in the meeting.²⁴⁴

The local Congress leaders became familiar among the people as the speakers in these public meetings, which was also beneficial for them in their later political life. Moidu Maulavi, a native of Ponnani along with a few other fellow activists came to Kozhikode to invite U. Gopala Menon to a *Khilafat* meeting that was decided to be held at Ponnani. While Moidu Maulavi was in Kozhikode, some *Khilafat*-Congress volunteers in Kozhikode invited Maulavi to speak in a public meeting held at Kuttichira. Moidu Maulavi's speech in the public meeting at Kuttichira was good and appreciated by the audience. Following this incident, the *Khilafat*-Congress workers in Kozhikode asked Maulavi to work in Kozhikode Town. Consequently, Moidu Maulavi decided to settle in Kozhikode and to make Kozhikode Town as the center of his activities.²⁴⁵ Congress leaders took public meetings as occasions to make anti-British speeches and it became a powerful form of protest. Moyarath Sankaran delivered many speeches with strong anti-British remarks in the public meetings organized during this period.²⁴⁶ The vote of thanks of Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad in the public meeting held at the yard of Puthanalkkal Kavu Bhagawati Temple also contained strong anti-British remarks.²⁴⁷

The promotion and propagation of Swadeshi was another aspect of the boycott. The propagation of *khadi* and *charkha* was the main goal of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement. For Rahul Ramagundam, the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement gave new impetus to the *khadi* movement, and wearing *khaddar* and spinning and weaving *khadi* became part of the daily life of the people of India.²⁴⁸ It was during this period, that wearing *khadi* and spinning thread on the *charkha* became a habit of the Congress activists in Kerala. The leadership of the *khadi* movement was taken up by young Congressmen. The Mappilas also took part in the *khadi* movement. *Khaddar* dress became the identity of the Congressmen. Moyarath Sankaran recounts that

²⁴⁴ Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, *Khilafat Smarankal*, Kozhikode, 2015(1965), p. 31.

²⁴⁵ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, p. 19.

²⁴⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 78.

²⁴⁷ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*

²⁴⁸ Rahul Ramagundam, *Gandhi's Khadi: A History of Contention and Conciliation*, New Delhi, 2009, pp.66-99.

during the picketing of the liquor shop in Kozhikode Town, the Congress leaders had worn *khadi* dresses, and Gandhi caps and held *olakkuda*.²⁴⁹ *Charkhas* were distributed during the Khilafat-Non-Co-operation campaign.²⁵⁰ The *charkha* started to appear in houses. The youngsters showed great interest in spinning thread on the *charkha*.²⁵¹ Spinning thread on the *charkha* is an activity that needs proper training. Thus, a school was started attached to the K. P. C. C Office, Kozhikode to provide training to Congress volunteers. V. U Govindan Nair was the manager of the school. The Congress volunteers were provided training in spinning there. In the school, Madura Das Purushotham from Gujarat was entrusted to provide training to the volunteers in spinning.²⁵² An exhibition that showed spinning thread on the *charkha* was organized as part of the First All Kerala Provincial Conference held at Ottapalam in April 1921.²⁵³

Mappilas also began to wear *khaddar*. K. M. Maulavi actively took part in the boycott of foreign clothes and the propagation of *khadi*.²⁵⁴ Prominent Mappila leaders such as Ali Musliar used to wear *khaddar*. The official reports disclose that at that time Ali Musliar was wearing a garment of *khadi* cloth.²⁵⁵ Following the call by Gandhi and Shaukat Ali when they visited Kozhikode, Uruniyan Ahamad, a *Khilafat* leader from Tirurangadi boycotted mill cloth and began to wear *khadi*.²⁵⁶ There were many other Mappila leaders like Madampattu Muhmmad and E. Moidu Maulavi who used to wear *khaddar*.²⁵⁷ It was during this period the Gandhi cap became popular in Malabar. There is a study by K. Gopalankutty on how the Gandhi cap became a symbol of anti-colonial resistance.²⁵⁸ During this period, there were two types of caps that were popular among the non-co-operators in Malabar. They were the Gandhi cap representing Gandhian nationalism and the Turkish cap as the symbol of the *Khilafat*

²⁴⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 82&84.

²⁵⁰ 'Letter from C. H. Govindan Nambiar to Moyarath Sankaran', in Kaviyoor Rajagopalan, *op. cit.*

²⁵¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 90.

²⁵² K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, p. 80.

²⁵³ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

²⁵⁴ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *K. M. Maulavi*, p. 52.

²⁵⁵ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 249. The terms '*khadi* cloth' and 'Gandhi cloth' were used interchangeably in government records.

²⁵⁶ *Malabar Kalapam 1921: Smaranaklum Padanangalum*, p. 320.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 339; E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, p. 52.

²⁵⁸ K. Gopalankutty, *Konganpada, Onam, Thoppi: Charithrathile Adayalappeduthalukal*, Kottayam, pp. 49-60.

Movement. Ali Musliar used to wear a Turkish cap.²⁵⁹ Kunhalavi, a disciple and lieutenant of Ali Musliar also used to wear a Turkish cap.²⁶⁰ When Moidu Maulavi, who was arrested during the rebellion, was brought to the Special Sub jail, Kozhikode, he was wearing a *kalli mundu*, *khaddar* shirt, and a Gandhi cap.²⁶¹ The Turkish cap was a luxury item in Malabar. Unlike the Gandhi cap, the Turkish cap was not popular among the people of Malabar.²⁶²

When the *khadi* cloth and Gandhi cap became the symbols of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement, the government and the police began to obstruct the people from wearing them. As it was easy for the police to identify that the people who were wearing *khadi* dresses and Gandhi caps were non-co-operators, the police began to assault the *khadi* and Gandhi cap wearers. In an incident that occurred at Kozhikode Railway Station, a European Sergeant, who got angry by seeing the *khaddar* dress of K. Madahava Menon, slapped Menon on his face and tore off his clothes.²⁶³ According to a report published in *Deshabhaktan* in April 1921, in Tirur, a police inspector forcibly snatched the Gandhi cap of a Mappila. The report further said: "Perhaps there is no right for the people in this country to wear the cap they like."²⁶⁴ In Thalassery, the District Magistrate sentenced Narayana Maller, a Brahmin youth to a fine of Rs.30 for wearing a Gandhi cap. The boy courted imprisonment by refusing to pay the fine.²⁶⁵ In another incident that occurred near Feroke Bridge, a British soldier snatched the Gandhi cap of K. V. Gopala Menon and spat on it.²⁶⁶ Amu, the Deputy Superintendent of Police, and Khan Bahadur Chekkutti, a retired police inspector made attempts to obstruct the disciples of Ali Musliar from wearing Turkish caps. However, Ali Musliar instructed his disciples not to remove the cap.²⁶⁷

The open confrontation between the Gandhian Congressmen in Malabar and the colonial state and its agencies like the police also started during this period. The local

²⁵⁹ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*

²⁶⁰ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *K. M. Maulavi*, pp. 77&79.

²⁶¹ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*.

²⁶² V. M. Kutti, *Kanivum Ninavum*, Kozhikode, 2010, pp. 52-53.

²⁶³ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

²⁶⁴ *Deshabhaktan*, 21 April 1921, NNPR(April-June)1921, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²⁶⁵ *Muslim*, 4 May 1921, NNPR(April-June)1921.

²⁶⁶ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, pp. 41-42.

²⁶⁷ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-22.

Congress leaders had realized that linking the *kudiyam* problem with the National Movement would give strength to the Non-Co-operation Movement. Consequently, when the First All Kerala Provincial Conference organized by the newly formed Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee, which was held at Ottapalam under the presidentship of T. Prakasam towards the end of April 1921, a Tenants' Conference also was held along with it.²⁶⁸ The immense popular support gained by the *Khilafat* Non-Co-operation Movement alerted the District Government. To invite the people to the Tenants' Conference that was decided to be held at Ottapalam under the presidentship of K. P. Raman Menon, 10, 000 copies of notice were printed at George Press, Ottapalam, and distributed. The notice states that the participants of the conference had to pay a delegate fee that was not less than 8 anna.²⁶⁹ The District Government regarded the Tenants' Conference as an attempt to take tenants into the non-co-operator's camp. The government expressed fear about this and decided to print a leaflet in Malayalam, which had at least 3, 000 copies, to explain the government's position on the tenancy issue and circulate it throughout Malabar.²⁷⁰ The Congress leaders abandoned the moderate tone and began to make strong anti-British remarks in their speeches. The speeches of Congress leaders in the Ottapalam Conference contained strong anti-British remarks. K. P. Kesva Menon said: "How can 32 crores of Indians be willing to be the slaves of 1 lakh Englishmen? That can never be if all the various castes and creeds in India act jointly, the present kind of British Government will be shattered to pieces."²⁷¹ Paliyath Cheriya Kunjuni Achan expressed an opinion that "our salvation consists in non-cooperation with the government. Why should we depend upon foreign people for our salvation? Is it disgraceful we cannot but have *swaraj*. But what we obtained as a result of our prayers? The Rowlatt Act, the Press Act, and other repressive laws."²⁷²

The enormous strength the National Movement had gained by taking up the *Khilafat* problem and the grievances of the tenants gave confidence to the Congress leaders.

²⁶⁸ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

²⁶⁹ G. O. No.343, dated 10th July 1921, Madras Records-Law Department Files (1921-1955), Bundle No.1, Sl. No.7, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁷¹ *Manorama*, 29 April 1921, NNPR(April-June) 1921.

²⁷² *Ibid.*

The government started to view the Congress-led National Movement as a dangerous and strong opponent and began to adopt repressive measures. The first experience of receiving lathi blows and kicks with boots from the police was regarded as the most memorable and desired moment in a freedom fighter's life. Even Jawaharlal Nehru, who got the opportunity to serve imprisonment during the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement, had his first experience of lathi charges during the Simon Boycott Agitation in 1928. Chapter 25 of Nehru's autobiography narrating this experience is titled 'Lathi Charges.'²⁷³ However, a few of the Congress leaders in Malabar got the opportunity to experience the first lathi charges in their lives during the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement. According to Moidu Maulavi and Koyatti Maulavi, the First police lathi charge in Malabar took place on 16 February 1921. On that day, following the arrests of the leaders, the people gathered in Kozhikode Town were lathi-charged. Moidu Maulavi writes that some people lost their watches, rings, cash, and clothes and a few were minorly injured in the lathi charge.²⁷⁴ According to Koyatti Maulavi's version, the lathi charge took place at Kozhikode Beach.²⁷⁵

The police atrocities during the Ottapalam Conference was an incident that attracted wide public attention all over South India. South Indian newspapers reported the atrocities committed by the reserve police against the *Khilafat*-Congress volunteers at Ottapalam with great importance.²⁷⁶ The popular support of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement panicked the District Government. Moyarath Sankaran says that the 'the Ottapalam atrocities' were the result of a plan by the government to create an issue by provoking the Mappilas of Eranad and Valluvanad Taluk, who attended the Ottapalam Conference on a large scale.²⁷⁷ During the conference, the Malappuram Special Force was posted at Ottapalam. By 11 a. m. on 26 April 26, 1921, by leaving charge to the A. S. P, R. H. Hitchcock, the District Superintendent of Police left for Kozhikode from Ottapalam.²⁷⁸ The Ottapalam Conference had a huge public

²⁷³ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Op. cit.*, pp. 187-191.

²⁷⁴ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, p. 15.

²⁷⁵ K. Koyatti Maulavi, *Op. cit.*, p. 25. Both Moidu Maulavi and Koyatti Maulavi were eyewitnesses to the incidents during 1920-21.

²⁷⁶ NNPR(April-June) 1921.

²⁷⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 75.

²⁷⁸ G. O. No.424, Public Department, dated 4 July 1921, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

participation and was attended by more than 4, 000 people. On 26 April, by 9a. m. a Mappila came to the conference *pandal* and said that he was assaulted by the police. Meanwhile, some other people came to the *pandal* and informed that Chenkalath Madhava Menon, a *Khilafat* volunteer was beaten up by the police. To inquire about this, P. Ramunni Menon, the conference secretary, and Abdul Hamid Khan, the secretary of the Madras Khilafat Committee and another man went to Ottapalam Bazaar. Ramunni Menon was severely beaten by the police in the Bazaar. Menon was again attacked by the police on his way back to the conference *pandal*. A few local people were also assaulted by the police. Achuthan, a local trader in Ottapalam Bazaar, a local man known as Narayana Menon, and his brother Uniinkrishna Menon were also beaten by the police. As the local people and traders were assaulted by the police, in protest against this, the shops in Ottapalam Bazaar remained closed for three days.²⁷⁹

The death of Lala Lajpat Rai following the severe lathi charge against him during the anti-Simon demonstration in 1928 was an incident that triggered widespread protests and anti-British sentiment in India. The people of India believed that Lajpat Rai's death was due to the injuries caused by the lathi charge. This belief was genuine as Lajpat Rai, who was a heart patient was hit on his chest by the police.²⁸⁰ The Ottapalam incident when P. Ramunni Menon was severely beaten up by the police took place years before this incident. The severe beating he had to experience that day ruined the health of Ramunni Menon, who naturally had a thin body. Consequently, when Ramunni Menon passed away on 23 January 1931, at the age of 44, the public believed that his untimely death was the result of this incident.²⁸¹

Women were also the participants of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement. Unlike the Civil Disobedience Movement, they didn't take part in campaigns like picketing but they supported the Non-Co-operation Movement by making donations to the *Tilak Swarajya Fund*. Donating to the *Tilak Swarajya Fund* became a form of participation

²⁷⁹ This description is taken from a pamphlet written by KP. Kesava Menon and titled *Ottapalam Conferensum Poilce Athikramangalum*. G. O. No.491, Public Department, dated 3 August 1921, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

²⁸⁰ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Op. cit.*, pp. 183-185.

²⁸¹ V. R. Menon, *Mathrubhumiye Charithram*, Vol. I, Kozhikode, 1973, pp. 198-199.

for women. The women, who happened to hear the speeches at the Ottapalam Conference donated their rings, bangles, and chains to the *Tilak Swarajya Fund* during the conference.²⁸² C. Kunhikava Amma, who later became a notable Congress leader joined Congress along with her family during the Ottapalam Conference.²⁸³ During the *Khilafat-Non-Cooperation Movement*, T. P. Ammalu Amma, K. Kelappan's wife welcomed her husband, who returned home after serving one month of imprisonment, by donating her ring to the *Tilak Swarajya Fund*.²⁸⁴

The publication and circulation of political pamphlets with strong anti-British remarks became a form of protest during this period. A Study by Shukla Sanyal on the revolutionary pamphlets in colonial Bengal shows that the immense potential of political pamphlets to become the most powerful tool of anti-British propaganda induced the British Government to take the circulation of anti-British pamphlets as a matter of grave concern and adopt severe repressive measures against it.²⁸⁵ Samuel Aron recounts the role of two political pamphlets that generated nationalist feelings in him during the *Khilafat-Non-Cooperation Movement*. The first pamphlet that influenced Aron was titled *Maulana Muhammad Aliyude Madras Prasangam* (Maulana Muhammad Ali's Madras Speech). This pamphlet was the printed version of a speech delivered by Maulana Muhammad Ali in Madras. The price of the pamphlet was 6 anna. Muhammad Ali's speech in Madras had been translated into different languages. This was later banned by the government. Another pamphlet that influenced Aron was a pamphlet written by K. P. Kesava Menon titled *Ottapalam Conferensum Police Athikramangalum* (The Ottapalam Conference and Police Atrocities).²⁸⁶ This pamphlet was a detailed description of the police atrocities during the Ottapalam Conference and the enthusiasm created by the conference among the people. The Congress version of the Ottapalam incident was explained in the pamphlet. About 15, 000 copies of this pamphlet were printed at Vidya Vinodini Press, Thrissur. The pamphlet ends with the statement that "nothing like danger, insult,

²⁸² A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*

²⁸³ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*.

²⁸⁴ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

²⁸⁵ Shukla Sanyal, *Revolutionary Pamphlets, Propaganda, and Political Culture in Colonial Bengal*, Delhi, 2014.

²⁸⁶ Samuel Aron, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-106.

beating, imprisonment, Andaman Islands, and gallows will deter us from this holy struggle.”²⁸⁷ The author of the pamphlet raised an accusation that the Ottapalam atrocities were committed by the instigation and support of the District Superintendent of Police and the Deputy Superintendent of Police.²⁸⁸

By harshly criticizing the injustices committed by the British to Turkey and the *Khilafat*, E. Moidu Maulavi wrote an Arabi Malayalam pamphlet titled *To the Muslims of Kerala*. In this pamphlet, Maulavi asked the Mappilas to contribute to the *Tilak Swarajya Fund* as *sakkath* during the month of *Ramadan*. The copies of the pamphlet were forfeited by the government. E. Moidu Maulavi didn’t apologize to the government for publishing this pamphlet though Amu, the District Superintendent of Police personally asked him to do so.²⁸⁹ For writing and circulating this pamphlet Moidu Maulavi was prosecuted under sections 124 A and 153 A and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for two years and a fine of Rs.300.²⁹⁰ The circulation of anti-government pamphlets became a form of protest. The fact that these pamphlets were opposed, forfeited, or banned by the government increased the curiosity of the people and the circulation of the pamphlets. Consequently, there were many buyers for these pamphlets, who were even willing to purchase them by giving more than the price. Samuel Aron took the initiative to distribute these pamphlets. As a rich mill owner, he could purchase copies of the pamphlets in bulk.²⁹¹ T. Hasan Koya Molla was prosecuted and sentenced to imprisonment for two years for circulating Moidu Maulavi’s pamphlet.²⁹²

The National Movement in Malabar adopted Gandhian non-violence as its ideology during the *Khilafat-Non-Cooperation* Movement. Though there were grave provocations from the police and government, the non-co-operators in Malabar firmly upheld non-violence. While picketing liquor shops, the Congress volunteers were assaulted by the liquor shop owners and their men. However, they didn’t deviate from

²⁸⁷ G. O. No.491, Public Department, dated 3 August 1921.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁰ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, pp. 54-55.

²⁹¹ Samuel Aron, *op. cit.*, pp. 106-107.

²⁹² G. O. No.699, Public Department (Confdl.), dated 13th October 1921, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai; P. P. Ummer Koya, *Op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

non-violence even a little.²⁹³ Many Congress leaders in India were doubtful about that to what extent Indian Muslims could adopt and practice Gandhian non-violence. Francis Robinson has argued that by the middle of 1921, the *Ulama* began to feel a lack of trust in Gandhian non-violence.²⁹⁴ Due to the backdrop of the previous Mappila outbreaks, the local Congress leaders also were deeply sceptical about the ability of the Mappilas of Eranad and Valluvand *Taluks* to uphold Gandhian non-violence. However, before the rebellion, despite there being grave provocations from the government, the Mapilas firmly upheld the ideology of non-violence and showed a strong commitment to it. The studies by David Hardiman and Rajat Kanta Ray show that even before the Chauri Chaura incident in February 1922, there were many violent incidents and police firings occurred in India during the Non-Cooperation Movement. Thus, in many other regions of India, there were many incidents when even a small provocation from the government and the police instigated the people to react by using violence.²⁹⁵ While giving evidence before the special tribunal in a case, K. Madhavan Nair enumerated nine causes for the outbreak of the Malabar rebellion. Madhavan Nair mentioned a few other incidents before the Pookoottur incident including the Ottapapalam incident as instances of that the police and government made attempts to provoke the Mappilas and crush the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement.²⁹⁶ It is evident from the nationalist accounts of the Malabar rebellion that till August 1921, the Mappilas showed commitment to Gandhian non-violence.

3.8. Semiotics of the Constructive Phase

From 1922 to 1928, the years between the end of the rebellion and the Simon Boycott Movement, Malabar saw no agitations as part of the Indian National Movement. Thus, this phase of the National Movement in Malabar was regarded by A. K. Pillai as a period of 'depression in politics. 'For him, during these years, the activities of the Congress had been confined to Tiruvitamkur.²⁹⁷ The intervals between the Gandhian

²⁹³ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 80-86; P. K. K. Menon, *Op. cit.*

²⁹⁴ Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces*, Cambridge, 1974, pp. 330-333.

²⁹⁵ Rajat Kanta Ray, *Social Conflict and Political Unrest in Bengal, 1875-1927*, New Delhi, 1984, pp. 266-310; David Hardiman, *Non Cooperation in India*.

²⁹⁶ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp.66-67.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

mass movements were regarded as a stage of 'truce' or 'compromise' with the government. But these were the very active phases when the Gandhian constructive programmes. The significance of this phase is neglected due to the hesitation shown by historians to accept the efficiency of the constructive programmes. However, Bipan Chandra identifies such intervals between the Gandhian mass movements as 'breathing time'. Bipan Chandra considers the constructive phase as an important element of Gandhian strategy and argues that the capacity of the masses to suffer imprisonment, lathi charges, and repression was limited which got exhausted after some time. Thus, the constructive phase should be considered as a 'breathing time' and preparatory stage for another struggle.²⁹⁸ K. Gopalankutty has pointed out the significance of the period between the end of the Malabar rebellion in 1922 and the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930 in the National Movement in Malabar. Gopalankutty argues that although there were no notable popular agitations during this period, these years were important in the spread of nationalism in Malabar. Constructive programmes including *khadi* propagation, anti-liquor campaigns, Hindu-Muslim unity, and anti-untouchability campaigns were active in Malabar in this period.²⁹⁹ The constructive programmes were activities that could be carried out even during the absence of mass movements and parallel to mass movements. The period between 1920 and 1934 was the most active phase of the constructive programmes in Malabar and Gandhian nationalism had a predominance in the politics of this phase. The shaping of ideal rural Gandhians such as K. Kelappan, C. H Govindan Nambiar, and A. C. Kannan Nair took place during this period. A new category of politicians, who followed Gandhism in their lifestyle and politics and who were identified by the local people as 'Gandhians' was born in this period.

The constructive programmes as activities that could be carried out even during a situation when the launch of mass movements was impossible and parallel to mass movements had maintained an element of continuity throughout the Gandhian phase of the Indian National Movement. Tanika Sarkar, while explaining the case of Bengal says that the rural Gandhians who were active in the constructive programmes had

²⁹⁸ Bipan Chandra, *Indian National Movement: The Long Term-Dynamics*, New Delhi, 2013 (2008).

²⁹⁹ K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, pp. 35-37.

provided 'a thread of continuity between Non-Co-operation and Civil Disobedience in Bengal.'³⁰⁰ The constructive programmes which started in Malabar during the *Khilafat* Non-Co-operation Movement got wide acceptance and popular support during the period between 1920 and 1934, the years when Gandhian nationalism had a strong influence. Even while serving imprisonment in jail, by spinning thread on the *charkha* in jail, the Gandhian Congressmen could continue their participation in constructive programmes. As spinning on the *charkha* was an activity that could be done at home and wearing *khadi* was a private matter, the Congressmen could continue these activities every time and in every situation. During the Malabar rebellion, Moyarath Sankaran who was living in Vadakara spun *khadi* in the *charkha* and propagated its use. He ran a spinning school at his house at Adakka Theru, Vadakara by admitting school children.³⁰¹

There are many like Peter Gonsalves, Anthony Parel, and S. Balaram, who have pointed out that the Gandhian strategy had a semiotic aspect. In Peter Gonsalves's opinion, Gandhi was a communicator who communicated with people by verbal and non-verbal means. He further says that Gandhi's silence, fasting, clothing and physical presence were part of his 'rich variety of non-verbal symbolism that endeared him to the largely illiterate rural population that flowed to his open-air prayer meetings and conferences.'³⁰² For S. Balaram, the Gandhi cap, *khadi*, *charkha*, *Ram Dhun* Songs and prayers, Gandhi's white linen cloth, and his thin lean body were notable symbols in Gandhian semiotics.³⁰³ To Anthony Parel, "*khadi* together with spinning and spinning wheel was probably the most important Gandhian political symbol."³⁰⁴ Tanika Sarkar in her case study on the politics of Bengal to the late 1920s and early 1930s identifies rural Gandhians as an important group in Bengal politics at that time. She says that the rural Gandhians who worked making local *khadi* centres as the focal point of their

³⁰⁰ Tanika Sarkar, *Bengal, 1928-34: The Politics of Protest*, New Delhi, 1987, p. 26.

³⁰¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 124.

³⁰² Peter Gonsalves, *Clothing for Liberation: A Communication Analysis of Gandhi's Swadeshi Revolution*, New Delhi, 2010, p. 21.

³⁰³ S. Balaram, 'The Power of Representation: Krishna to Gandhi', *India International Centre Quarterly*, Vol. XXIII, no.2, 1996.

³⁰⁴ Anthony Parel, 'Symbolism in Gandhian Politics', *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. II, no.4, December, 1991.

activities initiated broad reconstruction schemes in rural Bengal.³⁰⁵ David Hardiman in his study on peasant nationalism in the Kheda district from 1917 to 1934, mentions the remarkable role played by Ravishankar Maharaj, a local Gandhian in the revival of the nationalist movement in Kheda district after the end of the Non-Co-operation Movement. He traveled on foot through the villages addressed the rural people and mobilized new communities such as *Baraiyas* and *Patanvadiyas* to the National Movement.³⁰⁶ Likewise, the role of K. Kelappan in the post-rebellion politics in Malabar should be analyzed in the same way. If it was Ravishankar Maharaj who became the first model of an ideal Gandhian for the rural population in the Kheda district, K. Kelappan by his life became the first model of an ideal Gandhian for the people of Malabar. Kelappan gave leadership to constructive programmes like *khadi* propagation and anti-untouchability campaigns in the villages of Malabar.³⁰⁷

The *Khaddar* dress became popular in Malabar during the period between 1920 and 1934. Wearing *khadi* and spinning on *charkha* was the most simple and easy way to become part of the National Movement. *Khaddar* dress became the identity of the Congressmen during this period. The government and the public started to identify those who wore *khaddar* as Congressmen. Wearing *khadi* also became a way for the Congressmen to declare their political identity. One of the most notable achievements of Gandhi was that he brought a total change in the lifestyle and dressing style of Indian politicians. The dressing style of the early Congressmen was an imitation of Western style which was often regarded as a 'parody of the English gentleman.' For Emma Tarlo, 'during the Non-Co-operation Movement the dark European and Semi-European suits worn by Indian politicians in the past had been completely replaced by loose white cotton garments such as *dhoti*, *kurta*, and *pyjama* cloths together with turbans and Gandhi caps and Gandhis' attempts for re-Indianisation was successful.'³⁰⁸ Dipesh Chakrabarti also writes about this change as 'khadi became the uniform of Indian political man.' He further says that "the white *khadi* symbolizes the Hindu idea of purity; its coarseness an identification with both simplicity and poverty; together

³⁰⁵ Tanika Sarkar, *Bengal, 1928-34: The Politics of Protest*.

³⁰⁶ David Hardiman, *Peasant Nationalists of Gujarat: Kheda District, 1917-1934*, Delhi, 1981, pp. 174-175.

³⁰⁷ C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, pp. 87-92.

³⁰⁸ Emma Tarlo, *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*, London, 1996, pp. 100-101.

they stand for the politician's capacity to renounce his material well-being to make sacrifices (*tyag*) in the public/national interest. *Khadi* indicates the person's capacity to serve the country."³⁰⁹

Many people became part of the Congress-led National Movement by wearing *khaddar* and spinning thread on the *charkha*. However, historians have been reluctant to give the same importance to constructive programmes as mass movements, and by this, they have committed a serious mistake by neglecting the role of constructive programmes in bringing the masses into the National Movement. Though the *khadi* dress was introduced in Malabar during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement, its availability was limited as *khadi* production had not started in Malabar. V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan says that at that time, getting *khaddar* clothes was very difficult but S. Chidamabara Nath arranged some *khaddar* clothes for them.³¹⁰ However, in the post-rebellion period, Payyannur in North Malabar and Sabari Ashram at Akathethara in Palakkad in South Malabar became the main centres of *khadi* production in South India. T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer, the founder of Sabari Ashram was also the secretary of Palakkad Taluk Congress Committee.³¹¹ There were facilities for dyeing and printing at Sabari Ashram. The *Khadi* clothes produced in the Ashram were sold even in faraway places. The students of the Ashram sold *khadi* clothes in the nearby areas. Krishna Swami Iyer started attempts to grow cotton at the Ashram and by seeking permission for this he wrote to Gandhi.³¹²

Payyannur, the major site of Salt *Satyagraha* in Malabar in 1930 had emerged as the main center of *khadi* production in Keralam during the post-rebellion period. When Sabari Ashram lost its importance as a main center of *khadi* production after the death of Krishnaswami Iyer, Payyannur retained its significance and remained as one of the main centers of *khadi* production in South India. The foundations of the *khadi* movement in Payyannur were laid by C. H. Govindan Nambiar, who hailed from Thalassery. Govindan Nambiar, who returned after attending the Kakinada Session of

³⁰⁹ Dipesh Chakrabarti, *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies*, Delhi, 2002, p. 52.

³¹⁰ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

³¹¹ C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, p. 92.

³¹² N. Gopalakrishnan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.

the Congress in 1923, came to Payyannur and started *khadi* propagation activities there.³¹³ There is a study by M. T. Narayanan on the *khadi* movement in Payyannur.³¹⁴ There were many factors that had helped Payyannur to emerge as the focal point of the *khadi* movement. Cotton had been growing in the eastern areas of Payyannur. C. H. Govindan Nambiar had promoted the cultivation of cotton in Payyannur. There were many weavers living at Kunhimanagalam, Vellur, Payyannur Theru, Perumba, Kavvayi, and Koyyonkara. Govindan Nambair aorganized them and distributed wooden *charkhas* to them.³¹⁵ At Taliparamaba, the attempts of *khadi* and *charkha* propagation were begun by N. Krishnan Nair, a *khadi* worker, who had acquired training at Sabarmati Ashram. There was a settlement of traditional weavers known as Chaliya Theru. *Pookoth thorthu* was very famous at that time.³¹⁶ C. H. Govindan Nambiar found wooden *charkhas* in a few houses in Payyannur. Unnamman Unnithiri, V. P. Sekhara Poduval, V. P. Sreekanta Poduval were the important leaders of the *khadi* movement in Payyannur.³¹⁷ By the attempt of Govindan Nambiar, Payyannur *khadi* was sold even in Tiruppur.³¹⁸ Payyannur became the main center of *khadi* workers in Keralam. *Khadi* workers from other places in Keralam were sent to work in Payyannur. After C. H. Govindan Nambiar, the *khadi* movement in Payyannur was led by N. P. Raghava Poduval, who was known as Raghvaji. Raghava Poduval, a native of Shornur stayed at Sabarmati Ashram for three years. S. V. Subramaniam, who hailed from Angadippuarm was a *khadi* worker in Payyannur.³¹⁹ Mookkappuzha Karthyayani Amma was an important woman leader of the *khadi* movement in Keralam. She selected Payyannur as the center of her *khadi* propagation activities in the post-Civil Disobedience period. Payyannur attracted her attention as the major center of *khadi*

³¹³ T. V. Gopalan, *Kerala Bardoli*, Payyannur, 2013, p. 42. C. H. Govindan Nambiar was the son of Moyarath Unni Nambiar, Moyarath Sankaran's uncle.

³¹⁴ M. T. Narayanan, 'Beyond Dressing the Politicians: Social Impact Khadi Movement', Sectional Presidential Address: Social History, South Indian Congress, XXIV Annual Session, 2014.

³¹⁵ K. K. Govindan Master, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

³¹⁶ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *Athyuthara Keralam Swathanthrya Samarathil*, Payyannur (date of publication not available), pp. 119-120.

³¹⁷ K. K. Govindan Master, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

³¹⁸ T. V. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

³¹⁹ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-22.

production in Keralam. She decided to work at Karivellur and another village, the adjacent villages of Payyannur.³²⁰

Spinning, propagation of *khadi* and *charkha*, wearing *khadi* and Gandhi cap were ways for many people to ensure their participation in the National Movement. The young Congressmen, who entered the National Movement through the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930-32 were part of the *khadi* movement long before that. For instance, the Congress leaders such as A. K. Gopalan, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, and K. Madhavan, who entered active Congress politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement were wearing *khaddar* in the mid-1920s. Before becoming an active Congress worker, A. K. Gopalan was a teacher at Peralasseri Board School. During his free time, he immersed himself in the activities of the Congress in villages like the anti-liquor campaign and the propagation of *khadi* and *charkha*.³²¹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad writes that his early activities related to the Congress were wearing *khadi*, learning Hindi, and reading *Mathrubhumi*.³²² Due to the influence of A. C. Kannann Nair, an ardent Gandhian who was also his close relative, K. Madhavan started wearing *khadi* when he was a boy.³²³

Many people who didn't take part directly in the freedom struggle by going to jail, participating in picketing, or suffering lathi charges became part of the National Movement by following a Gandhian way of living such as wearing *khadi*. The life of this kind of people was a source of inspiration for many others to join the National Movement. For instance, A. K. Sankaran Nambiar, A. K. Gopalan's elder brother was a teacher at Peralasseri Board School. He was a *khaddar* wearer from the early days. Sankaran Nambiar used to go to school by wearing a *khaddar* shirt and holding an *olakkuda*. His influence was an important factor that had drawn A. K. Gopalan to the Congress Movement.³²⁴

³²⁰ Mookkapuzha Karthyayani Amma, 'Niram Theliyunna Thaalukal', *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 20-26, November, 1983.

³²¹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015(1980), pp. 15-16.

³²² EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormmakurippukal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012(1987), p. 23.

³²³ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhian Communistinte Ormakal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014(1987), p. 32.

³²⁴ A. K. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

Apart from the production and use of *khadi*, its sale was an important aspect of the *khadi* movement. At that time, *khadi* workers used to sell *khadi* by going from home to home. During vacations, students took part in the house-to-house sale of *khadi* along with N. Krishnan Nair, a *khadi* worker from Taliparamba. C. H. Kunhappa, who was a student at that time recollects a memory of taking part in the house-to-house sale of *khadi* along with N. Krishnan Nair.³²⁵ The activities of the *khadi* workers engaged in the house-to-house *khadi* campaign brought many people to the *khadi* movement and encouraged many to wear *khaddar*. P. R. Kurup, a notable Socialist leader from Keralam recounts the incident that made him a *khaddar* wearer. In October 1933, P. Kunhiraman Nair, a lawyer from Thalassery, L. S. Prabhu, and T. V. N. Nair visited P. R. Kurup's house for *khadi* propagation. At that time, Kurup and his father used to wear coats. However, Kurup's father bought some *khadi* clothes from them. P. Kunhiraman gifted a Gandhi cap to Kurup. After this incident, Kurup became a *khadar* wearer and his dress was changed to *khadar mundu*.³²⁶ In the post-rebellion period, itinerant selling of *khadi* was an important activity of A. C. Kannan Nair.³²⁷ *khadi* depots were opened in Palakkad, Kozhikode, Kochi and Thrissur.³²⁸ In 1926, the first *khadi* shop, managed by K. V. Vellodi and Brothers, was inaugurated by Rajagopalachari in Kozhikode.³²⁹ For the promotion of *khadi*, advertisements were given in the *Mathrubhumi*. To open the maximum *Khadi* depots was a goal of the K. P. C. C.³³⁰

The people irrespective of their class, caste, gender, and age took part in the *khadi* movement. Women and children became part of the *khadi* movement by spinning thread on the *charkha*. Spinning was compulsory for the students at T. R. Krishna Swami Iyer's Sabari Ashram. The students of the Sabari Ashram gifted a piece of *khadi* cloth to Gandhi when he visited Keralam.³³¹ Activities like spinning thread on the *charkha* and *takli*, cotton ginning, and cotton wick making were compulsory for the

³²⁵ C. H. Kunhappa, *Smaranakal Mathram*, Thrissur, 2000(1981), p. 109.

³²⁶ P. R. Kurup, *Ente Nadinte Katha Enteyum*, Kottayam, 1985, pp. 35-38.

³²⁷ K. K. N. Kurup, A. C. Kannan Nair-Oru Padanam(*Dirikalioode*), Thiruvananthapuram, 2008(1985), p. 15.

³²⁸ C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, p. 93.

³²⁹ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

³³⁰ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp.68 &133.

³³¹ *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. XXXV(September 1927-January 1928), New Delhi, 1969, pp. 143-144.

students in the residential school opened by K. Kelappan for Dalit students at Pakkanarpuram near Payyoli.³³² Separate classes in spinning were given to students at *Vijnana Dayani School*, a national school started by A. C. Kannan Nair, Vidwan P. Kelu Nair, and A. C. Kannan Nair at Vellikkothu in 1926.³³³

Among the constructive programmes of Gandhi, the *khadi* movement was the most suitable one for the women of India. The studies by Madu Kishwar and Lisa Trivedi explain how the *khadi* movement helped the women to ensure their participation in the National Movement.³³⁴ As spinning on the *charkha* was an activity that could be done at home, even the women who didn't have a presence in the public sphere also took part in the *khadi* movement. Women have more skill and experience in spinning than men. G. Ramachandran describes the role of women in the emergence of Tiruppur in Tamil Nadu as the main center of *khadi* production in South India. He says that in the process of *khadi* production, the spinners were women and the weavers were men. Most of the women were widows or old women.³³⁵ N. Krishnan Nair organized the weavers in the Muslim families in Taliparamba and made them an important part of the *khadi* movement. For this, he established contacts with poor Muslim families and encouraged them to engage in spinning. Old Muslim women provided training for others in spinning.³³⁶

From the beginning of the *khadi* movement. Gracy Arnon, Samuel Aron's wife showed great interest in it. She took the initiative for activities like giving *charkha* and *takli* to women encouraging them to spin and bringing the yarn spun by the women to *khadi* centers.³³⁷ Spinning became the livelihood of many poor women. The *Khadi Noolpu Sangham* started by A. K. Sankaran Nambiar was a source of income for the students of poor families.³³⁸ Congress leaders encouraged the women of their families to spin

³³² M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-127. Kelappan started his residential school named as Shradhananda School at Nallambrakunnu near Payyoli. Later Nallambrakunnu was renamed by K. Kelappan as Pakkanarpuram.

³³³ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

³³⁴ Madhu Kishwar, 'Gandhi on Woman', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XX, no.41, 5 October, 1985; Lisa Trivedi, *Clothing Gandhi's Nation: Homespun and Modern India*, Bloomington, 2007.

³³⁵ G. Ramachandran, *Pinnitta Jeevithapatha*, Kottayam, 1985, pp. 170-172.

³³⁶ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *op. cit.* p. 119.

³³⁷ Samuel Aron, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

³³⁸ C. H. Kunhappa, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

thread on the *charkha*. A. C. Kannan Nair taught spinning to his wife.³³⁹ Karimadath Mammad Haji, a Mappila Congress leader arranged spinning in his house. During their free time, the women in the home of Karimadath Mammad Haji, used to spin thread on the *charkha*. Haji and his family members wore the dress made of yarn spun by themselves.³⁴⁰ After the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement, women became more active in the *khadi* movement. A. V. Kuttimalu Amma was the treasurer of *Khadi Pracharana Sangh* formed by a group of young ladies in Kozhikode³⁴¹. Mookkappuzha Karthyayni Amma was active in the *khadi* movement from 1929.³⁴²

By the *khadi* movement, Gandhi didn't mean that the same dress for all Indians. Religious, regional, and cultural differences are the essence of Indian dresses and dressing styles. According to Tarlo, Gandhi addressed these diversities in his *khadi* movement.³⁴³ When the North Indian leaders of the Congress wore dresses like *dhoti* and *kurta* of *khadi*, the dress of most of the Gandhian Congressmen in Keralam was *khaddar* shirt and *mundu*. In a study, Shahid Amin analyzes how the dress and dressing style of Indian Muslims are represented in the nationalist sphere.³⁴⁴ The colonial perception identified the Mappilas with a particular dress. Thus, when M. P. Narayana Menon wore a *lungi* and half-sleeve shirt, the British officials ridiculed it as *Mappila Vesham* (Mappila Dress).³⁴⁵ Muhammad Abdu Rahman wore *khadi* and promoted its use. He took the initiative to open *charkha* centers in various places like Pulikkal and Ramanattukra. Though Abdu Rahman was not an ardent Gandhian, the *khadi* movement attracted his attention because the spinning and weaving of *khadi* was the livelihood of many poor people. When a follower gifted a Yerwada *charkha* to Abdu Rahman, he gave it to a poor family of spinners.³⁴⁶ In a speech in September 1931, Abdu Rahman said: "Mahathmaji has gone to the round table conference. He may visit

³³⁹ K. K. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-12.

³⁴⁰ P. P. Ummer Koya, *op. cit.*, p.60.

³⁴¹ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 428-429.

³⁴² Mookkapuzha Karthyayani Amma, 'Niram Theliyunna Thaalukal', *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 6-12 November 1983.

³⁴³ Emma Tarlo, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

³⁴⁴ Shahid Amin, 'Representing Indian Mussalman: Then and Now and Now and Then', in Sahil Mayaram, M. S. S. Pandian and Ajay Sakharia(eds.), *Subaltern Studies XII: Muslims, Dalits and Fabrications of History*, Delhi, 2005, pp. 1-36.

³⁴⁵ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

³⁴⁶ M. Rasheed, *Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*, Kozhikode, 1998(1994), p. 33.

Lancashire. If that kindest man comes to know about the unemployment of the mill workers there, he may make some requests to us. If so, please don't wear foreign clothes."³⁴⁷ Many Mappila Congress leaders such as Hasan Koya Molla were *khaddar* wearers and ardent supporters of Swadeshi.³⁴⁸ compared to other programmes in the constructive movement, it was easy for the Mappilas to take part in the *khadi* movement.

Lisa Trivedi has pointed out that "spinning thread and weaving *khadi* produced fictive kinship between people who had never and would never meet."³⁴⁹ The *khadi* dress created an emotional bond between the Congressmen by giving them a commonality.³⁵⁰ Though Gandhi was against the launch of popular agitations in the princely states of India, he had allowed the Congress activists to carry out constructive programmes also in the princely states. Thus, the constructive programmes were active in the princely states of Kochi and Tiruvitamkur.³⁵¹ Thus, by providing a common dressing style, the *khadi* cloth created a sense of unity among the Congress supporters all over Keralam.

Wearing *khadi* and Gandhi caps and spinning thread on the *charkha* were not small things but they were anti-colonial statements. The government took this matter seriously. Gyanendra Pandey writes that less centralized and less well-organized *khaddar bhandhars* and ashrams run by the nationalists played a notable role in establishing the Congress and spreading the Gandhian constructive programmes to small towns and villages.³⁵² This factor prompted the government to put these institutions under strict surveillance. Samuel Aron recounts that the police suspiciously watched the activities of the Congress activists, who took the initiative for *khadi* propagation, organizing *charkha* classes, and spinning and often made attempts to obstruct them from these activities.³⁵³ Appearing in public spaces and government offices by wearing *khadi* clothes was regarded as an offense by the government.

³⁴⁷ V. S. Keralleyan, *Keralathinte Veera Puthran*, Thrissur, 2013(1959), p. 160.

³⁴⁸ P. P. Ummer Koya, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.

³⁴⁹ Lisa Trivedi, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

³⁵⁰ Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

³⁵¹ K. Damodaran and C. Narayana Pillai, *Op. cit.*, p. 23; P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 425-426.

³⁵² Gyanendra Pandey, *Ascendancy of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh*, London, 2002, p. 52.

³⁵³ Samuel Aron, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-26.

Kallanmarthodi Ramunni Menon, a nationalist poet who was a teacher at Koduvayoor Government High School was scolded by the District Educational Officer for wearing *khaddar*. Following this incident, Ramunni Menon resigned from his job and joined the National Movement.³⁵⁴ Appearing in front of top government officials by wearing *khaddar* dress and Gandhi cap became a form of protest.³⁵⁵ *Charkha* was a symbol of anti-British resistance. While explaining the Tagore-Gandhi debate, Shiv Visvanathan writes: "Tagore realizes that the *charkha* is not just an artefact but also a spectacle or event. It is a boycott. It is production. Each part is an event, a symbol, and an instrument."³⁵⁶

Wearing *khaddar* and spinning on the *charkha* became ways to express adherence to the Gandhian Congress politics. It became a common belief that the Congressmen should wear *khaddar*. Thus, Samuel Aron admits that 'I am a Congressman, who doesn't wear *khaddar*.'³⁵⁷ According to Rahul Ramagundam, "khadi sought to divide Indians into two 'classes', those who believed and wore khadi and those who did not."³⁵⁸ There was a heated debate in a meeting of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee held in Kochi in September 1924 over the matter of considering spinning as mandatory for the Congress membership. The main issue was over an amendment proposed on a resolution moved by accepting the decision taken by the Ahmedabad session of the A. I. C. C regarding this. This amendment was that all the Congress members who failed to give 3, 000 feet of self-spun yarn and to convince the Khadi Board about this would be considered as resigned from their memberships in the Congress. When T. R. Krishna Swami Iyer and K. Kelappan supported the amendment K. P. Kesava Menon and P. Ramunni Menon opposed it. The amendment was put to vote and passed by a majority.³⁵⁹ Lisa Trivedi has pointed out the role of the Swadeshi exhibitions held as part of the Congress sessions and other big nationalist events in

³⁵⁴ M. Achuthan, *Swathanthrya Samaravum Malayala Sahithyavum*, Thrissur, 1994, p. 259.

³⁵⁵ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

³⁵⁶ Shiv Visvanathan, 'The Language of Khadi', *India International Quarterly*, Vol. XXXVIII, no.2, 2011. There is a study by Nikhil Menon on how the *charkha* became a symbol in post-independent India. Nikhil Menon, 'Gandhi's Spinning Wheel: Charkha and Its Regenerative Effects', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Vol. LXXXI, no.4, October, 2020.

³⁵⁷ Samuel Aron, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

³⁵⁸ Rahul Ramagundam, 'Khadi and Its Agency: Organizing Structures of Philanthropic Commerce', *Social Scientist*, Vol. XXXII, no.5/6, May-June, 2004.

³⁵⁹ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-123.

making the national symbols popular among the people.³⁶⁰ The main exhibits in the Swadeshi exhibitions were *khadi* products and *charkhas*.³⁶¹ Exhibitions like this were also held in Malabar.³⁶²

During this period, many people adopted Gandhian ideology in their public and private life. The diaries of A. C. Kannan Nair and Vidwan P. Kelu Nair refer to the changes brought by Gandhian ideology in their private life. Wearing *khadi* was part of this change. Dressing is a personal matter. It is noteworthy that *khadi* cloth was known for its coarseness. The *khadi* clothes at that time were rough as sacks. Because of this, the local washermen were reluctant to wash *khadi* clothes.³⁶³ The British loyalists ridiculed the *khadi* cloth by calling it a 'bed sheet.'³⁶⁴ *Khadi* symbolizes qualities like sacrifice and simplicity in personal life. For the people of the upper class and middle class, wearing rough *khadi* cloth instead of colourful and soft foreign clothes became a sacrifice. When he was a boy, K. Madhavan was thrashed by his father for expressing his desire to wear *khaddar*. Madhavan's father, who was a prominent landlord and a member of the reputable Echikkanam family, believed that if his son wore 'rough khadi cloth', it would be a disgrace to his family. A. C. Kannan Nair also belonged to the same Echikkanam family. He was a *khaddar* wearer. He bought *khadi* clothes for Madhavan.³⁶⁵ Apart from wearing *khadi*, things like a controlled diet with minimum food, using a palm leaf umbrella instead of a cloth umbrella, using mud pots instead of foreign-made pots, walking barefooted, and living in huts were part of the Gandhian way of life.³⁶⁶ Living in mud huts was also a part of the Gandhian lifestyle. C. H. Govindan Nambiar, who had come to Payyannur for *khadi* propagation lived in a small hut in the sandy land located North of Payyannur Bazaar.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁰ Lisa Trivedi, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-66.

³⁶¹ Rahul Ramagundam, *Gandhi's Khadi*, pp. 172-178.

³⁶² V. M. Vishnu Bhartheeyan, *Op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

³⁶³ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 143-144.

³⁶⁴ P. R. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

³⁶⁵ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

³⁶⁶ P. P. Ummer Koya, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.

³⁶⁷ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

From a particular point in his life, Gandhi decided to keep sexual abstinence and regarded celibacy as an 'important element of living and higher form of life.'³⁶⁸ Vidwan P. Kelu Nair wrote in his diary about his sincere attempts to keep sexual abstinence in his life and how he deviated from this due to the pressure of lust.³⁶⁹ Apart from the constructive programmes, activities such as the Congress membership campaign in villages and fundraising for the Congress were continued in the post-rebellion period. Many people supported the Congress-led National Movement by taking part in membership campaigns and fundraising. When he was a student, C. H. Kunhappa used to go to collect funds for the Congress with V. R. Nayanar and S. K. Kombrobail. They walked up to 10 to 20 miles a day for this purpose.³⁷⁰ Voluntary social service was part of Gandhian politics. On special days, the students and teachers of the Vellikkoth National School were involved in activities like the cleaning of Dalit houses.³⁷¹ The *Grama Seva Samithis* led by Gandhian Congressmen organized activities such as the building of roads in villages. P. Kunhiraman Nair, an eminent Malayalam poet took part in a road-building campaign organized by the *Grama Seva Samithi*. These activities were organized to spread the Gandhian message of social service to villages.³⁷²

The national symbols including the national flag were popularised during this period. The people started to accept the Tri-colour Congress flag as the symbol of their national feeling and developed an emotional bond with it. Gandhi adopted the Swaraj flag as a symbol of India's anti-colonial fight in 1921. Sadan Jha argues that one of the main elements of the flag is its symbolic meaning.³⁷³ The insult to the national flag is regarded by the people of a nation as an insult to the nation. The acceptance of a particular flag as their national flag by the people is always a psychological process. The Flag *Satyagraha* started in Nagpur of the Central Provinces played a notable role

³⁶⁸ Madhu Kishwar, 'Gandhi on Woman', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XX, no.41, 12 October, 1985.

³⁶⁹ E. P. Rajagopalan(ed.), *Jeevitha Nadakam Vidwan P. Kelu Nayarude Diarykurippukal*, Thrissur, 2008, pp. 78-79.

³⁷⁰ C. H. Kunhappa, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

³⁷¹ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

³⁷² P. Kunhiraman Nair, *Kaviyude Kalpadukal*, Kottayam, 2020(2006), p. 208.

³⁷³ Sadan Jha, *Reverence, Resistance, and Politics of Seeing the Indian National Flag*, New Delhi, 2016, p. 15.

in building an emotional bond between the people of India and the national flag.³⁷⁴ It was the first agitation during the freedom struggle that was organized related to the national flag. The Congress volunteers from different parts of India participated in the Flag *Satyagraha*. Venkata Rama Sharma, M. Kumaran, Kochunni Nair, G. Sreedharan, N. P. Kurukkal, Kulasekhara Perumal, K. Madhavan Nair and V. R. Subramania Iyer were Congress volunteers from Kerala who took part in the Nagpur Flag *Satyagraha* and courted arrest.³⁷⁵ The Congress-led National Movement succeeded in its attempt to popularize the *Swaraj* flag among the people of India even before it was officially adopted as the national flag. Arundhati Viramani has pointed out that by using it regularly in public meetings and demonstrations, the Irish Home Rule Movement had popularized the national flag of Ireland among the people even before it was officially adopted as the national flag.³⁷⁶ Likewise, the *Swaraj* flag was used in the public meetings and demonstrations organized by the Congress during the post-rebellion period. The local people called the Congress flag *desheeya kodi* and *swarajya kodi*. This flag was popularized in Malabar during the post-rebellion period.³⁷⁷ During the notorious lathi charges at Kozhikode Beach on 12 May 1930, the police attempted to snatch the national flag held by the *satyagrahis*. P. Krishna Pillai who held the flag didn't leave it though he was severely manhandled by the police. Krishna Pillai and R. V. Shrama were arrested during their attempt to protect the national flag.³⁷⁸ The emotional attachment to the national flag was not a feeling that took shape suddenly during the Civil Disobedience period. The people accepted the Congress flag as their national flag by seeing it regularly in public spaces and the post-rebellion period played a notable role in this.

The habit of keeping the photos of the national leaders became common during the post-rebellion period. The people got familiar with the photos of national leaders especially with the photos of Gandhi during this period. Buying and keeping the

³⁷⁴ Arundhati Viramani, 'National Symbols Under Colonial Domination: The Nationalisation of the Indian Flag, March-August 1923', *Past and Present*, no.164, August 1999.

³⁷⁵ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.

³⁷⁶ Arundhati Viramani, *op. cit.*

³⁷⁷ The terms *desheeya kodi* and *swarajya kodi* are used in the dairies of A. C . Kannan Nair to refer to the national flag. K. K. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*

³⁷⁸ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-259.

photos of national leaders including Gandhi and displaying them in public spaces and on the walls of houses became common during this period. When C. H Govindan Nambiar came to Payyannur, he had five photos of Gandhi and ten copies of *Mathrubhumi* in his hand.³⁷⁹ A. C Kannan Nair wrote in his diary that he bought a photo of Gandhi by giving 2 rupees and 10 anna and put it on the wall of his house.³⁸⁰ 2 rupees and 10 anna was a big amount at that time. Kannan Nair also wrote that he had bought the photos of C. R. Das, Vivekananda, Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa, Rabindranath Tagore, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Arabinda Ghose.³⁸¹ P. Kunhiraman Nair recounts that when he was a youngster, he left his home by stealing 200 rupees from his father's shelf and bought a *khadi* shirt, *mundum veshti*, trunk box, bed, chair and household items for this money.³⁸² The photos of the national leaders published in the *Mathrubhumi* also played an important role in popularizing the photos of national leaders.³⁸³ Processions carrying Gandhi's photos were held during this period.³⁸⁴

For Lisa Trivedi, one of the most notable contributions of the Indian National Congress was that they introduced a nationalist calendar that included national holidays and special days and popularized it.³⁸⁵ The practice of celebrating 2 October every year as the *Gandhi Jayanti* became regular during the post-rebellion period.³⁸⁶ The people started to memorize that the national week was starting from 6 April.³⁸⁷

Like the birthdays of national leaders, their dates of death were also memorized by the people. Observing the death anniversaries of national leaders became common in this period. Kelu Nair marked 27 September 1928 in his diary as the 95th death anniversary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy.³⁸⁸ Mourning after the death of a national leader was a way

³⁷⁹ K. K. Govindan Master, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

³⁸⁰ K. K. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

³⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

³⁸² PKunhiraman Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

³⁸³ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*

³⁸⁴ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

³⁸⁵ Lisa Trivedi, *op. cit.*, pp. 102-103.

³⁸⁶ E. P. Rajagopalan, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-48.

³⁸⁷ K. K. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

³⁸⁸ E. P. Rajagopalan, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

for the public to support the National Movement. Mourning often has a politics.³⁸⁹ The demises of C. R Das and Lala Lajpat Rai were two incidents that pained and shocked the people of India the most during the 1920s. C. R. Das passed away on 16 June 1925. By expressing grief on his death, many shops and private institutions in Kozhikode Town remained closed on 17 June. When the Municipal Office and the educational institutions in the Town functioned normally on that day, *Mathrubhumi* strongly condemned it.³⁹⁰ The condolence meetings held after the death of national leaders became the platforms for praising their contributions and sacrifices for the country. The demise of Lala Lajpat Rai not only created a feeling of grief among the public but also triggered protests as the people believed that his death was due to the lathi charges during the Simon Boycott Agitation. A. C Kannan Nair's dairies provide the details of the condolence meetings held after the death of Lajpat Rai.³⁹¹ The suicide of Vidwan P. Kelu Nair was an unexpected shock for his fellow Congress activists and the local people, who admired his poems and plays. P. Kunhiraman Nair recollects a memory that in a condolence meeting held after the death of Kelu Nair, he recited a heart touching poem by expressing grief on Kelu Nair's death.³⁹²

Attending the annual sessions of the Congress as delegates and visitors was a form of participation in the National Movement. Many people from Malabar had attended the annual sessions of the Congress held after 1922. Even the people, who were not active Congress workers showed interest in attending the Congress sessions. As significant events, the Madras and Calcutta sessions of the Congress held in 1927 and 1928 attracted wide public attention across India. Vidwan P. Kelu Nair wrote in his diary about the difficulties he had faced in arranging the money to go to Calcutta to attend the Congress session in 1928. He arranged the money for his journey to attend the Calcutta session by borrowing from his friends and relatives. Kelu Nair narrated his memories related to the journey to Calcutta and the Congress session in his diary.³⁹³ The train journeys to attend the Congress sessions were opportunities for the Congress activists from different regions of India to meet and interact together. There

³⁸⁹ For details see, David L. Eng and David Kazanjian(eds.), *The Politics of Mourning*, London, 2003.

³⁹⁰ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-142.

³⁹¹ K. K. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

³⁹² P. Kunhiraman Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

³⁹³ E. P. Rajagopalan, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-98.

was a huge rush of Congressmen in trains during the months when the Congress sessions were held. Moyarath Sankaran mentions the names of Rairu Kurup, P. K. Narayanan Nair, M. Chandukutti Nambiar, Mookkath Moidi, C. P. Krishnan Nair, K. K. Gopalan Nambiar, Advocate Narayanan, and Naranathil Kunhikannan Nambiar, who were Congress supporters and also his co-passengers in train during his journey to attend the Congress session held in Madaras in 1927.¹³ 13 people from Vadakara attended the Madras session of the Congress.³⁹⁴

E. M. S. Namboodiripad had attended a Congress session even before he became an active Congress worker. E. M. S. Namboodiripad attended the Madras session of the Congress when he was a student. He says that this incident made him interested in nationalist politics.³⁹⁵ He went to Madras to attend the Congress session with a few friends. He attended the session as a delegate as he got a delegate ticket. The people from different parts of India attended the Congress sessions as delegates and visitors and the Congress sessions became a common platform for the people of different regions, languages, and cultures to get together irrespective of the diversities of India. E. M. S. Namboodiripad states that he understood the real meaning of the terms 'India' and 'Indians' during the Madras Congress session.³⁹⁶

K. Gopalankutty has pointed out that celebrating the visits of national leaders and making them big events was a major activity related to the National Movement in the post-rebellion Malabar.³⁹⁷ The national leaders including Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru had visited Malabar during this period. Gandhi visited Keralam in October 1927. His 19-days-long Kerala tour, which started in Kanyakumari and ended in Kozhikode created great enthusiasm. The District Government denied permission to use Mananchira *maidanam* as the venue to arrange a reception for Gandhi. They denied the permission by citing a reason that if allotted, Mananchira *maidanam*, which was also using as a sports ground would be messed up. Due to weak health and that he had to go back to Delhi immediately after his Mangalore programme, Gandhi couldn't visit many important places in North Malabar. Though this disappointed the people,

³⁹⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 137-38.

³⁹⁵ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormmakurippukal*, p. 32.

³⁹⁶ EMS, *Athmakatha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017, pp. 85-86.

³⁹⁷ K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*, p. 38.

they gave warm receptions to Gandhi at railway stations.³⁹⁸ Jawaharlal Nehru visited Malabar in May 1928 to preside over the Fourth Kerala Provincial Conference held at Payyannur.³⁹⁹ There was a huge public participation in the conference. Nehru's presence attracted youth and students to the conference on a large scale.⁴⁰⁰

Although the picketing of liquor shops was stopped the anti-liquor campaign was very active during the post-rebellion period. K. Kelappan started a Dalit colony and school at Gopalapuram in Pavoorkunnu near his residence at Moodadi. K. Kelappan induced the Dalits of that place to practice abstinence from liquor and he succeeded in his attempt.⁴⁰¹ Songs and plays supporting the anti-liquor campaign were written during this period.⁴⁰² The period from the end of the rebellion to the Civil Disobedience was a phase when the anti-untouchability-Dalit upliftment campaign of the Congress was most active. K. Kelappan was the main leader of this campaign. The anti-untouchability campaign led by the Congress helped the National Movement to gain the support of new sections of people. Even the people who didn't take part directly in the agitations led by the Congress supported the anti-untouchability campaigns of the Congress. For instance, Vagbhatanandan, a well-known social reformer from Malabar was not actively involved in the politics of the Congress-led National Movement. But by his writings, he strongly supported the constructive programmes of the Congress, especially the anti-untouchability campaign.⁴⁰³ The anti-untouchability campaigns were often radical protests that filled excitement among the people. In January 1925, two newly admitted Dalit students of Kalliasseri Board School were stopped by some upper caste men on their way to the school, and obstructed from entering the school. One of the boys, who was 10 years old was beaten and dragged along the road. K. Kelappan, who came to know this took up the issue and visited Kalliasseri along with C. F. Andrews.⁴⁰⁴ Rayarappan Nayanar was the *Adhikari* of Kalliasseri village. He was the father of K. P. R. Gopalan and uncle of E. K. Nayanar. E. K. Nayanar recounts the impact

³⁹⁸ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

³⁹⁹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

⁴⁰⁰ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-40.

⁴⁰¹ C. K. Moosad, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, p. 90.

⁴⁰² P. Kunhiraman Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

⁴⁰³ Vagbhatananda Guru, *Vagbhatanandante Sampoorana Krithikal*, Kozhikode, 2016(1988).

⁴⁰⁴ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-123.

of this incident on his political life. E. K. Nayanar's father and uncle were against admitting the Dalits to the school. On the next day, by challenging the upper caste men, a crowd along with the Dalit students came to Kalliasseri School and brought the Dalit students to the class. K. P. R. Gopalan was among the crowd.⁴⁰⁵

David Hardiman identifies the active participation of the Congress leaders in the flood relief works after the mid-1920s as an important factor that helped the revival of the Congress movement in Kheda in the post-Non-Co-operation phase.⁴⁰⁶ In July 1924, a great flood occurred in Malabar due to extremely heavy rain. Thousands became homeless and destitute.⁴⁰⁷ The Congress leaders such as K. Madhavan Nair, who showed disinterest in being active in Congress campaigns took up the leadership of the flood relief works. At that time the politics of Madhavan Nair was closer to the strategy of the Swaraj Party as he was mainly involved in activities like political journalism and the campaigns inside the legislature for tenancy reforms. However, Madhavan Nair regained his importance in Congress politics by taking up the leadership of the flood relief works of the K. P. C. C.⁴⁰⁸ Muhammad Abdu Rahman also took up the leadership of flood relief works and organized a relief committee. The activities of the relief committee under his leadership were concentrated on Eranad and Kozhikode Taluks. This committee distributed more than 10, 000 rupees to the flood-affected people.⁴⁰⁹ The active involvement in relief works is most helpful for a political leader to gain and enhance popular support. Thus, his leadership for the relief works among the refugees of the rebellion and the flood-affected people was the main factor that helped Muhammad Abdu Rahman to emerge as one of the most popular and prominent political leaders of Malabar in the post-rebellion period.

Reading *Mathrubhumi* and learning Hindi were forms of silent participation in the National Movement.⁴¹⁰ Reading *Mathrubhimi*, which started publication as a tri-

⁴⁰⁵ E. K. Nayanar, *Pathrapravarthakante Anubhavangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1987, pp. 5-7; E. K. Nayanar, *Communistukarante Kudumbabandhangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1988, pp. 14-16. E. K. Nayanar says that the incident occurred when he was 7 years old. Nayanar was born in 1918. This incident occurred in 1925. Thus, he may be talking about the same incident.

⁴⁰⁶ David Hardiman, *Peasant Nationalists of Gujarat*, p. 178.

⁴⁰⁷ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.

⁴⁰⁸ C. K. Moosad, *K. Madhavan Nair*, pp. 144-158.

⁴⁰⁹ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Op. cit.*, p. 183.

⁴¹⁰ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormmakurippukal*, p. 23.

weekly in March 1923 became an essential qualification to become a Congressman.⁴¹¹ Though many newspapers started publication in the mid-1920s, *Mathrubumi* got a wide circulation among the Congressmen as it expressed the opinion of the Congress and represented the national interests. Reading *Mathrubhmi* became a daily routine of a congressman.⁴¹² To campaign for the increase in the circulation of the *Mathrubhmi* was also a task and responsibility of the Congress activists. In the post-rebellion period, the Congress volunteers who were tasked with the membership campaign in villages also worked for the spread of the circulation of *Mathrubhumi* to villages.⁴¹³

Learning Hindi was a way to express support to the Congress and Gandhi. By learning and promoting Hindi, youth and students became part of the National Movement.⁴¹⁴ When he was a student, E. M. S. Namboodiripad learned Hindi and took part in Hindi promotion.⁴¹⁵ Before becoming an active Congress worker, P. Krishna Pillai was a full-time *Hindi Pracharak*. After obtaining a Sahitya Visharad degree from Allahabad, Krishna Pillai worked as a Hindi *Pracharak* at Thrippunithura.⁴¹⁶ The Sabari Ashram managed by Krishna Swami Iyer played a leading role in Hindi promotion. The students of the Sabari Ashram showed a great interest in learning Hindi.⁴¹⁷

This phase was notable for the emergence and growth of nationalist literature in Malayalam. The nationalist writers in Malayalam were of two types. The first category of nationalist writers included writers such as T. S. Tirumumbu and Vidwan P. Kelu Nair who were also Congress leaders and workers. The second type of nationalist writers supported the National Movement through their poems and other writings without directly taking part in it. Writers like Vallathol Narayana Menon, P. Kunhiraman Nair, Balamani Amma, Kuttmath Kunniyur Kunhikrishna Kurup belonged to this type.⁴¹⁸ It was not easy for the poets and writers, who had a soft and romantic heart to support the National Movement by suffering lathi charges and going to jail. Thus, apart from supporting the Congress-led National Movement by their writings they also became

⁴¹¹ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

⁴¹² E. P. Rajagopalan, *op. cit.*

⁴¹³ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁴¹⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁴¹⁵ EMS, *Athmakatha*, pp. 97-98.

⁴¹⁶ T. V. K, *Sakhavu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017(1975), pp. 19-20.

⁴¹⁷ N. Gopalakrishnan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

⁴¹⁸ M. Achuthan, *op. cit.*

part of it by wearing *khadi*. For instance, Kuttmath Kunniyur Kunhikrishna Kurup, who didn't take part in any of the agitations led by the Congress was an ardent Gandhian and *khaddar* wearer.⁴¹⁹ Many notable Malayalam poets such as P. Kunhiraman Nair, Balamani Amma, and N. V. Krishna Varier were *khaddar* wearers.⁴²⁰

The literary career of many writers, who later became popular for their patriotic writings began during this period. P. Kunhiraman Nair, Kallanmarthodi Ramunni Menon, Vidwan C. S. Nair, and K. K. Raja, who were former students of Punnasseri Neelakanta Sharma's Sanskrit College at Pattambi wrote many poems by supporting the National Movement.⁴²¹ The poems and plays written during the period between 1922 and 1930 strongly supported constructive programmes. The plays such as *Pakkanarcharitham*, *Padukapattabhishekam*, *Kabir Das Charitam* by Vidwan P. Kelu Nair supported constructive programmes including the *khadi* movement, Hindu-Muslim unity, and Dalit upliftment programmes.⁴²² T. S. Tirumumbu began his active literary career during the end of the 1920s.⁴²³ Many Congress activists who were not full-time writers wrote patriotic songs and poems. For instance, T. R. Krishna Swami Iyer was the author of many patriotic songs and poems.⁴²⁴

The constructive programmes including the *khadi* movement were an effective strategy as it was successful in bringing many new sections into the Congress-led National Movement. Even Judith Brown, a strong critic of Gandhian politics has accepted the constructive programmes including the *Khadi* movement as one of the main factors that helped Gandhi, who was in jail from 1922 to 1924 to emerge as the omnipotent leader of the Congress movement in the post-Non-Co-operation phase.⁴²⁵ Even the people who didn't have primary memberships in Congress took part actively in the constructive programmes. Gandhian Nationalism spread to the masses through constructive programmes and the role of constructive programmes in generating

⁴¹⁹ Pavanam, *Mahakavi Kuttamath: Jeevithavum Krithikalum*, Kottayam, 19890, p.61.

⁴²⁰ M. Achuthan, *op. cit.*

⁴²¹ P. Kunhiraman Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

⁴²² K. Balakrishnan Nambiar, *Vidwan P. Kelu Nair: Jeevithavum Krithikalum*, Thrissur, 2018(1992), pp. 115-142.

⁴²³ R. K. Mannur, *T. S. Tirumumbu: Jeevithavum Krithikalum*, Thrissur, 2008, pp. 27-29.

⁴²⁴ M. Achuthan, *op. cit.* pp. 315-317.

⁴²⁵ Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi and the Civil Disobedience: The Mahathma in Indian Politics*, 1928-34, Cambridge, 1977, pp. 14-28.

nationalist feelings and anti-British sentiment among the masses is undeniable. For instance, Sukumar Azheekode, an eminent Malayalam writer and orator, who was born in 1926 was not an active Congress worker or part of any of the agitations led by the Congress. In 1946, Sukumar Azheekode, who was an ardent supporter of Gandhi visited the Sevagram Ashram and met Gandhi. Though not an active Congress worker, Sukumar Azheekode used to wear *khadi* and spin thread on the *charkha* from his childhood. This background gave him great confidence to meet Gandhi.⁴²⁶

3.9. Political Biographies as a Form of Resistance

Although there are a few studies on the biographies in Indian history, the role of the biographies of national leaders written in local languages in the anti-colonial resistance is an area untouched by these studies.⁴²⁷ The Malayalam biographies of national leaders began to appear during the beginning of the 20th century. G. P. Pillai published his work *Indian Congressmen* in 1899. This English work was a collection of short biographies of early Congress leaders such as Dadabhai Naoroji, W. C. Banerjee, Pherozeshah Mehta, P. Ananda Charlu, S. N. Banerjee, A. O. Hume, D. E. Wacha, Ananda Mohan Bose and Madan Mohan Malaviya.⁴²⁸ K. Ramakrishna Pillai, the author of a Malayalam biography of Karl Marx published in 1912 wrote a biography of Gandhi in Malayalam titled *Mohandas Gandhi* in 1913.⁴²⁹ K. P. Kesava Menon wrote a biography of Gopal Krishna Gokhale in Malayalam in 1915. He wrote a biography of Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Malayalam under the title *Lokamanya Tilakan* in 1916. A Malayalam biography of Gandhi titled *Mahatma Gandhi* written by K. P. Kesava Menon was also published in 1920.⁴³⁰ K. P. Kesava Menon mentions these biographies in his autobiography. Kesava Menon says that during the beginning of his career as a lawyer, he couldn't run his life by depending upon the meagre income from the legal practice and the income from the sale of these books was a great relief for him.⁴³¹ In their autobiographies, E. M. S. Namboodiripad and Vishnu Bharatheeyan also recount the

⁴²⁶ Sukumar Azheekode, *Azheekodinte Athmakatha*, Kottayam, 2022(2012), p. 16.

⁴²⁷ Vijaya Ramaswamy and Yogesh Sharma(eds.), *Biography as History: Indian Perspectives*, Delhi, 2008; David Arnold and Stuart Balckburn(eds.), *Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History*, Delhi, 2004.

⁴²⁸ Parameswaran Pillai, *Indian Congressmen*, Pophams Broadway, 1899.

⁴²⁹ M. Achuthan, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁴³¹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, pp. 59-60.

experience of reading the biographies of Tilak and Gokhale written by Kesava Menon.⁴³²

A short Malayalam biography of C. R. Das by Moyarath Sankaran titled *Deshabandhu Das* was published in 1923. K. P. Kesava Menon introduced this book to the audience at the Second Kerala Provincial Conference held in Palakkad in March 1923 under the presidency of Sarojini Naidu.⁴³³ It was K. Kelappan who wrote the preface to this book. Though Moyarath Sankaran describes the family background, education, and personal and professional life of C. R. Das in this work, much more importance is given to his political life. The biographies of national leaders were written with clear political motives. Thus, in the biographies, emphasis was given to the sacrifices and sufferings of the national leaders for the country. The sacrifices of C. R. Das for his country are narrated by Moyarath Sankaran with great importance. Moreover, the trends of the post rebellion politics were reflected in these biographies. For instance, Moyarath Sankaran used the example of C. R. Das, who abandoned his legal practice that was giving him 50, 000 rupees per month to criticize the Congress leaders of Malabar, who had resumed their legal practice.⁴³⁴ The life of national leaders was used as a tool to create patriotism and national feeling among the people. Thus, the fearlessness expressed by national leaders during the freedom struggle was highlighted by the biographers. The arrest of C. R. Das during the Non-Co-operation Movement is narrated by Moyarath Sankaran in a dramatic and gripping way. The attempt of Moyarath Sankaran to describe the importance given by C. R. Das to the rural reconstruction schemes and the Swadeshi propagation is another instance of the influence of post-rebellion political trends. The quotes of C. R. Das that excited the people are used in the work. For instance, the speech of C. R. Das in a public meeting that was held in Calcutta to protest against the internment of Annie Besant in 1917 is quoted by Moyarath Sankaran. The theme of this biography was the life of C. R. Das from 1873 to 1923. All the major events of his life till the formation of the Swaraj Party are described in this biography. It was a period when the factional fights in the

⁴³² EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormmakurippukal*, p. 21; V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁴³³ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 130.

⁴³⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *Deshabandhu Das*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014(1923), p. 37.

Congress were strong. Thus, Moyarath Sankaran states that 'disunity in the Congress can do more harm to the freedom than the guns and bullets of the British Government.'⁴³⁵ There will be a huge demand for the biography of a political leader if it is published when he is at the peak of popularity. During the early 1920s, C. R. Das was one of the most popular Congress leaders of India. Consequently, there was a huge demand for his biography. Moyarath Sankaran says that copies of this book were sold at 10 annas each and the income from its sale helped him to stay on at Vadakara for around one and a half years.⁴³⁶ It is noteworthy that Moyarath Sankaran, who lived in Calcutta for a few years for his studies later wrote a biography of C. R. Das, the most prominent political leader of Bengal. Moyarath translated a few letters of Vivekananda into Malayalam and published them under the title *Swami Vivekanandante Kathukal* (The Letters of Swami Vivekananda) in 1923.⁴³⁷ The copies of the biographies of national leaders were sold from the K. P. C. C Office in Kozhikode.⁴³⁸

Moyarath Sankaran wrote a biography of Motilal Nehru in Malayalam in 1931. The preface to the book was written by Mookkapuzha Karthyayni Amma, a notable woman Congress leader of that time. This work which was published a few months after the death of Motilal Nehru was a short description of the major events in Motilal Nehru's life from 1861 to February 1931. As a political biography published during the Civil Disobedience Movement, the politics of the Civil Disobedience was clearly stated in this work. Thus, the biographer described in detail the sacrifices and sufferings of Motilal Nehru for his mother country. Moyarath Sankaran praises Motilal Nehru, who gave up his legal practice that was giving him a huge income to take part in the freedom movement and led of miserable life by sacrificing his prosperous life for the country. To prepare the people mentally to face arrests and imprisonment was a need of the Civil Disobedience struggle. Thus, Moyarath Sankaran devoted considerable space in this work to narrate the sufferings of Motilal Nehru during his jail life. Another

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁴³⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *The Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter and Martyr*, p. 160.

⁴³⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *Swami Vivekanandante Kathukal*, Thalassery, 2021(1923). Moyarath Sankaran wrote a novel titled *Oru Penkidavinte Thentedam* in 1921. This novel was an independent Malayalam translation of the novel *A Girl of Spirit* by Charles Garvice. Moyarath Sankaran, *Oru Penkidavinte Thentedam*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2013.

⁴³⁸ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p.68.

notable thing is that Moyarath Sankaran showers praise on Motilal Nehru for his strong secular ideals. The biographer identifies the transformation of Motilal from a strong moderate congressman to a radical congressman. His return to constitutional politics is also explained in the work. By citing the example of Motilal Nehru, Moyarath Sankaran has argued that constitutionalism and moderate politics were not suitable strategies in the anti-British struggle.⁴³⁹

The most notable work among the political biographies in Malayalam published during the freedom movement was a biography of Jawaharlal Nehru written by E. M. S. Namboodiripad. It was an irony that the first work of E. M. S. Namboodiripad, a prolific writer, well-known Marxist, and an outspoken critic of Nehruism was a biography of Jawaharlal Nehru. The book was published by the Unni Namboodiri Book Depot, Thrissur in 1932 and the price of the book was 12 anna.⁴⁴⁰ E. M. S. Namboodiripad was only 22 years old when he wrote this book.⁴⁴¹ The years between 1926 and 1932 were crucial in the life of Jawaharlal Nehru. During these years Nehru was popular in India as a young socialist, the ardent advocate of the *Purna Swaraj*, the young president of the Indian National Congress, Gandhi's possible political successor, an internationalist, and the spokesman of a new social and economic programme that incorporated the peasants and workers.⁴⁴² E. M. S. Namboodiripad was a radical young Congressman when he wrote this biography. The strong admiration towards Jawaharlal Nehru was a natural feeling for a young Congressman at that time. The strong admiration of E. M. S. towards Nehru was reflected in this work. E. M. S. describes the personal qualities of Nehru. As an example of Nehru's radical mindset, E. M. S. narrates an incident when Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his disagreement with the opinion of Motilal Nehru in a public meeting.

For the biographer, Jawaharlal Nehru was a radical Congressman even from the beginning of his political career, who liked struggle and opposed compromises. He regarded Nehru as 'a longtime friend of Indian peasants' and a Congress leader who

⁴³⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Motilal Nehru: Jeevacharithram*, Kannur, 2010(1931). Moyarath Sankaran also wrote a biography of Lala Lajpat Rai. But its copies are unavailable.

⁴⁴⁰ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Jawaharlal Nehru', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol.1 (1927-35), Thiruvananthapuram, 1998, pp. 229-287.

⁴⁴¹ Appukuttan Vallikunnu, *Ariyapedatha E. M. S.*, Perinthalmanna, 1990(1987), p. 202.

⁴⁴² Benjamin Zachariah, *Nehru*, London, p. 204.

addressed the grievances of the Indian working class. E. M. S says that Nehru was a leader of Indian youth and his leadership attracted youth to the National Movement on a larger scale.⁴⁴³ Benjamin Zachariah has argued that Nehru's European tour in 1926-27 made him a strong internationalist.⁴⁴⁴ However, E. M. S had an opinion that Nehru's European tour and visit to Soviet Russia made his belief and commitment to Gandhism stronger. He says that Nehru was the most important Congress leader in India next to Gandhi. The important views expressed by E. M. S Namboodiripad on Nehru's socialist politics are: (1)Nehru is a staunch socialist who shows extreme commitment to economic revolution (2)Though Nehru supports the economic policy and ideology of Soviet Russia, he is against the Russian model of armed revolution; (3) Nehru proposes a new model to India based on the adoption of the ideology of Russia and the negation of Russia's path of armed revolution; (4) Nehru's politics represents a blend of the ideology of Gandhi and Lenin.⁴⁴⁵

Training in the martial arts known as *kalarippayattu* was compulsory for the Nair boys in the pre-colonial period. To provide training in *kalarippayattu*, institutions known as *kalaris* were attached to every Nair *taravadus*. But when the Nair youth were recruited to clerical jobs under the British on a larger scale, *kalaris* had disappeared and the practice of giving martial training to the Nair boys was stopped during the colonial period. During the mid-1920s, there were attempts from the Nair youth for the revival of *kalaris* and *kalarippayattu*. The Congress leaders such as K. Kelappan and Moyarath Sankaran supported these attempts. With the support of K. Kelappan, E. C. Kunhikannan Namabiar started *Shakthimandiram* at Thikkodi, where young men were given training in *kalarippayattu*.⁴⁴⁶ Kunhikannan Nambiar, the founder of *Shakthimandiram* was an ex-serviceman.⁴⁴⁷ Apart from the training in *kalarippayattu* volunteer training was also provided at *Shakthimandiram*. In the model of *Khudai*

⁴⁴³ *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol.1 (1927-35).

⁴⁴⁴ Benjamin Zachariah, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁴⁴⁵ *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol.1 (1927-35). E. M. S uses the Malayalam term *Saamyavadi* to refer to Socialism.

⁴⁴⁶ Thikkodian, *Arangu Kanatha Nadan*, Kottayam, 2017(1991), p. 58.

⁴⁴⁷ Thikkodi Narayanan, 'E. C. Kunhikannan Nambiar', *Kerala Gandhi Kelappan 125-aam Janmadina Varshika Smaranika*, Koyappalli Tharvad Paripalana Trust, Thurayur, 2014, p. 148.

Khitmatgars, Nambair organized a band of young volunteers in red shirts known as the *Yuvak Sangham*.⁴⁴⁸

The Publication of Malayalam novels based on the life of the Nair warriors of pre-modern Keralam such as *Thacholi Othenan* by Kadathanattu Madhavi Amma and *Velluvakammaran* by C. Kunhirama Menon was an outcome of the attempts to revive *kalarippayattu*. *Thacholi Othenan* was a novel by Kadathanattu Madhavi Amma published in 1928 based on the life of Thacholi Othenan, a Nair warrior in the *Vadakkan Pattukal*(Northern Ballads), who was known as a master of *kalarippayattu*. The introduction to this novel was written by Moyarath Sankaran.⁴⁴⁹ The theme of C. Kunhirama Menon's novel *Velluvakammaran* published in 1927 was the life of Velluva Kammaran Nambiar, a Nair warrior of North Malabar who lived in the 18th century. Kammaran Nambiar, who was captured by Hyder Ali converted to Islam adopted the name Shaikh Ayaz, and became the commander of the Mysorean army.⁴⁵⁰

3.10. The Birth of a New Generation of Politicians

Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, a congress leader during the Non-Co-operation Movement in 1920 recounts:

At that time, I used to wake up at 7 in the morning. By the time I finish my bath and breakfast, it would be 11 o'clock. Then sleep again and wake up by 4 in the evening. When I wake up Kutti Pattar would be waiting for me with coffee. After that, I would go to Bhagawati Kavu. Will come back by 7 and take a bath. Then after having dinner go to bed before 9.⁴⁵¹

A. K. Gopalan, a Congress volunteer during the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930 writes:

I still vividly remember a stray example of this life. I left the Thalassery volunteer camp one morning for a flag-hoisting ceremony at Koothuparambu. Reaching Koothuparambu at 9. a. m, I hoisted the flag and made a speech. At 12.30 p. m. I reached Mattannu. I picketed for about three hours. I started from there at 4 o' clock after collecting some rice for the volunteers. I went to speak at a public meeting at a place ten miles away from Koodali and Mattannur. It was about 6.30. p. m. I spoke there for three hours with greatest difficulty. After that, I went to

⁴⁴⁸ Thikkodian, *op. cit.*, p.61.

⁴⁴⁹ Kadathanattu Madhavi Amma, *Thacholi Othenan*, Kozhikkode, 2017(1928).

⁴⁵⁰ C. Kunhirama Menon, *Velluvakammaran*, Thrissur, 2000(1927).

⁴⁵¹ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-85.

the house of a friend nearby. I collapsed on the verandah of the house. He wanted me to have wash and food. I was so fatigued that I could not wake up. I lay down and slept until 6 o'clock.⁴⁵²

This change in the daily routine of the Congress activists was important. The most important contribution of the Civil Disobedience phase to the National Movement was many young workers, who devoted their entire time and energy for building the Congress as a popular movement. In the post-Civil Disobedience phase, these young workers became active workers of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party and from there they moved to the Communist Party. Many of these young workers later became prominent political leaders in Kerala politics after independence. The notable political leaders such as P. Krishna Pillai, A. K. Gopalan, E. M. S. Namboodiripad, K. Damodaran, N. C. Sekhar, K. A. Keraleeyan, K. P. R. Gopalan, A. V. Kunhambu, C. H. Kanaran, K. P. Gopalan, T. S. Tirumumbu, K. Madhavan, C. K. Govindan Nair, K. A. Damodara Menon, V. P. Sreekanta Poduval, V. P. Kunhirama Kurup, K. T. Kunhiraman Nambiar, and A. V. Kuttimalu Amma entered active politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement.

While writing on the Civil Disobedience Movement in Bengal, Tanika Sarkar has pointed out that "urban youth and students generally stayed aloof from the movement. The most militant of them associated themselves with resurgent terrorism. Picketing in cities and towns, was largely the work of 'Banar Senas' of school boys and middle-class women."⁴⁵³ However unlike in Bengal, in Malabar, young men were the leaders and main participants of picketing during the Civil Disobedience campaign. A. K. Gopalan says that the main activity of the Congress volunteers during the Civil Disobedience was the picketing of foreign cloth shops and liquor shops.⁴⁵⁴ In July 1931, in a meeting of the Malayalis in Bombay, K. Kelappan said: 'I don't deserve these compliments and praises. I am not responsible for the success of the Salt *Satyagraha* in Keralam. The credit goes to the youth of Keralam.'⁴⁵⁵

There were some common characteristics for the young politicians, who had entered active Congress politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement. The most important

⁴⁵² A. K. Gopalan, *In the Cause of the People: Reminiscences*, Madras, 1973, pp. 19-20.

⁴⁵³ Tanika Sarkar, *Bengal, 1928-34*, p. 95.

⁴⁵⁴ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, Kozhikode, 2016, p. 40.

⁴⁵⁵ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 410.

thing was that, unlike the early Congress leaders they were not lawyers. Almost all of them were young men below 30 years old, who were born in the 20th century. Some of them were below 25 and a few were below 20. For instance, K. Madhavan was only 15 years old when he became a member of the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by K. Kelappan.⁴⁵⁶ Another notable thing was that while most of the early leaders of the Congress belonged to South Malabar, many of the notable people among these young Congressmen hailed from North Malabar. Though most of them belonged to the middle class, they hailed from all sections like the upper class, middle class, lower middle class, and rural poor. The young Congress activists such as P. Krishna Pillai and A. V. Kunhambu hailed from the class of rural poor. There were students among them and the people belonged to different occupations. A. K. Gopalan was an aided school teacher.⁴⁵⁷ K. P. R. Gopalan was a clerk in the Registration Department.⁴⁵⁸

P. Krishna Pillai, K. P. Gopalan, K. A. Keraleeyan, K. Madhavan, T. Subramanian Tirumumbu, , V. P. Sreekanta Poduval, and K. T. Kunhiraman Nambiar were members of the Salt *Satyagraha* procession led by K. Kelappan from Kozhikode to Payyannur with 33 volunteers in April 1930.⁴⁵⁹ K. Kelappan effectively utilized the energy and talent of the young Congressmen to organize agitations during the Salt *Satyagraha*. Young Congress activists such as P. Krishna Pillai, A. K. Gopalan, K. Madhavan and T. S. Tirumbmu actively participated in the Guruvayur *Satyagraha* in November 1931.⁴⁶⁰ Thus, the young Congressmen who had entered politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement accepted the leadership of K. Kelappan, an ardent Gandhian.

It was interesting that the youth, who had a radical mindset found a spark in the Civil Disobedience struggle led by Gandhi. There was the birth of a generation of youth, who had a radical and anti-British mindset and a keen interest and skills in politics in the post-rebellion period itself. These young men became part of the Congress-led National Movement by supporting constructive programmes and attending political conferences. The Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930 became the first opportunity

⁴⁵⁶ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-61.

⁴⁵⁷ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, p. 32.

⁴⁵⁸ Anil Kumar. A. V., *K. P. R. Gopalan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2001, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁵⁹ A. K. Pillai. *op. cit.*, pp. 142-143.

⁴⁶⁰ K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*, pp.66-87.

for them to take part in a mass agitation. During this period, the young men in other regions of India such as Bengal, politically had a chance to choose other ideologies. For instance, during the 1930s, revolutionary terrorism was an ideology that attracted the youth of Bengal more than the Civil Disobedience campaign.⁴⁶¹ However, the youth in Malabar didn't have such options. The only path before them was the Civil Disobedience Movement. For instance, we can take the case of A. V. Kunhambu. Kunhambu suffered imprisonment by performing *satyagraha* during the second phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Before that, Kunhambu was a 4 anna member of the Congress and *khaddar* wearer, who was involved in activities like *khadi* propagation, anti-untouchability campaign, and the picketing of liquor shops.⁴⁶²

The Payyannur Conference in 1928 and the Simon Boycott Agitation in the same year were crucial incidents in the lives of the youth, who were aspiring to become Congress activists. The Payyannur Conference was a significant event in the political career of the youth of North Malabar. Among the young men, who had attended the Payyannur Conference there were E. M. S. Namboodiripad, K. P. R. Gopalan, K. A. Keraleeyan, and K. Madhavan.⁴⁶³ Picketing was a form of agitation that couldn't satisfy the radical mindset of youth. A. K. Gopalan had expressed his disagreements with the use of picketing as the main method of agitation in the Civil Disobedience campaign. A. K. Gopalan had an opinion that picketing was a campaign that couldn't attract the masses into the Congress and unsuitable for the peasants and workers. However, he actively took part in the picketing of liquor shops and took up the leadership of such campaigns. Before going to jail, the main activity of A. K. Gopalan was recruiting volunteers for picketing.⁴⁶⁴ The young Congressmen, who later became Congress Socialists and Communists were active in the picketing campaign. K. P. Gopalan's father was the owner of many liquor shops. K. P. Gopalan picketed his father's liquor shops along with Congress volunteers.⁴⁶⁵ The Civil Disobedience struggle was not limited to picketing. Going to jail and suffering lathi charges were the main duties to be

⁴⁶¹ Tanika Sarkar, *Bengal, 1928-34*.

⁴⁶² M. N. Kurup, *Kunjambuvinte Katha*, Kottayam, 1982, pp. 51-97.

⁴⁶³ EMS, *Athmakatha*, pp. 87-89; K. K. N. Kurup, *K. A. Keraleeyan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015, p. 25; Anil Kumar A. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10; M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46; K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-57.

⁴⁶⁴ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, pp. 32-34.

⁴⁶⁵ Chanthavila Murali, *K. P. Gopalan: Jeevithavum Rashtreyavum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2021, p. 12.

performed by Congress volunteers as part of the movement. The young volunteers showed more willingness than the veteran Congress leaders to go to jail and suffer lathi charges. The courage expressed by young Congressmen to suffer imprisonment and face brutal lathi charges became the main factor behind the success of the Civil Disobedience struggle.⁴⁶⁶ Young Congressmen such as A. K. Gopalan, P. Krishna Pillai and K. P. Gopalan suffered imprisonment during the first phase of the Civil Disobedience campaign.⁴⁶⁷ At the same time, young Congress activists like E. M. S. Namboodiripad, C. H. Kanaran and A. V. Kunamabu participated in the movement and suffered imprisonment during its second phase.⁴⁶⁸ Some of them like K. P. Gopalan, P. Krishna Pillai and K. PR. Gopalan suffered imprisonment more than once during the Civil Disobedience struggle. Many of them were below 25 years old when they courted arrest and suffered imprisonment. For instance, E. M. S. Namboodiripad was only 23 years old and K. P. Gopalan was only 22 when they suffered imprisonment for the first time.⁴⁶⁹

The young Congressmen, who had entered politics by taking part in the Civil Disobedience Movement led by Gandhi became Congress Socialists and Communists in the post-Civil Disobedience phase. The youths, who were the volunteers in the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by K. Kelappan later became his political opponents. C. K. Govindan Nair, K. A. Damodara Menon, Kongattil Raman Menon, V. P. Sreekanta Poduval, and V. P. Kunhirama Kurup were some notable Gandhian Congress leaders, who entered in Congress politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Among these leaders, C. K. Govindan Nair and Kongattil Raman Menon were lawyers. C. K. Govindan Nair was born in Thalassery in 1897. He was an eminent lawyer practicing at Koyilandy. He started to wear *khaddar* even before becoming active in Congress politics. He gave up his legal practice to take part in the Civil Disobedience struggle and suffered imprisonment. Even though Govindan Nair was a leader of the Congress

⁴⁶⁶ N. C. Sekhar, *Agniveedhikal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2010(1987), pp. 77-81.

⁴⁶⁷ Chanthavila Murali, *AKG Oru Samagra Jeeva Charithram*, Vol. I, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, pp. 52-57; Chanthavila Murali, *Sakhavu P. Krishna Pillai: Oru Samagra Jeevacharithra Padanam*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017(2008), pp. 46-48.

⁴⁶⁸ Andalat, C. H. Kanaran: *Kaalam Varthedutha Rashtreeya Prathibha*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014, pp. 26-27.

⁴⁶⁹ EMS, *Athmakatha*; Chanthavila Murali, *K. P. Gopalan: Jeevithavum Rashtreeyavum*, p. 9.

Socialist Party for a brief period, he left the party and became a leader of the rightists in the Congress.⁴⁷⁰ V. P. Sreekanta Poduval, a leader of the Congress movement in Payyannur was a member of the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by Kelappan. He was a famous Ayurveda practitioner, Sanskrit scholar, and writer.⁴⁷¹ V. P. Kunhirama Kurup, a notable Gandhian Congress leader from Kurumbranad *Taluk* joined the Civil Disobedience Movement when he was a student. He was actively involved in the picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops.⁴⁷² P. M. Kunhiraman Nambiar, a prominent Socialist leader from North Malabar began his political career by participating in the Civil Disobedience campaign and suffering imprisonment.⁴⁷³

The local Congress leaders who emerged in villages during the Civil Disobedience Movement played an important role in the success of the movement and the spread of the Congress-led National Movement to villages. Local leaders emerged in each village and their contributions were significant. In his memoirs, Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair, a famous *Kathakali* artist, mentions one Moosarikandi Kelappan Nair, who was a relative of his father. Kelappan Nair abandoned his job as a railway station master to take part in the freedom movement. One day during the Civil Disobedience Movement, Kunhiraman Nair and his friend along with Kelappan Nair picketed an arrack shop near Chemancheri railway station.⁴⁷⁴

3.11. Political Migration

During the colonial period, the nature of politics in the Malabar District, which was under direct British rule, and the princely states of Kochi and Tiruvitamkur was different. Gandhi excluded the princely states from his mass movements such as the Non-Co-operation and the Civil Disobedience Movements. Thus, the people of Tiruvitakur and Kochi had to come to Malabar to take part in these movements. Migration is a concept that is always associated with social and economic factors. However, migration may occur also due to political factors. The migration due to

⁴⁷⁰ Thikkodi Narayanan, C. K. *Govindan Nair*, Kozhikode, 2013, pp. 21-42.

⁴⁷¹ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *Op. cit.*, p. 259.

⁴⁷² B. K. Thiruvoth, V. P: *Swathanthraya Samarathile Oredu*, Kozhikode, 2022.

⁴⁷³ B. K. Thiruvoth, *Malbarile Socialist Prasthanam: Munnill Nadannavar*, Kozhikode, 2014, pp. 32-35.

⁴⁷⁴ Guru Chemancheri Kunhiraman Nair and Aneesh Kuttan, *Jeevitaha Rasangal*, Kozhikode, 2015(2012), p. 25.

political factors from the princely states of Tiruvitamkur and Kochi to Malabar began in the early 20th century. One of the early political migrants from Tiruvitamkur to Malabar was K. Ramakrishna Pillai, the editor of the *Swadeshabhimani*. After being exiled by the King from Tiruvitamkur, Ramakrishna Pillai lived in Madras and Malabar. Ramakrishna Pillai, who hailed from a princely state didn't take shelter in Kochi, the neighboring princely state but decided to live in British India. This decision was induced by political reasons. Though some famous newspapers in Kochi offered editorship to Ramakrishna Pillai, he refused these offers. He lived in Madras and different places in Malabar including Palakkad, Kozhikode, Thenkurissi, Manjaloore, Kottakkal, and Kannur. He passed away in 1916 when he was living in Kannur. He had been living in Kannur since January 1915. His wife, B. Kalyani Amma was working as a teacher in a girl's school in Kannur.⁴⁷⁵ Ramakrishna Pillai's worst experiences in Tiruvitamkur created a strong anti-monarchical sentiment in him. Dilip Menon argues that K. Ramakrishna Pillai's strong anti-monarchical sentiment was expressed in the biography of Karl Marx written by him in 1912. In this biography, Ramakrishna Pillai highlighted Karl Marx's stiff opposition to the Prussian monarchy.⁴⁷⁶

Several young men from Tiruvitamkur and Kochi, who wished to take part in the Khilafat-Non-Co-operation Movement in 1920 came to Malabar. In March 1921, A. K. Pillai, who had abandoned his studies at Oxford disembarked at Bombay Port. He came to Kozhikode as Gandhi instructed him to participate in the activities of the newly formed Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee. Then he went to Tiruvitamkur and took up the leadership of the Tiruvitamkur District Congress Committee which was formed under the K. P. C. C. After years, in September 1935, A. K. Pillai again came to Kozhikode and settled there with his family to begin practice in the district court. These were the years when the activities of the Congress Socialist Party began in Malabar. A. K. Pillai, one of the early Socialist leaders of India supported these activities and gave guidance.⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁵ B. Kalyani Amma, *Vyazhavatta Smarankal*, Kottayam, 1991, pp.68-108.

⁴⁷⁶ Dilip M. Menon, *The Blindness of Insight: Essays of Caste in Modern India*, pp. 32-33.

⁴⁷⁷ A. Radhakrishnan, *A. K. Pillai: Aadarshangalude Rakthasakshi*, Kochi, 1998, pp. 19-21.

Muhammad Abdu Rahaman and K. M. Seethi, who had represented two prominent groups in the Muslim politics of Malabar were the natives of Kodungallur in Kochi. Muhammad Abdu Rahman came first to Kozhikode as a student at the Basel Mission College. Then, Abdu Rahman studied at the Madras Presidency College and Madras Muhammadan College, and in 1921, while studying at the Jamia Milia, Aligarh, he decided to abandon his studies and come to Malabar to join the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement.⁴⁷⁸ We can identify a few factors that induced Abdu Rahman to settle in Kozhikode. Kozhikode and Malabar were places where the politics of Abdu Rahman had scope and acceptance. As compared to Kochi, Malabar had a substantial Muslim population. Abdu Rahman took it as his responsibility to bring them into the nationalist movement. Abdu Rahman was familiar with Kozhikode Town as a former student of the Basel Mission College. The secular character of Kozhikode Town was favourable for his ideology and politics. It is also notable that Muhammad Abdu Rahman, a Western-educated Muslim who lived in a big city like Madras for a few years for education decided to settle in Kozhikode, one of the important towns of South India.

K. M. Seethi, one of the most prominent leaders of the Muslim League in Malabar hailed from Kodungallur in Kochi. K. M. Seethi, who was an eminent young lawyer came to Thalassery in 1931 to appear in a controversial conversion case. Then he settled in Thalassery as a lawyer in Thalassery Court and a leader of the Muslim League. At that time, there were no Muslim lawyers in Thalassery.⁴⁷⁹ Thalassery was a place where the Mappila Muslims had a strong presence. Thus, Thalassery and Malabar were places that were favourable to the politics of the Muslim League represented by Seethi.

The Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930-34 gave a great impetus to the concept of *Aikya Keralam*. Like the youth of Malabar, the youth of Tiruvitamkur and Kochi had a strong desire to take part in the Civil Disobedience Movement and go to jail. Several people from Kochi and Tiruvitamkur wrote letters expressing willingness to join as

⁴⁷⁸ M. Rasheed, *op. cit.*, pp. 1-13.

⁴⁷⁹ T. M. Savankutty, *Seethi Sahib*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1992, pp. 35-41.

volunteers in the Salt *Satyagraha*.⁴⁸⁰ At that time, anti-British sentiment was a common feeling of the people of Malabar, Kochi, and Tiruvitamkur. Consequently, many young men from Tiruvitamkur and Kochi came to Kozhikode to join as volunteers in the Salt *Satyagraha*. They took part in the *Satyagraha* and suffered imprisonment in British Indian jails including Kannur Jail with the Congress activists of Malabar. Usually, people leave home and travel to new places in search of jobs and a better life. Puthupally Raghavan, a notable Communist leader from Keralam was a native of Puthupally near Kayamkulam. In July 1930, when he was a school student, Puthupally Raghavan left for Kozhikode to join as a volunteer in the Civil Disobedience struggle with 10 rupees which his elder brother gave him to buy books and pay fees. Then, Raghavan participated in a liquor shop picketing in Kozhikode and suffered lathi charges and imprisonment in Kannur jail.⁴⁸¹

N. C. Sekhar, one of the founders of the Communist Party in Keralam was born at Venganoor near Thiruvananthapuram in 1904.⁴⁸² On 30 April 1930, a *jatha* of 25 volunteers started from Thiruvananthapuram to Payyanur to participate in the Payyannur *Satyagraha*. Ponnara Sreedhar was the captain of the *jatha*. N. C. Sekhar was a member of the *jatha*. Then, Sekhar actively participated in the Civil disobedience struggle and suffered imprisonment.⁴⁸³ Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, an eminent Malayalam writer, who later settled at Beypore came to Kozhikode for the first time to take part in the Civil disobedience Movement. Basheer, who was born at Thalayolapparambu in Vaikom participated in the Salt *Satyagraha* and suffered imprisonment in Kozhikode and Kannur jails.⁴⁸⁴

N. C. Sekhar explains the concepts of 'Political migration' and 'political migrants' in his autobiography. The title of the fifth chapter of his autobiography *Agniveedhikal* was *Rashtreeya Kudiyettam* (Political Migration). Sekhar says that his political migration from Tiruvitamkur to Malabar was a turning point in his life. For Sekhar, the first

⁴⁸⁰ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

⁴⁸¹ Puthupally Raghavan, *Viplava Smarankal*, Part-I, Kottayam, 1992, pp. 35-41.

⁴⁸² Chanthavila Murali, *N. C. Sekhar: Keralathile Viplava Prasthanathinte Theppori*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015, p. 17. N. C. Sekhar's full name is Narayana Pillai Chandrasekhara Pillai.

⁴⁸³ N. C. Sekhar, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

⁴⁸⁴ Vaikom Muhammad Basheer, *Basheer Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. II Kottayam, 2016, (1992), pp. 1529-1530.

political migrant from Tiruvitamkur to Malabar was K. Ramakrishna Pillai and A. K. Pillai was another notable example.⁴⁸⁵ Sekhar recounts that as compared to Tiruvitamkur, there were a few factors that were favourable for the Congress activists in Malabar. The Non-Co-operation Movement and the constructive programmes in the post-rebellion period gave wide acceptance for Congress and Congressmen among the people of Malabar. Unlike in Tiruvitamkur, casteism was not strong in Malabar. Sekhar recollects his experience that a Congress worker was treated well irrespective of his caste even in the house of a big landlord in Malabar.⁴⁸⁶

As recounted in the autobiographies of P. S. Namboodiri, M. S. Devadas, and G. Sankara Kurup the Salt *Satyagraha* created great enthusiasm among the youth of Kochi. The college students in Kochi who were thrilled by the Salt *Satyagraha* tended to go to Kozhikode and join as volunteers in the Civil Disobedience Movement. G. Sankara Kurup, a famous Malayalam poet recollects an experience during his college days that two of his classmates named Madhava Menon and Appukutta Menon left for Kozhikode without telling him to take part in the Salt *Satyagraha*.⁴⁸⁷ Often, the students who were in a rush to go to Kozhikode to become *Satyagrahis* were dissuaded from this by their friends and relatives.⁴⁸⁸

From the beginning of the National Movement, Kozhikode Town became a focal point of the politics of the District. As the headquarters of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee Kozhikode Town emerged as the centre of Congress politics. Thus, settling in Kozhikode Town became a need of the people who were interested in Congress politics. K. A. Damodara Menon, a native of Paravoor came to Kozhikode to join the Civil Disobedience Movement. Later he settled in Kozhikode Town and became the editor of the *Mathrubhumi* and an important leader of the rightists in the Congress. Throughout his political career, Kozhikode Town was the centre of Damodara Menon's politics.⁴⁸⁹ P. Narayanan Nair was born in a village near Chelakkara in Kochi state. Narayanan Nair, who was working as a journalist in Madras joined *Mathrubhumi* as a

⁴⁸⁵ N. C. Sekhar, *op. cit.*, pp. 217-219.

⁴⁸⁶ N. C. Sekhar, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

⁴⁸⁷ G. Sankara Kurup, *Ormayude Olangalil*, Thrissur, 2002(1978), pp. 253-255.

⁴⁸⁸ P. S. Namboodiri, *Njanum Ente Vazhikalum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, pp. 39-40; M. S. Devadas, *Jeevithathinte Thaalukal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1990, pp. 110-116.

⁴⁸⁹ K. A. Damodara Menon, *Thirinja Nokkumbol*, Kottayam, 1981.

reporter during the Civil Disobedience struggle. Within a few months, after he joined the *Mathrubhumi*, Narayanan Nair was appointed as the editor of *Mathrubhumi* daily and weekly. Narayanan Nair, who arrived in Kozhikode as a journalist began his political career as a leader of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party and the centre of his activities was Kozhikode Town.⁴⁹⁰

The role of the Communists in laying the foundations for the idea of *Aikya Keralam* (United Keralam) should be analyzed. The role of the young Congressmen, who had entered politics during the Civil Disobedience Movement and later became Congress Socialists and Communists was crucial in generating a sense of unity among the people of Keralam. The most notable contribution to the concept of *Aikya Keralam* was by P. Krishna Pillai. Krishna Pillai was born in 1906 in a poor Nair family at Vaikom in Tiruvitamkur. He came to Malabar and joined as a volunteer in the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by Kelappan. After 1934, as a leader of the Congress Socialist Party and then of the Communist Party, Krishna Pillai organized the peasants and workers in Malabar, Kochi, and Tiruvitamkur and took up the leadership of many strikes and agitations across Keralam.⁴⁹¹ The activists of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party and the Communist Party mobilized peasants and workers of Malabar, Kochi, and Tiruvitamkur with the ideological clarity that the lives of the poor and oppressed were the same everywhere. K. A. Keraleeyan explains the contributions of P. Krishna Pillai to the idea of *Aikya Keralam*. He says that imperialism made use of the regional differences between Malabar, Kochi, and Tiruvitamkur to divide the people of Keralam. There were many misconceptions among the people of Malabar such as the people of Tiruvitamkur were *thirudan*. Keraleeyan says that P. Krishna Pillai's life and activities in Malabar were a challenge against this.⁴⁹²

The young Congressmen, whose center of activities was Malabar during the Civil Disobedience struggle in 1930-34 spread their activities also to Kochi and Tiruvitamkur after 1934. The leadership of the Congress Socialist Party supported the popular agitations in Tiruvitamkur and Kochi. In September 1938, A. K. Gopalan led a *jatha*

⁴⁹⁰ P. Narayan Nair, *Aranoottantilute*, Thrissur, 1999(1973).

⁴⁹¹ T. V. K, *op. cit.*

⁴⁹² K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Sakhavum Aikya Keralavum' in C. Bhaskaran(ed.), *Sakhakkaludeyum Sakkavu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012 (2006), p. 71.

from Kozhikode to Tiruvitamkur by expressing solidarity with the agitation started by the Tiruvitamkur State Congress. This *jatha* was known as *Malabar Jatha* in Tiruvitamkur.⁴⁹³ K. Damodaran, who spoke at the annual conference of the Tiruvitamkur Youth League by defying the prohibitory order was arrested and suffered imprisonment in Poojappura Central Jail. He was known as 'Malabar K. Damodaran' in Tiruvitatamkur.⁴⁹⁴

3.12. The 'Shock City' of the Civil Disobedience Struggle

The phase of struggle began again in the Malabar district during the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930. Kozhikode Town was the main center of the Civil Disobedience campaign. Though the campaigns as part of the Civil Disobedience struggle held in all towns in Malabar, the focal point of the agitation was Kozhikode Town. The role of Kozhikode Town in the Civil Disobedience Movement was a noticed fact. In August 1932, a delegation sent by the India League in London visited Kozhikode. The secretary of the delegation was V. K. Krishna Menon, who was a native of Kozhikode.⁴⁹⁵ The report submitted by the delegation contained detailed descriptions of the brutal lathi charges against the *satyagrahis* in Kozhikode and the inhuman treatment of *satyagrahis* in police lockups. The report discloses that Kozhikode Town was one of the major sites of the Civil Disobedience struggle in India.⁴⁹⁶ Asa Briggs have used the concept 'shock city' in the work *Victorian Cities* (1963) to describe Manchester in the 1840s. Howard Spodek uses this concept in a study on Ahmedabad City during the 20th century.⁴⁹⁷ The concept of 'shock city' is not suitable for Kozhikode Town as Kozhikode is not a huge city or industrial centre like Manchester and Ahmedabad. Moreover, economic, ethnic, and social factors are important in the making of a 'shock city.' However, Spodek identifies the role of political factors in the birth of a 'shock city' and explains the activities of Gandhi and the National Movement in Ahmedabad.⁴⁹⁸ Though this concept is not fit for Kozhikode Town, we can use the term 'shock city' to

⁴⁹³ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, pp. 112-126.

⁴⁹⁴ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, Kottayam, 1982, pp.63-69.

⁴⁹⁵ T. J. S. George, , *op. cit.*, pp. 120-121.

⁴⁹⁶ *Condition of India: Being the Report of the Delegation Sent to India by the India League, in 1932*, London, 1932.

⁴⁹⁷ Howard Spodek, *Ahmedabad: Shock City of Twentieth Century India*, Indiana, 2011, p. 5.

⁴⁹⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 5-9.

refer to Kozhikode Town during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Becoming a 'shock city' is a temporary phenomenon. The 'shock city' of an age is not necessarily the 'shock city' of another age.

Four important factors made Kozhikode Town as the main center of the Civil Disobedience struggle. First, Kozhikode Town was the administrative headquarters of the Malabar district. At the same time, the headquarters of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee was also in Kozhikode. Most of the important Congress leaders in Malabar were the permanent residents of Kozhikode Town. Second, Kozhikode Town was a major commercial center in Malabar. Thus, Kozhikode was a suitable place for the picketing campaign. Third, as a town with a wide coastal area and a huge beach, Kozhikode opened the possibility to organize the Salt *Satyagraha* campaign there. The last factor was the cultural importance of Kozhikode Town. Kozhikode Town had a rich cultural heritage, and a secular and cosmopolitan character, and its population consisted of people of various religions, castes, and diverse backgrounds.

K. Kelappan, the most important leader of the Civil Disobedience Movement decided to start the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* from Kozhikode Town. On 13 April 1930, a batch of volunteers led by K. Kelappan started a *jatha* from Kozhikode Town and broke the salt law when the *jatha* reached Payyannur.⁴⁹⁹ The volunteers in this *jatha* were provided training at Verkot House at Chalappuram.⁵⁰⁰ A foot march can create excitement en route it is passing. The Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by Kelappan created great enthusiasm in Kozhikode Town. Moyarath Sankaran, who was the pilot of the *jatha* mentions the route of the *jatha*. The *jatha* was passed through the street west of the Co-operative Bank at Chalappuram.⁵⁰¹ Many people followed the *jatha* until it left the town. The Congress leaders such as K. Madhavan Nair, T. R. Krishna Sawmi Iyer, T. V. Sundara Iyer, P. Achuthan, and Kongattil Raman Menon, who were not members of the *jatha* followed it until it left the town. A few policemen were also walking in front

⁴⁹⁹ A. K. Pillai, , *op. cit.*, p. 143.

⁵⁰⁰ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

⁵⁰¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 152.

of the *jatha*. People received the *jatha* at a few spots before leaving the town. Following a march without being a member of it is a way to support the march.⁵⁰²

From the beginning, K. Kelappan planned the Civil Disobedience campaign by making Kozhikode Town as the focal point of the movement. Thus, when the *jatha* reached Payyannur, K. Kelappan left for Kozhikode immediately after starting the *satyagraha* there.⁵⁰³ During this period, the anxiety about what would happen in the next moment became part of the life of the people in Kozhikode Town. The feeling that anything would happen, the worries of the government about the moves of the *satyagrahis*, and the anxiety of the Congressmen about the repressive measures being adopted by the government against the *satyagrahis* were the factors that decided the mood of the town. At that time, the news and rumours about the Civil Disobedience struggle became the talk of the town. The day before starting the *satyagraha*, on 12 April 1930, all night, police vehicles roamed through the road of Chalappuram. A rumour that K. Kelappan would be arrested on April 12 spread in the town. In the early morning of 13 April, a few pensioned officials waited at the gate of the *satyagraha* camp to gather the information of the arrest.⁵⁰⁴

The news of the arrest of the national and local leaders always triggered protests and created a turbulent mood in the town. After the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement, a major problem that disturbed Lord Irwin was related to the arrest of Gandhi. Irwin was in a dilemma as to whether arresting Gandhi or delaying his arrest was a more strategic move. Finally, Gandhi was arrested on May 4/5 1930.⁵⁰⁵ The arrest of Gandhi gave a new vigour to the Civil Disobedience struggle in Malabar. Following this, the campaign of violating the salt law was started at Kozhikode Beach. On 12 May 1930, *satyagrahis* broke the salt law at Kozhikode Beach under the leadership of K. Kelappan, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer, and P. Krishna Pillai.⁵⁰⁶ When the news that the *satyagrahis* would make salt and violate salt law at Kozhikode Beach on the morning of 12 May spread across the District, people

⁵⁰² V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

⁵⁰³ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

⁵⁰⁴ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 151.

⁵⁰⁵ Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi and the Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics*, pp. 111-152.

⁵⁰⁶ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-148.

flowed to Kozhikode Town.⁵⁰⁷ E. Moidu Maulavi writes that on May 11, 'Kozhikode Town had a sleepless night like the *Shivarathri* festival.'⁵⁰⁸ After the brutal lathi charges against *satyagrahis* and the arrests and imprisonment of leaders on 12 May, Kozhikode Beach became the main centre of agitation, where incidents such as salt making, salt law violation, and clashes with the *satyagrahis* and police were common. After the arrest and imprisonment of K. Kelappan, Moidu Maulavi took up the leadership of the Salt *Satyagraha*. On 13 and 14 May, *satyagrahis* made salt and broke the salt law at Kozhikode Beach.⁵⁰⁹ Many notable incidents occurred at Kozhikode Beach during the Civil Disobedience struggle. When 4 May 1931 was observed as the 'Flag Day', a tri colour flag was hoisted at Kozhikode Beach in the presence of a huge gathering under the leadership of T. Raghava Kurup, P. K. Ramunni Nair, and K. Krishnan Nair. The people gathered at the Beach that day were brutally lathi-charged and the leaders were arrested.⁵¹⁰

During the first phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement, an incident related to the Civil Disobedience campaign occurred on almost all days in Kozhikode Town. Incidents like violation of law and lathi charges, arrests, and the imposition of 144 always kept the atmosphere in Kozhikode Town turbulent. As an important commercial center, Kozhikode Town was also the main center of the picketing campaign. The picketing campaign was centered around liquor shops and foreign cloth shops. After the arrest of K. Kelappan, the K. P. C. C. met on 17 May and selected K. Madhavan Nair as the president of the K. P. C. C. The picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops was started in Malabar when K. Madhavan Nair was leading the K. P. C. C. The picketing of liquor shops began in Kozhikode Town.⁵¹¹ In July 1930, when the K. P. C. C. under the leadership of K. Madhavan Nair decided to carry out the picketing of liquor shops vigorously, the District Government responded by declaring 144 in Kozhikode Town.⁵¹² A. K. Gopalan recruited volunteers for the picketing campaign in Kozhikode.⁵¹³ The first

⁵⁰⁷ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, p. 173.

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁵⁰⁹ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 260-261.

⁵¹⁰ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

⁵¹¹ C. K. Moosad, *K. Madhavan Nair*, pp. 204-208.

⁵¹² *Mathrubhumi*, 9 July 1930.

⁵¹³ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, p. 34.

incident when women took part in picketing and courted arrest occurred in Kozhikode Town. On 12 February 1931, K. Kunhilakshmi Amma and N. Sanjivi Bai picketed a piece-goods shop with a tri-colour flag at Big Bazaar, Kozhikode. They courted arrest on 14 February.⁵¹⁴

The *hartal* in protest of the arrests of leaders was a main form of protest during the Civil Disobedience struggle. The *hartals* in Kozhikode Town became successful because of the wholehearted support and cooperation of the public. The *hartal* in protest of the arrest of Gandhi was the first *hartal* in Malabar during the Civil Disobedience Movement. Immediately after knowing about the arrest of Gandhi, the traders in Kozhikode Town observed a complete *hartal* by shutting down their shops. Vehicles remained off the roads. People gathered and talked emotionally about the arrest. The attempt of the lathi-wielding policemen to open some shops by threatening the traders failed.⁵¹⁵ Many *hartals* were held in Malabar and Kozhikode Town during the Civil Disobedience struggle. *Hartals* were observed to protest against the arrests of national and local leaders. On May 12, in protest against the arrests of the Congress leaders, the whole Malabar observed a *hartal*.⁵¹⁶ Most often, the arrests of Congress leaders were sudden and without giving any prior notice. Thus, spontaneous *hartals* in protest against the arrests of Congress leaders became common during this period. A spontaneous *hartal* was observed in Kozhikode Town as a protest against the arrests of P. Achuthan and P. Moideen Koya, two popular Congress leaders.⁵¹⁷

The arrests of Congress leaders always created a stormy atmosphere in the politics of the town. The arrests of the leaders were incidents that always changed the mood of the town. For instance, the arrests of Sardar Vallabhai Patel and Madan Mohan Malaviya, the members of the Congress Working Committee in Bombay on 1 August 1930 brought the women Congress workers in Kozhikode Town, who till then had limited their activities to the constructive programmes, to the forefront of the Civil Disobedience struggle. The Congress Working Committee had directed to observe 15 August 1930 as the 'All India Political Sufferers Day.' Following this, a complete *hartal*

⁵¹⁴ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

⁵¹⁵ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

⁵¹⁶ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

was observed in Kozhikode Town on 15 August. The *hartal* became successful through the efforts of A. V. Kuttimalu Amma and E. Narayanikutti Amma, two important leaders of the *Mahila Sangham* in Kozhikode Town.⁵¹⁸

The people of the town took part in these *hartals* voluntarily. In October 1930, just before the *Diwali* of that year, Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested under the charge of sedition. The people of Kozhikode Town expressed their strong protest against this by abandoning the *Diwali* celebrations and light decorations. The streets covered in darkness and houses surrounded by silence became the symbols of protest.⁵¹⁹ The people of all sections became part of the protest. For instance, the Gujarati community, one of the smallest sections of the population of the town abandoned *Diwali* celebrations as a protest against the arrest of Nehru. 'The Dark *Diwali*' was a symbolic protest against the repressive government.⁵²⁰

The turbulent atmosphere in the town drew Congress leaders such as K. Madhavan Nair and U. Gopala Menon, who showed reluctance in the beginning, to the Civil Disobedience Movement. K. Madhavan Nair and U. Gopala Menon, two veteran Congress leaders were reluctant to participate in the Civil Disobedience Agitation in its early days. However, K. Madhavan Nair was part of the send-off given to the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by Kelappan in Kozhikode Town. After the arrest of Kelappan, Madhavan Nair took up the leadership of the Civil Disobedience Movement. When K. Kelappan, who was in jail felt that K. Madhavan Nair was unwilling to court arrest and suffer imprisonment, he wrote a letter to Madhavan Nair from jail. In the letter, Kelappan challenged Madhavan Nair by saying that "come out Madhavan Nair, got yourself arrested in Calicut, come out, be true to your past."⁵²¹ Within a few weeks after Madhavan Nair received this letter, Madhavan Nair and U. Gopala Menon were arrested for their active involvement in the Civil Disobedience campaign.⁵²² During the *Khilafat-Non-Co-operation* Movement in 1920-22, Kongattil Raman Menon, who later became a Congress minister was a young lawyer practising in the district court.

⁵¹⁸ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-274.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 275.

⁵²⁰ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

⁵²¹ C. K. Moosad, *K. Madhavan Nair*, p. 206.

⁵²² *Ibid.*, p. 209.

However, he was unwilling to give up his practice to participate in the Non-Co-operation campaign. The same Raman Menon abandoned his legal practice and actively took part in the Civil Disobedience Movement and suffered imprisonment twice in 1931 and 1933.⁵²³

During the Civil Disobedience Agitation, processions, lathi charges, and clashes with the *satyagrahis* and police were common incidents in the streets of Kozhikode Town. Police vehicles roaming through a city is a sign to its people that the law and order situation in the city is bad. The police vehicles that were always roaming through Kozhikode Town were a factor that shaped the mood of the people of the town during the Civil Disobedience struggle.⁵²⁴ The continuous use of the tri-colour national flag, a symbol of Indian nationalism in the public places in Kozhikode Town, the nerve centre of district administration disturbed the District Government. Thus, incidents such as snatching the national flags from *satyagrahis* and obstructing the display of the national flag in public places were common during this period. The incident that two Englishmen, who visited Kozhikode Town snatched the national flags from two volunteers enraged the public. The people expressed their protest by hoisting flags on all shops and houses.⁵²⁵

There were many notable schools and colleges in Kozhikode Town and the overwhelming support of the college and school students to the Civil Disobedience campaign was an important factor behind its success. On 9 July 1930, a spontaneous *hartal* was observed in Kozhikode Town in protest against the arrests of K. Madhavan Nair, U. Gopala Menon and S. Nilakanta Iyer. The students of the Native(Ganapat)High School, the Malabar Christian College, the Samutiri College, and the Himayathul Muslim High School boycotted classes and held a protest meeting under the big banyan tree near the Samutiri College. The Students of Chalappuram Girls School organized a procession under the leadership of the Women's Swadeshi League in Kozhikode by defying the prohibitory order, which was in force in the town.⁵²⁶ K. Kumaran Nair, K. Madhavan Nair's son, who was a student at Samutiri High School at

⁵²³ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keralaleeyar*, pp. 54-55.

⁵²⁴ P. S. Namboodiri, *O. cit.*, pp. 50-51.

⁵²⁵ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

⁵²⁶ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-205; V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

that time recollects the incidents of that day. On that day, Kumaran Nair and his younger brother went to the Samutiri High School, where they were studying. But they went back home when their classmates told them that the school was off that day as the students boycotted classes by expressing support to the *hartal* held in protest to the arrests of the Congress leaders.⁵²⁷ On 17 November 1930, in protest against the arrests and imprisonment of the women Congress leaders, a spontaneous *hartal* was observed by the students of most of the schools and colleges in the town. The students of the Government School of Commerce played a leading part in organizing the strike. The students of the Municipal Girl's High School, Chalappuram, Samutiri College, Malabar Christian College, Ganapat High School, and Himayatul Muslim School took part in the protests of that day.⁵²⁸

Rajat Ray explains how the Civil Disobedience struggle was reflected in Calcutta city politics. Ray's study also shows how the Calcutta Corporation became part of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Ray describes the conflict between the Congress councillors in Calcutta Corporation, who supported the Civil Disobedience Movement and the European councillors who opposed it.⁵²⁹ The Civil Disobedience struggle was also reflected in the proceedings of Kozhikode Municipality. In a meeting of Kozhikode Municipality held on 14 May 1930, Dr. A. Chandu moved a resolution to adjourn the proceedings as a protest against the arrest of Gandhi and other leaders, and Haddow, a nominated European councillor opposed this move. When the resolution was put to vote, the Chairman, C. V. Narayana Menon used his casting vote and voted against the resolution. The councillors in favour of the resolution held a walkout and the meeting was adjourned as it was unable to meet the quorum.⁵³⁰ Another protest of the councilors in the Municipal Council was led by Kozhippurathu Madhava Menon. Madhava Menon moved resolutions with the demands that the singing of Vallthol Narayana Menon's poem *pora pora naalil naalil* in Municipal schools, put up Gandhi's portrait on the walls of the council office, Municipal Library, and municipal schools, and hoisting national flags on all municipal buildings. When Menon moved the

⁵²⁷ K. Kumaran Nair, 'Ente Achan', *K. Madhavan Nair Shathabdi Smaranika*, p. XLIX.

⁵²⁸ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-217.

⁵²⁹ Rajat Ray, *Urban Roots of Indian Nationalism*, pp. 139-160.

⁵³⁰ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

resolution on Gandhi's portrait, 14 councilors voted in favour of it and two councilors opposed it. Then Menon also moved a resolution on the tri- color flag and Vallathol's poem. But the Chairman disallowed these resolutions stating them inadmissible.⁵³¹ Protesting against Charman's ruling many councilors held a walkout.⁵³² The Municipal Council, Kozhikode resolved not to purchase petrol and lubricating oil from British companies, as a protest against the ill-treatment of arrested volunteers by the police.⁵³³

As Kozhikode Town was the headquarters of the District Government and also the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee, the Civil Disobedience Movement in the town became an open fight between the Congress and the government. When the District Government adopted all possible means to crush the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Congress leaders made a tireless effort to keep the vigour of the movement. The attempts to repress the Civil Disobedience Movement were led by E. M. Gawne, the District Collector, Bulkeley, the Superintendent of Police, and E. V. Amu, the Deputy Superintendent of Police.⁵³⁴ In August 1930, a posse of armed constables went to the K. P. C. C Office located in the *Mathrubhumi* buildings Kozhikode, and after a vigorous search of the premises in the presence of T. Hasan Koya Molla they took away some papers and documents.⁵³⁵ The Congress leaders believed that losing the vigour of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Kozhikode Town would be a disgrace. For instance, in the second phase of the movement, following the arrest of Gandhi and other leaders, to avoid protests, a prohibitory order under section 144 was declared in Kozhikode Town. At that time most of the Congress leaders including K. Kelappan were camping at Guruvayur to organize the Guruvayur *Satyagraha*. Thus, there was no one in Kozhikode Town to violate the law and court arrest. Then, K. Kelappan came back to Kozhikode to break the law and court arrest but K. Madhavan Nair sent him back.⁵³⁶

The situation in Kozhikode Town changed after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in March 1931 and the Guruvayur *Satyagraha*, which began some months after that. There was a

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 238.

⁵³² V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 309.

⁵³³ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 252.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 188-193.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

⁵³⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, p. 188.

change in the mood of the town and the vigour of the Civil Disobedience struggle began to wane.⁵³⁷ Even in the phase, when the Civil Disobedience movement was suspended, a few incidents related to the movement occurred in the town. Kozhippurathu Madhava Menon moved a resolution in the Municipal Council demanding the reinstatement of two government officials, who were suspended for their involvement in the Civil Disobedience Movement. The resolution was passed for 10 votes against two votes despite the strong objection of the Municipal Chairman. A woman European councillor also voted in favour of the resolution.⁵³⁸

The second phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement began in Malabar in January 1932. The arrest of Gandhi and other leaders triggered widespread protests.⁵³⁹ On 5 January 1932, *hartal* was observed in Keralam as a protest against the repressive policy adopted by the government. On the same day, 144 came into force in Kozhikode Town for two months and notices under section 144 were served on 22 Congress leaders including K. Kelappan, K. A. Damodara Menon, Syed Muhammad, K. Madhavanar, U. Gopala Menon, K. Raman Menon, P. I. Kaimal, M. Govinda Menon, T. Hasan Koya Molla, and Margret Pavamani. In the evening, a public meeting was held at Kozhikode Beach and P. Krishna Pillai, K. A. Damodara Menon, and Karthyayanikutti Amma, who defied the ban were arrested. They were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment of five months and simple imprisonment for one month.⁵⁴⁰

In December 1930, when the K. P. C. C was banned by the government, the Congress leadership dissolved the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee and adopted a new tactic of appointing 'dictators' as the supreme command of the *satyagraha* agitation in Keralam.⁵⁴¹ The Civil Disobedience Movement was led by dictators in its second phase. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, who was nominated as a dictator during the second phase of the movement, courted arrest at Kozhikode Beach on 17 January 1932. To court arrest, E. M. S. Namboodiripad walked in procession to Kozhikode Beach.⁵⁴² When E. M. S. Namboodiripad and K. C. Gopalanunni Nair, who courted arrest with him were

⁵³⁷ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 292-294.

⁵³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 308-309.

⁵³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 341-343.

⁵⁴⁰ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

⁵⁴¹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

⁵⁴² EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 145.

produced in court, the police handcuffed them and there were protests against this incident.⁵⁴³

All the activities of the Civil Disobedience Movement were coordinated from Kozhikode Town. A 'People's Hospital' was opened in Kozhikode to provide medical aid for the *satyagrahis* injured in lathi charges. The delegation of the India League led by V. K. Krishna Menon had visited this hospital.⁵⁴⁴ During the Civil Disobedience struggle, A. K. Varier, the manager of the *Khadi Vidyalayam*, Kozhikode proposed the idea of starting a parallel postal service.⁵⁴⁵ The Head post office of the parallel postal service started by the Congress activists was in Kozhikode. They printed postal stamps and postcards marked with the map of India instead of the postal stamps with the photo of the British Emperor. It was easy and safe for them to print postcards and stamps in French Mahe.⁵⁴⁶

3.13. Towards a New Ideology

Judith Brown argues that, unlike the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920-22, the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930-31 didn't have an all-India blueprint. Brown adds that as compared to the Non-Cooperation Movement, regional variations were stronger in the Civil Disobedience Movement. This was a result of the freedom given to the Provincial Congress Committees (P. C. Cs) in organizing the agitation.⁵⁴⁷ Haunted by the memories of the rebellion of 1921, many Congress leaders were against starting the Salt *Satyagraha* campaign in Malabar, and the K. P. C. C decided to start the Salt *Satyagraha* in Malabar after long debates and discussions. Thus, the Congress leaders including K. Kelappan, the main leader of the Salt *Satyagraha* campaign in Malabar were too cautious in keeping the Civil Disobedience Movement in line with Gandhian non-violence.⁵⁴⁸ K. Gopalankutty has pointed out that the Civil Disobedience struggle in Malabar was an anti-imperialist movement and there were no no-rent campaigns in

⁵⁴³ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 345.

⁵⁴⁴ *Condition of India: Being the Report of the Delegation Sent to India by the India League, in 1932*, p. 122.

⁵⁴⁵ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 263.

⁵⁴⁶ P. S. Namboodiri, *op. cit.*, p.65.

⁵⁴⁷ Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi and the Civil Disobedience*. pp. 100&116.

⁵⁴⁸ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 149-150.

the district. For him, the nature of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar was like a movement against the state, not against the landlords.⁵⁴⁹

An alternative ideology for Gandhian politics emerged in Malabar with the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in 1934. The Socialist ideology was put forward as an alternative to Gandhian ideology due to two important reasons. The first reason was the failure of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The second reason was the trends in Indian politics and world politics during the 1930s. The strong admiration for left ideology was the most important political trend during the 1930s. Bipan Chandra says that 'most of the thinking Indians tended to go red or at least pink during these years.'⁵⁵⁰ The year 1934 became crucial as it was in that year the Civil Disobedience Movement was called off. Even the ardent Gandhian Congressmen were disturbed by the dilemma of what was next and everyone began to feel the need for a new ideology. The Kerala Congress Socialist Party was formed in a meeting of Congress workers held at Kozhikode Town Hall in May 1934. The meeting was presided over by K. Kelappan. The first president of the K. C. S. P was C. K. Govindan Nair, who later became an important leader of the rightists in the Congress and the secretary was P. Krishna Pillai.⁵⁵¹ P. Krishna Pillai wrote in the *Prabhatham* in 1939 by explaining the situation resulted in the formation of the K. C. S. P. Krishna Pillai remarked that even the Congress leaders, who later became the rightists in the K. P. C. C supported the attempts to form the K. C. S. P due to the compulsion of two factors: (1)The Congressmen in Keralam had believed in the idea of 'revolutionary transformation. '(2)The absence of a programme to lead the country forward in the inactive political atmosphere at that time made them feel the inevitability of a new programme.⁵⁵²

During the late 1920s and the early 1930s, Jawaharlal Nehru was the most popular leftist in India. S. Gopal, Bipan Chandra, and Sashi Joshi analyzes the role of Jawaharlal

⁵⁴⁹ K. Gopalankutty, 'Mobilization Against the State and not Against the Landlords : The Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. XXVI, no.4, 1989.

⁵⁵⁰ Bipan Chandra, *Essays On Indian Nationalism*, New Delhi, 2016(1993), p. 51.

⁵⁵¹ *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 21 May 1934.

⁵⁵² *Prabhatham*, 10 April 1939.

Nehru in the growth of left movements in India.⁵⁵³ A collection of articles titled *Whither India* published by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1933 was an important work that laid the theoretical foundation for the Kerala Congress Socialist Party.⁵⁵⁴ Nehru raised many important questions in this work regarding the political crisis in India in the post-Civil Disobedience period and the future paths of Indian politics. Nehru stated that Indian nationalism was a 'middle-class movement.'⁵⁵⁵ In his work, Nehru bravely addressed many important questions in Indian politics at that time. He declared that "fundamentally this solution is not merely a question of satisfying the natural desire for self-rule but one of filling hungry stomachs."⁵⁵⁶ P. Krishna Pillai, one of the founders of the K. C. S. P had admitted that the K. C. S. P was formed by the strong influence of Nehru's *Whither India*.⁵⁵⁷ While reporting about the first meeting of the K. C. S. P, the Fortnightly Report of May 1934 stated that "the most interesting resolution passed was that the policy of Congress should be socialistic and in conformity with the ideas of Jawaharlal Nehru."⁵⁵⁸ However, as Nehru didn't negate the importance of Gandhi's leadership and Gandhian non-violence but accepted them, the left politics in Malabar couldn't grow by solely depending upon the ideological base provided by Nehru's work.

After 1934, a prominent group of radical Congressmen, who had strong disagreements with the leadership of Gandhi emerged in the Indian National Congress. However, the radical Congressmen decided to work within the Congress due to the absence of other platforms of anti-imperialist struggle in India. They were leftists who held a Socialist attitude. Consequently, a conflict between different ideologies began in the Congress. Subhas Chandra Bose was a notable example of a radical Congressman during the 1930s.⁵⁵⁹ One of the important factors that prompted the leftists of Keralam to work within the Congress was that four annual sessions of the Congress held between 1934

⁵⁵³ Bipan Chandra, *Essays On Indian Nationalism*; S. Gopal, ' The Formative Ideology of Jawaharlal Nehru', in K. N. Panikkar(ed.), *National and Left Movements in India*, New Delhi, 1980, pp. 1-13; Sashi Joshi, ' Nehru and the Emergence of the Left Bloc', in Bipan Chandra(ed.), *Indian Left: Critical Appraisals*, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 45-100.

⁵⁵⁴ K. Damodaran and C. Narayana Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

⁵⁵⁵ Jawaharlal Nehru, *Whither India*, Allahabad, 1933, p. 4.

⁵⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵⁵⁷ *Prabhatham*, 10 April 1939.

⁵⁵⁸ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of May 1934, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁵⁵⁹ Chandrachur Ghose, *Bose: The Untold Story of An Inconvenient Nationalist*, Gurgaon, 2022, p. 222.

and 1939 were presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, who were known as leftists in the Congress.⁵⁶⁰ The Civil Disobedience phase witnessed the entry of the masses into the National Movement in Malabar. E. M. S. Namboodiripad says that the popular base of the Civil Disobedience Movement was the people of the 'lower middle class' such as petty traders, clerks and elementary school teachers, and the people who belonged to the class of rural poor, the coolie workers in towns and the youth and students. In the post-Civil Disobedience phase, not only the workers but also the leaders of the K. C. S. P emerged from these classes. P. Krishna Pillai, the secretary of the K. C. S. P hailed from the class of rural poor.⁵⁶¹ A new ideology for the Congress was a need of these classes.

The young leftists of Malabar played a notable role in the formation of the Congress Socialist Party in India. E. M. S. Namboodiripad had attended the Patna and Bombay conferences of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934 and was selected as one of the four joint secretaries of the All India Committee of the Congress Socialist Party, of which Jayaprakash Narayan was the president. He first met Jayaprakash Narayan during the Bombay Conference.⁵⁶² For E. M. S., the Congress Socialist Party assimilated the ideologies such as Gandhism, Nehruism and, left Communism. For E. M. S., the early ideology of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party was blend of Gandhism, revolutionary terrorism, and Nehruism.⁵⁶³

In their early on Socialism writings in Malayalam, the K. C. S. P leaders including E. M. S. Namboodiripad and P. Krishna Pillai used the Malayalam terms *saamyvadam* and *saamyavadi* to denote 'Socialism' and 'Socialist.'⁵⁶⁴ Subhas Chandra Bose also preferred to use the term *samyavada*. It was an ancient Buddhist term and Bose used

⁵⁶⁰ EMS, *Oru Indian Communistinte Ormmakurippukal*, p. 57.

⁵⁶¹ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018 (1948), p. 294; E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017 (1995), pp. 26-27.

⁵⁶² S. R. Bakshi, *E. M. S. Namboodiripad: The Marxist Leader*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 1; EMS, *Athmakatha*, pp. 184-193.

⁵⁶³ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2009(1984), pp. 59-61.

⁵⁶⁴ Andalath(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. I, Thiruvananthapuram, 2023, p. 173. *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, which is published in two volumes is the collection of P. Krishna Pillai's writings compiled and edited by Andalath.

it to express the ideology of Socialism as suited to Indian conditions. Bose explained *samya* as equality and *samyavadi* as 'one who believes in equality.'⁵⁶⁵

The post-Civil Disobedience phase was a juncture in Indian politics when new ideologies took shape and came into conflict with each other. By mentioning about this ideological conflict, E. M. S. Namboodiripad says politics during the end of the 1930s was shaped by the conflict between different ideologies and the public opinion derived from it.⁵⁶⁶ Though this ideological conflict was an all-India phenomenon, the fact that Malabar was a stronghold of the Congress Socialist Party and the Kerala Congress Socialist Party was moving towards Communism made this conflict intense in Malabar. The ideological fight led by the leftists in Malabar had three different aspects: (1)The ideological conflict between the leftists and the rightists in the Congress movement in Malabar; (2) The leftists in Malabar were part of the ideological clash between the left group and the right wing in the All India Congress; (3)The Congress Socialists in Malabar, who were moving towards the Communist Party came into conflict with some of the national leaders of the Congress Socialist Party, who held anti-communist views.

There was only a left group in Malabar till the formation of the Communist Party in Keralam in 1939. In 1939, the Forward Bloc, which was regarded as a left party was formed in Malabar under the leadership of Muhammad Abdu Rahman. However, as the K. C. S. P was entirely converted as the Communist Party in 1939 and the Forward Bloc was inactive due to the detainment of Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the Communist Party was the only left group in Malabar till the revival of the Congress Socialist Party in Keralam in 1942. The Communist Party which was formed from the Kerala Congress Socialist Party also had the same leadership and popular base as the Congress Socialist Party.⁵⁶⁷ In his study on the Communist Movement in Punjab, Bhagwan Josh has argued that the factional fights between the left groups was one of the main factors that weakened the left movement in Punjab.⁵⁶⁸ Till 1939, there was

⁵⁶⁵ Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India's Struggle Against Empire*, Cambridge, 2011, p. 88.

⁵⁶⁶ EMS, *Indian Swathanthryasamaracharithram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2022, p. 473.

⁵⁶⁷ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, pp. 324-332.

⁵⁶⁸ Bhagwan Josh, *Communist Movement in Punjab (1926-47)*, Delhi, 1979, p. 205.

only a group representing the left in Malabar. Malabar was a model for maintaining the left unity. Maintaining the left unity was a major achievement of P. Krishna Pillai, the secretary of the K. C. S. P. Krishna Pillai solved all the problems and discontents in the K. C. S. P by his timely interventions. For instance, in 1935-36, A. K. Gopalan and Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair, two notable leaders had resigned from the K. C. S. P due to some issues. By knowing this, Kozhippurathu Madhava Menon, a prominent rightist leader began attempts to bring them to the rightist camp.⁵⁶⁹ P. Krsihna Pillai, who came to know this brought back A. K. Gopalan to the K. C. S. P by giving him the leadership of the *Pattini Jatha* started in 1936.⁵⁷⁰

Bhagwan Josh calls the model followed by the Congress Socialists turned Communists of Keralam, who had worked within the Congress and transformed it and strengthened its popular base by mobilizing the peasants and workers as the 'Kerala Path.' The argument of Josh that even before becoming Communists, the Communists in Keralam gained popularity as Congressmen and Congress Socialists is also noteworthy.⁵⁷¹ However, the Congress Socialists in Malabar had ideologically become communists even before they officially joined the Communist Party. There were several reasons behind the decision of the leftists in Malabar to work in the K. C. S. P from 1934 and 1939 by not joining the Communist Party. First, before 1934, the young radical Congressmen in Malabar who later joined the Communist Party had no relation with the Communism and Communist Party. They had no contacts with the strongholds of the Communism in India. Many of the young Congress leaders didn't live outside Keralam even for education. For instance, E. M. S. Namboodiripad's first North Indian visit was in 1934 to attend the Bombay conference of the Congress Socialist Party.⁵⁷² However, K. Damodaran, a former student of the Kashi Vidyapith and P. Krishna Pillai, who lived in North India from 1927 to 1929 were notable exceptions . Thus, as the young radical Congressmen of Malabar were unfamiliar with Communism before 1934, they took a few years to assimilate the Communist ideology. . M. Rasheed , a

⁵⁶⁹ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

⁵⁷⁰ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, p. 90.

⁵⁷¹ Bhagwan Josh, 'Understanding Indian Communists: A Survey of Approaches to the Study of the Communist Movement in India, 1920-47', in Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and Romila Thapar(eds.), *Situating Indian History: For Survepalli Gopal*, Delhi, 1986, p. 313-324.

⁵⁷² EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 186.

biographer of K. Damodaran says that Damodaran had become a Communist while he was studying at the Kashi Vidyapith.⁵⁷³ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, P. Krishna Pillai, and A. K. Gopalan, the young Congress leaders from Malabar, when they had attended the Bombay Conference of the Congress Socialist Party in 1934 hadn't any association with the Communism and Communist Party.

A year after the Bombay Conference P. Krishna Pillai and E. M. S. Namboodiripad started to contact the Communist Party through P. Sundarayya.⁵⁷⁴ The contacts of the leaders of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party with P. Sundarayya and S. V. Ghate, two important leaders of the Communist Party of India played a crucial role in the formation of the Communist Party in Kerala.⁵⁷⁵ The transformation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party to the Communist Party began in 1935. In the early years of the Congress Socialist Party, the Congress Socialists in Malabar were strongly influenced by the politics of Jayaprakash Narayan. In 1934, Jayaprakash Narayan visited Malabar and spoke at the meetings of the Congress Socialist Party held in Kozhikode, Thalassery, and Kannur. Jayaprakash Narayan's *Why Socialism?* was translated into Malayalam under the title *Socialism Enthinu*, which got a wide popularity in Malabar.⁵⁷⁶ Jayaprakash Narayan's work, which contained strong criticisms against Gandhism and put forward Socialism as the only remedy to inequality satisfied the leftists in Malabar.⁵⁷⁷

From 1934 to 1939, the Congress Socialists in Malabar, who later became Communists worked in the Congress. Membership in the Congress was compulsory to become a member of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party.⁵⁷⁸ Thus, the Congress in Malabar split into two groups, the leftists and rightists, who were ideologically clashing with each other. The ideological conflict between the leftists, who were strong critics of Gandhism and the rightists, who were ardent supporters of Gandhism was very intense in Malabar. Though the leftist-rightist conflict in the Congress in Malabar had

⁵⁷³ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, pp. 26-30.

⁵⁷⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralacharithram Marxist Veekshanathil*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2019(1990), p. 263.

⁵⁷⁵ N. E. Balaram, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Aaddya Nalukal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016(1990), p. 47.

⁵⁷⁶ P. Naryanan Nair, *Op. cit.*, pp. 99&102.

⁵⁷⁷ Jayaprakash Narayan, *Why Socialism?*, Banaras, 1936.

⁵⁷⁸ *Mathrubhumi*, 16 May 1935.

an organizational aspect too, the ideological aspect was more important. It is easy to settle the tussles for power by proposing formulas and settlements but to put a total end to an ideological fight is always impossible. Thus, all the attempts of the central leadership of the Congress during 1934-40 to put an end to the leftist-rightist fight in the Congress by proposing formulas and settlements failed.⁵⁷⁹ The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee was dominated by the left in 1934-35 and 1938-40. However, even during the years when the left didn't dominate the K. P. C. C., the left had dominance over the subordinate committees of the Congress in Malabar. Apart from that, during the period when the K. P. C. C was not under the control of the left, E. M. S. Namboodiripad was the organizing secretary of the Congress.⁵⁸⁰ By 1939, the K. P. C. C came to totally under left hegemony. In December 1939, in a letter to Rajendra Prasad, G. Ramachandran, an ardent Gandhian Congressman wrote that 'the present executive of the KP. C. C was entirely in the hands of the Congress Socialist Party.'⁵⁸¹

The rightists were the staunch supporters of Gandhian ideology while the leftists expressed strong disagreements with Gandhian ideology and Gandhi's leadership. This basic difference was the root cause of the leftist-rightist conflict. The leftists in Malabar raised strong objections against the amendments proposed by Gandhi in the constitution of the Congress in the post-Civil Disobedience period. Gandhi's amendments included that spinning yarn was mandatory for Congress membership, wearing *khadi* was compulsory for getting voting right in Congress, and the replacement of the words 'peaceful' and 'legitimate' by 'truthful' and 'non-violent' to achieve the aim of the Congress.⁵⁸² N. E. Balaram says that the beginning of the leftist-rightist conflict in the K. P. C. C was from these amendments. In a K. P. C. C. meeting held at Shornur in October 1934, a resolution was moved by stating that Gandhi's amendment to replace the words 'peaceful' and 'legitimate' by 'truthful' and 'non-violent' to achieve the aim of the Congress was unacceptable. The rightists strongly

⁵⁷⁹ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁵⁸⁰ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, pp. 30-37.

⁵⁸¹ 'On the Kerala PCC: G. Ramachandran to Rajendra Prasad, 28 December 1939', in Mushirul Hasan(ed.), *Towards Freedom: Documents on the Movement for Independence in India*, New Delhi, 2008, p. 1444.

⁵⁸² Subhas Chandra Bose, *Indian Struggle, 1920-42*, New Delhi, 1964, p. 270.

opposed the resolution. However, the resolution was put to vote and passed despite the strong objection of the rightists.⁵⁸³

The attitude towards the Gandhian constructive programme was another reason for the leftist-rightist conflict in the Congress. The leftists were against giving over importance to the *khadi* movement and the opinion of the rightists that the industrial policy of India after the attainment of *Purna Swaraj* should be based on *khadi*. They opposed the view that *khadi* was the only remedy to India's poverty and pointed out that the high cost of *khadi* and its compulsory use were creating problems for poor Congress workers.⁵⁸⁴ Jayaprakash Narayan also had a similar opinion regarding the *khadi* movement.⁵⁸⁵ However, the leftists accepted the fact that *khadi* became 'the uniform of the Indian freedom fighters.'⁵⁸⁶ Thus, many Congress Socialists including E. M. S. Naamboodiripad, P. Kishna Pillai, and K. Damodaran continued the habit of wearing *khaddar*.⁵⁸⁷ S. V. Ghate recounts that when he first met P. Krishna Pillai in 1937, Krishna Pillai was 'a dark man dressed in pure *khadi*.'⁵⁸⁸

The leftists had an opinion that the constructive programmes such as the *khadi* propagation and the anti-untouchability campaign had weakened the anti-imperialist struggle. According to them, the anti-untouchability campaigns including the Guruvayur *Satyagraha* undermined the strength of the Civil Disobedience Movement.⁵⁸⁹ The leftists gave importance to mass agitations. In 1936 December, E. M. S. Nambodiripad wrote that 'Payyannur gave strength to the Congress in Keralam not as centre of khadi production but as a centre of the Civil Disobedience Agitation.'⁵⁹⁰ When E. M. S. Nambodiripad said that the only aim of the Temple Entry Movement was to prevent religious conversion, K. Kelappan, a rightist and a leader of

⁵⁸³ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

⁵⁸⁴ *Prabhatham*, 27 June 1938.

⁵⁸⁵ Jayaprakash Narayan, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-111.

⁵⁸⁶ *Prabhatham*, 27 June 1938.

⁵⁸⁷ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 104; M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, p. 104

⁵⁸⁸ Andalat(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. I, p. 259.

⁵⁸⁹ EMS, *Indian Swathanthryasamaracharithram*, p. 448. For Shashi Joshi, 'even large numbers of Congressmen, apart from the Communists saw Gandhi's temple entry movement as a distraction from the anti-imperialist struggle.' Shashi Joshi, *Struggle for Hegemony in India*, Vol. I, New Delhi, 1992, p. 297.

⁵⁹⁰ E. M. S. Nambodiripad, 'Socialisavum Keralvum', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. II(1936-38), Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p. 161.

the Temple Entry Movement harshly criticized him.⁵⁹¹ Kelappan had a view that temple entry would bring equality in society and thereby strengthen the National Movement.⁵⁹²

The rightists and leftists had different opinions regarding office acceptance. The left groups in India including the Congress Socialists and the Communists strongly disapproved of the decision of the Congress to accept office.⁵⁹³ In September 1935, E. M. S. Namboodiripad wrote by explaining the disagreements the left had to the decision to accept office. He said: 'Congress will not get majority anywhere. So, it will be forced to compromise with the Hindu Mahasabha, the Justice Party, landlords, and the wealthy classes to form the government. Then Congress will become another version of the Justice Party when it leaves power.'⁵⁹⁴ For the leftists, office acceptance was suicidal and sufferings and sacrifices were more ideal.⁵⁹⁵

The leftists demanded a change in the policy of aloofness and the exclusion that the Congress was keeping towards the princely states. The leftists supported the popular agitations in Kochi and Tiruvitamkur and worked for the spread of Socialist ideology also to the princely states. In the matter of the princely states, the leftists adopted an approach that was different from that of the rightists.⁵⁹⁶ For K. Gopalankutty, the different opinions regarding the nature of the Malabar rebellion, 1921-22 was another ideological issue between the rightists and the leftists.⁵⁹⁷ By raising the question 'Is the Malabar Rebellion a peasant revolt?', E. M. S. Namboodiripad wrote an article in the *Prabhatham* in September 1939. There E. M. S. Namboodiripad explained the aspects of the rebellion of 1921 as a peasant revolt.⁵⁹⁸ In a resolution presented by K. Unneen Maulavai in the Congress conference held in Kozhikode in April 1938, the Malabar

⁵⁹¹ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Ente Nila', in *Ibid.*, p. 79.

⁵⁹² M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁵⁹³ Ravi Shankar Vasudevan, 'Why the Congress Accepted Office in 1937', *Studies in History*, Vol. IV, nos.1&2, 1988.

⁵⁹⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Congress Engottu?', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. II, pp. 219-220.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

⁵⁹⁶ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, p. 36.

⁵⁹⁷ K. Gopalankutty, 'The Task of Transforming the Congress: Malabar, 1934-40', *Studies in History*, Vol. V, no.2, 1989.

⁵⁹⁸ *Prabhatham*, 13 September 1939. E. M. S wrote this article using the secret name 'Surendran.'

rebellion was characterized as 'a peasant revolt.' K. Madhava Menon, a rightist leader raised a strong objection and asked Maulavi to withdraw the statement.⁵⁹⁹

The leftists in Malabar worked by embracing the idea of the 'United Front' approach of Dimitrov and the 'Dutt-Bradley Thesis' by Rajani Palme Dutt and Ben Bradley, two British Communists, both of which were prepared during the mid-1930s. This was the most important ideological issue over which the leftists and the rightists clashed with each other as these ideas were against the basic element of Gandhian strategy. Gandhi adopted a strategy of accommodating diverse interests irrespective of classes. By criticizing this approach, Subhas Chandra Bose wrote that 'Gandhi has failed because the false unity of interests that are inherently opposed is not a source of strength but a source of weakness in political warfare.'⁶⁰⁰ The Dimitrov thesis prepared by Georgi Dimitrov urged the Communists in India 'to support and participate in all anti-imperialist mass activities including those which are under national reformist leadership. 'This document instructed the Communists to work in the Indian National Congress by keeping their organizational and political independence.'⁶⁰¹ The 'Dutt-Bradley Thesis' published in 1936 called for a 'united front of the National Congress with all the existing mass organizations of the trade unions, peasant unions, youth associations or other mass organizations.'⁶⁰² The document clearly stated that the people such as the princes, landlords, money lenders, communal groups, merchants, and wealthy classes should be kept out of the united front.⁶⁰³

K. Gopalankutty argues that the leftists in Malabar succeeded in their attempt to integrate the peasant movement with the National Movement.⁶⁰⁴ The leftists tried their best to include the rightists in Congress in the 'united front'. For this, the leftists chose the rightist leaders as the inaugurators and the main speakers in the

⁵⁹⁹ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 448-449.

⁶⁰⁰ Subhas Chandra Bose, *op. cit.*, p. 295.

⁶⁰¹ Georgie Dimitrov, *The United Front: The Struggle Against Fascism and the War*, London, 1938, p. 51.

⁶⁰² Rajani Palme Dutt and Ben Bradley, 'The Anti-Imperialist United Front of India', *Documents on the Communist Movement in India*, Vol. III(1929-1935), Calcutta(The year of publication not available).

⁶⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁶⁰⁴ K. Gopalankutty, 'The Integration of Anti-Landlord Movement with the Movement Against Imperialism: The Case of Malabar, 1935-39', in Bipan Chandra(ed.), *Indian Left: Critical Appraisals*, pp. 201-214.

conferences and meetings of the peasants, workers, and students organized by them. In the early years of the trade union movement, K. Kelappan was one of the main speakers in the workers' meetings organized by the leftists in Kozhikode. During the early years of the trade unions in Kozhikode, the company owners told the workers after sacking them that 'go and tell to Kelappan.'⁶⁰⁵ The Second All Malabar Peasant Conference held in Kozhikode in December 1938, one of the most notable events organized by the leftists during 1934-40 was presided over by Kozhippurathu Madhava Menon, a prominent rightist leader.⁶⁰⁶ The First All Kerala Student Conference held at Samutiri College, which was attended by Saumyendranath Tagore was presided over by K. Kelappan.⁶⁰⁷ The Dimitrov Thesis was widely circulated among the leftists in Malabar.⁶⁰⁸

The landlords and capitalists were excluded from the 'united front. 'Thus, there arose a question that whose interests the Congress was representing. When the leftists criticized the rightists by saying that they were supporting the landlords and capitalists during the peasant agitations and workers' strikes, landlords and capitalists alleged that the leftists were working against Congress. In January 1939, V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan said that 'the Congress belongs to the peasants.'⁶⁰⁹ Samuel Aron, a rightist Congress leader and the owner of the Aron Mills, Pappinisseri opposed the formation of trade unions in his mill. Aron was not ready to accept the demands raised by K. A. Keraleeyan, K. P. R. Gopalan and K. P. Gopalan, the trade union leaders in the mill, who were also his fellow workers in the Congress.⁶¹⁰ In Damodaran's play *Pattbakki*, the *khaddar*-worn friend of the company owner is helping him to suppress the strike in the company.⁶¹¹

The approach of the leftists in Malabar was 'pro-poor' and 'class-oriented. 'They knew that there were two groups in the Congress, one representing the haves and the other

⁶⁰⁵ *Mathrubhumi*, 28 April 1935.

⁶⁰⁶ *Prabhatham*, 19 December 1938.

⁶⁰⁷ Imbichi Bava, 'Keralthile Vidyarthi Prasthanathinte Aadyanaalukal', in I. V. Das(ed.), *Porattathinte Jeeitha Rekhakal*, Kottayam, 2013, pp. 258-259.

⁶⁰⁸ Andalath, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1976, pp. 82-83.

⁶⁰⁹ *Prabhatham*, 9 January 1939.

⁶¹⁰ Anil Kumar A. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 50-53.

⁶¹¹ K. Damodaran, 'Pattabakki', *K. Damodaran Samboornakrithikal*, Vol. VII, Thiruvananthapuram, 2011, pp. 284-286.

the have-nots. In 1931, P. Krishna Pillai wrote a letter to K. Madhavan from Salem Jail. In that letter, he told Madhavan that there were two groups in the Congress, the one which represented the rich and the other which represented the poor.⁶¹² The 'C class' life in jails during the Civil Disobedience Movement became real-life experiences for the young Congressmen about how people were treated differently according to their wealth and social status. Most of the Congressmen who later became leftists were 'C Class' prisoners in jails while most of the Congressmen who later became rightists were 'A class' prisoners.⁶¹³ There were heated debates in the volunteer camps of the Salt *Satyagraha* between the Congress leaders, who were rich and upper-caste people and the volunteers, most of whom were common people.⁶¹⁴

The leftists in Malabar realized that the most important factor that was weakening the peasant and working-class movements in India was the religious and caste differences. In his study about the jute mill workers in colonial Bengal, Dipesh Chakrabarty has argued that the class consciousness of the jute mill workers in Bengal was fragmented due to the influence of the factors based on religion, ethnicity, and language. However, he accepted that though religion was a factor that decided their class consciousness, the workers were conscious of the fundamental distinction between the haves and have-nots.⁶¹⁵ The leftists identified the distinctions based on religion and caste as the major obstacle on their path. In April 1934, Krishna Pillai urged the workers 'to forget the differences such as *Tiyya*, *Nair*, *Pattar*, *Mappila*, and *Christian* and acquire an identity based on the feeling that I am a peasant worker and I am a mill worker.'⁶¹⁶ In a recent study, Nissim Mannathukkaren has pointed out that the 'Communists regarded caste-based mobilization as identity politics and as a barrier before the growth of class-based identities.'⁶¹⁷ A study by Shri Kishan on the nature of peasant mobilization in Bombay province during 1934-41 shows that religious symbols

⁶¹² K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

⁶¹³ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 209.

⁶¹⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 27.

⁶¹⁵ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working Class History: Bengal, 1890-1940*, Delhi, 1989, p. 186.

⁶¹⁶ P. Krishna Pillai, 'Mathathinalla Chorinaanu Poruthendathu', in Andalath(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. II, Thiruvananthapuram, 2023, p. 172.

⁶¹⁷ Nissim Mannathukkaren, *Communism, Subaltern Studies and Post-Colonial Theory: The Left in South India*, Oxon, 2022, p. 87.

were used to mobilize the peasants in the countryside of Bombay.⁶¹⁸ However, the leftists in Malabar didn't use religious symbols to mobilize the peasants.

The left politics in Malabar was strongly influenced by atheism. The peasants and workers believed that poverty and miseries were fate and god's decision.⁶¹⁹ The leftists had to eliminate this feeling. Bhagat Singh was one of the ardent advocates of atheism in India. Bhagat Singh wrote the *pamphlet Why I am an Atheist?* while he was in jail in October 1930, which was published in September 1931. Bhagat Singh described the influence of the ideas of Marx, Lenin, and Trotsky in making him an atheist.⁶²⁰ The autobiographies and memoirs of the Communist leaders of Malabar show that most of the Communists were not strong theists even before becoming leftists and Communists. Though young Congress activists such as P. Krishna Pillai and A. K. Gopalan were at the forefront of the Guruvayur *Satyagraha*, most of the young Congressmen were atheists even during the Guruvayur *Satyagraha*. K. Madhavan recounts that one of the topics of the discussions held in the Guruvayur *Satyagraha* camp was 'does the god exist or not?'.⁶²¹ K. Madhavan was an atheist when he took part in the Guruvayur *Satyagraha*.⁶²² The title of an article written by P. Krishna Pillai in 1934 was *Mathathinalla Chorinaanu Poruthendathu*(we should fight for food not for religion). There Krishna Pillai explained the importance of atheism.⁶²³ Balan, a character in K. Damodaran's *Pattabakki* asks: 'if the god is a good man. Why are we starving?'.⁶²⁴ Shalini Sharma mentions about the allegations spread by the colonial state about the Communists to make them unpopular. Branding the Communists as atheists was one of them.⁶²⁵ When K. Damodaran was leading the strike of the beedi workers of Ponnani in 1939, to tarnish his public image, the beedi company owner and

⁶¹⁸ Shri Kishan, 'Peasant Mobilization Political Organizations and Modes of Interaction: The Bombay Countryside', 1934-41', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. XXXII, no.4, 1995.

⁶¹⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, p. 73; EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, p. 314.

⁶²⁰ Bhagat Singh, 'Why I am an Atheist?', in S. Irfan Habib(ed.), *Inqilab: Bhagat Singh on Religion and Revolution*, New Delhi, 2018.

⁶²¹ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.

⁶²² Ajayakumar Kodoth, *Gandhian Communistinoppam Aranoottandu*, Thrissur, 2021, pp. 74-76.

⁶²³ Andalath(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. II, p. 171.

⁶²⁴ K. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

⁶²⁵ Shalini Sharma, *Radical Politics in Punjab: Governance and Sedition*, Oxon, 2010.

his men spread that Damodaran was an atheist.⁶²⁶ Thus, being an atheist was part of the public image of the Communists and the people accepted them despite this.

In the right-wing-left wing conflict in the All India Congress, leftists in Malabar sided with the left wing of the All India Congress Committee. The leftists supported Subhas Chandra Bose in his ideological fight against Gandhi during 1938-39 and the contest between Subhas Bose and Pattabhi Sitaramayya in the Congress president election during the Tripuri Session of the Congress in 1939.⁶²⁷ The active involvement of the leftists in the left-wing-right wing ideological conflict in the all-India Congress played a crucial role in the transformation of the leftists in Malabar to the Communists. In the background of the intense left-right wing conflict in the all-India Congress after 1934, the leftists and rightists in Malabar tried to send the maximum number of delegates from their side to the annual Congress sessions.⁶²⁸ The Congress sessions and the journeys to attend the Congress sessions became the occasions for the leftists in Malabar to meet the important leaders of the Communist Party of India. No annual session of the Indian National Congress was held in South India during 1934-40. Thus, for the Congressmen of South India, the journeys to attend the Congress sessions were very long.⁶²⁹ I. C. P. Namboodiri recollects the memory of the journey to attend the Faizpur Congress session in 1937. He travelled to Bombay by ship and from there to Faizpur by train. A. K. Pillai, Ramachandran Nedungadi, P. V. Kunhunni Nair, and P. Narayanan Nair were on the ship with I. C. P. Namboodiri. P. Krishna Pillai and E. M. S. Namboodiripad was waiting for them at Bombay Railway Station. During the journey From Bombay to Faizpur, B. T. Ranadive, S. S. Batliwala, and P. Krishna Pillai and I. C. P. Namboodiri were in the same compartment.⁶³⁰

The strong anti-Communist views held by the Congress Socialist leaders such as M. R. Masani shattered the Congress Socialist-Communist unity.⁶³¹ A conflict arose between the Congress Socialist leaders in Malabar, who were moving towards Communism, and

⁶²⁶ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, pp. 38-39.

⁶²⁷ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 55.

⁶²⁸ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 191.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid.* pp. 259-260.

⁶³⁰ I. C. P. Namboodiri, *Viylavathinte Ulthudippukal*, Kottayam, 2002, p. 58.

⁶³¹ Sobhanlal Datta Gupta, *Comintern and the Destiny of Communism in India: 1919-1943*, Calcutta, pp. 189-192.

the anti-Communist leaders of the Congress Socialist Party. A Communist fraction of five members formed in the national executive committee of the Congress Socialist Party. Z. A. Ahmed, Dinkar Mehta, Soli Batliwala, Sajjad Zaheer, and E. M. S. Namboodiripad were the members of this fraction.⁶³² E. M. S says that three factors induced the Communist fraction to lead an ideological fight against the Congress Socialist leaders: (1)The leaders of the Congress Socialist Party showed reluctance to lead mass agitations by mobilizing the peasants and workers; (2)They surrendered before the rightists in the Congress including in the occasions like the Subhas Bose-rightist fight; (3)Some prominent leaders of the Congress Socialist Party held strong anti-Soviet and anti-Communist views.⁶³³

The leaders of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party and the national leadership of the Congress Socialist Party had different opinions regarding the trial and execution of the Soviet leaders in Russia after the mid-1930s led by Stalin. The leftists in Malabar supported Stalin in the Stalin-Trotsky conflict.⁶³⁴ At the same time, many Congress Socialist leaders including Jayaprakash Narayan had adopted a pro-Trotsky attitude.⁶³⁵ When Soviet Russia signed the 'Non-Aggression Pact' with Germany in 1939, the Kerala Congress Socialist Party leaders wholeheartedly supported it. The national leadership of the Congress Socialist Party opposed this move of Soviet Russia.⁶³⁶

By the beginning of the Second World War in 1939, the leftists decided to quit the Congress Socialist Party and join the Communist Party. Due to the attitude of the Communist Party towards the war, the Communists couldn't continue in Congress or accept the policies of the rightists even temporarily. In the All India Congress Committee meeting held at Wardha in September 1939, Gandhi opposed the opinion of Subhas Bose and Jayaprakash Narayan that 'by taking the war as an opportunity freedom must be achieved through a mass civil disobedience struggle. 'Though the ideas of Gandhi, Bose, and Narayan didn't get unconditional support in the meeting,

⁶³² EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 260.

⁶³³ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, pp. 298-299.

⁶³⁴ *Prabhatham*, 11 July 1938.

⁶³⁵ Pranav Jani, ' Bihar, California, and the US Midwest: The Early Radicalization of Jayaprakash Narayan', in Kama Maclean and J. Daniel Elam(eds.), *Revolutionary Links in South Asia: Acts and Afterlives of Anti-Colonial Political Action*, Routledge, Oxon, 2015.

⁶³⁶ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Communist Party Keralathil*, pp. 103-104.

the Congress was not ready for an immediate civil disobedience struggle as proposed by Bose and Narayan. The Communist approach towards the war was clear. The Communists held the view that the Second World War was an 'imperialist war' and 'the war must be used as an opportunity to win freedom and Britain must be expelled from India by immense popular pressure'⁶³⁷ Immediately after the Wardha AICC meeting, the executive committee of the Congress Socialist Party met at Nagpur but the meeting adjourned without taking any decisions. P. Krishna Pillai and E. MS. Namboodiripad were present at the meeting. Immediately after the meeting, Krishna Pillai went to Bombay and met Communist leaders.⁶³⁸ At that time, the Communist leaders strongly held the position that 'no-compromise with Britain.' K. Damodaran had attended the Anti-Compromise Conference held by Subhas Chandra Bose at Ramgarh.⁶³⁹ Meanwhile, the rightists, who realized that the K. P. C. C was dominated by the left, formed the Kerala Congress Gandhi Sangham in a meeting held at M. P. Govinda Menon's house at Perinthalmanna. K. Kelappan was its president, K. A. Damodara Menon was the secretary, and K. Madhva Menon was the treasurer.⁶⁴⁰ A thesis prepared by K. Damodaran about the situation in international politics was discussed in the sixth conference of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party held at Thalassery, which was presided over by P. Naryanan Nair. The discussions on the thesis held in the meeting reiterated the need for a united front against Fascism and the war.⁶⁴¹

Shri Krishan has pointed out that the Civil Disobedience struggle during 1930-34 created 'a psychic bridge' between the Congress and the masses and to utilize this situation by building an 'organizational bridge' was a major task before the Congress leadership. He adds that in Western India, the organizational links of the Congress spread to villages in the post-Civil Disobedience phase.⁶⁴² The vigour of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar also created enthusiasm in villages. The Congress

⁶³⁷ D. N. Gupta, *Communism and Nationalism in Colonial India, 1939-45*, New Delhi, 2008, pp. 75-81.

⁶³⁸ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 153.

⁶³⁹ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, p. 54.

⁶⁴⁰ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁶⁴¹ *Prabhatham*, 2&6 June 1939.

⁶⁴² Shri Kirshan, *Political Mobilization and Identity in Western India, 1934-47*, New Delhi, 2005, pp. 94-95.

had to spread its organizational links to the villages of Malabar. After 1934, the K. C. S. P activists undertook this task and achieved success. This task was taken up and done by many full time Congress workers who emerged in the politics of Malabar after 1934. Till 1934, the Congress movement was led by a group of leaders, whom the leftists later called as 'Sunday Congressmen.' Most of these leaders were professional lawyers who spent six days a week in the court and took part in the activities of the Congress only on Sundays.⁶⁴³ P. Narayanan Nair gives the following list of full-time Congress workers in Malabar in the post-Civil Disobedience phase: K. V. John and M. V. Devan (Palakkad *Taluk*), E. P. Gopalan, P. V. Kunhunni Nair, K. C. Gopalanunni, Kongassery Krishnan, I. C. P. Namboodiri, A. K. Sekhara Pisharodi, Adakkaputhoor Appukkuttan (Valluvand *Taluk*), P. M. Krishna Menon, Koyakunhi Naha, Edakkodu Muhammad, Sadhu Ahammadkutti, T. Kunhunni (Eranad *Taluk*), T. K. Raman, C. S. Gopalan, Sankaranarayanan(Ponnani *Taluk*), Manju Natha Rao, T. K. Karunan, P. K. Balan(Kozhikode *Taluk*), M. K. Kelu, C. Narayana Kurup, M. Gopala Kurup(Kurumbranad *Taluk*), C. H. Kanaran, K. N. Chtahukkutti, Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair (Kottiyam *Taluk*), Vishnu Bharatheeyan, K. A Keraleeyan, K. P. R. Gopalan, and A. V. Kunhambu(Chirakkal *Taluk*).⁶⁴⁴

The main activity of the full-time workers was enrolling members in the Congress by travelling through villages. The membership campaign was very active in North Malabar, especially in Chirakkal and Kottiyam *taluks*, where the Congress Socialist Party had many leaders and workers.⁶⁴⁵ By 1938-39, the Congress in Malabar became a popular movement with a powerful organizational structure, which had 60, 000 members and 500 village committees⁶⁴⁶. Even the remote villages that didn't have a mere presence of the Congress before 1934 became the strongholds of the Congress Socialist Party and the backbone of the anti-colonial struggle. Karivellur village became a notable example. Mookkapuzha Karthyayani Amma, who came to Payyannur as a *khadi* worker in July 1935 has recounted that that at that time, the people of Karivellur hadn't even heard of the Congress and the Congress led agitations. It was by the

⁶⁴³ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 302.

⁶⁴⁴ P. Naryanan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-102. For the full list see Narayanan Nair's work.

⁶⁴⁵ For the details of the Congress membership campaign led by the leftists in the villages of Malabar see the *Mathrubhumi* daily in 1934-35.

⁶⁴⁶ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, pp. 301-302.

instruction of Karthyayani Amma, a Congress flag was hoisted on the pipal tree in the local temple.⁶⁴⁷ Later the same Karivellur became a bastion of the left movement.

One of the most notable changes in Malabar after 1934 was the formation of a public sphere that encompassed peasants and workers. For Amir Ali, "the present configuration of the public sphere as it is to be found in India was decisively shaped by the experience of British Colonialism and the National Movement that arose in response to it."⁶⁴⁸ The concept of public sphere was popularized in academic circles by Jurgen Habermas. The concepts of 'public sphere', 'private sphere' and 'civil society' which are used by Habermas don't include subaltern classes.⁶⁴⁹ Thus, we can't define the public sphere formed in Malabar after 1934 by using the ideas and definitions of Habermas. 'Counter Public Sphere' is the most suitable term to define the public sphere that was formed in Malabar during the mid-1930s. The colonial society maintained a one-way communication system. The Indian middle class also adopted a one way communicational system to its socially inferior fellow natives.⁶⁵⁰ The peasants and workers needed a communicational style to engage in the public sphere and to communicate to the state and their superior classes. In a study, Mary P. Ryan shows how the women were denied access to the public sphere in the 19th century America and the way the feminist politics countered it by forming an alternative public sphere.⁶⁵¹ As women were treated as an inferior social class in America, we can use the arguments of Mary Ryan to explain the 'counter public sphere' of peasants and workers formed in Malabar after 1934.

In a recent study on the evolution of the public sphere and social spaces in Kerala, S. Harikrishnan explains rural libraries and tea shops as the important spaces of the

⁶⁴⁷ Mookkapuzah Karthyayani Amma, *op. cit.*

⁶⁴⁸ Amir Ali, 'the Evolution of Public Sphere in India', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXVI, no.26, June-July, 2001.

⁶⁴⁹ Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1991(1989).

⁶⁵⁰ Arvind Rajagopal, 'Introduction: The Public sphere India: the Structure and Transformation', in Arvind Rajagopal(ed.), *The Indian Public Sphere: Readings in Media and History*, New Delhi, 2009, p. 7.

⁶⁵¹ Mary P. Ryan, ' Gender and Public Access: Women's Politics in Nineteenth Century America', in Craig Calhoun(ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, Massachusetts, 1996(1992), pp. 259-288.

public sphere in rural Kerala.⁶⁵² After 1934, *vayanashalaka*(reading rooms) became a word that was inextricably linked with the daily life of the peasants and workers. By the activities of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party workers, reading rooms were made as an important public space in rural Malabar. The Kerala Congress Socialist Party decided to open reading rooms attached to every primary Congress committees.⁶⁵³ Reading rooms played a crucial role in the political and cultural transformation of the villages of Malabar. In villages, reading rooms became not only the centre of cultural activities but also of politics. For instance, the *Sri Harshan Vayanashala* was the focal point of cultural activities and politics in Kalliasseri Village. Kalliasseri was the native village of notable Communist leaders, E. K. Nayanar and K. P. R. Gopalan. The *vayanashala* was named after Sri Harshan, a Dalit Congress worker who died in in Kannur Jail. E. K. Nayanar recollects that the *Shri harshan Vayanshala* was the centre of political discussions in Kalliasseri village. Every evening, about thirty people gathered in the reading room.⁶⁵⁴

Cherukad in his novel *Muthassi* depicts how a reading room brings significant social, cultural and political changes in a small village.⁶⁵⁵ In his autobiography, Cherukad also recalls the crucial role played by the reading room in his native village, Pulamanthol in South Malabar in making him a writer and activist. Cherukad says that he became interested in politics by reading newspapers regularly from the reading room and participating in the discussions held there in the evenings.⁶⁵⁶ Many new reading rooms were started in villages by the attempts of the K. C. S. P activists. The reading rooms such as the *Vijnanavardhini Vayanshala* at New Mahe, Public Library at Paral, and *Sree Narayana Guru Vayanashala* at Chokli were started by the attempts of Moyarath Sankaran.⁶⁵⁷ *Shivananda Vayanashala*, *P. K. M Vayanashala* at Parassinikkadavu, and

⁶⁵² S. Harikrishnan, *Social Spaces and the Public Sphere: A Spatial History of Modernity in Kerala*, Oxon, 2023, pp. 110-117.

⁶⁵³ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, p. 302.

⁶⁵⁴ E. K. Nayanar, *My Struggle: An Autobiography*, New Delhi, 1982, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁵⁵ Cherukad, *Muthassi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2018(1957), pp. 126-131.

⁶⁵⁶ Cherukad, *Jeevithapatha*, Thrissur, 2013(1974), p. 131.

⁶⁵⁷ Kuniyil Krishnan, 'Irambunna Smarankal', in *Moyarath Sankaran, Smaranika*, Freedom Fighters Association, Kannur, 2003, p. 57.

Kerala Chandrika at Kodyeri were some other famous reading rooms at that time.⁶⁵⁸ Many important meetings of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party were held in reading rooms. For instance, the people who had attended the first meeting of the Kerala Communist Party held at Pinarayi in December 1939, were asked to come to the *Vivekananda Vayanashala* at Parappuram.⁶⁵⁹ The *Vivekananda Vayanashala* at Parappuram was started by the initiative of N. K. Chahthukutti in September 1934. The *Vayanashala* was inaugurated by Muhammad Abdu Rahman in 1935, the golden jubilee year of the Indian National Congress.⁶⁶⁰ The meeting to discuss plan the protests in the Anti-Repression Day in September 1940 was initially decided to be held at the Kalliasseri *Shri Harshan Vayanshala*.⁶⁶¹ The peasants and workers began to think that they needed a reading room near them. When the *Sree Narayana Beedi Thozhilali Sangham* formed at Thalassery in 1934, its first decision was to start a reading room for the organization.⁶⁶² A *vayanashala* in rural Malabar was different from the reading rooms or libraries in Europe. A *vayanshala* was a small establishment, which didn't even need a building. For instance, Kannan Peruvannan, Patoli Kammaran, Pudukkal Kandankoran, and Payyadakkan Krsihnan started a reading room on the veranda of a house at Cherumoola.⁶⁶³ By the initiative of K. Damodran and some other K. C. S. P activists, a 'Malabar Reading Rooms and Libraries Conference' was held in Kozhikode in June 1937. The conference was presided over by K. Kelappan. The Conference was resolved to form an All Malabar Reading Room and Library Association and a committee was appointed with K. Damodaran as the secretary.⁶⁶⁴

Chayakkadakkal (local tea shops) became an important space of the 'counter-public sphere' in Malabar. A tea shop was a space where the lower-class people gathered. For A. R. Venkatachalapathy, hotels were associated with the middle class and tea

⁶⁵⁸ Andalat, C. H. *Kanaran: Kaalam Varthedutha Rashtreeya Prathibha*, p.69; Kaviyoor Rajagopalan, *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

⁶⁵⁹ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 154.

⁶⁶⁰ Geetha Nazeer, Balaram Enna Manushyan, Kozhikode, 2019, p. 37

⁶⁶¹ E. K. Nayanar, *My Struggle*.

⁶⁶² G. D. Nair, *Malabarile Trade Union Prasthanam*, Payyannur, 2004, p. 49.

⁶⁶³ Kannan Peruvannan, *Chilambitta Ormakal: Theyyakkarantha Katha Theyyattathinteyum*, Ernakulam, 1997, p. 77.

⁶⁶⁴ C. I. D report on the Formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party and its Activities, HFM, Vol.101, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai

shops with the lower classes.⁶⁶⁵ The activities in a tea shop were not just limited to the drinking of tea. Relevant political discussions were held there. In villages, tea shops were places where villagers gathered, interacted, and discussed politics.⁶⁶⁶ Scene 2 of K. Damodran's play *Pattabakki* is set in the background of tea shop. In this scene Muhammad, a friend of Kittunni, the hero of the play tells Kittunni about the significance of the establishment of a Socialist society.⁶⁶⁷ Most of the local tea shop owners in Malabar were the supporters of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party. The local tea shop owners backed the workers' strikes in Kozhikode.⁶⁶⁸ For two to three years during his young age, P. Krishna Pillai worked in a tea shop near Vaikkom temple.⁶⁶⁹ The tea shops in villages were the gathering places and shelters of the K. C. S. P workers. Madathil Appu, the Kayyur martyr had tea shop on the river bank.⁶⁷⁰ During the underground life, Communist leaders chose tea shops as their shelters. The main shelter of E. K. Nayanar and K. Madhavan during their underground life was a tea shop in Madikkai village.⁶⁷¹

The K. C. S. P activists had to equip the peasants and workers to engage in the middle class. For this, they had to teach the peasants and workers, most of whom were illiterate to read and write. As the people who were working during day, the peasants and workers couldn't attend classes during day. Thus, night schools were started for peasants and workers. The night school started for workers near First Gate, Kozhikode was inaugurated by K. P. Gopalan in April 1934. Classes were held there for workers from six to seven in the evening.⁶⁷² K. Damodaran was a teacher in the night school.⁶⁷³ Then, night schools were started for peasants in villages.⁶⁷⁴ Study classes were given for K. C. S. P workers on Sundays at the union office in Second Gate, Kozhikode. In a study class held in July 1935, A. K. Pillai gave a class on the subject 'the History of the

⁶⁶⁵ A. R. Venkatachalapathy, *In Those Days There was no Coffee: Writings in Cultural History*, New Delhi, 2006.

⁶⁶⁶ Dilip M. Menon, 'From Pleasure to Taboo: Drinking and Society in Kerala', *India International Centre Quarterly*, VOLXXII, no.2/3(Summer-Monsoon), 1995

⁶⁶⁷ K. Damodaran, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

⁶⁶⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, p. 80.

⁶⁶⁹ T. V. K, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁶⁷⁰ E. KNayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015(1994), p. 23

⁶⁷¹ K. Madhavan, *Op. cit.*, pp. 167-168.

⁶⁷² Andalath(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. I, p. 247.

⁶⁷³ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, p. 79.

⁶⁷⁴ *Parbatham*, 7 November, 1938.

Indian National Congress. 'In the study classes held in August 1934, there were classes by P. Krishna Pillai on the topic 'The History of Revolutionary Movement in India' and by P. Narayanan Nair on the topic 'the American War of Independence and the French Revolution.'⁶⁷⁵

Differences in the way the leftists and rightists spent their time revealed their political style and orientation. For instance, K. Kelappan, who was detained in the Amaravati Jail during the Quit India Movement in 1942 spent time by spinning yarn and reading books.⁶⁷⁶ N. E. Balaram, a notable Communist leader, when he was suffering imprisonment in Bellary Jail in 1937, taught Moola Pokkan, a poor peasant from Pazhassi, who was his co-prisoner in the jail to read and write. Within ten days Pokkan began to read *Adhyathma Ramayanam*.⁶⁷⁷ Such incidents are depicted in Niranjana's novel *Chirasmarana*. Every evening, the hero of the novel, who is called as 'Master' reads newspaper to local peasants, who gather on the school verandah. To stop this, the landlord Nambiar requests Master give tuition to his son in the evenings. The landlord also advises Master to engage in leisure activities such as badminton, hunting, and rummy during his free time. Due to the opposition of Nambiar, who is also the manager of the school the newspaper reading is shifted to the house of Koran, a local peasant.⁶⁷⁸

The active involvement in the public sphere became a relief for the peasants from mental and physical stress. Thus, they used every space where they got together as platforms to gather knowledge and political consciousness. In a study on the *addas* in Colonial Calcutta, Dipesh Chakrabarty shows how the little social life of Bengalis led to the formation of *addas* among them.⁶⁷⁹ Beedi workers found time to read newspapers and magazines while they were working. For this they devised a technique. The beedi workers entrusted a worker among them to read newspapers and magazines to them. He would read the newspapers and magazines to the workers while they were

⁶⁷⁵ Andalat(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. II, pp. 222-223.

⁶⁷⁶ K. A. Damodara Menon, 'Kelappan: Aadharshanishtanaya Nethavu', in *Kelappan Smaraka Visheshal Prathi*, Gandhi Peace Foundation, Kozhiokde, 1975, p. 35.

⁶⁷⁷ Geetha Nazeer, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

⁶⁷⁸ Niranjana, *Chirasmarana*, Translated by C. Balan, Payyannur, 2015, pp.67-75.

⁶⁷⁹ "Adda is the practice of friends getting together for long, informal, and unrigorous conversations". Adda is associated with the middle class. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Post Colonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton, 2000, pp. 180-231.

working. His work would be completed by all other workers. Due to poverty, C. Kannan, a Communist leader was forced to leave school in fourth standard and to work in a beedi company. The joint reading of books, newspapers, and magazines in the Beedi company gave C. Kannan political consciousness and a good amount of general knowledge. The beedi company was also a study centre for C. Kannan.⁶⁸⁰

Organizing public meetings and conferences was a method used by the Kerala Congress Socialist Party to mobilize the peasants and workers. The party needed suitable spaces to hold meetings and conferences. The places in villages suitable for holding public meetings and conferences of peasants were controlled by local landlords while in towns the suitable places to hold the meetings and conferences of workers were under the control of the government. The local landlords didn't allot the places under their control to use as the venue of the meetings and conferences of the *karshakasanhgams*.⁶⁸¹ In towns, the government obstructed the use of public spaces by declaring 144.⁶⁸² However, the K. C. S. P leaders organized meetings and conferences to overcome all these.

The entry of a new section into the public sphere will also be reflected in print media as new newspapers and magazines will appear to address the new comers. Women magazines were part of the counter public sphere formed by women in 19th century America.⁶⁸³ *Prabhatham*, which restarted publication in early 1938 addressed the interests and aspirations of the peasants and workers. Though the *Prabhatham* didn't have a good printing or attractive layout it gained a good readership by the wholehearted support of the peasants and workers.⁶⁸⁴ Publishing handwritten magazines was a technique used to mobilize students.⁶⁸⁵ When he was young, E. K.

⁶⁸⁰ G. D. Nair, *C. Kannan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, pp. 19-24.

⁶⁸¹ Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-76.

⁶⁸² A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, pp. 98-99.

⁶⁸³ Mary P. Ryan, 'Gender and Public Access: Women's Politics in Nineteenth Century America', in Craig Calhoun(ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, pp. 272-273.

⁶⁸⁴ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshkal*, p. 16.

⁶⁸⁵ Imbichi Bava, 'Keralthile Vidyarthi Prasthanathinte Aadyanaalukal', in I. V. Das(ed.), *Porattathinte Jeeitha Rekhakal*, p. 257.

Nayanar published poems and articles in the handwritten magazine started by Kalliasseri Sri Harshan Vayanashala.⁶⁸⁶

Sports was used as a technique to mobilize the youth. Many of the leaders of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party were excellent sportsmen. C. H. Kanaran was a good football player, while studying at the BEMP School.⁶⁸⁷ K. P. R. Gopalan was player of the local football team of Kannur.⁶⁸⁸ In 1935, Kalliasseri Sri Harshan Vayanashala organized football and volleyball tournaments as part of the golden jubilee celebrations of the Congress.⁶⁸⁹ A. V. Kunhambu was a good football player. He realized the importance of sports in mobilizing the youth. He set up a local football team known as 'Bhagat Memorial Team' in Karivellur. Kanhirapuzha Krishanan Nair, C. V. Kunhiraman, Sadananda Pai (captain), A. V. Kunhambu (centre forward) were members of the team.⁶⁹⁰ M. Kumaran Master, a leader of the Communist Party and the teachers' movement in Kurumbranadu Taluk was a good volleyball player.⁶⁹¹

The most widely and commonly used technique of mobilization was *Jatha*. The kisan marches organized by the All India Kisan Sabha during 1937-38 politically awakened the countryside of India.⁶⁹² Likewise, the *jathas* organized by *karshaka sanghams* during 1934-40 created a new wave of enthusiasm in the villages in the villages of Malabar. *Jatha* was not an invention of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in politics. By comparing *jathas* with the religious procession to shines, Dilip Menon emphasizes the cultural aspect of *jatha*.⁶⁹³ The people of Malabar were familiar with *jathas* even before 1934. The concept of *jatha* was introduced in villages by the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by K. Kelappan in 1930.⁶⁹⁴ The Salt *Satyagraha Jatha*, which started from Kozhikode Town and reached Payyannur by touching different villages created great

⁶⁸⁶ E. K. Nayanar, *My Struggle*, pp. 8-9.

⁶⁸⁷ Andalat, C. H. Kanaran: *Kaalam Varthedutha Rashtreeya Prathibha*, p. 15.

⁶⁸⁸ Anil Kumar A. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 247-248.

⁶⁸⁹ E. K. Nayanar, *My Struggle*, p. 9.

⁶⁹⁰ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-136.

⁶⁹¹ T. K. Vijayaraghavan, *Oru Communist Karmayogi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2021, pp. 23-24.

⁶⁹² AKG, *Indian Karshakaprasthanathinte Charithram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2022(1961), p. 24.

⁶⁹³ Dilip M. Menon, 'Conjunctural Community: Communism in Malabar, 1934-1948', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXVII, no.51/53, December, 1992.

⁶⁹⁴ K. Gopalankutty, 'Jatha as a Technique of Political Mobilization: The Case of Malabar, 194-40', *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. XL, 1979.

enthusiasm in the villages of Malabar.⁶⁹⁵ Thus, there was no need to introduce the concept of *jatha* to the people of Malabar. Though *jathas* were mostly used in peasant agitations and to mobilize the peasants, *jathas* were used in the agitations of other groups as well. For instance, when a conference of the Elementary Teachers Union was held at Ottapalam on 29, 30 December, a *jatha* of more than 100 teachers led by T. C. Narayanan Nambiar from Kannur to Ottapalam was organized as party of it. The *jatha* reached Ottapalam by travelling on foot through the villages of Malabar.⁶⁹⁶ It was easy to bring the people with the same grievances, interests, and goals in a *jatha*. K. Damodaran organized a *jatha* of the company workers in Kozhikode Town, who had lost their jobs. The slogan of the *jatha* was *Thozhil Nashtpettavarkku Ivide Viplavam Thozhil* (Revolution is the job of those who had lost their jobs here).⁶⁹⁷

Jathas were notable for two things. The distance covered and the number of participants. In the long *jathas*, the number of participants was limited but the local *jathas* organized in villages, which covered a short distance showed strength by huge number of participants. For instance, when the leftists decided to organize a *Pattini Jatha* (Hunger March) from Kannur to Madras in July 1936, it was decided to limit the number of members in the *jatha* between 40-50.⁶⁹⁸ The organizers of the *Pattini Jatha* claimed that the *jatha* would travel more than 500 miles on foot.⁶⁹⁹ At last, the *Pattini Jatha* was started under the leadership of A. K. Gopalan with 28 members.⁷⁰⁰ *Jathas* created excitement throughout the area it travelled and among the people of the area. Because of the enthusiasm created by the slogans of the *jathas* and speeches during the *jathas*, new people joined the *jathas* on the way. Kannan Peruvannan, a Teyyam performer recalls that even though he was not a peasant, he joined in a *jatha* of peasants led by A. V. Kunhambu to Chirakkal Kovilakam in 1938. At that time, people gathered to watch and receive *jathas*.⁷⁰¹

⁶⁹⁵ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 151-160.

⁶⁹⁶ C. Bhaskaran and G. D. Nair, *Keralathile Adhyapaka Prasthanam: Oru Charithram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2006, p. 79.

⁶⁹⁷ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, p. 32.

⁶⁹⁸ *Mathrubhumi*, 30 May 1936.

⁶⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 18 June 1936.

⁷⁰⁰ K. Gopalankutty, 'AKG and the Mobilization of the Unemployed' in *Indian History Congress 80th Session Souvenir*, Kannur University, 2019, p. 29.

⁷⁰¹ Kannan Peruvannan, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

Jathas had two main targets. The first target was the colonial government. The second target varied according to the nature of the *jatha*. The target of a *jatha* of peasants was the landlord while the target of the *jatha* of workers was the capitalist. The *Pattini Jatha* was organized against the colonial British Government. Thus, the government keenly watched the progress of the *jatha* at every stage.⁷⁰² The technique that giving petitions to *janmis* by going as *jathas* was widely used by the peasant movement during this period.⁷⁰³ The organizers tried to bring all the tenants of a *janmi* in such *jathas*. In 1936, A. K. Gopalan led a *jatha* of the tenants of Kottayam Raja to Kottayam Kovilakam. All the tenants of Kottayam Raja was in the *jatha* and when the *jatha* reached Kovilakam, Raja said to A. K. Gopalan: 'Gopala...I haven't had an opportunity to meet all my tenants together. I am glad that you arranged such an occasion.'⁷⁰⁴ There is a leader for *Jatha* and a *jatha* will be known in the name of the leader who leads it. A. K. Gopalan had a special skill in organizing and leading *jathas*. In this period, A. Gopalan led many *jathas* including two long marches, the *Pattini Jatha* and *Tiruvitamkur Jatha*.⁷⁰⁵ The *jathas* led by him played a crucial role in making A. K. Gopalan as one of the most popular political leaders of Keralam.

Holding massive conferences known as *sammelanangal* of peasants and workers was an important technique of mobilization used during this period. Though this technique was commonly used by peasants and workers, it was used more effectively by *karshaka sanghams*. The venues of peasant conferences were in villages while the workers conferences were held in towns. Mridula Mukherjee has pointed out that organizing conferences became the important strategy of peasant politics in India after 1934. Mukherjee says that there was a huge increase in the number of people attracted by a conference and the number of participants in a peasant conference during this period was often 20, 000 to 30, 000.⁷⁰⁶ By the initiative of the All Malabar Karshaka Sangham, village conferences, joint village conferences and *taluk* conferences of peasants were held regularly during this period. During January -May 1939, 33

⁷⁰² Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of July 1936, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁷⁰³ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-116.

⁷⁰⁴ Interview with C. Rairu Nair (98), Thalassrey, 8.4.2018.

⁷⁰⁵ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*.

⁷⁰⁶ Mridula Mukherjee, *Peasant in India's Non-Violent Revolution: Practice and Theory*, New Delhi, 2004, pp. 140-143.

village conferences of peasants were held. The number of people who had attended the *Taluk* peasant conferences held during January-May 1939 were between 5, 000 to 10, 000. The Blathur-Kodakkad Peasant Conference was attended by 15, 000 people.⁷⁰⁷ It was during this period the word *sammelanam* became popular in the villages of Malabar.⁷⁰⁸

Picketing was a form of protest that was widely used by the trade union movement during this period. Picketing was used as an important form of protest in the protests organized by the teachers movement.⁷⁰⁹ However, Vishnu Bharatheeyan recalls an incident when picketing was used in a protest organized by the *Karshaka Sangham*. In 1937, *Karshaka Sangham* leaders gave a petition to the Namboodiri landlord in Kolacheri village on behalf of the local people requesting the landlord that to allot a 50 acres land in his ownership for a public grazing ground in the village. The landlord refused the request and leased the land to a man named Pappiniyan Tharuvvayi. Then the *Karshaka Sangham* started a mass picketing in the land. More than 100 people participated in the picketing led by K. A. Keraleeyan, K. P. R. Gopalan, and Vishnu Bharatheeyan. The picketing was successful as Tharuvvayi backed off from his decision.⁷¹⁰

Bhagwan Josh argues that “another point about the Kerala Socialists was their attitude towards Gandhi. Gandhi and Gandhi’s ideas were even criticized but due respect was paid to him as a national leader and at times his authority was recognized.”⁷¹¹ K. Gopalankutty has argued that that Josh’s assumption that the Kerala Congress Socialists had a positive attitude towards Gandhi is wrong.⁷¹² However, though the approach of the Kerala Congress Socialists was class oriented, the methods of agitation adopted by them were Gandhian. K. P. Gopalan, an important leftist leader went on a hunger strike at Malabar Tile Works, Feroke from 27 January to 6 February 1935. The aim of his hunger strike was to make a change in the mindset of the tile factory owner,

⁷⁰⁷ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.* pp. 79-80.

⁷⁰⁸ Kannan Peruvannan, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75.

⁷⁰⁹ Thikkodian, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

⁷¹⁰ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-92.

⁷¹¹ Bhagwan Josh, ‘Understanding Indian Communists: A Survey of Approaches to the Study of the Communist Movement in India, 1920-47’, in Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and Romila Thapar(eds.), *Situating Indian History*, p. 326.

⁷¹² K. Gopalankutty, ‘The Task of Transforming the Congress: Malabar, 1934-40’.

who was holding an anti-worker attitude. *Mathrubhumi*, a mouthpiece of the rightists in the Congress supported Gopalan's strike.⁷¹³ Organized strikes of workers began in Malabar during this period. However, the K. C. S. P leaders adopted a strategy that opposed indefinite strikes and they preferred to end the strikes by accepting the concessions offered by capitalists. In 1937, during the workers' strike in the Commonwealth Factory, Kannur, at a certain stage of the strike, Krishna Pillai asked the workers to end the strike. His instruction infuriated the workers and they even said that Krishna Pillai was saying so by taking bribes from the *Sayippu*. During the strike of the beedi workers in 1939, Krishna Pillai instructed the beedi workers to stop the strike by accepting the petty concessions offered by the beedi company owners.⁷¹⁴ Krishna Pillai realized that the trade union movement in Keralam was in its formative stage and the workers were not prepared for indefinite strikes. Krishna Pillai was also influenced by the factor that he and the Congress Socialist Party was working in the Congress.

Krishna Pillai adopted a similar approach during the agitations of peasants. In 1937, the tenants of Kalliattu Nambiar and Karakkattidam Nayanar decided to start a no-rent movement. To discuss about this, a meeting of the *Karshaka Sangham* was held at Kadambari Elementary School. P. Krishna Pillai, K. P. R. Gopalan, K. A. Keraleeyan, and Vishnu Bahratheeyan attended the meeting. In the meeting, Krishna Pillai opposed the decision of the tenants to begin the no-rent movement.⁷¹⁵ Social boycotting was another form of agitation adopted by the peasants against the landlords. As part of social boycotting washermen, barbers, and domestic servants boycotted *janmi* houses. Gandhi introduced boycotting as a form of agitation.⁷¹⁶ However, Gandhi was against social boycott and promoted only political boycott.⁷¹⁷ Here not the colonial government but landlords were the target of the boycott.

A statement published by P. Krishna Pillai as *Keralathile Congressukarodu*(To the Congressmen of Keralam) in July 1934, revealed the attitude of the K. C. S. P to Gandhi

⁷¹³ P. C. S ukumaran Nair and P. M. Sudhakaran, *Mathrubhumiude Charithram(Samgraham)*, Kozhikode, 2000, pp. 137-138.

⁷¹⁴ Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, pp. 137-138.

⁷¹⁵ T. V. K, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

⁷¹⁶ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

⁷¹⁷ Ranajit Guha, *Dominance without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*, Harvard University Press, pp. 122-131.

and Gandhism. The blind loyalty to Gandhism was criticized by Krishna Pillai. Though Krishna Pillai accepted the crucial role played by Gandhi and Gandhism in transforming the National Movement into a popular movement, he remarked that 'the ability of Gandhi and Gandhism to lead a popular movement is over.'⁷¹⁸ Though the K. C. S. P broke ideologically from Gandhism, as a group working in the Congress the K. C. S. P followed the Gandhian strategy and method of agitation. However, the ideology of the K. C. S. P was evident in the goals and approach of the party. For instance, during this period, the *Karshaka Sangham* adopted the slogan *janmitham nashikkatte* (Let the Landlordism Perish). Notably, in his autobiography, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati recalls that he started to raise the slogan 'the Zamindari system must go' only after he became a leftist in 1934.⁷¹⁹

The practice of starting volunteer camps and summer schools for selected party workers was introduced in Malabar by Gandhian Congressmen during the Non-Cooperation Movement in 190-22. The K. C. S. P organized a summer school and volunteer training camp for its workers. A 28-day summer school was organized at Mankada-Pallippuram from 8 May to 5 June 1939.⁷²⁰ The syllabus of the summer school disclosed its left orientation. Unlike the early political schools organized by the Gandhian Congressmen, Gandhism was not taught as a separate topic in the summer school and no classes were given for spinning on the *charkha*. Apart from the students recommended by the Congress committees the students recommended by the All Malabar Karshaka Sangham, trade unions, Student Federation, and *Abhinav Bharat Yuvak Sangham* were admitted in the summer school. There were classes on the subjects, Economics, Indian History, and World History in the summer school. The subject World History was handled by K. Damodaran. On the last day of the summer school, the students were asked to write essays on the topic the poverty in India, United Front, and, world war.⁷²¹ The volunteer training camp of the K. P. C. C. was conducted at *Shakthimandiram*, Thikkodi. Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair, a notable K. C.

⁷¹⁸ P. Krishna Pillai, 'Keralathile Congressukarodu', in Andalath(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. II, pp. 218-219.

⁷¹⁹ Sahajanand Saraswati, *The Struggle of My Life: Autobiography of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati*, Translated and Edited by Ramchandra Pradhan, New Delhi, 2018, pp. 281-282.

⁷²⁰ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

⁷²¹ *Prabhatham*, 19 June 1939.

S. P leader, who was also an ex-servicemen led the volunteer training. The training was in military style and uniform.⁷²² Thikkodian recount that during the days of the training, local villagers used to come to watch the training. Some of the villagers often asked: 'why the merciful King George doesn't ban this training.'⁷²³

It was during this period that an organization was formed in Keralam exclusively for writers. Under the leadership of famous Indian writers such as Prem Chand, Sajjad Zaheer, Mulk Raj Anand, and Rashid Khan the All India Progressive Writers Association (AIWPA) was formed at Lucknow in April 1936. The AIWPA was formed by the strong influence of the left ideology, which was gaining strength in India.⁷²⁴ Following the model of AIWPA, a *Jeevalsahithya Sammelanam*(Living Literature Conference) which was presided over by Vidwan A. D. Hari Sharma held at Thrissur in 1937. Notable Congress leaders from Malabar such as E. M. S. Namboodiripad, K. A. Damodara Menon, K. Damodaran, and T. Subramanian Tirumumbu attended the conference. K. Damodaran's famous plays *Pattabakki* and *Rakthapanam*, which were strongly influenced by the Living Literature Movement played a crucial role in mobilizing peasants and workers to the left politics.⁷²⁵

Apart from plays, songs were widely used to mobilize the peasants and workers. Songs written by K. A. Keraleeyan, K. P. R. Gopalan, Subramanian Tirumumbu, and K. P. G. Namboodiri were published in the *Prabhatham*.⁷²⁶ The songs simply explained complex ideas to peasants and workers. For instance, the songs *Kollakkola* and *Vayalppattu* by K. A. Keraleeyan simply narrated the economic exploitation by the British and landlords.⁷²⁷ Songs were sung in the *jathas*. *Pattini Pattukal*(Hunger Songs) were written to use in the *Pattini Jatha*.⁷²⁸ The song writers wrote songs in popular tunes. Robert Darnton in his study on the poetry and political expression in 18th century Paris shows how the combination of lyrics and music was used to express

⁷²² Thikkodian, *op. cit.* , p. 137.

⁷²³ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁷²⁴ Talat Ahmed, *Literature and Politics in the Age of Nationalism: The Progressive Episode in South Asia, 1932-56*, Oxfordshire, , 2019, pp. 11-41.

⁷²⁵ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, pp. 43-49.

⁷²⁶ See the issues of *Prabhatham* in 1939-39.

⁷²⁷ K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, Kozhikode, 2014.

⁷²⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, p. 92.

multiple meanings.⁷²⁹ *Pattini Pattukal* were written in the tunes of the popular Hindi songs of that time.⁷³⁰

D. N. Dhanagare has pointed out that the leaders of the All India Kisan Sabha” came from either well-to-do middle peasants or the urban middle-class professionals, intelligentsia and politicians.”⁷³¹ For Dilip Menon, the leaders of the *Karshaka Sangham* in North Malabar were the members of prominent landowning Nair families.⁷³² Though many of the leaders of the left movement in Malabar were members of prominent landowning families, the people of the lower classes and lower middle class also emerged as the leaders of the peasant and trade union movements in Malabar. A. V. Kunhambu, the most important leader of the *Karshaka Sangham* in Chirakkal *Taluk* belonged to the class of rural poor.⁷³³ M. K. Kelu, the leader of the peasant movement in Kurumbarand *Taluk* was born in a poor Nair family in Vadakara. He also hailed from the class of rural poor.⁷³⁴ Azheekodan Raghavan, who began his political career as leader of the beedi workers was born in 1919 in a poor working class family in Kannur Town.⁷³⁵ C. Kannan, a notable trade union leader from North Malabar entered left politics as a leader of the beedi workers in Kannur. Kannan was born in 1910 in a poor family in Kannur.⁷³⁶

The leftists succeeded in forming a united front of the masses including the peasants and workers. Peasants supported workers during their strikes.⁷³⁷ During this period, wide popular support was the factor behind the success of many campaigns and protests. For instance, though teachers school teachers were a small section, their protests and campaigns became successful due to the support of the masses.⁷³⁸

⁷²⁹ Robert Darnton, *Poetry and the Political Communication Network in 18th Century Paris*, Massachusetts, 2010.

⁷³⁰ Interview with Neeni Keraleeyan(65), Kozhikode, 20.12.2019.

⁷³¹ D. N. Danaghare, 'The Politics of Survival: Peasant Organizations and the Left Wing in India, 1925-46', in K. N. Panikkar(ed.), *National and Left Movements in India*, pp. 102-103.

⁷³² Dilip M. Menon, 'Conjunctural Community'.

⁷³³ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*

⁷³⁴ K. V. Kunhiraman, *Kelu Ettan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, pp. 17-18.

⁷³⁵ Andalath(ed.), *Ranabhoomiyil Ninnu: Azheekoden Raghavante Lekhanangalum Anusmaranakkurippukalum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2023, pp. 15-16.

⁷³⁶ G. D. Nair, C. Kannan.

⁷³⁷ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-132.

⁷³⁸ C. Bhaskaran and G. D. Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

When the war began in 1939, a change in the strategy and forms of agitation became inevitable. Anti-war speeches, anti-recruitment demonstrations, and writing anti-war slogans on the walls were the most important forms of protest during the war.⁷³⁹ Though the leaders of the Communist Party adopted the tactic of evading arrests, the Communists were active in the campaign of writing anti-war slogans on government buildings and on the walls in public places. They wrote anti-war slogans even on the walls of police stations and on police vehicles.⁷⁴⁰ The Communist leaders such as A. V. Kunhambu took part actively in the anti-recruitment and anti-war fund campaigns.⁷⁴¹ As a secret organization, the Communist Party used writing on walls as an important form of campaign. On 26 January 1940, the slogans *Communist Party Zindabad*, *Viplavam Jayikkatte* (Let the Revolution Win), *Saamrajyatham Nashikkattte* (Let the Landlordism Perish) appeared on the public walls all over in North Malabar. It was by these slogans the people got informed about the formation of the Communist Party.⁷⁴²

3.14. Memories of the 1921 Rebellion and the Nationalist Muslim Politics

K. N. Panikkar has rightly pointed out that the Malabar Rebellion in 1921-22 alienated the Mappila Muslims from the Congress-led National Movement. He says that “the loss of credibility and influence of the Congress” among the Mappilas was a consequence of the rebellion.⁷⁴³ The Mappilas lost faith in local Congress leaders, who did nothing to help them when they were in extreme distress and brutally tortured by the police and troops. The relief and reconstruction activities led by the Congress avoided the Mappilas and concentrated on Hindus. Consequently, as observed by Panikkar, “Mappilas began to identify the Congress with Hindus.”⁷⁴⁴ The attitude and approach of the national leadership of the Congress to the rebellion was similar to local Congress leadership. The Congress session held in Ahmedabad in December 1921 resolved that “the Malabar rebellion was not caused by the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement, and the causes of the rebellion had nothing to do with these

⁷³⁹ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of January 1941, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁷⁴⁰ P. K. Krishnan, ‘Yathankal Niranja Naalukal’, *CPI Kannur Jila Sammelana Souevenir*, Thalassery, 2002.

⁷⁴¹ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 199-209.

⁷⁴² T. V. K., *op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁷⁴³ K. N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State*, pp. 188-189.

⁷⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

movements.”⁷⁴⁵ The alienation of the Muslims from the Congress in the post-Non-Co-operation period was not a political change that happened only in Malabar. After the Non-Co-operation Movement, Muslims were alienated from the Congress all over India. Even the Ali Brothers, the leaders of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement became anti-Congress. At this juncture in Indian politics, a new category of politicians known as ‘Nationalist Muslims’ emerged in Indian politics. Mushirul Hasan explains this process. Hasan says that the *Khilafat* Movement gave the Congress many of its ‘future stalwarts.’⁷⁴⁶ Hasan defines the nationalist Muslims that ‘men like Ansari, Ajmal Khan, Azad, A. M. Khawja, T. A. K. Sherwani, Asaf Ali, and Syed Mahmud were identified as “Nationalist Muslims” as opposed to the anti-Congress group led by the Ali Brothers.”⁷⁴⁷

The Muslim politics in India during the colonial rule was very complex as it had multiple aspects and dimensions. Because, apart from the Congress and Muslim League, Indian Muslims had several other political affiliations. For Peter Hardy, Indian Muslims had a strong tendency to be represented by their provincial Muslim parties.⁷⁴⁸ Thus, we should consider all these factors while analyzing the Nationalist Muslim politics in Malabar. The life and politics of a Nationalist Muslim leader were different from a Muslim League leader. The life of a Nationalist Muslim was eventful with imprisonments, lathi charges, active participation in anti-colonial agitations, and sacrifices for the country. Let us take the cases of Maulana Azad and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad spent seven years and eight months in prison for his active involvement in the freedom struggle. Azad spent one-seventh of his 53 years life in jail.⁷⁴⁹ But we can’t see the episodes like this in Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s biography. During 1930-33, the years of India’s mass civil disobedience struggle against

⁷⁴⁵ M. G. angadharan, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

⁷⁴⁶ Mushirul Hasan(ed.), *Muslims and the Congress: Select Correspondence of Dr. M. A. Ansari, 1912-1935*, New Delhi, 1960.

⁷⁴⁷ Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1916-1928*, New Delhi, 1979, p. 199.

⁷⁴⁸ Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge, 1972, p. 225. For a better understanding about the shifts in Muslim thought and politics under the colonial rule in India see Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850*, London, 2000. Ayesha’s study focuses on Punjab.

⁷⁴⁹ S. Irfan Habib , *Maulana Azad: A Life*, New Delhi, 2023, pp. 177-178.

Britain, Jinnah was in London.⁷⁵⁰ Muhammad Abdu Rahman was only 47 when died in 1945. In his life, from October 1921-August 1923, from May-December 1930, and from July 1940-September 1945, Maummad Abdu Rahman was in jail. Abdu Rahman's last imprisonment lasted for 62 months.⁷⁵¹

Similar to other regions of India, in Malabar, the notable Muslim Congress leaders including Muhammad Abdu Rahman, E. Moidu Maulavi, and T. Hasan Koya Molla entered the Congress-led National Movement during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement. After the end of the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement, they remained in Congress as the Nationalist Muslim group in it. Gyanendra Pandey writes that except NWFP, the Muslim participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement was 'disappointingly small.'⁷⁵² The Indian Muslims in their stereotypical images of Indian Muslims in colonial and post-colonial India are portrayed as an antagonist of the Congress-led National Movement. However, for Mushirul Hasan, Pandey's preposition is untenable and the Muslim Participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement was 'by no means inconsiderable.'⁷⁵³ Due to the fear of the recurrence of the rebellion, unlike the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement, mobilizing the Mappila Muslims was not a goal of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Thus, the preparatory campaigns of the Civil Disobedience Movement were limited to North Malabar and Kozhikode *Taluk* and the Mappila-dominated *Taluks* were excluded from this campaign.⁷⁵⁴ However, the Mappila Muslim leaders of the Congress including Muhammad Abdu Rahman, E. Moidu Maulavi, Hasan Koya Molla, and Ponmadath Moideen Koya took up the leadership of the Civil Disobedience campaign, courted arrest by performing *satyagraha*, and suffered imprisonment.⁷⁵⁵

In the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930, Muhammad Abdu Rahman had some doubts about the large scale participation of the Mappilas in the movement. Abdu Rahman knew that in that situation 'Mappilas, who didn't survive

⁷⁵⁰ Stanley Wolepert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, Oxford, 1984.

⁷⁵¹ M. Rasheed, *Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*.

⁷⁵² Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, New Delhi, 2010(1990), p. 243.

⁷⁵³ Mushirul Hasan, *Moderate or Militant: Images of India's Muslims*, New Delhi, 2014(2008), p.68.

⁷⁵⁴ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-145.

⁷⁵⁵ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*; P. P. Ummer Koya, *Op. cit.*

the trauma caused by the brutal violence unleashed by police and troops during the rebellion couldn't face another *police raj*. ' In a statement published as *Ente Kadama* (My Duty) on 29 April 1930, Abdu Rahman said that he was induced by three factors to join the Civil disobedience Movement: the desire for freedom, commitment to the country, and the devotion to religious freedom.⁷⁵⁶ The entry of Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who was influential and popular among the people in Kozhikode Town gave a new vigour to the Civil Disobedience Movement. Abdu Rahman played a leading role in the Salt *Satyagraha* campaign held at Kozhikode Beach on 12 May 1930, which became a significant event in the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar. The planning of the campaign of 12 May took place at Al Ameen Lodge, under the proprietorship Abdu Rahman.⁷⁵⁷ The government began attempts to use the anti-Congress section of the Mappilas to crush the Civil Disobedience Movement. There were attempts from Pookkoya Thanagal, a prominent Mappila in Kozhikode Town and his supporters to obstruct the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by Kelappan.⁷⁵⁸ When the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* was passing through the Muslim areas, the pro-British loyal Mappilas attempted to obstruct the *jatha*. The government used anti-Congress and loyal Mappilas to disrupt and mess up the public meetings organized by the Congress during the Civil Disobedience campaign.⁷⁵⁹ However, The Nationalist Muslims under the leadership of Muhammad Abdu Rahman countered all these moves of the government. Abdu Rahman used the Civil Disobedience Movement as an opportunity to bring back the Mappila Muslims into the National Movement. Though Abdu Rahman's leadership attracted the Mappila youth to the Civil disobedience campaign, the overall participation of the Mappila Muslims in the Civil Disobedience Movement was small. India's anti-colonial struggle was symbolic. We should analyze an anti-colonial agitation not by the number of participants in it but by its impact on the colonial state and the masses. The incidents of 12 May, in which Muhammad Abdu Rahman had a leading role became crucial in transforming the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar into a campaign that got nationwide attention. The courage

⁷⁵⁶ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, pp. 159-161.

⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

⁷⁵⁸ Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁷⁵⁹ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, pp. 154-158; E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, pp. 156-159.

expressed by Abdu Rahman during the brutal lathi charges at Kozhikode Beach on 12 May created great excitement among the people and helped the Civil Disobedience Movement to gain public sympathy.

A resolution was passed in the Fifth Kerala Provincial Conference held at Vadakara in May 1931 praising Muhammad Abdu Rahman and E. Moidu Maulavi and stating that they were the real reason for the success of the Salt *Satyagraha* campaign in Keralam.⁷⁶⁰ The resolution was moved by Kozhippurathu Madhava Menon. While presenting the resolution, Madhava Menon said that the situation that even K. Kelappan couldn't speak in a public meeting at Kozhikode Beach changed after the entry of Abdu Rahman and Moidu Maulavi. Menon further explained that the act of the police, who squeezed Muhammad Abdu Rahman's neck with lathis during the lathi charges on 12 May created strong anti-British feelings among the public. By supporting the resolution, K. A. Damodara Menon said that Muhammad Abdu Rahman became a hero of the youth.⁷⁶¹

Muhammad Abdu Rahman regarded the Civil Disobedience Movement as *Jihad ul Akbar* (The Great Holy War). Historians wrote about the role played by the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who took the Civil Disobedience Movement as an opportunity to bring the Pathan Muslims of the NWFP into the Congress led-National Movement and make them the ardent followers of Gandhian non-violence. The NWFP was a Muslim-majority province, where the Civil Disobedience Campaign was most active.⁷⁶² Thus, as Ghaffar Khan did in NWFP, Muhammad Abdu Rahman began attempts to bring back the Mappila Muslims into Congress by taking the Civil Disobedience campaign as an opportunity, but his attempt failed. Some people challenged Abdu Rahman to take the Civil Disobedience Movement as an opportunity to prove that the 'violent attitude' was not inherent in Mappila mentality and that the Mappilas could practice Gandhian non-violence.⁷⁶³ In 1930, Abdu Rahman was not in the leadership of the K. P. C. C. After 1922, the K. P. C. C leadership excluded the

⁷⁶⁰ A. K. Pillai, , *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁷⁶¹ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, pp. 202-203. Interestingly, Muhammad Abdu Rahman voted against this resolution, which showered praise on him.

⁷⁶² Syed Wiqar Ali Shah, ' The 1930 Civil Disobedience Movement in Peshawar Valley in the Paktoon Perspective', *Studies in History*, Vol. XXIX, no.1, October, 2013.

⁷⁶³ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, p. 158.

rebellion areas from the campaigns of the Congress. The K. P. C. C leadership made sure that the *jathas* organized by the Congress during 1930-32 would not pass through the Mappila-dominated *taluks*. The *jatha* of the second batch of *Satyagrahis* organized by T. R. Krishnaswami Iyer and led by R. V. Sharma started from the Sabari Ashram, Olavakkod on 19 April 1930. The *jatha* travelled on foot through Peruvemb, Vadavannur, Kollankodu, Thiruvilwamala, Lakkidi, and Ottapalam, and from Shornur to Payyannur, the *jatha* travelled by train.⁷⁶⁴ The *Satyagraha Jatha* to Guruvayur in October 1931 traveled on foot till Feroke and from there took a train to Tirur.⁷⁶⁵ In 1930, when the Civil Disobedience Movement began, Abdu Rahman had no role in deciding the policies and strategy of the Congress. However, by the image of the 'Hero of the Salt *Satyagraha*', he gained huge popular support and a place in the top leadership of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee.

Muhammad Abdu Rahman's politics had three different aspects: (1) The fight against the colonial British Government; (2) the ideological conflict with the upper caste Hindu leaders of the Congress, who were identified as the rightists (3) The struggle against the Muslim League and the orthodox elements in Kerala Islam. He adopted different strategies and ideologies to fight his rivals. His ideology was different from the rightists and leftists. Mushirul Hasan says that the Nationalist Muslims showed loyalty either to Gandhi or other Congress leaders.⁷⁶⁶ The case of Abdu Rahman was different. He was not an ardent Gandhian and did not show loyalty towards any Congress leader. However, after becoming a leader of the Forward Bloc, Abdu Rahman expressed a strong admiration for Subhas Bose. Abdu Rahman held left views and supported Socialism as an ideology. In November 1933, in his presidential address at the Second Conference of the Malabar Muslim Association, Abdu Rahman praised Socialism, Russian Revolution, and Marx. In this speech, he said that 'Socialism is favourable to the economic structure of Islam.'⁷⁶⁷ Government records often regarded Abdu Rahman as a 'Socialist Moplah.'⁷⁶⁸ E. M. S. Namboodiripad says that Muhammad Abdu

⁷⁶⁴ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

⁷⁶⁵ Dilip M. Menon, *Caste, Nationalism and Communism in South India: Malabar, 1900-1948*, New Delhi, 1994, p. 104.

⁷⁶⁶ Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India*, pp. 199-200.

⁷⁶⁷ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 275-276.

⁷⁶⁸ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of February 1940, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

Rahman, who was a practicing Muslim had a feeling that the 'Communists are atheists.'⁷⁶⁹ Thus, we can call Abdu Rahman a radical Congressman, who held left views.

Abdu Rahman, when he decided to take part in the Civil Disobedience Movement, said that he had disagreements with the Congress leaders in Keralam but had faith in the national leadership of the Congress.⁷⁷⁰ The conflict between Muhammad Abdu Rahman and the upper-caste Hindu leaders of the Congress became intense during Municipal elections in Kozhikode in 1931. In this election, the K. P. C. C allotted Abdu Rahman ward 6, where the Congress had no chance of winning. When Abdu Rahman refused it, the K. P. C. C allotted him ward 7, where also the Congress had no chance of winning. However, Abdu Rahman contested in that seat and won with a huge majority. Then, when Abdu Rahman decided to contest in the election of the Municipal chairman, the upper caste Hindu leaders opposed it. At last, the post of the Municipal chairman was denied to Abdu Rahman.⁷⁷¹ Though the centre of activities of Abdu Rahman and his supporters was the *Al Ameen* Lodge, they were known as the '*Al Ameen* Group' of the Congress.⁷⁷² Most of the rightist Congress leaders were the residents of Chalappuram area in Kozhikode Town. Thus, they came to be known as the '*Chalappuram Gang*.' It was Abdu Rahman, who gave this name for them.⁷⁷³

After the formation of the K. C. S. P and the emergence of the left wing in the Congress, the political opponents Abdu Rahman became the group representing the rightists in the Congress. They began attempts to sideline Abdu Rahman in Congress politics. In the K. P. C. C elections in 1936, Abdu Rahman contested from Ponnani but lost miserably getting only 6 votes.⁷⁷⁴ In this elections to the K. P. C. C, which held just before the Lucknow Congress session in 1936, the leftists also had a miserable

⁷⁶⁹ EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, p. 328.

⁷⁷⁰ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, pp. 162-163.

⁷⁷¹ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 254-258.

⁷⁷² EMS, *Keralam Malayalikalude Mathrubhumi*, p. 317.

⁷⁷³ EMS, *Athmakatha*, p. 305.

⁷⁷⁴ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, p. 440.

defeat.⁷⁷⁵ Consequently, the leftists and the Nationalist Muslim group decided to unite against the rightists.

From 1939 to 1940, the leftists and Nationalist Muslim group under the leadership of Abdu Rahman contested in the K. P. C. C elections as an alliance. In the K. P. C. C presidential elections, the rightists fielded their prominent leaders against Abdu Rahman, R. Raghava Menon in 1938 and M. P. Govinda Menon in 1939, but Abdu Rahman defeated them and became K. P. C. C president. In the K. P. C. C president elections in 1940, the rightists fielded K. Kelappan but Abdu Rahman also defeated him. During 1938-40, the president of the K. P. C. C was Muhammad Abdu Rahman and the nominees of the leftists were its secretaries. Sanjayan called it a 'Mecca-Moscow Pact.'⁷⁷⁶

The details of the allegations raised by the rightists against Muhammad Abdu Rahman were mentioned in a letter from K. Kelappan to A. C. Kannan Nair In April 1939. In the letter, Kelappan said that Muhammad Abdu Rahman was a power hungry politician working in Congress with selfish interests and he was always insulting the Congress leaders including Gandhi. Then Kelappan alleged that Abdu Rahman conspired to defeat the Congress candidate in the Municipal chairman election in 1931 and involved in lobbying to get a ministerial berth in the Congress ministry in Madras in 1937. Then Kelappan said that Abdu Rahman made the people say that 'if he didn't become a minister there would be another Mappila rebellion.'⁷⁷⁷

The leftist--Nationalist Muslim alliance was not just an arrangement for capturing K. P. C. C. The alliance had an ideological base as well. As the president of the K. P. C. C., Muhammad Abdu Rahman supported the attempts of the leftists to mobilize the peasants and workers and to strengthen the popular base of the Congress. Both the leftists and Nationalist Muslims had a view that the rebellion of 1921 was a peasant revolt.⁷⁷⁸ This factor provided an ideological link between them.

⁷⁷⁵ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, p. 253.

⁷⁷⁶ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 438-475.

⁷⁷⁷ K. K. N. Kurup, *A. C. Kannan Nair-Oru Padanam(Diarikalioode)*, pp. 106-107.

⁷⁷⁸ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Op. cit.*, pp. 448-450.

In a study on the role of legislatures in the freedom movement in NWFP, Amit Gupta has pointed out that the legislatures were also used as a platform for anti-colonial fights. However, Amit Gupta says that as a form agitation, as compared popular agitations, constitutionalism was least effective.⁷⁷⁹ The strategy of Muhammad Abdu Rahman was a combination of both these techniques. Muhammad Abdu Rahman was one of the important leaders of the major anti-colonial agitations in Malabar including the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement, Simon Boycott Agitation, and the Civil Disobedience Movement. At the same time, representing the interests of the people as a Municipal councilor and the Member of Legislative Assembly and using legislatures as a platform for the anti-colonial fight was also his strategy.

Elections to the Central Legislative Assembly were declared in 1934. Muhammad Abdu Rahman decided to contest from the West Coast & Nilgiris(Muslim) constituency, a geographically vast constituency, which included South Canara, Nilgiri, and Malabar. Abdul Sathar Seit, his rival candidate was a rich businessman. He had many rich and prominent people as his relatives and friends in and outside Keralam. It was sure that the Siet camp would spend abundantly for the election campaign. At that time, Muhammad Abdu Rahaman was going through the worst financial situation in his life. As it was a large constituency a huge amount of money was needed to tour the constituency. He didn't have even the money in his hand to pay the election deposit.⁷⁸⁰ In 1934, both Abdu Rahman and Sathar Seit were Congressmen. Both contested in the in the election as independents. The youth supported and vigorously campaigned for Abdu Rahman. As a close and fierce election fight, the election in 1934 created great enthusiasm in the Muslim politics in Malabar. The Mappilas Muslims were polarized as the supporters of Abdu Rahman and supporters of Seit. Abdu Rahman lost the election by a small margin.⁷⁸¹ For Roland Miller, this election was 'a symbolically significant event'in the Muslim poltics in Malabar. In Miller's opinion, the victory of Seit over Abdu Rahman, a progressive nationalist Muslim was an indicator of

⁷⁷⁹ Amit Kumar Gupta, *North West Frontier Province Legislature and Indian Freedom Struggle*, New Delhi, 29176, pp. 311-324.

⁷⁸⁰ M. Rasheed, *Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*, pp.62-63. S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Op. cit.*, pp. 311-324.

⁷⁸¹ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 311-324.

the future Muslim politics in Malabar.⁷⁸² P. P. Ummer Koya, a notable Congress leader from Malabar recalls how this election influenced him. Ummer Koya's elder brother was a strong supporter of Abdu Rahman in the election. When Abdu Rahman lost the election Ummer Koya took it as his defeat.⁷⁸³

Muhammad Abdu Rahman was the strongest opponent of the *Raj* in Malabar. Bernard Cohn writes: 'the Indians were players in the British constructed theatre of power. The loyal Indian subjects had to act in the scenes that the rulers had constructed. Everyone-rulers and the ruled had proper roles to play in the colonial sociological theatre.'⁷⁸⁴ The people who didn't act in the 'colonial sociological theatre' in the prescribed role and script became the opponents of the *Raj*. Muhammad Abdu Rahman had devised several tools for the anti-colonial fight. These tools were several issues affecting the Mappilas of Malabar. They had both ideological and emotional aspects. Muhammad Abdu Rahman used ideological and emotional issues to fight the British. His anti-colonial fight was set in the background of a few issues such as the Mappila Acts, wagon massacre, Hitchcock Memorial, Andaman Scheme, and the deportation of Mambaram Tangal.

As pointed out in a recent study by Nick Lyod, the rebellion of 1921 was one of the major setbacks for the British Empire in the 20th century. The rebellion of 1921 became the most shocking incident for the British Government after the revolt of 1857 as the prestige and might of the empire were shattered by the rebellion. The British Government was blamed for the delay in suppressing the rebellion and the failure to prevent its spread.⁷⁸⁵ The British feared the memories of the rebellion of 1921. For instance, when Saumyendranath Tagore published the work *Peasants Revolt in Malabar-1921* in 1937, the British Government banned it and seized all its copies.⁷⁸⁶ After quelling a revolt, the British Government would always begin the attempt to establish hegemony over the memories of the revolt. The British Government used its

⁷⁸² Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Malabar: A Study in Islamic Trends*, Madras, 1992(1976), p. 161.

⁷⁸³ P. P. Ummerkoya, *Ormmakaliloote*, Kozhikode, 2007, pp. 20-21.

⁷⁸⁴ Bernard Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*, Princeton, 1996, p. 10.

⁷⁸⁵ Nick Lyod, 'Colonial Counter-Insurgency in Southern India: The Malabar Rebellion, 1921-22', *Contemporary British History*, Vol. XXIX, no.3, 2015.

⁷⁸⁶ Saumyendranath Tagore, *1921; Malabarile Karshaka Samaram*, Translated by M. Raheed, Kozhikode, 2018.

hegemony over memories to celebrate the wars and revolts, in which they had serious reverses as big victories, and to justify the brutalities, atrocities, and massacres committed by them. Partha Chatterjee and Thomas Metcalf have analyzed how the British Government had used the Holwell Monument in Calcutta to justify the conquest of Bengal and the atrocities violence committed during the battle of Plassey.⁷⁸⁷ Memory and memorials were tools of 'ideological colonization.' Thus, the campaigns led by Abdu Rahman for the removal of the Hitchcock Memorial at Valluvambram and building a memorial for the victims of the 'wagon massacre' in 1921 should be viewed in this context.⁷⁸⁸

The creation of 'counter memories' and the 'refusal to forget' are forms of resistance.⁷⁸⁹ Ted Swedenburg in a study of the 1936-39 revolt in Palestine shows how popular memory became a form of resistance in post-rebellion Palestine.⁷⁹⁰ Muhammad Abdu Rahman realized that refusing to forget the memories of the rebellion of 1921 would be a strong anti-British resistance. He knew that the 'wagon massacre' in November 1921 was the most notable symbol of the brutalities of the British Government during the rebellion. Thus, he made an effort to keep the memories of this incident alive. He worked and campaigned for building a memorial for the wagon massacre victims. The Fifth Kerala Provincial Conference held at Vadakara set up a committee to undertake the efforts to build a memorial for the wagon massacre victims. The wagon massacre was known as *Maranavandi* (The Wagon of Death) among the local people.⁷⁹¹ The convenor of the committee was K. Kelappan and Muhammad Abdu Rahman was its

⁷⁸⁷ Partha Chatterjee, *The Black Hole of Empire: History of Global Practice of Power*, Princeton, 2012; Thomas R. Metcalf, *Forging the Raj: Essays on British India in the Heyday of Empire*, New Delhi, 2005.

⁷⁸⁸ Peter Robb, 'Memory, Place and British Memorials in Early Calcutta', In Ezra Rashkow et al. (eds.), *Memory, Identity and the Colonial Encounter in India: Essays in Honour of Peter Robb*, Oxon, 2018, p. 44.

⁷⁸⁹ Stephen Legg, 'Sites of Counter Memory: the Refusal to Forget and the Nationalist Struggle in Colonial Delhi', *Historical Geography*, 2005.

⁷⁹⁰ Ted Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt: The 1936-39 Rebellion and the Palestinian National Past*, Minnesota, 1995.

⁷⁹¹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 160. To know more about wagon massacre see Sivadasan P, 'Wagon Tragedy': *Kanalvaziyile Koottakuruthi*, Kottayam, 2011. This incident is known as 'Wagon Tragedy' in colonial narratives. However, as the incident was not a tragedy but a brutal massacre we should call it as 'wagon massacre.'

secretary.⁷⁹² On 26 November 1930, Abdu Rahman published an editorial in the *Al Ameen* explaining the significance of the wagon massacre memorial. He mentioned about the Holwell Monument and the 'Black Hole Incident' in this editorial. In every November, he wrote in *Al Ameen* reminding the Mappilas about the wagon massacre. He concluded the editorial by reiterating the need to build a memorial to keep alive the memory of the brutal massacre forever.⁷⁹³ Accepting the request of Abdu Rahman, K. P. C. C observed 19 September 1931 as 'Mappila Day'. 'The day was observed for the liberation of the Mappilas who were in extreme distress such as the Mappilas, who were deported to Andaman.'⁷⁹⁴ Apart from this, the day was also observed for building a memorial for the wagon massacre victims.⁷⁹⁵

During the end of the 1920s, the government built a memorial for R. H. Hitchcock, the District Superintendent of Police of Malabar during the rebellion of 1921. Hitchcock, under whose leadership the rebellion was brutally suppressed and the police and the troops unleashed a wave of violence on the Mappilas, died while he was going back to London after retirement. The attempts to build the Hitchcock Memorial were started by the government in 1926.⁷⁹⁶ The Hitchcock Memorial was built at Valluvambram, which was situated in the middle of Eranad *Taluk*.⁷⁹⁷ An agitation for the removal of the Hitchcock Memorial began at the end of the 1930s. Muhammad Abdu Rahman was the main leader of this agitation and the discussions to plan the agitation were held at *Al Ameen* Lodge. A *Satyagraha Samithi* was formed for this and a *jatha* led by T. Muhammad Yousuf and A. Muhammad Koya started from Kozhikode Town Hall to Valluvambaram.⁷⁹⁸ T. Muhammad Yousuf, the captain of the *jatha* was a follower of Aabdu Rahman. he was a famous playwright and later he joined the Communist Party.⁷⁹⁹ A. Muhammad Koya, another leader of the *jatha* who was also known as

⁷⁹² P. K. K. Menon, *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

⁷⁹³ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Op. cit.*, p. 160-161.

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

⁷⁹⁵ K. Abubaker, 'Wagon Tragedy Smarakam', in Abdu Chervadi(ed.), *Wagon Tragedy Smaranika*, Malappuram, 2020(1981), p. 170.

⁷⁹⁶ File No.148/28, dated 13.9.1928, List.2, Sl. No.1, MSP Records, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁷⁹⁷ K. Koyatti Maulavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97.

⁷⁹⁸ V. S. Keraleeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-92.

⁷⁹⁹ P. P. Mammed Koya Parappil, , *op. cit.*, pp. 377-378.

Appakoya was also a follower of Abdu Rahman.⁸⁰⁰ A. K. Goplan was a leader of this *jatha*.⁸⁰¹ As a member of the *jatha*, A. K. Gopalan traveled all over Eranad *Taluk*.⁸⁰² This campaign was active also in the 1940s. The Hitchcock Memorial Removal Agitation awakened the politically depressed Eranad *Taluk*. VM. Kutty, a famous *Mappila Pattu* singer recounts how the Hitchcock Memorial Removal Agitation created great excitement in the villages of Eranad.⁸⁰³ During the Hitchcock Memorial Removal Agitation, Abdu Rahman asked S. K. Pottekkatt, who was a young writer in Kozhikode Town at that time, to write a song to sing in the *Jatha*. Following the request, S. K. Pottekkatt wrote a song.⁸⁰⁴

Muhammad Abdu Rahman was the leader of the campaign started in the 1930s to bring back the descendants of Syed Fazal Tangal to Mambaram and restore the properties of Mambaram Tangals.⁸⁰⁵ Syed Fazal issue was an emotional issue for the Mappilas. Syed Fazal, who was deputed to Mecca by the British Government in 1852 was a symbol of anti-British resistance during the 1840s and 1850s. the British Government even feared his memories. Thus, the British Government denied permission to Syed Ali Tangal, son of Syed Fazal Tangal to enter and live in Malabar. Then in January 1933, the Mamabaram Restoration Committee was established under the leadership of Muhammad Abdu Rahman. The week starting from 5 November to 12 November 1937 was celebrated in Malabar as a week to collect signatures with a demand to the government that to permit the descendants of Syed Fazal Tangal to enter Malabar. For this, a mass petition signed by one lakh people was submitted to Yakub Hasan, a minister in the Congress ministry in Madras who visited Malabar in November 1937.⁸⁰⁶ For Abdu Rahman, this issue was a weapon against his political rival, P. M. Attakoya Tangal, who was managing the properties of Mambaram Tangal as an attorney. Attakoya Tangal was a Mappila leader, who was extremely loyal to the

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 445-446.

⁸⁰¹ *Prabhatahm*, 2 January 1939.

⁸⁰² A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, p. 102.

⁸⁰³ V. M. Kutty, *op. cit.*, pp.68-73.

⁸⁰⁴ S. K. Pottekkatt, *Ente Vazhiyambalangal*, Kozhikode, 2017(2004), pp. 34-35.

⁸⁰⁵ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Sathar, *A Mappila Leader in Exile; A Political Biography of Syed Fazal Tangal*, Kozhikode, 2012, pp. 130-144.

⁸⁰⁶ V. S. Keraleeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

British. Attakoya Tangal even resigned from the Muslim League when the League instructed him to abandon the 'Khan Bahadur' title to protest against the British.⁸⁰⁷

Abdu Rahman used the term *Mappila Naadu* to denote the Mappilas of Eranad, Valluvanad, and Ponnani.⁸⁰⁸ He gave great importance to the unity of Malayali Muslims. He took up the issues of Malayalam speaking Muslims of Lakshadweep and wrote about their problems in *Al Ameen*.⁸⁰⁹

During the colonial period, Kozhikode was a strong hold of loyal Muslims, who held 'Khan Bahadur' and 'Rao Bahadur' titles.⁸¹⁰ Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who settled in Kozhikode Town gained many followers and popular support. However, Abdu Rahman couldn't resist the growth of the Muslim League in Malabar after 1937. He failed in his attempt to bring back the Mappila Muslims into the nationalist politics and make Congress as the major political movement representing the Mappila Muslims of Malabar. It was after 1937 the Muslim League grew as the major political party of the Mappila Muslims. This was a result of the growth of the Muslim League all over India. Rafique Afzal says that before 1934, the Muslim League hadn't a strong organization in India. The growth of the League into prominence in the Muslim politics in India was the climax of Muhammad Ali Jinnah's tireless effort to organizationally strengthen the League.⁸¹¹ There were several people with a Muslim League mentality in Malabar even before 1937. Though a practicing Muslim, Muhammad Abdu Rahman held a progressive and liberal outlook. While working in the Congress, Abdu Rahman also worked in some Muslim organizations and opposed the orthodox elements within them. His co-workers in the Muslim organizations, who opposed the views held by Abdu Rahman became the leaders of the Muslim League after 1937. For instance, in the second annual conference of the Muslim Majlis held at Kozhikode in 1933, Muhammad Abdu Rahman and the prominent Muslim leaders from North Malabar, B. Pocker, Sathar Siet, and K. M. Seethi clashed with each other over a few resolutions moved in the conference. These leaders later became prominent leaders of the

⁸⁰⁷ P. P. Mammed Koya Parappil, , *op. cit.*, p. 363.

⁸⁰⁸ S. K. Pottekatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, p. 283.

⁸⁰⁹ V. S. Keraleeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-97.

⁸¹⁰ P. P. Mammed Koya Parappil, , *op. cit.*

⁸¹¹ M. Rafique Afzal, *A History of the All India Muslim League, 1906-1947*, Oxford, 2001, pp. 203-239.

Muslim League.⁸¹² In the election fight between Sathar Seit and Abdu Rahman in 1934 , all these leaders supported Seit. K. M. Seethi supported Siet in the election, even though Abdu Rahman was his friend and relative.⁸¹³ After becoming a member of Central Legislative Assembly, Siet established contacts with the national leaders of the Muslim League.⁸¹⁴ There were only four members from South India in the parliamentary Board of the League formed in 1936. B. Pocker was one of them.⁸¹⁵

Thalassery was the centre of the early activities of the League and during the 1940s the Mappila areas of South Malabar became the stronghold of the League. In 1936-37, the A. I. C. C started a 'Muslim Mass Contacts Campaign ' under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru to bring back the Muslims to the Congress. Nehru had the support of the leftist Muslim leaders in the Congress.⁸¹⁶ The Mass Contacts Campaign was also active in Malabar.⁸¹⁷ As part of this campaign, 2574 people were enrolled as members in the Congress in Keralam in 1938. As compared to other regions of India, this number was not insignificant.⁸¹⁸ There were three groups of Muslims in Malabar in 1937: (1)Those who supported the Congress; (2)Those who supported the League; (3)Those who wished to stand as independent from both these parties as independent loyalists.⁸¹⁹

The activities of the Congress were restarted in the rebellion areas during 1938-40, when Abdu Rahman was the president of the K. P. C. C. A. K. Gopalan recalls that at that time, he had worked with Abdu Rahman in Eranad *Taluk* for about 3 months. The activities like enrolling members in the Congress, organizing public meetings, and forming peasant unions were held as part of this. This campaign got good responses from the people.⁸²⁰ The conflict between Abdu Rahman and the Muslim League also began during this period. A. C. Kannan Nair wrote in his diary that in May 1938, when

⁸¹² S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman*, pp. 271-273.

⁸¹³ T. M. Sawankutty, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁸¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁸¹⁵ M. Rafique Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 214.

⁸¹⁶ Mushirul Hasan, 'The Muslim Mass Contacts Campaign: An Attempt of Political Mobilization', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXI, no.52, December, 1986. This study is reproduced in Mushirul Hasan(ed.), *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization*, Delhi, 1993, pp. 132-158.

⁸¹⁷ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of May 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁸¹⁸ Mushirul Hasan, 'The Muslim Mass Contacts Campaign: An Attempt of Political Mobilization'.

⁸¹⁹ Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of July 1937, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai

⁸²⁰ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*,

Abdu Rahman visited Kasargod, the Muslim League workers held a black flag demonstration against him and shouted 'Go back.'⁸²¹

However, Abdu Rahman couldn't prevent the growth of the Muslim League in Malabar. After the growth of the League, most of Abdu Rahman's supporters left his camp and joined the League. M. Gangadharan has rightly pointed out that, the Mappilas lost faith in the Congress due to the attitude of the Congress leadership to the rebellion of 1921 and this ultimately led to the growth of the Muslim League.⁸²² The same factor acted as an obstacle to Abdu Rahman in his attempt to bring back the Mappilas into the Congress. The growth of the League was the factor that increased the relevance of the Nationalist Muslims in the Congress. For instance, Maulana Azad began to play a leading role in the Congress after 1937.⁸²³ Likewise, the role of Abdu Rahman in the politics of Malabar became more crucial and relevant after 1937.

3.15. The Bomb in Malabar Politics

The first national leader who identified the symbolic meaning of the bomb was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Commenting on the politics of 'bomb', Tilak wrote: 'The bomb has more of the form of knowledge than a bullet. It is a "magic", it is a sacred "formula", an amulet.'⁸²⁴ During the end of the 1920s, Bhagat Singh and his comrades brought the bomb into the centre stage of Indian politics and made the meaning of the bomb a topic of political debate. Gandhi published his statement 'Cult of the Bomb' in this context. Gandhi published the statement 'Cult of the Bomb' in *Young India* on 2 January 1930 by condemning the attempt by a group of revolutionary terrorists to blow up the train, which was travelled by 'he viceroy, Lord Irwin in a bomb explosion. In his statement Gandhi viewed bomb as a symbol of violence and threat to non-violence.⁸²⁵ In response Gandhi's criticisms, Bhagawati Charan Vohra wrote a pamphlet titled *The Philosophy of the Bomb*. In the pamphlet, Vohra harshly criticized Gandhian

⁸²¹ K. K. N. Kurup, A. C. Kannan Nair-Oru Padanam, pp. 93-94.

⁸²² M. Gangadharan, Mappila Padanangal, Kottayam, 2012(2007), pp. 115-116.

⁸²³ Ian Handerson Douglas, *Abdul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Political Biography*, Delhi, 1993, pp. 222-223.

⁸²⁴ Stanley A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale*, p. 220.

⁸²⁵ *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, VOL. XLII, Ahmedabad, 1970, pp. 363-364. The Title of Peter Heeh's work on the rise of Revolutionary terrorism in Bengal during 1900 and 1910 is *The Bomb in Bengal*. Peter Heehs, *The Bomb in Bengal: The Rise of Revolutionary Terrorism in Bengal, 1900-1910*, New Delhi, 1993.

non-violence.⁸²⁶ In April 1929, Bhagat Singh and B. K. Dutt threw bombs at the Central Legislative Hall, Delhi. During this incident, Bhagat Singh gave a highly symbolic definition to the bomb. The copies of a leaflet were thrown to the Assembly Hall with the bombs. In this leaflet, borrowing the idea of Auguste Valliant, a French Anarchist, Bhagat Singh explained that “it takes a louds sound to make the deaf hear” and ‘we threw bombs not to kill people but to make the deaf hear.’⁸²⁷

The Communist leaders of Malabar, the outspoken critics of Gandhian non-violence never accepted the bomb as part of their style of politics and ideology. For the Communists of Malabar, bomb was a term associated with the ideology and strategy of revolutionary terrorists. For instance, E. M. S. Namboodiripad uses the term ‘Bomb Politics’ to denote revolutionary terrorism.⁸²⁸ There were a few isolated attempts to manufacture and use bombs by the youth of Malabar, who were attracted to revolutionary terrorism. However, those attempts failed as revolutionary terrorism couldn’t grow as a movement in Malabar. The first organized attempts to manufacture and use bombs took place in Malabar during the Quit India Movement in 1942. As part of the sabotage activities organized during the Quit India Movement, the bomb and bomb centered politics became a topic of discussion in the political circles. It was a paradoxical situation in Malabar that the bomb became one of the symbols of the Quit India Movement, a movement launched by Gandhi, a staunch critic of bomb-centered politics.

K. Gopalankutty has pointed out that the Quit India Movement in Malabar had two phases. The first phase of the Quit India Movement saw unplanned and spontaneous protests such as demonstrations and *hartals* and the second phase was a period of organized sabotage activities.⁸²⁹ Due to several reasons, the Quit India Movement didn’t become a popular Movement in Malabar. The first reason for this was that the Communist Party, who had popular support at the grass root level strongly opposed the Quit India Movement. Furthermore, within days after the Quit India Movement

⁸²⁶ Bhagawati Charan Vohra, ‘The Philosophy of the Bomb’, Appendix C: 3, in S. Irfan Habib, *To Make the Deaf Hear: Ideology and Programme of Bhagat Singh and His Comrades*, Gurgaon, 2015(2007).

⁸²⁷ ‘Leaflet Thrown in the Central Legislative Assembly Delhi, April 1929’, in Chamanlal(ed.), *The Bhagat Singh Reader*, Gurgaon, 2019.

⁸²⁸ EMS, *Indian Swathanthryasamaracharithram*, p. 469.

⁸²⁹ K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*, p. 122.

began on 9 August 1942, the important Congress leaders of Malabar including K. Kelppan, K. Madhava Menon, P. K. Moideenkutty (K. P. C. C president), M. P. Narayana Menon and A. V. Kuttimalu Amma were arrested and detained.⁸³⁰ Even if they were not arrested, the K. P. C. C, which got weakened after the quitting of the leftists was inefficient to lead a popular movement.⁸³¹ The Quit India Movement became leaderless by the arrest of the Congress leaders. As a movement launched by Gandhi, the Quit India Movement had to be led by the Gandhian Congressmen such as K. Kelappan. Then K. B. Menon along with four other Malayali Congressmen, V. A. Kesavan Nair, N. A. Krishnan Nair, C. P. Sankaran Nair, and Mathai Manjuran came to Keralam from Bombay to take up the leadership of the Quit India Movement.⁸³²

Attack on the symbols of the British Government was the most common feature of the Quit India Movement in India.⁸³³ Telephone and telegraph wires were cut, government offices attacked, bridges destroyed, and the telegraph system was damaged during the Quit India Movement In Malabar. Before 1942, the people of Malabar were unfamiliar with sabotage that activities organized as part of an agitation. Apart from a new strategy new materials and instruments were needed for organizing the sabotage activities. For instance, pliers were needed to cut telegraph and telephone lines. When he came from Bombay, K. B. Menon brought with him a plier to cut telegraph wires.⁸³⁴ Bombs and dynamites were used for destroying bridges and government offices. During the Quit India Movement, the first incident that a bridge was demolished by agitators tookplace at Ulliyeri. The Ulliyeri bridge was demolished on 19 August 1942 by a small crowd using work tools such as pickaxes and sickles.⁸³⁵

K. B. Menon, the main leader of the Quit India Movement in Keralam was influenced by three different ideologies, Gandhism, revolutionary terrorism, and Socialism. Menon was a former student of Barkley College, California and taught at Harvard University. He was in America for about 13 years. While living in America, Menon

⁸³⁰ K. K. N. Kurup, *Quit India Samaravum Keralavum*, Thriruvananthapuram, 2002(1993), pp. 49-50.

⁸³¹ K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Padanangal*, p. 123.

⁸³² M. G. Indira Devi, *Kerala And the Quit India Movement*, Mundancavu, 2005, pp. 85-86.

⁸³³ Biswamoy Pati, 'The Climax of Popular Protest: The Quit India Movement in Orissa', in Biswamoy Pati(ed.), *Turbulent Times: India, 1940-44*, Mumbai, 1998p. 12.

⁸³⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, *Quit India Samaravum Keralavum*, p. 52.

⁸³⁵ Kesavan Kavumthara, *Swathanthrya Samara Smaranakalile Ulliyeri*, Kozhikode, pp. 34-35.

established links with the Ghadar Party. He was the editor of the *Independent*, the Mouthpiece of the Ghadar Party. After his come back to India, Menon's first meeting with Gandhi became a turning point in his life. He was attracted by Gandhism and became a follower of Gandhi. When the Bombay session of the A. I. C. C was held in August 1942, Menon was living at Wardha Ashram.⁸³⁶ K. B. Menon, who held the post of the economic secretary of the Wardha Ashram attended the Bombay session along with Gandhi.⁸³⁷

Some leaders of the Quit India Movement in Malabar expressed disagreements about organizing sabotage activities as part of a political movement launched by Gandhi. In a meeting held at Kinathi Narayanan's house in Thalassery in the presence of Achyuth Patwardhan, an opinion was raised that a new strategy with sabotage activities was inevitable for the Quit India Agitation. However, L. S. Prabhu, T. V. N. Nair Advocate Kunhiraman and their supporters opposed this opinion and left the meeting. The people who left the meeting were arrested before they reached home.⁸³⁸

The Congress leaders and the people of India viewed the Quit India Movement as the final struggle against Britain. Thus, the feeling was strong among them to make Britain quit India by adopting all possible means and using all available weapons. Even the ardent Gandhians had this feeling. Conspiracy meetings related to the Quit India Movement were held at *charkha* clubs.⁸³⁹ During the Quit India Movement, a meeting to plan the sabotage activities was held at the house of Kurur Neelakantan Namboodiripad, a staunch Gandhian.⁸⁴⁰ As mentioned earlier, when the Quit India Movement began in August 1942, K. B. Menon, the main leader of the movement in Malabar was living at Gandhi's Wardha Ashram. *Bharatharatham*, a Malayalam play by K. P. Kunhirama Poduval, an ardent Gandhian from Payyannur reflected this trend. The play was written in 1942 and first performed in 1944. The government banned the performance of the play. The play was dedicated to India's brave freedom fighters,

⁸³⁶ B. K. Thiruvoth, *Malabarile Socialist Prasthanam: Munnil Nadannavar*, Kozhikode, 2014, pp. 24-27.

⁸³⁷ Kunhimangalam Balan, 'Dr. K. B. Menon: August Viplavathil Keralathe Nayicha Veera Senani', in *Quit India Suvarna Jubilee Smaranika*, Quit India Suvarana Jubilee Aaghosha Committee, Payyannur, 1992.

⁸³⁸ P. R. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

⁸³⁹ M. G. Indira Devi, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

⁸⁴⁰ K. Gopalankutty, 'The Task of Transforming the Congress'.

who were killed in Alipore Jail. The play was set in the backdrop of the Kurukshetra War. In the play, Lord Krishna symbolized Gandhi, Arjuna-Nehru, Narada-Tagore, Yudhishitira-Rajendraprasad, Bhima- Patel, Nakula-Bose, Sahadeva-Jayaprakash Narayan, and Abhimanyu-Bhagat Singh. In the play, Karna, who was born as Kunti's elder son and joined the Kaurava side in the Kurukshetra War was a symbol of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The play ended with the call that the Quit India Movement was the final war for freedom that should be fought by Indians with all weapons.⁸⁴¹

T. P. Kunhirama Kidavu, veteran Gandhian Congress leader K. Kelappan's only son was an accused in the Keezhariyur Bomb Case, the most notable incident during the Quit India Movement. Kunhirama Kidavu was only 19 years old when he became an accused in the case.⁸⁴² The explosion in Feroke Railway bridge on 30 April 1943 was executed by T. P. Kunhirama Kidavu and Palatt Koya, a coal contractor from Feroke.⁸⁴³ Kunhirama Kidavu, who remained absconding after this incident lived underground in Bombay and Rajkot. The police couldn't catch him and he came back to Kozhikode only after the warrant against him was withdrawn in 1946.⁸⁴⁴ C. Radhakrishnan wrote a novella titled *Enpathinaalu Amavasikal* based on the life of T. P. Kunhirama Kidavu. Kidavu's involvement in the Quit India Movement and his underground life are depicted in the novel.⁸⁴⁵ Koyappalli Narayanan Nair, K. Kelppan's cousin brother was an accused in the Keezhariyur Bomb Case. Narayanan Nair was the mastermind behind the Keezhariyur bomb conspiracy.⁸⁴⁶

The Communist Party opposed and harshly criticized the sabotage activities during the Quit India Movement. P. Krishna Pillai wrote that the sabotage activities were against the ideology of the Quit India Movement based on Gandhian non violence. He used the Malayalam term *Nasheekarana Pravarthanangal*(vandalism) to refer to the

⁸⁴¹ K. P. Kunhirama Poduval, *Bharatharatham*, Payyannur, 1985; K. P. Malathi, *Deshathinte Gurunathan*, Kozhikode, 2012, pp. 81-82.

⁸⁴² M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

⁸⁴³ M. G. Indira Devi, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108.

⁸⁴⁴ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 238-239.

⁸⁴⁵ C. Radhakrishnan, *Enpathinaalu Amavasikal*, Kozhikode, 2010.

⁸⁴⁶ Vasu, 'Koyappalli Narayanan Nair', in *Kerala Gandhi Kelappan 125-aam Janmadina Varshika Smaranika*, pp. 144-145.

sabotage activities. He further said that such activities would weaken the agitations for the release of Gandhi.⁸⁴⁷

David Arnold in his study on the Quit India Movement in Madras gives the total number of bomb related cases in Madras province. There were 17 bomb explosions and 35 bombs or explosive materials discovered in Madras province during the Quit India Movement.⁸⁴⁸ The most famous incident during the Quit India Movement in Keralam was the Keezhariyur Bomb Case. The Quit India agitators in Keralam decided to observe 17 November 1942 as 'All Kerala Sabotage Day' and to organize sabotage acts all over Keralam on that day. For this purpose, they decided to manufacture and import bombs. They selected Kandiyil Meethal Veedu at Keezhariyur and Embranveedu at Parappanangadi as places to manufacture bombs.⁸⁴⁹ Secrecy was very important in bomb making. Thus, they had selected Keezhariyur village as the centre of bomb manufacturing. Keezhariyur is located near Nelliadi Puazha and in those days as there was no bridge on the river it was very difficult to reach there. The village was also surrounded by hills.⁸⁵⁰ Kandiyil Methal House was selected as it was located near the dense forests of Mavatt Mala.⁸⁵¹ According to their plan, on 17 November, the agitators successfully committed sabotage acts in a few places in different areas of Kerala.⁸⁵²

During the Quit India Movement, bombs were not used to kill or harm people but used as a tool to destroy the symbols of the British Government. During the Quit India Movement, there was an attempt to destroy the Hitchcock Memorial at Valluvamabram by using bombs and dynamites and this task was assigned to a person named Kandiyil Meethal Changan. The explosives were collected from different sources. Explosives were brought even from the Kolar Gold Fields, Mysore.⁸⁵³

⁸⁴⁷ P. Krishna Pillai, 'Jayilinu Veliyilulla Congress Pravarthakarodu', Andalal(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. I, pp. 122-126.

⁸⁴⁸ David Arnold, 'Quit India Movement in Madras: Hiatus or Climacteric', in Gyanendra Pandey(ed.), *The Indian Nation in 1942*, Calcutta, 1988, p. 214.

⁸⁴⁹ M. G. Indira Devi, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁸⁵⁰ C. K. Gopalan, *Quit Indiyum Njanum*, Kozhikode, 2000(1997), pp. 38-40.

⁸⁵¹ M. G. Indira Devi, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-92.

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 90.

⁸⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

It was during this period, like the people of Bengal and North India, the strongholds of revolutionary terrorism, the public of Malabar became familiar with the words 'bomb' and 'bomb case.' The raids of police in the houses of the suspects of the bomb cases to discover bomb and explosive materials were common during this period.⁸⁵⁴ The accused of bomb cases was treated as a separate category in jails. They were detention prisoners in jail. The accused of the bomb cases wore *khaddar* dresses in jail.⁸⁵⁵

The Quit India Movement in Malabar was not limited to sabotage activities. Non-violent campaigns were also part of the movement. However, the studies by M. G. Indira Devi and K. K. K. N. Kurup have devoted almost the entire space in their works to explain the sabotage activities during the Quit India Movement. The Quit India Agitation was very active in Payyannur. K. C. Nambiar, V. P. Sreekanta Poduval, K. P. Kunhirama Poduval, C. V. Kunhambu Srappu, T. C. V. Kunhikanna Poduval, A. K. Kunhirama Poduval, Malabar Gopalan, V. P. Narayana Poduval, and A. V. Sreekanata Poduval were the leaders of the Quit India Agitation in Payyannur.⁸⁵⁶ Processions, public meetings, and the picketing of government offices were held regularly in Payyannur Town during the Quit India Movement.⁸⁵⁷ On 2 October 1942, T. C. V. Kunhikanna Poduval, C. V. Kunhambu Srappu, and A. K. Kunhirama Poduval hoisted tri-colour flag on the flag pole at Payyannur police Station.⁸⁵⁸ *Gandhi Roko* campaign in Payyannur began to protest against the arrest of V. P. Sreekanta Poduval on 10 September 1942. It was a form of protest that the trains carrying the arrested Congress leaders were picketed.⁸⁵⁹

3.16. Reflections of the Popular Movements

The nature of the popular movements in the final years of freedom struggle including the R. I. N. Mutiny, the agitation against I. N. A trials, labour strikes, and agrarian struggles and their role in India's freedom is a topic of debate among historians. The

⁸⁵⁴ V. A. Kesavan Nair, *Irumbazhikkullil*, Kozhikode, 1954(1947), p. 20.

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁸⁵⁶ T. V. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, pp.66-82.

⁸⁵⁷ V. P. Balakrishna Poduval, *Swathanthrya Samara Smaranakal*, Payyannur, 1991, pp. 11-14.

⁸⁵⁸ T. V. Gopalan, *op. cit.*, pp. 71-73.

⁸⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

works of Sumit Sarkar, Sucheta Mahajan, and Amit Kumar Gupta have contributed to this debate. In early 1980s, Sumit Sarkar wrote that 1945-47 period was an important phase in India's freedom movement and the immense popular pressure by the popular movement during 1945-47 was an important factor that forced Britain to leave India in August 1947.⁸⁶⁰ However, Sucheta Mahajan has a different opinion. Sucheta Mahajan argues that Britain left India in 1947 not due to the impact of these movements but the power of the colonial state had been eroded by this time. For Sucheta, these movements were not 'final assaults on colonialism.'⁸⁶¹ One of the notable points in Sucheta's arguments is that she says that these movements were integrated with the Congress-led National Movement as they were the expressions of the early nationalist activities led by the Congress.⁸⁶² Wavell's Journal discloses that these popular movements gave immense pressure to the colonial state. Wavell wrote on 19 February 1947: "a day of alarms but not excursions. I saw Porter, all for capitulation to the I. NA. ; Bewoor, about a postal strike; Carr, the A. O. C-in-C, about R. I. A. F Mutiny; Griffith and Conran Smith about the railway strike and finally the C-in-C, most gloomy of all about the R. I. N Mutiny at Bombay and the I. N. A strikes."⁸⁶³

While explaining the ideology of popular protest, George Rude says 'there are differences between a structured or relatively structured type of ideology and one of the more simple attitudes, mentalities, and outlooks.'⁸⁶⁴ The economic and political conditions of the post-war phase gave the Communists the first right opportunity to use their ideology of popular protest in the complete form. The post-war conditions in Malabar were favourable for the Communist Party to organize labour strikes and agrarian struggles. Food scarcity, Inflation, and unemployment were severe in post-war Malabar. According to K. A. Keraleeyan about 60, 000 of the 80, 000 people from Malabar, who had joined the British Indian Army were demobilized from the army

⁸⁶⁰ Sumit Sarkar, 'Popular Movements and National Leadership, 1945-47', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XVII, no.14/16, April, 1982. Sumit Sarkar repeated these arguments in his work published in 1983. Sumit Sarkar, 'Popular Movements' and 'Middle Class' Leadership in Late Colonial India: Perspectives and Problems of a 'History from Below', Calcutta, 1983, p.60.

⁸⁶¹ Sucheta Mahajan, *Independence and Partition: The Erosion of Colonial Power in India*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 111.

⁸⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁸⁶³ Pendrel Moon(ed.), *Wavell: The Viceroy's Journal*, London, 1973, p. 215.

⁸⁶⁴ George Rude, *Ideology and Popular Protest*, London, 1980, p. 21.

after the war, and the Malayalis, who were working in the factories in major industrial towns such as Bombay lost their jobs returned to Malabar as unemployed. The evictions of peasants from lands were widespread. There was a fall in the prices of arecanut, tapioca, cashew, pepper, and coconut but the prices of essential commodities shot up. The Communist Party took up inflation and unemployment as major issues and organized unemployment-price control conferences.⁸⁶⁵

During the final phase of the National Movement, the politics in Malabar was dominated by three political movements: the Indian National Congress represented by the former rightists in the Congress, the Communist Party led by the former leftists, and the Muslim League which by that time gained a huge support base among the Mappilas. During the war period, some joint campaigns were organized by the Congress, Communist Party, and the League. For instance, the food committees to fight the famine were formed by their joint effort. When K. P. R. Gopalan, a Communist leader was sentenced to death in the Morazha Case, Congressmen also took part in the campaign organized against K. P. R. Gopalan's death sentence. K. Madhava Menon wrote to government demanding the cancellation of the death sentence of K. P. R. Gopalan. The Civil Liberties Union in Bombay under the leadership of K. B. Menon, the political rival of the Communist Party actively took up this issue. For this purpose, the leaders of the Civil Liberties Union met Gandhi, Nehru, and Sarojini Naidu.⁸⁶⁶ As revealed by the writings of P. Krishna Pillai, there were attempts by Krishna Pillai during 1942-45 to build Communist-Congress unity in different issues. Krishna Pillai asked the Congress leadership to observe 13 April 1934, the last day of the national week of that year as a day to release Gandhi and Congress leaders from jail. He also asked the Congress leaders to unite with the Muslim League for this.⁸⁶⁷ Communists decided to participate in the *Gandhi Jayanthi* celebrations of 2 October 1944.⁸⁶⁸

⁸⁶⁵ K. A. Keraleeyan, 'Thozhilillayma Vilaniyanthrana Sammelanangal', in K. K. N. Kurup(ed.), *Keraleeyante Lekhanangal*, pp.67-70.

⁸⁶⁶ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-124.

⁸⁶⁷ P. Krishna Pillai, 'Jayilinu Veliyilulla Congressukarodu', in Andalat(ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. I, pp. 122-126.

⁸⁶⁸ P. Krishna Pillai, 'Gandhi Jayanthi Aaghosham', in *Ibid.*, pp. 151-154.

As said earlier, the leftist leaders in the Congress such as P. Krishna Pillai opposed the starting of mass no-rent campaigns by peasants. However, the character of the peasant resistance in Malabar changed during 1944-47. The use of force and violence became part of the resistance. Apart from the Karivellur and Kavumbayi agrarian riots, there were many other incidents during this period, where peasants used violence for resistance. Forcible cultivation and forcible harvesting of landlord's lands were common during this period.⁸⁶⁹ Radhakanta Barik's case study on the peasant unrest in Bihar shows that use of violence was part of the peasant resistance in Bihar. For Barik, forcible cultivation and forcible harvesting were important forms of resistance adopted by the peasants during the peasant agitations in Bihar and he adds that such forms of resistance were not used in the early agitations.⁸⁷⁰ Such incidents took place not only in North Malabar. In Eastern Eranad, peasants forcibly entered and cultivated the *tarishu* land under the ownership of Nilamabur Kovilakam. Most of the people who were arrested in this case were poor Mappila peasants. The *Karshaka Sangham* took up this issue and backed the peasants.⁸⁷¹

As mentioned earlier, during the strike of beedi workers in 1939, P. Krishna Pillai instructed the workers to end the strike by accepting the petty concessions offered by the company owners. However, During the strike of the beedi-cigar workers in Malabar and South Canara in 1946 Krishna Pillai adopted a different approach. When the strike continued for a certain period, the beedi company owners offered some small concessions. When the workers expressed willingness to end the strike by accepting this, Krishna Pillai instructed them to continue the strike.⁸⁷² Thus, compromise and truce were not part of the strategy of the Communist Party during this period. The workers of the Aron Mills, Pappinisseri began a strike in February 1946 when the workers, who struck work by expressing solidarity with the R. I. N. mutineers and in protest against the repressive measures adopted by the government against the

⁸⁶⁹ A. K. Gopalan, *Manninu Vendi*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017(1975), pp. 27-34; K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-204.

⁸⁷⁰ Radhakanta Barik, Congress Politics and Peasant Unrest in Bihar, 1946-47', in Amit Kumar Gupta(ed.), *Myth and Reality: The Struggle Freedom in India, 1945-47*, New Delhi, 1987, p. 399.

⁸⁷¹ A. K. Poduval, *Keralathile Karshakaprasthanathinte Oru Laghu Charithram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1962, p. 75.

⁸⁷² Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, p. 138.

mutiny were sacked by the mill owner. The strike lasted for 110 days and left to arbitration.⁸⁷³ The Communists utilized the R. I. N. Mutiny as an opportunity to organize agitations. In protest against the brutal repression by the British Government against the R. I. N mutineers, the Communist Party decided to organize strikes in all factories under the leadership of P. Krishna Pillai. For this, Communists formed secret groups in all factories.⁸⁷⁴

The strikes of postal employees and railway workers and the 'strike wave' across India in 1946-47 were also reflected in the Malabar district. As all India strikes with huge participation of workers and the railway and postal service were essential services, the postal-railway strikes had a big impact on the colonial state and the people of India. These strikes were active in the Malabar district. In Keralam, the postal railway strikes were led by the Communist Party. The strikes were organized and co-ordinated by P. Krishna Pillai.⁸⁷⁵ The postal employees struck work in different places in Malabar such as Ponnani, Tirur, Manjeri, Sulthan Bathery, Panur and Chokli. Post offices were picketed as part of the strike. Police were deployed to guard post offices.⁸⁷⁶ Sukumar Azheekode recounts how the railway strike affected the normal life of the people. In 1946, Sukumar Azheekode went Delhi to find a job. While returning from Delhi, as he couldn't travel by train due to the strike in the South Indian Railway, from Madras he travelled to Kannur via Mysore by bus.⁸⁷⁷

In Malabar, the Congress openly opposed these strikes and there were even attempts from the Congress to break the strikes. It was during this period, that the word *Karinkalikal* (Black Legs) became common in the trade union politics in Malabar. This word was used to denote the workers, who were betraying the strikes and the local people attempting to break the strikes.⁸⁷⁸ The Communists alleged that the Congress was trying to break the postal-railway strikes.⁸⁷⁹ Krishna Pillai said that K. Kelappan

⁸⁷³ G. D. Nair, *op. cit.*, pp.62-63.

⁸⁷⁴ Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, pp. 142-143

⁸⁷⁵ Chanthavila Murali, *Sakhavu P. Krishna Pillai*, pp. 810-820.

⁸⁷⁶ *Chandrika*, 17&19 July 1946.

⁸⁷⁷ Sukumar Azheekode, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁸⁷⁸ N. C. Sekhar , 'Postal-Telegraph Panimudakkukalil Karinkalippani Saamrajyatha Sevanamanu', in C. Bhaskaran(ed.), *N. C. Sekhar: Thiranjedutha Lekhanangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012(2005), pp.62-64.

⁸⁷⁹ Andalat, *Sakhavu Krishna Pillai*, pp. 140-142.

stayed at Samuel Aron's house as his guest the day before the incident in which Samuel Aron sacked the workers.⁸⁸⁰ Samuel Aron was an Important leader of the Congress even during the Aron Mills strikes in 1946. It is a fact that in Malabar, the Congress opposed the strikes that took place during 1945-47. During 'the strike wave' in 1945-47, the provinces were under the rule of Congress governments and the Congress leaders could settle the strikes easily. The scavengers in Kozhikode Municipality went on strike in 1946. The strike was led by Communist leaders such as T. K. Karunan and H. Manju Nath Rao.⁸⁸¹ T. K. Karunan, the leader of the strike was derisively called by the rivals as *Thotti Karunan* (Scavenger Karunan).⁸⁸² The Congress leaders in the Town such as K. Madhava Menon and K. A. Damodara Menon kept aloof from the strike and there were no attempts from these leaders, who were highly influential in the Congress Government in Madras to settle the strike in favour of the scavengers.⁸⁸³

The Malabar Special Police strike in March-April 1946 was a notable incident. In March 1946, the M. S. P men began protesting against the government over the messing arrangements. Some of the M. S. P men sent a secret communication to the editor of the *Mathrubhumi* stating that they were 'really good patriots' and requesting him to take up their issue.⁸⁸⁴ In March 1946, 235 out of 508 men of the Malabar Special Police stationed in Madras City refused to do their duty. 252 men were dismissed and 204 resignations were accepted during the strike.⁸⁸⁵ In 1942, there was an attempt from the Congress leadership to gain the support of the M. S. P for the Quit India Movement. Therefore, the government suspected the involvement of Congress in the M. S. P strike.⁸⁸⁶ In 1946, Congress leaders intervened to dissuade the M. S. P men from the strike. The M. S. P men, who were dismissed during the strike were not

⁸⁸⁰ P. Krishna Pillai, 'Thozhilalikaludeyum Nattukarudeyam Samaram', in Andalath (ed.), *Sakhakkale Munnottu*, Vol. II, p. 101.

⁸⁸¹ K. G. Pankajakshan, *Keralathile Nagara Shucheeekarana Thozhilalikal: Innale Innu Naale*, Kozhikode, 2023, pp. 34-35.

⁸⁸² C. Rairu Nair and Thaha Madayi, *Aa Pazhaya Kaalam*, Kottayam, 2014, pp. 84-85.

⁸⁸³ N. C. Sekhar, 'Municipal Thozhilali Samaram', in C. Bhaskaran (ed.), *N. C. Sekhar: Thiranjedutha Lekhanangal*, pp. 57-59.

⁸⁸⁴ Fortnightly Report for the First Half March 1946, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁸⁸⁵ Fortnightly Report for the First Half of April 1946, Tamil Nadu State Archives, Chennai.

⁸⁸⁶ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 196-197.

reinstated even after the Congress came to power.⁸⁸⁷ The Communist leaders such as A. K. Gopalan held a view that there were two different classes among the policemen. 1946-47 was a period when the police was unleashing brutal repression against the Communist-led agitations. A. K. Gopalan differentiated between oppressive policemen and ordinary policemen. He had an opinion that the policemen, who hailed from working class and peasant families were also leading a miserable life. Consequently, A. K. Gopalan was arrested under the charge of 'inciting anti-government sentiment among the police.'⁸⁸⁸ For A. K. Gopalan, some of the M. S. P men also had patriotic feeling. ' In a speech, referring to the R. I. N Mutiny, A. K. Gopalan said: " Indian policemen and the M. S. P were not prepared to shoot their own countrymen."⁸⁸⁹

Till 1945-46, the Muslim League adopted a strategy based on the tactic of avoiding anti-British agitations and collaborating with the British Government and bargaining for concessions. Thus, the League didn't get an opportunity to organize mass agitations by mobilizing the people and show its strength to the British Government. However, by 1945, Jinnah was forced to change the strategy of the Muslim League.⁸⁹⁰ Consequently, the 'Direct Action Day' of 16 August 1946 became an opportunity for the Muslim League in Malabar to show its strength and support. The term 'Direct Action Day' was translated into Malayalam by the local Muslim League leaders as *Samaradinam*. The Muslim League began the planning and preparations to make the 'Direct Action Day' as a huge success in Malabar. Meetings were held in different places for this. Big preparations were made in Kozhikode, Thalassery, Palakkad, Perinthalmanna, Tanur, Manjeri, and Feroke.⁸⁹¹ The 'Direct Action Day' was a huge success in Malabar. The Muslim merchants in Kozhikode Town observed a complete *hartal*. Muslims workers struck work. *Jathas* and a massive public rally were organized in Kozhikode Town.⁸⁹² K. A. Damodara Menon writes that 'The Direct Action Day'

⁸⁸⁷ Leela Damodara Menon, *Chettante Nizhalil*, Kottayam, 1984, p. 93.

⁸⁸⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *Manninu Vendi*, p. 33.

⁸⁸⁹ G. O. No.1587, Home Department(Ms.), dated 21st April 1947, Selected Records, Sl. No.21, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

⁸⁹⁰ Stanley Wolepert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*.

⁸⁹¹ *Chandrika*, 14, 15&16 August 1946.

⁸⁹² *Ibid.*, 18 August 1946.

became an opportunity for the Muslim League to show its strength. 'On 16 August, when the massive procession of the League was passing through in front of the *Mathrubhumi* office, slogans against the Congress were shouted.'⁸⁹³

The year 1946 was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Malabar rebellion. The Communists, even when they were working as the leftists in the Congress, held view that the rebellion of 1921 had the character of a peasant revolt. As said earlier, the rightists had a different position in this. The Communist leaders began to talk about the Malabar rebellion openly and frequently in 1946 by pointing out the political relevance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the rebellion. The Communist Party saw a new meaning to the rebellion in the new political atmosphere in India, where the popular movements were gaining strength. The Communist leaders frequently mentioned the Malabar rebellion in their speeches during this period. In a public meeting held at Perinthalmanna on 25 August 1946, A. K. Gopalan asked: 'if the Congress consider the August revolution as a struggle against the British Empire, why do they not commend or keep the memory of 21 similarly.' For A. K. Gopalan, the Malabar rebellion was a resistance against imperialism and oppression by the landlords. The police charged a case against A. K. Gopalan for the remarks in this speech.⁸⁹⁴ According to the police reports, K. P. R. Gopalan made frequent references to the rebellion in his speeches delivered in 1946 and justified the lawless actions of the rebels.⁸⁹⁵

On 20 August 1946, the twenty-fifth anniversary day of the rebellion, E. M. S. Namboodiripad published a statement under the title *Aahwanavum Thakkeethum* (The Call and the Warning) in the *Deshabhimani* as the official statement of the Communist Party. In this, E. M. S interpreted the Malabar rebellion as an 'anti-imperialist resistance' and appealed to all the Malayalis to remember its history and learn from it. He pointed out that the political scenarios of 1921 and 1946 were similar in all aspects. He highlighted the common aspects in 1921 and 1946 such as the world wars, inflation, scarcity of food, and the political awakening after the war. He compared the

⁸⁹³ K. A. Damodara Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

⁸⁹⁴ G. O. No.1587, Home Department(Ms.), dated 21st April 1947.

⁸⁹⁵ Proceedings of the Assistant District Magistrate, Malabar, 1946, Selected Records, Sl. No.71, Regional Archives, Kozhikode.

popular movements during 1945-46 with the Malabar rebellion. He questioned the attitude of the Congress leaders, who opposed the rebellion in the name of non-violence. He supported Muhammad Abdu Rahman's view that the rebellion of 1921 should be called as 'Malabar Rebellion' as the resistance of the entire people of Malabar. The term 'Malabar Rebellion' was popularised instead of 'Mappila Revolt' in 1946.⁸⁹⁶

The character of the agitations in Malabar during the end of the colonial rule differed according to the targets. For instance, the agrarian riots during this period were more anti-landlord than anti-British. However, the strikes and agitations that took place as an extension of the popular movements across India during 1945-47 had an anti-imperialist nature and were directed against the British Government. By taking up the leadership of the agitations during 1945-47, the Communist Party enhanced its popular support and emerged as the major alternative for the Congress in politics after independence.

3.17. Conclusion

The ideology of a political movement is expressed in the form of the strategy and technique it adopts for mobilization and agitation. As the direct activities related to the National Movement started in Malabar only during the First World War, the agitations as part of the moderate and extremist politics, which dominated the early phase of the Indian National Movement were absent in Malabar. The National Movement in Malabar during its first phase was led by the Home Rule League of Annie Besant. Thus, as Besant was an ardent upholder of moderate politics, the National Movement in Malabar, in the first phase, adopted the strategy and method of agitation of the moderates.

The National Movement in Malabar acquired a clear ideology during the *Khilafat*-Non-Co-operation Movement in 1920-22. The Gandhian ideology spread to Malabar during this period. Gandhian nationalism was not just an ideology but its most important aspect was the strategy and techniques it adopted for mobilization and agitation. From

⁸⁹⁶ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 1921nte Aahwanavum Thakkeethum', in P. Govinda Pillai (ed.), *EMSinte Sampoorana Krithikal*, Vol. VI (1945-46), Thiruvananthapuram, pp. 152-155.

1920 to 1934 the National Movement in Malabar was dominated by a single ideology, Gandhian nationalism. During this period the politics of Malabar got integrated into the basic S-T-S strategy of Gandhian politics. Gandhian politics was symbolic too. The constructive programmes, the most important element of Gandhian semiotics became active in Malabar during 1922-30. The Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-34, the most popular mass anti-colonial agitation launched by Gandhi, was held vigorously in Malabar district.

By the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in 1934, a new ideology emerged in the politics of Malabar as an alternative to Gandhism. The left ideology came into conflict with the Gandhian ideology to achieve hegemony. Though the leftists broke ideologically from Gandhism, they used Gandhian techniques of mobilization and forms of agitation based on non-violence such as picketing, *jathas*, boycotting, and fasting. However, the way they used these techniques and the orientation were different. Gandhi devised some effective techniques for mobilizing the masses. Though the leftists used Gandhian techniques for mobilizing the masses, their activities were focused on peasants and workers. However, the National Movement in Malabar had two ideologies during 1934-40, the left ideology was in a dominant position in the politics of Malabar during this period. New ideologies emerged in the politics of Malabar by 1940. The formation of the Communist Party in 1939 and the growth of the Muslim League after 1937 became major turning points in the politics of Malabar. Even after the formation of the Communist Party, the Gandhian ideology represented by the former rightists in the Congress remained as an important ideology. The politics of Subhas Chandra Bose also had a support base in Malabar. The Congress Socialist politics revived in Malabar during the Quit India Movement in 1942. Thus, the most important feature of the National Movement in Malabar in its last phase during 1940-47 was the conflict between different ideologies.

The political atmosphere during the war and the post-war period provided the opportunity for the Communists to express their ideology in its full form. The 'strike wave' during 1945-47 was the right occasion for the Communists to express and spread their ideology. When the Congress opposed the agitations during 1945-47, the Communist Party backed them and took over the leadership. The National Movement

in Malabar maintained local variations in its ideologies and strategy. When the presence of the Mappilas became the factor that caused the local variations in the National Movement during 1920-21, after 1934, the dominance of left politics in the local politics of Malabar was the main factor behind the local variations. To conclude, the National Movement Malabar district was part of all the political trends in the Indian National Movement after the First World War including the Non-Co-operation Movement, the Civil Disobedience Movement, the ideological conflict during the post-Civil Disobedience phase, the growth of the Muslim League, Quit India Movement, and the popular movements during 1945-47.

Chapter 4

The Crowd in the Public Space

4.1. Introduction

The role of the crowd is noteworthy in all the revolutions and armed uprisings in world history. It is almost impossible to overthrow a state without the support of the crowd. We can't write the history of the French Revolution and Russian Revolution without narrating the role of the crowd in them. Though things are like this, historians have maintained a negative attitude towards the crowd for a long time. Because of this, the term crowd has been used negatively in academic circles. It was believed that the crowd has no ideology and its mentality is decided by the emotions that are varying. The Marxists and the Gandhians commonly treated the crowd as apolitical, immature, and a mere collection of people. It was George Lefebvre and some of his students and disciples, who adopted a positive approach towards the crowd for the first time while writing on the different aspects of the French Revolution.¹

It was in the year 1959, that George Rude's work *The Crowd in the French Revolution* was published. Rude dedicated his work to George Lefebvre and admitted that Lefebvre's works on the French Revolution had inspired him.² Even today, Rude's study is the most comprehensive work available about the crowd.³ Rude in his study states that "one aspect of the French Revolution that has been largely neglected by historians is the nature of the revolutionary crowd."⁴ Rude raised some important questions regarding the nature and intentions of the crowd, which stormed the Fort Bastille in July 1789.⁵ Following the study of Rude, many prominent historians like E. P

¹ George Lefebvre, *The French Revolution: From Its Origins to 1793*, Translated by Elizabeth Moss Evanson, Oxon, 2009.

² George Rude, *The Crowd in the French Revolution*, Oxford, 1959, p. ix.

³ The Introduction of the work, *The Great Fear of 1789* by George Lefebvre was written by Rude. George Rude, 'Introduction to the English Edition', George Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789: Rural Panic in Revolutionary France*, Translated by Joan White, New York, 1973.

⁴ George Rude, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Thompson came forward to make a historical inquiry into the role of the crowd in the social, political, and cultural history of Europe.⁶

In India too, the early nationalist and Marxist historians have adopted the same approach towards the crowd. The fact that the crowd was present in all the popular movements in India during the era of the Indian freedom movement between 1857 and 1947 cannot be ignored. In 1982, the new trend in the historiography of modern India inaugurated by Ranajit Guha and his co-writers came out in the form of a series of volumes entitled *The Subaltern Studies*. A few articles in the *Subaltern Studies* and a few works by the historians of the Subaltern school have provided some clear indications about the participation of the crowd in the popular movements in India during the freedom struggle.⁷ Stephen Henningham in his study about the Quit India Movement in Bihar and the Eastern United Provinces shows that the crowd participated extensively in the popular protests in these regions during the Quit India Movement in 1942.⁸ Stephen Henningham added the 'Report of the Begusarai Sub Divisional officer dated 7 December 1942' in his study as an appendix.⁹ This report is a detailed description of the violent protests by the crowd in Begusarai Division as part of the Quit India Movement in August 1942. Another study by Ranajit Guha is on the nature and methods used by leaders like Gandhi to 'discipline and mobilize' the

⁶ E. P. Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, February, 1971. Dilip Menon in his study on *Teyyattam* uses the concept of 'moral economy' that was put forward by E. P. Thompson. Dilip M. Menon, 'The Moral Community of Teyyattam: Popular Culture in Late Colonial Malabar', *Studies in History*, Vol. IX, no.2, 1993.

⁷ Though, does not mention the crowd directly, the arguments of Ranajit Guha in his book about the peasant insurgency in colonial India would be useful for understanding the techniques used for mobilizing the crowd in politics. Guha identified six elementary aspects of the peasant insurgency in colonial India and described each of them in six full chapters. These features are Negation, Ambiguity, Modality, Solidarity, Transmission, and Territoriality. Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1983. This book was published in 1983. A year before that, in 1982, the first volume of the *Subaltern Studies* edited by Guha was published.

⁸ Stephen Henningham, 'The Quit India Movement in Bihar and the Eastern United Provinces', in Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies II: Writings on the South Asian History and Society*, New Delhi, 1983, pp. 130-79. In his study, Henningham argues that the Quit India Movement in Bihar and the Eastern United Provinces was a 'dual revolt', where a subaltern rebellion combined with an elite uprising.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 165-178.

masses in the national movement.¹⁰ Shahid Amin's studies on Gandhi and Chauri Chaura have some references to the crowd.¹¹

The crowd began to appear in the Indian National Movement on a large scale after Gandhi took over its leadership. All the popular movements in India from the Rowlatt *Satyagraha* in 1919 to the Quit India Movement in 1942, led by Gandhi had the generous support of the crowd. All those who have studied the popular movements in the Gandhian era refer to the presence of the crowd in these movements. For instance, the studies of David Hardiman carry descriptions of the role played by the crowd in the Rowlatt *Satyagraha* and the subsequent agitations.¹² Likewise, Shahid Amin has studied how the belief of the common people in the miraculous powers of Gandhi attracted the masses into the National Movement.¹³ Rajat K. Ray provides some indications of the role of the crowd in the advancement of the Non-Cooperation Movement in Bengal.¹⁴

The presence of the crowd was evident in most of the violent protests during the Quit India Movement in India.¹⁵ Vinita Damodaran's study shows how the presence of the crowd made the Quit India Movement turbulent in Bihar.¹⁶ The presence of the crowd was very common in the popular movements in the final phase of the Indian National Movement. Sumit Sarkar, who has studied the popular movements in India in 1945-46 mentions the participation of the crowd in these movements.¹⁷ Anirudh Deshpande's study on the crowd in the popular protests in Karachi during the R. I. N Mutiny is a

¹⁰ Ranajit Guha, 'Discipline and Mobilize', in Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey(eds.), *Subaltern Studies VII: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, pp. 40-68.

¹¹ Shahid Amin, 'Gandhi as a Mahatma: Gorakhpur District, Eastern UP, 1921-22', in Ranajit Guha(ed.), *Subaltern Studies III: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, New Delhi, 1984, pp. 161; ShahidAmin, 'Approvers Testimony, Judicial Discourse: The Case of Chauri Chaura', in *Subaltern Studies V: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Delhi, 1987, pp. 166-203.

¹² David Hardiman, *The Non-Violent Struggle for Indian Freedom, 1905-19*, Gurgaon, 2018; David Hardiman, *Peasant Nationalists of Gujarat: Kheda District, 1917-34*, Delhi, 1981.

¹³ Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chuara, 1922-1992*, Delhi, 1995.

¹⁴ Rajat K. Ray, *Social Conflict and Political Unrest in Bengal, 1975-1927*, New Delhi, 1984.

¹⁵ Gyanendra Pandey (ed.), *The Indian Nation in 1942*, Calcutta, 1988.

¹⁶ Vinita Damodaran, *Broken Promises: Popular Protest, Indian Nationalism and the Congress Party in Bihar, 1935-46*, Delhi, 1992, pp .183-241.

¹⁷ Sumit Sarkar, Popular Movements and Middle-Class leadership, 1945-47', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XVII, no.14/16, April, 1982.

notable one in this regard.¹⁸ Recent studies by Shri Krishan about the crowd explain the crowd behaviour in the popular movements in Western India during the Freedom struggle.¹⁹

The factor that made Colonial Malabar special in history was the presence of the rebellious Mappilas and Communists. Both these people resisted the colonial rule in Malabar with violence. The Malabar rebellion in 1921 and the agrarian struggles led by the communists in 1940-47 had the back up of the crowd. All the existing and available studies on the National Movement in Malabar neglected the role of the crowd in the popular agitations during the freedom movement in Malabar. Even though several studies are there on the Malabar rebellion and the agrarian struggles in 1940-47 in Malabar, all of these failed in theoretically understanding the role of the crowd. When we are dealing with the history of the crowd in Malabar during the period between 1900 and 1947, five different phases can be identified: The first phase was up to 1920; the second phase was the period of the Malabar rebellion in 1921-22; the third phase was from 1921-34, where Gandhian politics had a predominance in ; the fourth phase was from 1934 to 1940, and it was a period when the politics of Malabar was dominated by the Congress Socialists or the leftists within the Congress; the fifth and final phase was between 1940 and 1947 and those were the years the Communist party in Malabar began to work independently from the Congress.

4.2. The Birth of the Crowd in Malabar

The birth of the crowd in colonial Malabar can be traced back to the second half of the 19th century. Revolts, usually require the presence of the crowd, as they are armed resistance against the state. Thus, there is a possibility of locating the presence of the crowd in several Mappila revolts, which occurred between 1836-1921. However, a historian may fail in his attempt to identify the presence of the crowd in these revolts, although they were armed resistances against the British Government. Those who

¹⁸ Anirudh Deshpande, 'Sailors and the Crowd: Popular Protest in Karachi, 1946', in Sekhar Bandyopadhyay (ed.), *Nationalist Movement in India: A Reader*, New Delhi, 2009, pp. 336-58; Anirudh Deshpande, *Hope and Despair: Mutiny, Rebellion and Death in North India, 1946*, 2016, pp. 74-101.

¹⁹ Shri Krishan, 'Crowd Vigour and Social Identity: the Quit India Movement in Western India', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. XXXIII, no.4, 1996; Shri Krishan, *Political Mobilization and Identity in Western India*, New Delhi, 2005.

have studied the nature of the Mappila revolts in Malabar from 1836 to 1921 include Congress leaders like K. Madhavan Nair, colonial administrators like Logan and Innes, and Marxist historians like K. N. Panikkar and Cornard Wood, who have also identified the anti-landlord character of these revolts.²⁰

The Mappila revolts had the character that these revolts would start against either a particular landlord or the state usually by a small gang of Mappilas due to some immediate provocations.²¹ Since the Mappila revolts had a small beginning, these revolts derived strength from other small gangs of Mappilas that would join later with the gang of Mappilas, which started the revolt. All these revolts were small and isolated outbreaks and not a rebellion. Thus, a huge crowd can't be located in these revolts. For Cornard Wood the number of participants in all 29 Mappila revolts that occurred in Malabar during 1836-1921, except in three, the number of participants was 1 to 19 Mappilas.²² But a major exception to this was the Mappila revolt in 1896. K. Madhavan Nair has a rough calculation that the number of participants in the revolt of 1896 was not less than 100 Mappilas.²³ The 'mob' is the most suitable term to denote the gangs of Mappilas that participated in these revolts.²⁴

Colonial Malabar witnessed one of the huge crowds in its history in an incident in the mid-19th century. On February 12, 1852, when the Madras Government ordered the deportation of Mambaram Sayyid Fazal Pookoya Tangal, the most prominent spiritual leader of the Mappilas of Malabar. Tangal sailed for Arabia along with 57 people, which included his family members and servants on 19 March 1852.²⁵ A month before this, a rumour spread among the Mappilas that the British would make Tangal a prisoner and disgrace him. Disturbed by this rumour, 10 to 12 thousand Mappilas,

²⁰ K. N. Panikkar, *Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprising in Malabar.1836-1921*, Delhi, 1992; Cornard Wood, *The Moplah Rebellion and its Genesis*, New Delhi, 1987.

²¹ Wiliam Logan, *Malabar Manual*, New Delhi, 2010(1887), pp. 556-99; C. A. Innes and F. B. Evans, *Malabar(Gazetteer)*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1997(1908), pp. 75-84.

²² Cornard Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

²³ K. Madhavan Nair, *Malabar Kalapam*, Kozhikode, 2016(1971). Madhavan Nair was an eyewitness to the Mappila revolt of 1896. He was studying at the Manjeri Board Secondary School during the revolt.

²⁴ *The oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* defines a mob as a " large crowd of people, especially one that may become violent or cause trouble."Sally Wehmeier(ed.), *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Oxford, 2000(1948), p. 818.

²⁵ K. N. Panikkar, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

most of whom were armed collected at Tirurangadi. On 19 March, knowing that Tangal was leaving for Arabia, a large number of Mappilas gathered near his residence and when Tangal reached Parappanangadi, 6 miles away from Tangal's residence, a crowd consisting of 7, 000 to 8,000 Mappilas collected there.²⁶ Innes says that on 17 February 1852, when the British Government passed the order to deport Tangal from Malabar, a large number of Mappilas, who were 10 to 12 thousand in number gathered at Tirurangadi.²⁷ Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, when writing about the incidents on August 20, 1921 in Tirurangadi takes us back to 1852. He writes:

an emergency situation like this had happened before in Tirurangadi during the British rule. The climax of those incidents was the deportation of Mambaram Tangal to Mecca and consequently, the murder of Malabar Collector Conolly.²⁸

He added that the incidents in 1852 did not culminate in a rebellion because these incidents had no nature of a mass political movement like in 1921.²⁹

The activities as part of the Indian National Movement became active in Malabar during the First World War period. A. K. Pillai states that the new enthusiasm all over India generated by the Home Rule Movement was also reflected in Malabar.³⁰ The success of every political movement can also be measured according to the number of people who participated in the agitations and public meetings organized by that movement. People took part very actively in the district conferences, public meetings, demonstrations, and processions organized by the Home Rule-Congress Committee of Malabar during that period.³¹ The Second Malabar District Conference held in

²⁶ Willima Logan, *op. cit.*, p. 571

²⁷ C. A. Innes and F. B. Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 80. Tangals are the religious leaders among the Mappila Muslims of Kerala, known for their divine and charismatic powers. The most prominent family among the Tangals of Colonial Malabar was that of the Mambaram Taramal Tangals. The line of the Mambaram Tangals was established by Sayyid Shaikh Jiffri Tangal. Sayyid Fazal Pookoya Tangal belonged to this family. The District Government of Malabar suspected that Tangal's secret blessings and support were behind some of the Mappila revolts in the 1840s. Thus, the British Government decided to deport Tangal to Mecca. Roland E. Miller, *Mappila Muslims of Kerala: Study in Islamic Trends*, Madras, 1992(1976), pp. 255-57; Stephen Frederic Dale, *Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar, 1498-1922*, Oxford, 1980, pp. 111-18; M. Gangadharan, *Mappila Padanangal*, Kottayam, 2012(2007), pp. 30-36.

²⁸ Mozhikunnathu Brahmadathan Namboodiripad, *Khilafat Smaranakal*, Kozhikode, 2015(1965), p. 17.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ A. K. Pillai, *Congressum Keralavum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1982 (1935), p. 19.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

Kozhikode in April 1917, was well attended by the public. Mananchira *maidanam* in Kozhikode Town was selected as the venue for the Second District Conference. Though the organizers of the District Conference sought the permission of the District Government to erect the *pandal* of the conference at Mananchira *maidanam*, the permission was denied. The stand of the District Government was very clear that they wouldn't allow any kind of agitation in the vicinity of the Huzur office.³² The District Government was always afraid of agitations by a crowd held at places near the administrative headquarters. As the National Movement gained more popular support in Malabar, large spaces were needed to hold conferences and public meetings. Because a large space is always needed to accommodate a big crowd. The organizers of the Second District Conference expected a large number of participants for the conference and they selected a large space like Mananchira *maidanam* as the venue. By 1920-21, the National Movement in Malabar became as popular as capable of holding a public meeting with a huge crowd only a large space like Kozhikode Beach could accommodate.

As it was the war period, people were more eager to know the news and affairs.³³ That might be the reason that the conferences and public meetings during the war period attracted the attention of the common people. They came to think that any decision taken by the government on the war would also affect them. Thus, in every meeting held by the government in Kozhikode Town on matters related to the war, a crowd of ordinary men was present as uninvited guests to watch the proceedings. Only prominent persons and the top political leaders in the Town were invited by the government to the meetings held to discuss matters related to the war. The historic walkout of K. P. Kesava Menon in 1916 took place during a meeting held by the government at Kozhikode Town Hall to discuss the matters related to the war.³⁴ Kesava Menon had warned the government that if any resolution on the matter related to gifting a money purse in the name of the general public was brought for discussion in the meeting, he would oppose it. Kesava Menon's challenge attracted many people to the meeting. Kesava Menon has recollected this incident in his autobiography and says

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

³³ P. Kesavadev, *Ethirppu*, Kottayam, 2017(1959), pp. 86-92.

³⁴ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

that when he stood on the platform to speak, the loud applause of the crowd excited him.³⁵ He added that when he started to speak in Malayalam the people gathered inside and outside the Town Hall encouraged him by shouting aloud that *malayalathil, malayalathil* (in Malayalam, in Malayalam).³⁶ By expecting a huge crowd at the meeting, as a precautionary measure to avoid the law and order problems, the government posted some soldiers outside the Town Hall.³⁷ Thus, the encouragement provided by the crowd collected inside and outside the Town Hall inspired Kesava Menon for the historic walkout that became a turning point in the history of the freedom movement in Malabar.

When the Second Malabar District Conference was decided to be held in Kozhikode in April 1917, C. P Ramaswami Iyer was selected as its president. A crowd gathered in the vicinity of the Kozhikode Railway Station expecting the arrival of the president of the Conference from Madras on the train along with Annie Besant, who was invited as a special guest. They were taken to the venue of the Conference in a huge procession through the main roads of Kozhikode Town.³⁸ It is very usual that when important political leaders arrive by train, crowds will gather at the railway station and the premises to see and welcome them. Thus, the huge crowd assembled in and outside the Kozhikode Railway Station to welcome Annie Besant in 1917 revealing her popularity in Malabar at that time.

Within two months after the District Conference, the government interned Annie Besant, B. P Wadia, and G. S Arundale. To protest against this, a huge procession and a public meeting were organized in Kozhikode Town on 16 July 1917. The remarkable participation of the people in the procession and the public meeting were noticed by the government.³⁹ Consequently, the District Magistrate issued an order prohibiting the public meeting and procession, which was decided to be held a month after that,

³⁵ K. P. Kesava Menon, *Kazhinja Kaalam*, Kozhikode, 2016(1957), p. 54.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

³⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, Kozhikode, 2014, p. 55.

on 16 August. Prohibitory orders were also issued against K. P Raman Menon and Manjeri Rama Iyer.⁴⁰

Only selected people could enrol as delegates in the District Conferences. According to A. K Pillai, more than a thousand people participated in the Second District Conference held at Kozhikode including 400 delegates, and separate tickets were issued for the delegates and visitors.⁴¹ Thus, only the representatives of the elite and middle-class sections of society attended the District Conferences as the delegates. However, this practice was changed after the Manjeri Conference in 1920. Manjeri was selected as the venue for the Fifth Malabar District Conference, which was decided to be held in April 1920.⁴² Manjeri was the headquarters of Eranad *Taluk*.⁴³ Annie Besant and her supporters, who were cooperators had believed that the disappointment and disillusionment that the people of Malabar had about the Reforms of 1919 would make them adopt non-cooperation as the method of struggle and vote in favour of the resolutions supporting non-co-operation in the Manjeri Conference. Thus, to avoid any kind of decision being taken in the conference favoring non-cooperation, Annie Besant and her supporters started a campaign.⁴⁴ Besant and her team tried their best to enroll the maximum number of people in favour of them as the delegates at the conference. Manjeri Rama Iyer, the close aide of Annie Besant in Malabar led these attempts.⁴⁵ Consequently, more delegates than in the previous conferences were present at Manjeri, in which many were Mappilas.⁴⁶

Delegates from places like Tirur, Feroke, and Kozhikode came to Manjeri in motor lorries at the tireless attempt of Manjeri Rama Iyer. Many Mappilas came to the Conference as a result of Rama Iyer's campaigns in regions like Areekode. When a resolution was put for voting in the Manjeri Conference, the same Mappilas, who got the opportunity to attend the Conference at the attempts and initiative of Manjeri Rama Iyer voted against the interest of his leader and mentor, Annie Besant. The

⁴⁰ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 25

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁴³ C. Gopalan Nair, *The Moplah Rebellion, 1921*, Kozhikode, 1923, p. 8.

⁴⁴ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁴⁵ K. Madavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp.65-66.

⁴⁶ A. K. Pillai, *op. Cit.*

resolution favouring non-cooperation was passed in the conference by giving a heavy blow to Annie Besant politically.⁴⁷ A local newspaper reported the incident: "There were nearly a thousand delegates at the roughest calculation most of them being peasants with a large sprinkling of Moplahs coming from every nook and corner of Eranad *Taluk* in all stages of attire, some of them just come from plough and farm."⁴⁸ Those who attended the Manjeri Conference and defeated the anti-non-cooperation campaigns of Annie Besant were not a mere crowd of Mappilas without political consciousness. The Mappila tenants, who attended the Manjeri Conference had political consciousness. K. Madhavan Nair Says that the Mappilas were aware that the opinions expressed by Annie Besant in the Manjeri Conference were against the Gandhi and Ali brothers.⁴⁹ Every political movement attracts the crowd only when they address the issues of those people, who have a dominance in the population of that region. Big crowds began to appear in the National Movement of Malabar when it started to consider the problems and interests of the Mappilas, whose numbers were substantial in the population of Malabar. Two issues, the grievances of the tenants and the *Khilafat* problem, in which the Mappilas had a particular interest, were presented at the Manjeri Conference as two separate resolutions.⁵⁰ Moreover, the District Conference in 1920 was held at Manjeri, the headquarters of Eranad *Taluk*, where the Mappilas were the majority of the population. C. Gopalan Nair argues that "if the conference had been held at any station outside Eranad *Taluk*, the *Khilafat* resolution would never have been passed."⁵¹ However, the Manjeri Conference was a major turning point in the history of the National Movement in Malabar. The Mappilas became part of the mainstream of the National Movement after the Manjeri Conference. Consequently, all the agitations organized as part of the National Movement in Malabar after April 1920 were notable for the remarkable participation of the crowd. These crowds consisted of a substantial number of Mappilas.

⁴⁷ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp.65-66.

⁴⁸ *West Coast Spectator*, 29 April 1920, cited in C. Gopalan Nair, *Op. cit.*, pp. 8-9.

⁴⁹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p.66.

⁵⁰ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-39.

⁵¹ C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 9. Diwan Bahadur C. Gopalan Nair was a retired Deputy Collector and a British loyalist. His work *Moplah Rebellion, 1921* was published in 1923 and is the first account of the Rebellion of 1921 by a pro-British Indian. He dedicated his work to P. McEnroy, the British Military official, who led the Pookottur firing.

M K Gandhi and Shaukat Ali visited Malabar to seek support for the *Khilafat*- Non-Cooperation Movement. They arrived in Kozhikode on 18 August 1920. To listen to the speeches of Gandhi and Shaukat Ali about 20, 000 people assembled at Vellayil Beach of Kozhikode.⁵² A substantial number among them were Mappilas.⁵³ The size of the crowd that will gather to hear a leader depends upon his charisma and popularity. The large size of the crowd that collected at the beach to hear Gandhi indicates the popularity and influence that Gandhi had in Indian politics in those days. Shaukat Ali, who was Gandhi's companion on that trip was also very popular among the Indian Muslims as the leader of the *Khilafat* Movement.

K. Madhavan Nair recounts that after the Calcutta Special Session of the Congress, he decided to deliver some speeches on the Council Boycott. As part of this, meetings were organized in places such as Tanur, Vengara, Tirur, Tirurangadi, Kottakkal, Kodoor, Ponnani, Malappuram, Manjeri and, Mampad, where Madhavan Nair spoke about the Council Boycott. These meetings were held by the efforts of the Mappilas in these regions. Thousands of Mappilas from nearby and distant places participated in these meetings.⁵⁴ The colonial British Government was always afraid of the crowd that was present in the agitations organized as part of the Indian National Movement. Thus, by using Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code, the same Section, which was always used by the colonial British Government in India to control the crowd in the Indian National Movement, the District Government in Malabar made attempts to suppress the new vigour achieved by the National Movement in Malabar. The District Government started to prohibit the *Khilafat*- Congress meetings in Eranad and Valluvand *Taluks* by using Section 144. A *Khilafat*-Congress meeting, in which Yakub Hasan would speak was decided to be held at Tanur on 15 February 1921. A huge crowd was there at the Tanur Railway Station to receive Yakub Hasan. He was garlanded by the people.⁵⁵ People from distant places about 20, 000 in number came to Tanur in procession to attend this meeting. However, the District Government had prohibited the meeting by using section 144 without giving any prior notice. As the

⁵² 'Mr. Gandhi's Visit to Calicut', Appendix III, in *ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵³ K. N. Panikkar, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

⁵⁴ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁵⁵ C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

people spent a lot of money and effort on the meeting, the act of the government made the crowd, which came to attend the meeting at Tanur furious.⁵⁶ By using Section 144 the government also banned the public meeting, which was decided to be held at Kozhikode Beach, in which Yakub Hasan would Speak. Though Yakub Hasan decided to disobey the 144 order of the District Magistrate, before he did so, the government arrested him along with K. Madhavan Nair, Ponmadath Moideen Koya, and U. Gopala Menon, who were notable Congress leaders, under a charge of violating Section 107 of the Criminal procedure Code. These four leaders were sentenced to six months of imprisonment by the District Magistrate on 16 February 1921.⁵⁷ R. H. Hitchcock states that an incident that took place in Kozhikode Town on the day the leaders were arrested. He says that by knowing about the arrest of the leaders, a crowd of about 12, 000 Mappilas, many of them were armed, collected at Kozhikode and they clashed with the police on Beach Road. He added that E. F Thomas, the District Collector, had expected that such a huge crowd would gather in the Town on that day and arranged a party of Leinsters in a motor bus as a precautionary measure.⁵⁸ On 18 February 1921, when C. Rajagopalachari and K. P. Kesava Menon from Madras arrived at the Kozhikode Railway Station, a huge crowd gathered there to receive them. A huge procession which was 'two furlongs in extent' marched to the residence of Yakub Hasan, and the procession was dispersed by the police immediately after it passed through the Puthiyara Road. When the police dispersed the crowd in the procession, the District Magistrate and the District Superintendent of Police were also present on the spot.⁵⁹

On the next day, a *hartal* was observed in Kozhikode Town to protest against the arrests of the leaders. A huge procession was held in the evening. The news of the arrests of the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders spread across the District. People reached Kozhikode Town by different means.⁶⁰ Moidu Maulavi recalls that 'a crowd like that

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

⁵⁷ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

⁵⁸ R. H. Hitchcock, *Peasant Revolt in Malabar: A History of the Malabar Rebellion, 1921* by R. H. Hitchcock, New Delhi, 1983(1925), pp. 20-21.

⁵⁹ *West Cost Spectator*, 19 February 1921, cited in C. Gopalan Nair, *Op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁶⁰ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran: Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*, Thrissur, 1964, p. 15.

never gathered in the Town, after or before this.⁶¹ The deep resentment that the people had in the arrests of the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders under fabricated charges gave new impetus to the National Movement in Malabar. When the First Kerala Provincial Political Conference was held at Ottapalam in April 1921, a huge crowd gathered on the premises of Ottapalam Railway Station on 23 April to welcome T. Prakasam, who was the president of the Conference.⁶² The common people also joined the delegates and visitors at the conference in a procession, which was led by the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders through Ottapalam Town after the Conference was over.⁶³ The common people have always a tendency to join in the processions and demonstrations with a large number of participants, which is passing through a place easily noticeable by people, like the main roads in cities and towns.

The popularity of the *Khilafat*-Congress Movement in Malabar increased further after the Ottapalam Conference. Huge crowds started to appear even in the local *Khilafat*-Congress meetings. The number of participants in some of the local *Khilafat*-Congress meetings in Malabar at that time and in the public meeting at Kozhikode Beach in August 1920 addressed by Gandhi and Shaukat Ali was almost the same. Madhavan Nair claims that more than 20, 000 people attended a *Khilafat* meeting held at Kalpakancheri.⁶⁴

Huge crowds participated in the processions and receptions that were organized to receive the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders, who were released from jail. To warmly welcome K. Madhavan Nair, U. Gopala Menon and, Ponmadath Moideen Koya, who were released from Kannur Jail on 15 August 1921 after completing their 6 months of imprisonment, public meetings and processions were held in Kannur, Thalassery and Kozhikode Towns. Among these, the reception given to them on 17 August in Kozhikode was magnificent. On that day, the crowd in the procession passed in front of the Huzur Office clapped loudly and mocked Thomas, the District Collector who was standing on the veranda of the Huzur Office.⁶⁵ Later on that day, a huge public

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁶² A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶⁴ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.

meeting was held at Kozhikode Beach at 4 p. m., in which thousands of people participated. According to a report in the *West Coast Spectator*, the crowd gathered in Kozhikode on that day was not less than 15, 000.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, in another incident, K. Kelappan and K. V. Balakrishna Menon were sentenced to one month of imprisonment for violating 144. When K. Kelappan was released from prison, people brought him to his village in a procession from Vadakara.⁶⁷ Madhavan Nair claims that it was not the Pookottur incident but the magnificent reception given to him and his colleagues by the people of Kozhikode on 17 August that provoked Thomas, the District Collector to proceed to Tirurangadi on the night of 19 August.⁶⁸

The presence of huge crowds in a political movement is a clear sign of the popularity gained by the movement. The strength of the *Khilafat*- Non-cooperation Movement in Malabar increased after the Manjeri Conference, the arrests of the leaders, and the Ottapalam Conference. Madhavan Nair says that there were 200 Congress Committees and 20, 000 Congress members in Malabar by the end of July 1920.⁶⁹

How the illiterate Mappilas were mobilized to the National Movement is a basic problem that should be answered. M. P Narayana Menon and his close friend and co-worker, Kattilasseri Muhammad Musliar were the leaders responsible for the entry of the Mappilas into the National Movement and their enrollment as members in the congress on such a large scale.⁷⁰ Hitchcock regarded them as 'itinerant preachers.'⁷¹ M. P Narayana Menon was a Congress leader, who was very influential among the Mappilas. He was a lawyer, who became the secretary of the Eranad *Taluk* Congress Committee in 1919.⁷² The Manjeri Conference was the first important Congress meeting, in which M. P. Narayana Menon participated as a congress leader. He was the chief organizer of the Conference as the Eranad *Taluk* Congress secretary. The Mappilas in such a large number came to attend the Manjeri Conference because of the strong influence that Narayana Menon had on the Mappilas. The enrollment of

⁶⁶ *West Coast Spectator*, 18 August 1921, cited in C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

⁶⁷ M. P. Manmatahan, *Kelappan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016(1984), p. 83.

⁶⁸ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-105.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁷² M. P. S. Menon, *Malabar Samaram: M. P. Narayana Menonum Sahapravarthakarum*, Kozhikode, 2005 (1992), p. 42.

Mappilas as members of Congress and the passage of the resolution supporting the non-cooperation were political victories of M. P Narayana Menon.⁷³

M. P. Narayana Menon was also a leader of the *Kudiyan Sangham*. He and Kattilasseri Musliar worked hard for organizing the Mappila tenants. Narayana Menon also started a journal known as the *Kudiyan* (The Tenant).⁷⁴ The Mappila tenants were attracted to the *Khilafat*-Congress Movement as it was a movement led by M. P. Narayana Menon, who was also a prominent leader of the tenant movement in Malabar.⁷⁵ As compared to the Hindus, it was easy to organize and mobilize the Mappilas into a political movement. This was due to several reasons. The majority of the Mappilas, who participated in the Rebellion of 1921 were ordinary people. Most of them were peasants, tenant cultivators, coolies, bullock cart drivers, petty traders in local markets, and people doing petty jobs in mosques.⁷⁶ Two places where the Mappilas met together regularly were *chanthas* and *pallis*(local markets and mosques). Thus, Narayana Menon and Kattilasseri Musliar spoke inside mosques and at local markets to politically motivate the Mappilas and enrol them as members of the *Khilafat*-Congress committees.⁷⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, who campaigned vigorously for the *Khilafat*-Congress Movement in Kurumbranad *Taluk* says that he and his colleagues spoke inside mosques as part of the campaign.⁷⁸ Moyarath added that at that time, 'we delivered our speeches largely inside mosques.'⁷⁹

Unlike the Hindus, the Mappila Muslims used to gather together regularly in mosques, which were their centres of worship. According to Mozhikunnathu, 'Mambaram mosque was the main social centre of the Mappilas of Malabar.'⁸⁰ K. M. Maulavi, a prominent *Khilafat* leader in Malabar wrote in his memoirs that many of the important discussions between the *Khilafat*- Congress leaders that related to the *Khilafat*-

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

⁷⁵ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

⁷⁶ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-38.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

⁷⁸ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁸⁰ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

Congress movement in Malabar were held inside mosques.⁸¹ The panic that spread among the Mappilas in the post-war period was an important factor, which helped the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders to organize and mobilize them easily. There was a comprehensive study by George Lefebvre about the panic that spread in rural France in 1789.⁸² The economic crisis created by the First World War put the Mappila tenants in extreme distress.⁸³ The *Khilafat* problem that emerged in the post-war period also created panic among the Mappilas. Both issues, the grievances of the tenants and the *Khilafat* problem were issues that would affect the Mappilas directly. M. P. Narayana Menon and Kattilasseril Muhammad Musliar mobilized the Mappilas into the *Khilafat*-Congress Movement by convincing them about the graveness of these two issues.⁸⁴

It is very interesting to see that the same Mappila people, who were part of the non-violent agitations organized by the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement in Malabar in 1920-21, within a short while became part of an armed uprising against the British Government. Though the crowds found in both these struggles were almost the same, the behaviour of the crowd in a non-violent struggle and an armed uprising is different. The crowd in an armed uprising will resist the state by violent means. The crowd in the early agitations organized by the *Khilafat*-Congress Movement in Malabar had tolerated the repression and insults by the police against them with extreme patience. But when the situation became extremely unbearable the people reacted violently. E. Moidu Maulavi explains this situation by using a local Malayalam saying *alayayil kuthiyal neerkoliyum kadikkum*.⁸⁵

4.3 The Crowd in the Malabar Rebellion

The Pookottur incident, which took place on 1 August 1921, is generally identified as the immediate cause of the Malabar rebellion of 1921. Pookottur was a village in the

⁸¹ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Ali Musliyar: K. M. Maulaviyude Khilafat Smaranakal*, Tirurangadi, 2021(1968), p.67.

⁸² George Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789*.

⁸³ A. K. Poduval, *Keralathile Karshakaprasthanam Oru Lagu Charithram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1969, p. 11.

⁸⁴ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, p.60.

⁸⁵ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, Kottayam, 1981, p. 22. The actual meaning of this saying is that the forbearance of even a tolerant man has a limit. Maulavi uses this saying to express the meaning that even a tolerant man will react violently if the situation is unbearable to him. Moidu Maulavi made use of this saying to mean that the nonviolence of the common man has a limit. The same saying is also used by Mozhikunnathu when he is narrating the same situation.

Eranad *Taluk*, where the Mappilas had a majority in the population. Nilambur Tachirakavil Tirumulpad was the main landlord in the village. Kalathingal Mammad(also known as Vadakkeveettil Mammad in some documents), the Secretary of the Pookottur *Khilafat* Committee was one of the rent collectors of the Tirumulpad.⁸⁶ Tirumulpad dismissed Mammad from the service for his connection with the *Khilafat* Movement. On 30 July 1921 forenoon, the police searched Mammad's house to find a single barrel breach loading gun that was found missing from the Nilambur *kovilagam*, 130 Rupees, and some documents. Mammad and his men believed that the case was manipulated by Tirumaulpad and others who were opposing the *Khilafat* Movement. At dusk, on 31 July, Mammad along with several Mappilas went to the *kovilagam* and threatened Tirumulpad and demanded some money as arrears of Mammad's salary. Though Tirumulpad hesitated at first, by coming to know that those Mappilas were armed, he persuaded them by giving them some money and send them back with an assurance that he would give the rest Money the next day.⁸⁷ On 1 August 1921, the next day, M. Narayana Menon, the Circle Inspector of Manjeri came to Pookottur to enquire about the incident. He says that he reached Pookottur in the morning by 11.15 a. m. On his way, he had noticed that the Mappilas as small gangs of 30 to 50 gathered in the tea shops and mosques from Melumri to Pookuttur.⁸⁸ A crowd of about 300 Mappilas, who were armed, collected in the tea shop near the *kovilagam*. Vadakkeveettil Mammad was standing on the approach road to the *kovilagam* with a crowd of about 500 to 600 Mappilas. When Mammad refused to approach the Inspector, Narayana Menon went to Mammad. The crowd of the Mappilas along with Mammad were armed with weapons like country-made swords, spears, daggers, and batons. Menon states that though he was successful in persuading Mammad, suddenly, a huge crowd of the Mappilas shouting *Takbir* rushed to the spot. The crowd threatened the Inspector that they would kill the

⁸⁶ K. N. Panikkar, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-37. According to Kalathingal Unyayamma, Kalathingal Mammad's daughter, it was a spelling mistake that made Vadakkeveettil Mammad as Kalathingal Mammad. Kalathingal Mammad's house was in a *parambu* with a big pond. So as a person living in a *parambu* with a *kulam*(pond), Mammad was called by others as Kulathingal Mammad. Later, a spelling error in this name made him Kalathingal Mammad. 'Sakshimozikal', in P. A. Salam(ed.), *Charithram Thilakkunna Pookottur*, Pookottur, 2019, pp. 136-37.

⁸⁷ M. Gangadharan, *Malabar Rebellion*, Kottayam, 2008, pp. 105-109.

⁸⁸ 'Letter from M. Narayana Menon to the Superintendent of Police South Malabar, Calicut, dated 2 August 1921', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *The Mappila Rebellion, 1921-22*, Madras, 1922, pp. 13-14.

Inspector, who was an anti-Khilafat and would convert the *kovilagam* into a mosque.⁸⁹ According to Mozhikunnathu, Inspector Narayana Menon escaped from the crowd of the Mappilas by swearing in the name of Mambaram Tangal that he wouldn't do anything against the *Khilafat* from then on.⁹⁰ But K. M. Maulavi says that the Inspector escaped from the crowd by swearing in the name of prophet Nabi.⁹¹ It is usual that a person who gets caught by a violent crowd will swear in the name of a person, who is respected by the people in the crowd to escape and to make the people in the crowd feel that he has accepted their demands. Mambaram Tangal was very influential among the Mappilas of Malabar. At the same time, the prophet Nabi was respected by Muslims all over the world as the prophet.

Ranajit Guha has identified a variety of ways that were used by illiterate and subaltern people to mobilize the people easily during an insurgency. According to him, the sound of drums and buffalo horns was widely used by the insurgents for mobilization.⁹² Inspector M. Narayana Menon says that he heard the unusual and non-stop beating of *nakaram*(drum) in the mosque nearby from the time he reached Pookottur until 4 p. m. He added that this was pre-planned to summon the Mappilas

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁹¹ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *op. cit.* p.66. A large number of stories and here says were circulated among the people of the rebellion-affected areas during the rebellion and the post-rebellion period about the incidents took place at Pookottur in the last week of July and the first week of August 1921. Different stories were told by the people about the gun that was found missing from the Nilambur *kovilagam*. According to the version of P. K. Nair, a Congress worker from Pookottur, who was also a family friend of Vadakkeveetil Mammad and the son of a former female servant in Nilambur *kovilagam*, the other servants of Nilambur *kovilagam* framed this allegation against Mammad for opposing their malpractices. These servants lied to the Tampuran that Mammad the gun was stolen by Mammad. The gun was hidden by the servants somewhere. Cheenikkal Poonthottathil Mammad tells a different story. There was a small clash between Tampuratti (Tampuran's wife) and Mammad's wife. That clash later became a dispute between Tampuran and Mammad. Tampuran threatened Mammad by saying that he had a gun and he would shoot Mammad dead. Fearing that Tampuran would kill Mammad, Tampuratti took the gun and threw it into the pond. Tampuran came to believe that the gun was stolen by Mammad. Pandapilakkal Khadeeja (Mammad's son's wife) says that Mammad used to visit his house only on Fridays and on the other days he stayed at the *kovilagam*. P. A. Salam (ed.), *Charithram Thilakkunna Pookottur*, pp. 138-45.

⁹² Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, Delhi, 1983, pp. 230-32. According to R. C. Majumadar, "the wide circulation of *chapatis*, just before the outbreak of 1857, is regarded by many as important evidence in favour of an organized conspiracy." R. C. Majumadar, *History of the Freedom Movement in India*, vol. I, Calcutta, 1971(1962), p. 204.

of the neighbouring places within a very short time at Pookottur.⁹³ The sound of *nakaram* was used throughout the rebellion to mobilize the Mappila rebels, summon them to a particular place within a short time, and alert them about the arrival of the army and the police.⁹⁴ The *Banku vilis* (Islamic call to prayer) and the public announcement system in mosques were used during the rebellion to summon the Mappilas at a particular place. The Mappilas would recite *koottabanku* (collective recitation of the prayer) during an emergency situation. The recitation of the *koottabanku* from a mosque would be repeated by the people in the other mosques. The Mappilas could easily spread a message up to a distance between 50 to 100 kilometres by using the *koottabanku* in mosques.⁹⁵ Madhavan Nair says that the recitation of *koottabanku* was also used in the early Mappila revolts.⁹⁶

The colonial state always tended to exaggerate the number of people in a crowd who committed a crime. According to Inspector Narayana Menon, the crowd of the Mappilas, who were armed and gathered at Pookottur that day consisted of about 2,000 people. Among the crowd, there were Mappila women, who covered their faces with cloth, and children. The crowd that gathered at Pookottur consisted of Mappilas from Kondotti, Tirurangadi, Irumpuzhi, Podiyat, Melmuri, Valluvambram, Nellikuth, Ponmala, and some other distant places.⁹⁷ There was a possibility that Inspector Narayana Menon might exaggerate the number of people in the crowd. Because He had to convince his superiors that he was defeated by a huge crowd. Moreover, he had to inform the Madras Government that things were getting uncontrollable in Eranad Taluk.⁹⁸

Within days after the Pookottur incident, another incident that created a feeling among the district officials in Malabar that the Mappilas were preparing for a revolt occurred at Tanalur on 3 August 1921. The accused in this case was a crowd of Mappilas.⁹⁹ Some Mappilas assaulted the toddy-tapping *Tiyyas* of Tanalur. The police

⁹³ 'Letter From M. Narayana Menon', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *Op. cit.*

⁹⁴ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁹⁵ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

⁹⁶ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

⁹⁷ 'Letter From M. Narayana Menon', in G. R. F. Tottenham, *op. cit.*

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ Cornard Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

registered a case according to Sections 143, 506, 447, and 426 of the Indian Penal Code but they failed to arrest any of the accused. No Mappilas gave evidence against the accused.¹⁰⁰ None of the accused in this case was arrested because when the police went to arrest them, they were surrounded and protected by a local mob of Mappilas.¹⁰¹ A series of incidents including the Pookottur incident, Tanalur incident, and the incidents in Kozhikode Town on 17 August 1921 during the reception given to K. Madhavan Nair gave the red signal to the District Government that the situation was too serious. A common factor in these three incidents was the crowd. The government began to feel afraid of the fearlessness expressed by the crowd. The realization that the crowd began to view all the symbols of the government from the local police officers to the District Collector, who was the head of the district administration without seriousness created a scare among the district officials. This situation prompted E. F. Thomas, the District Collector to go to Tirurangadi in a special train with troops and along with R. H. Hitchcock, the Superintendent of Police of Malabar, E. V. Amu, the Deputy Superintendent Police of Malabar on the night of 19 August 1921.¹⁰²

The British officials, who wrote about the incidents preceding the rebellion had identified the presence and the role of the crowd in it. A. R. Knapp, who had reported about these incidents to the Madras Government mentioned the behaviour of the crowd when explaining the Pookottur incident. He wrote about the crowd in the Pookottur incident:

exactly why the crowd held their hands at the last moment is not plain; I am told that the Inspector himself cannot explain it and represents an interesting problem in crowd psychology.¹⁰³

On August 20 1921, a rumour spread rapidly among the Mappilas that the troops arrived at Tirurangadi to arrest the *Khli'fat* leaders including Ali Musliar had fired at and destroyed the Mambaram mosque.¹⁰⁴ Several rumours that were circulated

¹⁰⁰ G. R. Ftootenham, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

¹⁰¹ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

¹⁰² K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 110; G. R. F. Tottenham, *op. cit.*, pp. 426-27.

¹⁰³ A. R. Knapp, 'Note on Malabar Affairs, in G. R. F. T Tottenham, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

¹⁰⁴ Mozhikunnath, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

among the Mappilas throughout the rebellion period were the important reason behind the uncontrollable spread of the Malabar rebellion. K. Gopalankutty has studied the role of rumours in the outbreak and spread of the rebellion of 1921.¹⁰⁵ George Rude has explained the role played by rumours in creating panic and fear among the crowd.¹⁰⁶ Anirudh Deshpande, when writing about the crowd in the agitations in Karachi during the R. I. N. Mutiny mentions several rumours that spread among the crowd.¹⁰⁷ The Rumours will reflect the mentalities of the time then.¹⁰⁸ Since rumours are always lies or partial truths, to what extent people believe them depends upon the situation and mentality of people at that time. Many Mappilas believed the rumour that during the First World War, the British troops destroyed some mosques in Asia, which were considered sacred to the Muslims. Thus, they easily believed the rumour that the troops destroyed the Mamburam mosque.¹⁰⁹

George Rude has explained the places, from where the rumours were easily circulated during the French Revolution.¹¹⁰ Rumours will easily spread from places, where more people get together. The day on which the Malabar rebellion began, was the Kottakkal *chantha divasam* (the market day at Kottakkal). Thus, the Mappilas gathered in Kottakkal Market rushed to Tirurangadi after hearing the news.¹¹¹ At that time, there were many Mappilas, who were working as petty traders and bullock cart drivers. As these Mappilas had links with many people and different places, it was very easy to transmit rumours and here says through them rapidly. Variankunnath Kunhahammad Haji had worked as a bullock cart driver for some time.¹¹² Kunhi Kadir, the leader of the crowd from Tanur, which came to Tirurangadi, after hearing the news that the Mambaram mosque was destroyed, was a big grain trader in Tanur Town.¹¹³

¹⁰⁵ K. Gopalankutty, *Malabar Patanangal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2007, pp. 16-34.

¹⁰⁶ George Rude, *op. cit.* p. 222.

¹⁰⁷ Anirudh Deshpande, 'Sailors and the Crowd: Popular Protest in Karachi, 1946', in Sekhar Bandyopadhyay (ed.), *Nationalist Movement in India: A Reader*, p. 347.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 108-109.

¹¹⁰ George Rude, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

¹¹¹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.* pp. 110-11.

¹¹² K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

¹¹³ T. Hassanar Kutty, Tanur, 'Kunhi Kadir Sahib', in *Malabar Kalapam 1921: Smaranakalum Padanagalum*, Tirurangadi, 2015(1981), p. 133.

Lefebvre in his study mentions the routes and the speed of the spread of rumours, panic, and fear.¹¹⁴ The speed and routes that a rumour will spread have been decided by factors like the topography of that the region, the nature of people living there, and the nature of places, where the people are involved. Normally, a rumour will be spread at a high speed in a city as compared to a village. K. M. Maulavi says that the rumour that the British troops had destroyed the Mambaram mosque spread throughout Tirurangadi. Maulavi added that this rumour was spread up to a distance of 15-16 miles from Tirurangadi on 20 August and in the other regions in Eranad, Valluvanad, and Ponnani Taluks 21 on August.¹¹⁵ K. M Maulavi uses the Malayalam words *dhwani*, *shabdam*, and *kelvi* in his memoirs to denote the rumours.¹¹⁶

The updates from Eranad Taluk were reached to the *Khilafat*- Congress leaders in Kozhikode Town often in the form of rumours. No official means of communication was arranged for the correspondence between the local *Khilafat*-Congress leaders in Eranad-Valluvanad Taluks and the top-level *Khilafat*-Congress, who were settled in Kozhikode Town. Matters of urgent importance were communicated through special messengers. The information about the moves of the District Government that was leaked to the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders, who were living in Kozhikode Town, the nerve centre of the District administration was also partial truths in the form of rumours.¹¹⁷ On the night of 19 August itself, Muhammad Abdu Rahman got the information from the Superintendent's Office that the army would march to Eranad. Moidu Maulavi writes that 'this news was spread like wildfire in Kozhikode Town.'¹¹⁸ According to the information got to Abdu Rahman the troops would march to Pookottur. Immediately, Abdu Rahman sent a letter to Ali Musliar through T. V. Muhammad from Chavakkad, who was the secretary of the Eranad *Khilafat* Committee. The content of the letter was that he got information that 'the troops would come to Tirurangadi tomorrow and would arrest some people, if it happened so, please surrender.'¹¹⁹

¹¹⁴ George Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789*, pp. 169-197.

¹¹⁵ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Op. cit.*, p. 76.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.68-76.

¹¹⁷ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, p. 28.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* As the rumours were circulated orally among the people, for a comprehensive study on the rumours during the rebellion of 1921, the possibility of oral history should also be used. There is a

The Mappila people in small and big gangs from different places came to Tirurangadi by hearing the news that the troops had destroyed the mosque. The crowd of the Mappilas came from Tanur to Tirungadi and was led by Umayyathanagath Puthenveetil Kunhi Kadir, a local *Khilafat* leader from Tanur. The Reserve Police met the crowd from Tanur at a place about a mile and a half away from Tirurangadi. The crowd consisted of 2, 000-3, 000 Mappilas. The Reserve Police ordered the crowd to disperse but they refused.¹²⁰ The tendency to refuse the demand of the police to disperse is part of the mentality of the crowd.

The term 'mob' is more frequently used instead of 'crowd' in the accounts of the rebellion written by British officials like Hitchcock and in the Judgements sentencing the rebels.¹²¹ The term 'mob' was used also instead of 'crowd' in the report prepared by the Begusarai Sub Divisional Officer on the Quit India Movement, which is used by Henningham in his study.¹²² K. M Malavi used the term *janasamooham* to denote the crowd in his memoirs.¹²³ K. Madhavan Nair make use of the terms *janakoottam* and *aalkoottam*.¹²⁴ The Mappilas who came to Tirurangadi from Tanur were not part of a mere crowd that gathered after hearing a rumour. The Judgment by sentencing Kunhi Kadir mentions that the people in the crowd from Tanur wore *Khilafat* badges and shouted aloud, *Allahu Akabar*.¹²⁵ The Judgement also states that a person stood in front of the Tanur crowd was holding a *Khilafat* flag. The person who held the flag was Khasim Molla.¹²⁶ On their march to Tirurangadi, more Mappilas were joined by the crowd.¹²⁷

detailed study by Shamshad Hussain on the oral tradition of the Malabar rebellion. Shamsad Hussain K. T., *Malabarkalapathinte Vamozhi Parambaryam*, Kottayam, 2020.

¹²⁰ Case No.4 of 1921 in the court of the Special Tribunal, Malabar, Calicut, 18 October 1921, in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.* pp. 206-207.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² Stephen Henningham, 'The Quit India Movement in Bihar and the Eastern United Provinces', in Ranajit Guha (ed.), *Subaltern Studies II*, pp. 165-78. The term 'crowd' is more frequently used in the official documents in the work by G. R. F. Tottenham

¹²³ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

¹²⁴ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 103&114.

¹²⁵ Case No.4 of 1921 ..., in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.* pp. 206.

¹²⁶ T. Hassanar Kutty, Tanur, 'Kunhi Kadir Sahib', in *Malabar Kalapam 1921: Smaranakalum Padanangalum*.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

On 20 August 1921, a crowd of the Mappilas led by Ali Musliar proceeded to the *kacheri* in Tirurangadi with a demand to release the Mappilas who were arrested and kept in the *Kacheri*. On the way, the crowd was confronted by the troops. The officer leading the forces said to the crowd that he would consider their demands if they sat down. When many Mappilas in the crowd did so, the officer ordered the firing. More than 20 Mappilas died in the firing and many were injured.¹²⁸ K. M. Maulavi describes how the people in a crowd would react when the police would open fire against them. He wrote:

when the troops fired at the crowd, the people got scattered.

1. Many people ran away to all sides except the front side.
2. Some people were injured and fell.
3. Less than 20 Muslims died.
4. Some brave youngsters advanced to the front and killed the head of the troops and some others among the troops.¹²⁹

When the police opened fire against a huge crowd, the actual number of people who died in the firing would always be obscure. Even the estimate of the eyewitnesses of the incident would also be a guess. The state always tends to understate the number of deaths in police firing while the victims tend to exaggerate it.

Do the leaders have control over the crowd? This is an important problem that should be answered about the mentality of the crowd. Madhavan Nair says that on 20 August 1921, a crowd of Mappilas collected at Pookottur with the intention to proceed to Tirurangadi. Knowing this, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, K. Madhavan Nair, and M. P. Narayana Menon rushed to Pookottur. Madhavan Nair and other leaders succeeded in pacifying that angry crowd of Pookottur and dissuading them from going to Tirurangadi. But on the night of the same day, several Mappilas from the same crowd went to Nilambur and attacked the *kovilagam*.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ M. Gangadharan, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-29.

¹²⁹ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

¹³⁰ K. M. adhavanNair, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-29. E. Modu Maulavi claims that he was also among the Congress leaders, who pacified the angry crowd at Pookottur on that day. However, Maulavi's autobiography doesn't have a reference to the presence of M. P. Narayana Menon in Pookottur that day. E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, pp. 32-35.

Anirudh Deshpande has pointed out in his study that there were some examples of the crowd being controllable by its leaders. Moreover, he argues that the mentality of the crowd may vary each day. He added that if a crowd is controllable by the leaders one day, it would be uncontrollable on the other day.¹³¹ The behaviour of the Pookottur crowd was an example of this characteristic feature of the crowd that is pointed out by Anirudh Deshpande. Though the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders succeeded in pacifying the crowd for a short time the crowd again became violent after some time. The charisma of a leader and his influence over the people can be measured by his ability to pacify an angry crowd and dissuade the crowd from the attempt. K. M. Maulavi recounted that on 20 August 1921, he pacified a crowd gathered at Kizhakke Angadi in Tirurangadi.¹³²

As the name of the study indicates, K. N. Panikkar in his study argues that the Malabar rebellion of 1921 was both anti-landlord and anti-British.¹³³ The people and buildings attacked by rebels during the Malabar rebellion were either the symbols of British Imperialism or landlordism. C. Gopalan Nair has included in his study a detailed list of the government offices attacked by the Mappila rebels. *Taluk* offices, courts, police stations, sub-treasuries, toll sheds, post offices, *amsom kacheris*, and the forest buildings in Nilambur were attacked by the rebels. The crowd of the Mappilas attacked every place where they suspected the presence of the British. Thus, travellers' bungalows, rest houses, and, plantations owned by Englishmen became the main targets of the rebels.¹³⁴ Anirudh Deshpande argues that the crowd in Karachi attacked every symbol of 'an alien rule.'¹³⁵ For Shri Krishan, the crowd in colonial India had some common targets. He added that the village officials, who were the loyal supporters of the British were such a common target of the crowd.¹³⁶ P. Chenthamara Pisharody, the *adhipati* of Vilayil village, and P. Vasudevan Namboodiri, the *adhipati* of

¹³¹ Anirudh Deshpande, 'Sailors and the Crowd: Popular Protest in Karachi, 1946', in Shekhar Bandyopadhyay (ed.), *Nationalist Movement in India: A Reader*, pp. 343&353.

¹³² K. N. Panikkar, *op. cit.*

¹³³ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

¹³⁴ C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-89.

¹³⁵ Anirudh Deshpande, 'Sailors and the Crowd: Popular Protest in Karachi, 1946', in Shekhar Bandyopadhyay (ed.), *Nationalist Movement in India: A Reader*, p. 345.

¹³⁶ Shri Krishan, 'Crowd Vigour and Social Identity: the Quit India Movement in Western India'.

Areekode village were murdered by the rebels.¹³⁷ The nature of a revolt can be identified by analyzing the nature of the targets of the crowd in a rebellion. Thus, the fact that the crowd also targeted the houses of landlords apart from the symbols of colonial rule is validating Panikkar's argument.

Ranajit Guha has identified 'burning' as a form of resistance that was used by the rebels in the peasant revolts in colonial India. He argues that the rebels adopted the burning of properties of their enemy to express their anger.¹³⁸ The Mappila rebels burnt government offices and properties in the offices and land documents kept in the houses of landlords.¹³⁹ 'Burning' is always used by the rebels to express extreme anger. Guha identifies four forms of struggle in the peasant insurgency in colonial India: wrecking, burning, eating, and looting. Among these, the methods of wrecking, burning, and looting was very extensively used by the Mappila rebels during the rebellion. The thing that how hard a crowd will hit a symbol of its enemy depends upon the extremeness of its anger. 'Burning' was used as a way of struggle also by the crowd in the popular protests in Karachi in 1946. In Anirudh Deshpande's view, 'burning' shouldn't be treated as criminal madness and it is an expression of popular desire. He added that, by this, the crowd expresses the aspect of its mentality to punish the enemy by destroying what is beloved to him.¹⁴⁰

One of the main targets of the crowd during the Malabar rebellion was collaborators. The collaborators were targeted and attacked by the rebels irrespective of their religion. For instance, a gang of Mappilas led by Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji killed Khan Bahadur Chekkutti, a Retired Police Inspector and a staunch loyalist of the British Government, and paraded to Manjeri with his head on a spear.¹⁴¹ The act of exhibiting Chekkutti's head on a spear was not an expression of the criminal madness of the crowd. They intended to give symbolically a warning to other collaborators. C. Gopalan Nair regarded the murders of Head Constable Hydeross and Inspector Chekkutti as the

¹³⁷ C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

¹³⁸ Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, p. 136.

¹³⁹ C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.*

¹⁴⁰ Anirudh Deshpande, 'Sailors and the Crowd: Popular Protest in Karachi, 1946', in Shekhar Bandyopadhyay (ed.), *Nationalist Movement in India: A Reader*, p. 346.

¹⁴¹ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-73.

most brutal murders by the Mappilas during the rebellion.¹⁴² Both of them were Mappilas. Thus, it is clear that the rebels didn't give any concessions to collaborators whether they were Muslims or natives. The Mappila rebels also targeted Inspector M. Narayana Menon. But he was saved from the rebels by the Congress leader, M. P. Narayana Menon, who was a childhood friend and classmate of M. Narayana Menon.¹⁴³ The personal enmity of the crowd or the leader of the crowd towards a person whom they target is one of the factors that decides how a crowd will handle an enemy. Madhavan Nair says that the personal vendetta that Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji had against Chekkutti was also behind his brutal murder.¹⁴⁴ The Mappilas that killed Chekkutti were not a crowd but it is more suitable to call it a gang.

The historians, who have interpreted the Malabar rebellion as an anti-landlord struggle, to substantiate their arguments, made use of the fact that the rebels attacked the houses of landlords and burnt the land documents kept there. Mozhikunnathu says that the crowd of the Pookottur Mappilas, on their return after the attack of Nilamabur Kovilakam, captured the Sub Inspector of Nilambur, who was a Muslim and forced him to walk in front of them by holding the *Khilafat* flag.¹⁴⁵

George Rude regarded the storming of the Bastille Fort as the major event the crowd involved during the French Revolution. Rude has pointed out that the rebels attacked prisons and released prisoners during the Revolution. For him, one of the prime motives of the crowd during the rebellion was the collection of arms.¹⁴⁶ The Mappilas turned their attention towards the attack on police stations during the rebellion because the Mappila rebels also had the intention to collect guns.¹⁴⁷ There were a few instances of attacking jails and releasing prisoners during the Malabar rebellion.¹⁴⁸ The Sub-Jails of Manjeri and Angadippuram was attacked by the rebels. Maravakulath Abdullakutti Haji, a prisoner in Manjeri Sub Jail Jail was released when the jail was attacked by the rebels. Abdullakutti was a K. D. and the accused in many cases. Later

¹⁴² 'Atrocities', Appendix III, C. Gopalan Nair, *op. cit.* p. 54.

¹⁴³ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-18.

¹⁴⁴ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

¹⁴⁵ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

¹⁴⁶ George Rude, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-56.

¹⁴⁷ Mozhikunnathu, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

¹⁴⁸ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

he became a leader of the rebels.¹⁴⁹ The rebels gave more importance to arms than money during the Malabar rebellion. Madhavan Nair wrote that Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji obstructed the Mappilas from looting the Namboodiri Bank in Manjeri and, gave back the mortgages to the owners.¹⁵⁰ Many rebels possessed guns without a license. Velu, a blacksmith from Pookottur, who supplied swords to the rebels was caught by the troops.¹⁵¹

The state may face difficulties in identifying the real offenders in the case the crowd is involved. Thus, in such cases, the government takes such cases as an opportunity to make whoever they want as the accused. Thus, some innocent Congress leaders were arrested and sentenced for the crimes committed by the crowd during the rebellion. For instance, K. Kelappan and K. V. Balakrishna Menon were arrested on the charges of burning a toddy shop and attempting to attack the police station during the rebellion.¹⁵² In the crimes the crowd involved, the state attempts to make sure that the people in the crowd are armed with deadly weapons. The judgment states that the Mappilas in the crowd from Tanur were armed with deadly weapons.¹⁵³ Madhavan Nair says that when this case was brought to trial in court, sticks in the hand of the Mappilas became iron rods and swords.¹⁵⁴

In Ranajit Guha's opinion, the term 'dacoits' was used by the Colonial Government to denote the peasant leaders in India.¹⁵⁵ But in the case of the Malabar rebellion, even K. Mahavan Nair is also using the term 'dacoity' to refer to some incidents during the Malabar rebellion. The title of one of the chapters in Madhavan Nair's work is *Kollakal Kollakal(dacoity... dacoity...)*.¹⁵⁶

The crowd that would gather during the funeral ceremony of a political leader is the clearest sign of his popularity. Kunhi Tangal, a *Khilafat*-Congress leader from Malappuarm died in Kannur Jail. His dead body was brought to Kannur Town in a

¹⁴⁹ R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*, pp.63&149.

¹⁵⁰ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 164-65.

¹⁵¹ P. A. Salam (ed.), *Charithram Thilakkunna Pookottur*, pp. 146&148.

¹⁵² M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

¹⁵³ Case No.4 of 1921 ..., in R. H. Hitchcock, *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁴ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

¹⁵⁵ Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India*, pp. 77-108.

¹⁵⁶ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-47.

procession of a huge crowd consisted both Hindus and Muslims. After this incident, the government decided not to hand over the dead bodies of the Mappila rebels to their relatives.¹⁵⁷ When Ali Musliar was hanged at Coimbatore Jail, his body was cremated in a burial ground in Coimbatore.¹⁵⁸ The dead body of Variankunnath Kunhamad Haji was burnt by the troops with kerosene oil without any trace.¹⁵⁹

4.4. The Crowd Puller Versus the Crowd

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is the biggest crowd-puller in Modern Indian History. Gandhi knew very clearly how to engage a crowd. Gandhi's presence attracted and excited the crowd. Huge crowds always gathered to see Gandhi, wherever he went.¹⁶⁰ However, Shahid Amin and Ranajit Guha in their studies make clear that Gandhi was always against the limitless participation of the crowd in a political movement.¹⁶¹ Gandhi prepared a 'Twenty Point Program' in September 1920, to control the *darshan*-seeking crowds and 'mobocracy' in the movements led by him. Gandhi turned his attention towards trained and self-disciplined volunteers, which later became the backbone of Gandhian politics, to avoid the dominance of the crowd in the movements under his leadership.¹⁶² An incident at Chauri Chaura in U. P on 4 February 1922, where a crowd of peasants burnt a police station and killed 22 policemen, was the reason behind the sudden withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement by Gandhi.¹⁶³ Gandhi made attempts to keep away the crowd in the agitations led by him to avoid the repetition of such incidents. Partha Chatterjee argues that the incidents during the Rowlatt *Satyagraha* prompted Gandhi to identify the distinctions between

¹⁵⁷ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran: Muhammad Abdu Rahman Sahib*, pp.63-64.

¹⁵⁸ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

¹⁵⁹ K. K. Muhammad Abdul Kareem, *Shaheed Variankunnath Kunhahammad Haji*, Kozhikode, 2021(1992), p. 154. Muhammad Abdu Rahman passed away on 23 November 1945. A huge crowd was gathered at his house and the vicinity to see him at least a glance for the last time and to witness his funeral. This huge crowd that was present at his funeral is hinting at Abdu Rahman's popularity and charisma among the people of Malabar. During his funeral ceremonies, even volunteers were arranged to control the crowd. S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *Muhammad Abdu Rahman: Rashtreeya Jeevacharithram*, Kozhikode, 1978, p.656.

¹⁶⁰ Shahid Amin, 'Gandhi as a Mahathma: Gorakhpur District, Eastern UP, 1921-22', in Ranajit Guha(ed.), *Subaltern Studies III*, pp. 1-61.

¹⁶¹ Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chuara*; Ranajit Guha, 'Discipline and Mobilize', in Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey(eds.), *Subaltern Studies VII*.

¹⁶² Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chuara*, p. 13.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

‘the leader and *satyagrahi*’ and ‘the *satyagrahi* and the masses.’¹⁶⁴ Gandhi made use of the adjectives like ‘unmanageable’, ‘uncontrollable’, and ‘undisciplined’ to describe the mentality of the crowd.¹⁶⁵ However, it is a fact that all the political movements in India led by Gandhi gained strength from the support of the crowd. It was the huge crowd that always rushed to see Gandhi that revealed his popularity to his critics and to the Colonial Government. Not only Gandhi’s but also the popularity of other leaders of the National Movement was also expressed in the form of the huge crowd that gathered to see them.

Gandhi’s life was inseparably linked to the train from the famous incident in South Africa when he was expelled from the First-Class Compartment during a journey. For many Indians, Gandhi was also an image linked with trains and railway stations.¹⁶⁶ Because the crowd saw Gandhi waiting at railway stations during his journey. During Gandhi’s journey, crowds gathered at every station, where the train had a stop. A. C. Kannan Nair recorded in his diaries a few incidents that took place after the people of North Malabar got information that Gandhi was going to Mangalore via Kanhangad by train on 10 October 1927. Kannan Nair went to Cheruvathur when he came to know that Gandhi wouldn’t visit Nileshwaram. Though Kannan Nair waited at two railway stations to see Gandhi, he didn’t see Gandhi because of the massive rush. Finally, Kannan Nair saw Gandhi at Kasargod and from there Kannan Nair went to Mangalore. There also, a huge crowd rushed to see Gandhi.¹⁶⁷ K. Madhavan recollects in his autobiography that when the train that Gandhi was travelling, stopped at Kanhangad, thousands of people rushed to the Railway Station to see Gandhi and presented a money purse to Gandhi.¹⁶⁸ Moyarath Sankaran says that in August 1920, when Gandhi and Shaukat Ali were going to Mangalore from Kozhikode by train, they addressed the

¹⁶⁴ Partha Chatterjee, ‘Gandhi and the Critique of Civil Society’ in Ranajit Guha(ed.), *Subaltern Studies III*, p. 182.

¹⁶⁵ Ranajit Guha, ‘Discipline and Mobilize’, in Partha Chatterjee and Gyanendra Pandey(eds.), *Subaltern Studies VII*, p. 107.

¹⁶⁶ Claude Markovits, Jacques Pouchepadass and Sanjay Subramanyam, ‘Introduction: Circulation and Society Under Colonial Rule’, in Claude Markovits et al. (eds.), *Society and Circulation: Mobile People and Itinerant Cultures in South Asia, 1750-1950*, Delhi, 2003, p. 2.

¹⁶⁷ K. K. N. Kurup, A. C. Kannan Nair *Oru Padanam : Diarikalilude*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2008(1995), pp. 18-19.

¹⁶⁸ K. Madhavan, *Oru Gandhian Communistinte Ormakal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2014(1987), pp. 18-19.

people gathered at Thalssery Railway Station. Gandhi spoke to the crowd gathered at the platform for five minutes by standing at the door of the train.¹⁶⁹

Generally, the period from 1921 to 1934 in Malabar was a period dominated by Gandhian politics. No violent incident had occurred in this period related to the National Movement. K. Kelappan, the important face of the National Movement in Malabar during this period was an ardent Gandhian, who followed the Gandhian principle of non-violence without any deviation. In this period, Kelappan turned his attention towards constructive programs, which didn't demand the support of a crowd.¹⁷⁰ After the rebellion, the Congress leaders made attempts to put the burden of violent incidents during the rebellion on the head of the violent crowd. K. P. Kesava Menon asserts that during the Malabar Rebellion anti-social elements intruded among the rebels. He added that even a peaceful man may commit a crime if he becomes part of a crowd. Kesava Menon attempted to link the violent incidents during the rebellion to the sensitive nature of the crowd.¹⁷¹

After the rebellion, K. P. Kesava Menon, the then secretary of the K. P. C. C. wrote an article in *The Hindu* about the forcible conversions during the rebellion. There were protests against Kesava Menon from some corners for some of his observations in this article. Some unknown people threw stones at Menon's house at night. C. Rajagopalachari visited Malabar district after the rebellion with a mission to rebuild the Hindu-Muslim unity in Malabar. Kesava Menon was also a speaker at a public meeting at Kozhikode Beach, which was attended by Rajagopalachari. Some people in the crowd gathered there shouted and interrupted Menon's speech for some time.¹⁷²

The Indian National Congress and the Colonial Government came to an open fight again with the arrival of the Simon Commission in India. The renewed vigour of the Indian National Movement during the Simon Boycott Movement was also reflected in Malabar. Some loyalists in Malabar made attempts to prevent the Simon Boycott

¹⁶⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, p.66.

¹⁷⁰ C. K. Moosath, *kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan*, Kottayam, 1982, pp. 87-95.

¹⁷¹ K. P. Kesava Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 110. Menon is using the Malayalam word *Janakoottam* to denote the crowd.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12.

Movement from being active in Malabar.¹⁷³ Thus, the supporters of the British Government announced that they were planning to organize a public meeting in Kozhikode Town for discussing the arrangements to welcome the Simon Commission to Malabar. Several people led by Manjeri Rama Iyer, K. Madhavan Nair and Kunhisankara Menon came to the public meeting as they had a stand that they also had the right to express their opinion in a meeting held on behalf of the public. Rama Iyer informed the organizers of the meeting through a speech that they wouldn't allow the passing of any resolution on behalf of the general public in the meeting. The leaders along with the people walked out of the meeting when the organizers of the meeting like K. C. Menon and Dr. Nedungadi replied that it was not a public meeting but a meeting of only the people supporting the Simon Commission.¹⁷⁴ For K. Gopalankutty, at that period, messing up the public meetings organized by the loyalists by coming for the meetings with a crowd became a method of agitation of the Congress leaders in Malabar.¹⁷⁵

A similar incident took place at Koyilandi in 1928. V. V. Rama Iyer decided to give a grand reception to Minister Muthaiah Mudaliar at Koyilandi on behalf of the public. Muthaiah Mudaliar was a politician, who was elected to the Legislative Council as a Congress candidate and later defected to the Justice party to become a minister. The Congress leaders who came to know this decided to mess up the reception. On the day of the reception, the people of Koyilandi Town began to gather inside and outside the *pandal* from the morning.¹⁷⁶ Moyarath Sankaran says that many people in Koyilandi Town came to the meeting place.¹⁷⁷ He added that some of the people came to the meeting place to support them and others just for a time pass. Moyarath Sankaran and his colleagues messed up the reception successfully. Just after messing up the meeting, a public meeting was held at Koyilandi *maidanam* to protest against the arrests of the Congress leaders.¹⁷⁸ Newspapers were reported about the Koyilandi

¹⁷³ K. Gopalankutty, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁷⁴ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 126-27. A. K. Pillai regarded the supporters of the Simon Commission as *Swagathavadikal*.

¹⁷⁵ K. Gopalankutty, *Op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

¹⁷⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

reception. When a question about it was asked in the Madras Legislative Council, Mudaliar denied it by saying that there was no such incident occurred.¹⁷⁹ Moyarath Sankaran recalls this incident in his autobiography under the title “We Mess up a Minister’s Reception.”¹⁸⁰ Moyarath Sankaran uses the local Malayalam term *kalakkal* to denote the messing up of the meetings.¹⁸¹ The attempts of the collaborators to hinder the resurrection of the National Movement in Malabar during the Simon Boycott Movement were countered and defeated by the Congress leaders with the support of the crowd. The Congress leaders devised a new method of struggle during this period, that to hold a public meeting to explain their side in a place nearby just after messing up the meeting organized by the loyalists. The crowd that participated in these agitations was nonviolent and controllable by the leaders.

The Congress leaders had devised a program of multifaceted agitation in Malabar as part of the Simon Boycott Movement. The programs included observing a complete *hartal* on 3 February 1928, when the Simon Commission would arrive in India, and holding public meetings in different places to show the protest of the people against the Commission. Processions were also part of the Simon Boycott Movement in Malabar.¹⁸² Public meetings and processions wouldn’t be successful without the participation of people on a large scale. Thus, even K. Kelappan who was against mass agitations had to come forward to organize campaigns to mobilize the masses into the Simon Boycott Movement.¹⁸³ On 3 February evening, a huge procession holding black flags proceeded to the Municipal Office in Kozhikode. The procession was led by the leaders including K. Madhavan Nair, Muhammad Abdu Rahman, Hasan Koya Molla, M. Narayana Menon, U. Gopala Menon, and Manjeri Rama Iyer. The procession was passed from the Municipal Office to the Beach. A huge public meeting was held at the beach that was presided over by Narayanan Nair, the Municipal Chairman.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ Moyarath Sankaran, *Autobiography of a Freedom Fighter*, Translated by Radhika P Menon, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016, p. 173.

¹⁸¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha.*, p. 142.

¹⁸² V. R. Menon, *Mathrubhumiye Charitharm*, Kozhikode, 1973, pp. 167-68.

¹⁸³ C. K. Moosath, *op. cit.*

¹⁸⁴ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, pp. 204-205.

The Civil Disobedience Movement was very active in Malabar.¹⁸⁵ The Movement is notable not only for the number of Congress leaders and workers who participated in it but also for the public sympathy it gained. The huge crowds that appeared in different forms and manners in the Congress-led agitations during the Civil Disobedience Movement were an expression of this public sympathy. The agitations during the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar were based on trained and selected volunteers. The methods of struggle like salt making, *jatha*, and picketing were organized by using a limited number of Congress volunteers. However, the crowd participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar in different ways. Huge crowds gathered in various centres of reception arranged to welcome the salt *satyagraha* marches organized as part of the Civil Disobedience Movement.¹⁸⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, who was in charge of the pilot in the salt *satyagraha* march to Payyannur led by K. Kelappan recounts in his autobiography about the enthusiastic reception got to the march in centres of reception even in small villages.¹⁸⁷ Moyarath Sankaran recounts that about 3, 000 people participated in a public meeting held at Vattoli, to receive the salt *satyagraha* march to Payyannur.¹⁸⁸

On 23 April 1930, when the Congress volunteers violated the salt law at Payyannur, a huge crowd was present at the spot to watch the salt *satyagraha* and encourage the volunteers also participated in the *satyagraha*.¹⁸⁹ When the salt *satyagraha* took place at Payyannur, 16 volunteers under the leadership of K. Kelappan violated the salt law by making salt. The volunteers were accompanied by a huge crowd when they were going from their camp to the spot. When Kelappan picked some salt from the wide salt field that lay along the riverside and put it in the gunny bag, about a thousand people gathered there and picked salt.¹⁹⁰

The crowd participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement in another way as 'passive onlookers' to the brutal lathi charges against the *satyagrahis*. In Tanika Sarkar's view, looking at the lathi charges against the *satyagrahis* was also a form of participation by

¹⁸⁵ K. Gopalankutty, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-65.

¹⁸⁶ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-31.

¹⁸⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-162.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-57.

¹⁸⁹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-45.

¹⁹⁰ V. R. Menon, *op. cit.*

the people in the Civil Disobedience Movement.¹⁹¹ On 12 May 1930, the police brutally lathi-charged some notable Congress leaders of Malabar for breaking the salt law at Kozhikode Beach.¹⁹² People rushed to Kozhikode Town when the news that the Congress leaders would break the law and make salt at Kozhikode Beach was spread across the Town.¹⁹³ A huge crowd gathered at Kozhikode Beach as the witnesses of this incident. The police tried to disperse the crowd gathered at the Beach by blowing lathi against them. Many college students were also present at the Beach.¹⁹⁴ One of the students, who became the eyewitness to this incident was S. K. Pottekkatt, the famous Malayalam writer, who was then an intermediate student at the Samutiri College, Kozhikode.¹⁹⁵ Pottekkatt wrote about the nature of the crowd gathered there that day: 'a crowd gathered and stood in a distance with anxiety and fear to watch how the police of the white men would handle the agitation that was organized by the congress against the rule of the white men. I was also among them.'¹⁹⁶ K. Gopalankutty argues that in some situations the crowd was not mere 'passive onlookers'. There was an incident where the crowd that came to watch the scene attacked the Sub-District Magistrate.¹⁹⁷ On 13 May, the very next day after this lathi-charge, a group of satyagrahi people violated the salt law again at Kozhikode Beach. A crowd was waiting for the *satyagrahi* gang at Kozhikode Beach singing national songs and shouting *jai*.¹⁹⁸

Huge crowds gathered to greet the Congress leaders, who were arrested for participating in the salt *satyagraha* on the way they were being taken to jail and to watch their trials. The Congress leaders including K. Kelappan and Muhammad Abdu Rahman, who were arrested on 12 May were presented at the court of the Sub

¹⁹¹ Tanika Sarkar, *Bengal 1928-34: The Politics of Protest*, New Delhi, 1987, p. 86, cited in K. Gopalankutty, 'Mobilization Against the State and not Against the Landlords: The Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar', *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, vol. XXVI, no.4, 1989.

¹⁹² A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

¹⁹³ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, p. 178.

¹⁹⁴ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Maulaviyude Athmakatha*, pp. 170-71.

¹⁹⁵ S. K. Pottekkatt, 'P. Krishna Pillai: Randu Pazhaya Chithrangal' in C. Bhaskaran (ed.), *Sakhakkludeyum sakhavu: Ormakkurippukalum Padanangalum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012 (2006), p. 82.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ K. Gopalankutty, 'Mobilization Against the State and not Against the Landlords: The Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar'.

¹⁹⁸ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-48.

Divisional Officer for trial. To see them, a huge crowd gathered at the Huzur Office.¹⁹⁹ On the next day morning, people rushed to the Town, when the news that the leaders would be taken to Kannur in a bus was spread in Kozhikode Town. The people got information that they were being taken from West Hill. Thus, a crowd also gathered there. A crowd was present at the Kannur Railway Station to see the leaders at least a glance.²⁰⁰

Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the most prominent Muslim leader of Malabar was against the presence of the crowd to watch the salt *satyagraha*. He reiterated this opinion in his statements to the people.²⁰¹ During his trial, he expressed his gratitude to the police for keeping away the crowd and obstructing the people from confronting the police during the lathi-charge.²⁰² The opinion of Abdu Rahman was not only because of his concern that innocent people would be brutally lathi-charged by the police.²⁰³ He also had an intention that 1921 wouldn't be repeated when expressing this opinion.²⁰⁴ He might have the opinion that the violent crowd made the rebellion of 1921 uncontrollable.

In a meeting, where the political leaders take important decisions, anxiety about the decisions taken in the meeting is a factor that attract the crowd to the meeting place. Moyarath Sankaran says that a resolution supporting the starting of the Salt *Satyagraha* in Keralam was moved by him in a Congress meeting held at the *Kerala Kesari* Office, Vadakara. A crowd was eagerly waiting in the adjoining *Viswabharathi* reading room, on the veranda, down the office, and on the road to know the decision of the meeting. When the Salt *Satyagraha* resolution moved by Moyarath Sankaran was passed in the meeting the crowd made loud applause.²⁰⁵

Generally, historians tend to interpret the crowd as a phenomenon that is related to only revolutionary politics. This is a wrong interpretation. The crowd provided strength

¹⁹⁹ S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, p. 220

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 222-23.

²⁰¹ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, pp. 155-57.

²⁰² S. K. Pottekkatt et al., *op. cit.*, p. 221.

²⁰³ E. Moidu Maulavi, *Ente Koottukaran*, p. 157.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 157-58.

²⁰⁵ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athmakatha*, pp. 148-49. *Kerala Kesari* was a journal started by Moyarath Sankaran from Vadakara in 1924.

to agitations held in the Gandhian phase of Indian politics. Thus, the studies about the role of the crowd in political movements should also be extended to the study of the nature of the crowd in Gandhian politics.

4.5. The Crowd in Left Politics

E. M. S Namboodiripad has pointed out that the majority of the participants in the Salt *Satyagraha* were peasants or the other representatives of the rural poor or the intellectuals in the rural areas (like school teachers) or coolie workers. These same people became the base of the Congress Socialist Party in Malabar.²⁰⁶ The period from 1934 to 1940 was a stage of transformation in the history of the National Movement in Malabar. Peasants and workers became part of the National Movement during this period. Peasants and workers were mobilized into the National Movement on a large scale first by the Congress Socialist Party and then by the Communist Party.²⁰⁷ There are references in the autobiography and memoirs of A. K. Gopalan about the nature of the people who participated in the agitations, *jathas*, and public meetings organized by the Congress Socialist Party during the period between 1934 and 1940. They were peasants and workers.²⁰⁸ As a leader who worked at the grassroots level, A. K. Gopalan could give direct and authentic details about the nature of the people who became part of the agitations during that period.

The techniques used by the Congress Socialist Party and the Communist Party to mobilize the peasants and workers were not new. The tenant movement was started in Malabar in the post-First World War period itself.²⁰⁹ In Malabar, the first attempts to mobilize peasants were undertaken by M. P. Narayana Menon, a leader of the *Kudiyan Sangham*. Narayana Menon introduced the method of organizing and mobilizing peasants by working at the grassroots level and addressing the basic issues of peasants. In a sense, the techniques of mobilization used by the Communist leaders such as P. Krishna Pillai and A. K. Gopalan were a continuation or extension of the

²⁰⁶ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Ulbhavavum Valarchayum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2017 (1995), p. 27.

²⁰⁷ K. Gopankutty, 'The Task of Transforming Congress: Malabar 1934-40', *Studies in History*, vol. V, no.2, 1989.

²⁰⁸ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshakal*, Kozhikode, 2016, pp. 79-158., A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Jeevitha Katha*, Thiruvananthapuram, , 2015(1980), pp. 70-111.

²⁰⁹ A. K. Poduval, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-20.

techniques used by M. P. Narayana Menon. However, a strange contradiction was that, though Narayana Menon was a supporter of the Congress Socialist Party, he did not support the Communist Party and its ideology.²¹⁰

We can easily locate the presence of the crowd in the agitations and struggles, which became the turning point in the history of the Communist Movement in Kerala. The crowd played a crucial role in the Anti-Repression Day Agitations in September 1940 and the agrarian struggles led by the Communist Party in the end of the colonial rule in Malabar. The basic nature of these crowds was that they consisted of mainly peasants and workers. Thus, the behaviour of the crowd in these incidents is closer to the features of the revolutionary crowd as proposed by George Rude.

4.6. The Crowd That Hit Back

The 'Anti-Repression Day' Agitations on 15 September 1940 became a major turning point in the history of the Communist Party in Kerala.²¹¹ The Communists, who were secretly working within the Congress as Congressmen completely abandoned every relationship with the Congress after this incident. Many of the Communists lost even their primary membership in the Congress. The rest two communists of the K. P. C. C, C. Achutha Menon and M. K. Kelu resigned from the Congress immediately after their release from jail in 1942.²¹² Within a short period, after the Second World War began in 1939, the British Government dragged India also to the war. There were widespread protests against this all over India. It was in this backdrop, that the left-dominated K. P. C. C called on the people to observe 15 September 1940 as the anti-repression day. Preparations were made for this in different places in Malabar. The government didn't like this a bit. Before two days, the District Magistrate issued prohibitory orders. The

²¹⁰ M. P. S. Menon, *op. cit.* However, E. M. S. Namboodiripad argues that the nature and composition of the tenant movement led by M. P. Narayana Menon at the beginning of the 1920s were different from that of the peasant movements that were organized by the Congress Socialists and later by the Communists during the mid-1930s. He further says that the *Kudiyana Sangham* led by Menon was a movement of *kanakkar* and it didn't represent the interests of the *verumpattakkar*. E. M. S. Namboodiripad, *M. P. Narayana Menonum Sahaprararthakaram*, Thiruvananthapuram, 1992.

²¹¹ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015(1994), p. 15. Nayanar says that his first underground life begins in relation to this incident.

²¹² N. E. Balaram, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam: Aadya Nalukal*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2016(1990), p. 165.

office-bearers of the K. P. C. C were put behind bars. However, the Communist Party proceeded with its decision to observe the day.²¹³

When the Second World War began, the prices of essential commodities shot up. Peasants and workers started to starve. They demanded dearness allowance to meet the rise in the cost of living, to open cheap grain shops, punishments for the officials, who were collecting war funds forcibly, and a minimum guaranteed price for agricultural products.²¹⁴ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, one of the prime accused in the Morazha case recounts the situation behind the incident during the anti-repression day agitations in September 1940. There was a gradual but steep decline in the prices of agricultural products at the beginning of the Second World War. Consequently, the life of the rural population became miserable. Thus, the meeting of the Chirakkal *Taluk Karshaka Sangham* decided that the guidelines for resolving this issue should be proposed from within the Chirakkal *Taluk*, the birthplace of the peasant movement in Malabar.²¹⁵ Thus, the trade unions and *karshaka sanghams* decided to observe the anti-repression day in Chirakkal and Kottayam *Taluks* also as the 'price control day.'²¹⁶ During the War period, the repression of the government and the police became unbearable to the people. The government banned public meetings and demonstrations.²¹⁷ They promulgated new ordinances and issued prohibitory orders. The leaders of the K. P. C. C including Muhammad Abdu Rahman, the K. P. C. C President were kept under preventive detention.²¹⁸ In 1940, P. Narayanan Nair was the president of the All Malabar *Karshaka Sangham*, which was formed in 1937 and he had been holding this post since its formation.²¹⁹ Narayanan Nair was the secretary of the K. P. C. C in 1940. He was arrested by the police when he was working as the K. P. C. C secretary.²²⁰ By this time, the peasants and workers in Malabar had turned against the government. The workers of the Aron Mills at Pappinisseri went on a strike to protest against the actions of the British Government that unilaterally dragged India

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

²¹⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, *Modern Kerala: Studies in Social and Agrarian Relations*, Delhi, 1988, p. 121.

²¹⁵ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *Adimakalengane Udamakalayi*, Kannur, 2018(1980), p. 141.

²¹⁶ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-64.

²¹⁷ E. K. Nayanar, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

²¹⁸ P. Narayanan Nair, *Aranooottantilute*, Thrissur, 1999(1973), p. 136.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

into the War. The strike lasted for 40 days. The police sided with Samuel Aron, the owner of the mill, and brutally lathi-charged the workers on strike.²²¹

On 12 September 1940, the District Magistrate issued an order under the Defense of India Rules and banned meetings, processions, or assemblies in the Malabar district on 15 September 1940.²²² Though there were demonstrations and public meetings in 16 places all over Malabar on 15 September, the protest became violent in only four places. There were police firing at Morazha, Mattannur, and Thalassery. People were brutally lathi-charged at Koothuparambu.²²³ Two people, Aboo (28), a primary school teacher from Mambaram and Chathukutty (22), a beedi worker from Dharmadam died in police firing at Jawaharghat, Thalassery.²²⁴ Why did the protests become violent only in four places, especially at Morazha? This question needs to be answered. The interpretations of the government can be found in the judgments of the Morazha and Mattannur cases. The interpretations of the political leaders, who were either eyewitnesses or involved directly in these incidents were explained in their autobiographies or memoirs. The Communist leaders had an opinion that it was the provocation and repression by the police made the protests violent in four places.²²⁵ However, this finding is incomplete. The mentality of the crowd that came to an open confrontation with the police should be analyzed by linking it with the economic and political conditions of those days.

On 14 September 1940, P. Krishna Pillai, who was in a shelter at Kadamberi, through a note asked Vishnu Bharatheeyan to meet him. Vishnu Bharatheeyan was the president of the protest meeting, which was decided to be held at Pappinisseri on 15 September. Krishna Pillai asked Bharatheeyan to stress the needs and rights of peasants in Bharatheeyan's presidential address during the next day's meeting. When Bharatheeyan expressed his doubt regarding this that, 'is our main intention to protest against the declaration of Lord Amery, that insisting strongly that India had to

²²¹ G. D. Nair, *Malabarile Trade Union Prasthanathinte Charithram*, Payyannur, 2004, p.60.

²²² Sessions Case No.3 of 1941, Judgements of Sessions Court, North Malabar, Thalassery, 1941.

²²³ N. E. Balaram, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

²²⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, *Keralathile Karshaka Samarangal*, Kottayam, 2010(1996), p. 12.

²²⁵ N. E. Balaram, *o p. cit.*

be a part in the War? 'Krishna Pillai replied to him that apart from that the issues of the peasants should also be raised in the meeting.²²⁶

A huge crowd will appear in agitation only when it can address different problems of different sections of people. During the Second World War period, the Communist leaders succeeded in their attempts to bring peasants and workers to the forefront of the freedom struggle in North Malabar. During the Aron Mill strike, which took place some months before the anti-repression day agitations, the peasants from different places of Chirakkal *Taluk* supplied rice and vegetables for the workers on strike.²²⁷ Thus, the crowd that participated in the anti-repression day agitations consisted of the people, who had extreme discontent over the policies of the British Government.

The Magistrate of Kannur had prohibited the meeting decided to be held at Pappinisseri *amsom* on 15 September by using section 144.²²⁸ Later, the organizers of the meeting met at Kalliasseri Sri Harshan reading room to decide their next move.²²⁹ Vishnu Bharatheeyan, the chair of the Conference was in favour of the opinion that the meeting should be held at Pappinisseri itself.²³⁰ K. P. R. Gopalan put forward the suggestion to hold the meeting at Morazha.²³¹ The majority of the people in the meeting were in favour of the suggestion of K. P. R. Gopalan. This decision was made to avoid an open confrontation with the police. Morazha *amsom* was the adjacent village of Pappinisseri. 144 was not in effect there. This village was also out of the jurisdiction of the Magistrate of Kannur. So, the meeting was decided to be held at Anchampeedika, a bazaar area at Morazha.²³² As this decision was taken suddenly on the morning of the day of the meeting, volunteers were arranged to divert the people, who would come to Pappinisseri to Morazha.²³³

The Morazha *amsom* was within the jurisdiction of the Magistrate of Taliparambu. Kuttikrishna Menon, the Sub Inspector of Valapattanam along with Beeran Moideen,

²²⁶ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-142.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-130.

²²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

²²⁹ E. K. Nayanar, *My Struggles: An Autobiography*, New Delhi, 1982, p. 28.

²³⁰ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*

²³¹ E. K. Nayanar, *My Struggles.*, p. 29.

²³² V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-143.

²³³ E. K. Nayanar, *My Struggles.*

the Sub Inspector of Taliparambu, and Gopalan Nair, the Head Constable of Valapattanam came to Morazha. Morazha was outside the jurisdiction of Sub Inspector Kuttikrishna Menon. Kuttikrishna Menon brought the Magistrate of Taliparambu to Morazha directly and handed over to the leaders the 144 order prohibiting meetings of any kind at the place. But Vishnu Bharatheeyan, who was the chair of the meeting decided to violate the 144 order. Though Kuttikrishna Menon ordered again and again Vishnu Bharatheeyan refused to disperse the meeting. In the meanwhile, a huge *jatha* of peasants led by Arakkal Kunhiraman Nambiar reached Morazha as the last one. The *jatha* was blocked by the police and Inspector Kuttikrishna Menon was hit on the head of Kunhiraman Nambiar with a lathi and his head got injured. Then Kunhiraman Nambiar was lathi-charged by the police. Consequently, the crowd gathered there got violent. Sub Inspector Kuttikrishna Menon and Head Constable Gopalan Nair were killed in the clash between the crowd and the police.²³⁴

The location of Anchampeedika, where the meeting was held had some peculiarities. Anchampeedika was a footpath with rows of shops on either side with an open space in the middle.²³⁵ There were five or six *peedikas* (small shops) at Anchampeedika.²³⁶ People hadn't the option here to disperse to all four directions if there was a conflict. Later, many of the important witnesses in the Morazha case were petty traders of Anchampeedika.²³⁷ At the same time, Jawaharghat at the Thalassery beach, where the public meeting in Thalassery on 15 September was held was a more open space. Two people died in police firing there. There, the police had enough space to take the position and open firing.²³⁸

In big public meetings, fearing the rush, people have a habit of ensuring their seats and positions by reaching the venue early. At Morazha, a huge crowd was there when Vishnu Bharatheeyan, the chair of the meeting reached there. Some people were gathered around the seat of the chair, and many were on the veranda of the small

²³⁴ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-46.

²³⁵ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941, Judgements of Sessions Court, North Malabar, Thalassery, 1941.

²³⁶ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

²³⁷ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

²³⁸ *Mathrubhumi*, 16 September 1940.

shops, on the roadside, on the lanes, and on the mud walls. At Thalassery also, about 2, 000 people were gathered on the spot before the meeting began.²³⁹

There were different opinions regarding the size of the crowd and the strength of the police in Morazha. According to Vishnu Bharatheeyan, there were 2 Sub Inspectors, 14 Constables, one Head Constable, and about 7, 000 people in Morazha.²⁴⁰ In the Judgement, the size of the crowd in Morazha was about 2, 000. The Judgment states that Sub Inspector Kuttikrishna Menon came to Morazha with a Head Constable in a car. There were 6 Constables in a bus along with him. One of the factors that instigate a crowd to confront the police is their numbers, which are bigger than the police. The Judgement made clear that the size of the crowd in Morazha was about 2, 000, whereas the strength of the police was only 10.²⁴¹ The crowd at Mattannur, which came into an open fight with the police on 15 September consisted of 500 people. Raman Nair, a constable died in this incident.²⁴²

The mentality of a crowd may change very suddenly. A crowd that is controllable by the leaders may become uncontrollable within a while. When Inspector Kuttikrishna Menon asked the crowd gathered at Anchampeedika to disperse, Vishnu Bharatheeyan said the crowd didn't do so and to sit there peacefully till the end of the meeting. The crowd obeyed Bharatheeyan. But when the fight with the police started, the violent crowd didn't take the instructions of its leader, Vishnu Bharatheeyan.²⁴³ This is an example of the extremely sensitive nature of a violent crowd that will disobey the leaders. E. K. Nayanar says that the crowd at Morazha 'was excited and emotional.'²⁴⁴ Moreover, a crowd like this would not be dispersed suddenly. The crowd at Morazha also dispersed gradually after the incident.²⁴⁵

It is evident that the crowd gathered at Morazha was influenced by an ideology. C. F. Willams, the District Collector of Malabar had sent copies of an order according to the Defense of India Rules banning the processions and meetings of 15 September to the

²³⁹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

²⁴⁰ *Mathrubhumi*, 16 September 1940.

²⁴¹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-44.

²⁴² Sessions Case No.3 of 1941.

²⁴³ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-47.

²⁴⁴ E. K. Nayanar, *My struggles*, p. 32.

²⁴⁵ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

District Superintendents of police and leaders of the K. P. C. C.²⁴⁶ At that time K. Damodaran, who was a leftist in the Congress was the secretary of the K. P. C. C.²⁴⁷ Damodaran sent a circular to the local Congress committees instructing them to hold protests by breaking the prohibitory order if needed.²⁴⁸ As the meeting was held under the instructions of the left-controlled K. P. C. C. there were tri-color flags of the Congress and red flags found in the venue at Morazha.²⁴⁹ When the fight between the crowd and the police started at Morazha, K. P. R. Gopalan who was sitting in the shop of Mangadantakath Ibrayin, came out and shouted *Inqilab Zindabad* (Long Live Revolution). That slogan was repeated by the mob.²⁵⁰ E. K. Nayanar who was an eyewitness to the incident also says that apart from shouting *Inqilab* the crowd shouted slogans against landlords and the British Government.²⁵¹ The Judgement refers to KP. R. Gopalan as a Socialist.²⁵² After these incidents, the All India Congress Committee dismissed the left-dominated K. P. C. C and appointed a three-member ad hoc committee with R. K. L. Nandakeolyar from Bihar as its Chairman in place of it.²⁵³ One of the factors that attracted such a huge crowd to Morazha was the presence of two prominent leaders of the peasant trade union movements in North Malabar, K. P. R. Gopalan and Vishnu Bharatheeyan. Moreover, a large number of people gathered at Morazha were from Kalliasseri, K. P. R. Gopalan's native village.²⁵⁴

The nature of the weapons that are used by the crowd in unexpected encounters with the police should be analyzed. In such situations, usually, the weapons are collected from the spot. Thus, the chief weapon of the crowd is stone. The main strategy of attack of the crowd is pelting stones. For Bharatheeyan, the chief weapons of the crowd in Morazha were pieces of stone and broken pieces of tiles. The crowd also made attempts to grab the lathis from the police.²⁵⁵ At Thalassery, the chief weapon of

²⁴⁶ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *Athyuthara Keralam Swathanthrya Samarathil*, Payyannur (the date of publication not available), p. 103.

²⁴⁷ M. Rasheed, *K. Damodaran*, Kottayam, 1982, pp. 55-56. .

²⁴⁸ A. V. Sreekanta Poduval, *op. cit.* p. 104.

²⁴⁹ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ E. K. Nayanar, *My struggles*, pp. 30-31.

²⁵² Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

²⁵³ M. Rasheed, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

²⁵⁴ E. K. Nayanar, *My struggles*, p. 33.

²⁵⁵ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-47.

the crowd was stone.²⁵⁶ At Mattannur, the crowd pelted stones against the police and attempted to snatch the lathis from the police.²⁵⁷ The important material objects produced by the Prosecution in the Morazha Case were stones and sticks.²⁵⁸

The crowd showed extreme fearlessness during the anti-repression day agitations. The crowd collected at Morazha wouldn't disperse listening to the order of Inspector Kuttikrishna Menon.²⁵⁹ At Mattannur also, the crowd didn't obey the order of Anandan, the Acting sub-inspector of Mattannur.²⁶⁰ The British officials from Head Constables and Sub Inspectors to the judicial officers including the Sub-Magistrate were manhandled by the crowd during the anti-repression day agitations. At Morazha, the crowd attempted to assault M. N. Venkita Rama Iyer, the Sub-Magistrate of Taliparambu.²⁶¹ In Thalassery, the Joint Magistrate was injured in the pelting of stones by the crowd.²⁶² The big size of a crowd will make a person in the crowd fearless and instigate him to do what he doesn't do in his normal state of mind. Usually, people have always a fear of assaulting a top-level official.

In the crimes, the crowd involved there may be attempts from the state to repress the political leaders by imposing grave charges on them and, to torture the leaders, who were not involved in the crime by making them accused in the case. The District Government took the Morazha case as an opportunity to finish off politically three important peasant-trade union leaders of North Malabar, Vishnu Bharatheeyan, A. V Kunhambu, and K. P. R. Gopalan. A. V. Kunhambu was very active in anti-war activities at that time.²⁶³ The government attempted to establish that the crowd attacked the police in Morazha at the instruction and instigation of the leaders.²⁶⁴

In a crime committed by the crowd, the state and people have always been ambiguous about the prime accused. Naturally, many rumours will spread about the prime accused in such a case. The newspapers like *The Hindu*, and the *Mathrubhumi*

²⁵⁶ *Mathrubhumi*, 16 September 1940.

²⁵⁷ Sessions Case No.3 of 1941.

²⁵⁸ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

²⁵⁹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 144-45.

²⁶⁰ Sessions Case No.3 of 1941.

²⁶¹ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

²⁶² *Mathrubhumi*, 16 September 1940.

²⁶³ M. N. Kurup, *Kunhambuvinte Katha*, Kottayam, 1982, pp. 205-218.

²⁶⁴ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

identified four persons as the prime accused in the Morazha case. They were K. P. R. Gopalan, Vishnu Bharatheeyan, A. V. Kunhambu, and Subramania Shenoy.²⁶⁵ All these leaders went underground.²⁶⁶ The people spread their versions about the incident in the form of rumours.²⁶⁷ The government made E. Narayanan Nayanar an accused in the Morazha case instead of his brother E. K. Nayanar.²⁶⁸ The Morazha case was a sensational case that attracted wide popular attention. Thus, a large number of people were gathered in the vicinity and on the veranda of the trial court.²⁶⁹ The newspapers of that period reported the proceedings of the trial in the Morazha case with great importance.²⁷⁰

The intense hostility that the people in a crowd have towards a particular person is an important factor in deciding their target. Some of the people in the crowd gathered at Morazha had an intense hostility towards Inspector Kuttikrishna Menon. Kuttikrishna Menon, the Sub Inspector of Valapattanam who died in the Morazha incident was the police officer who led the brutal lathi charges against the workers during the strike in the Aron Mills. Kuttikrishna Menon also ordered the arrest of Vishnu Bharatheeyan, who was one of the leaders of the strike.²⁷¹ Vishnu Bharatheeyan who was sentenced to imprisonment related to this incident was released from jail and came back to his village a few days before the Morazha incident.²⁷² Many workers of the Aron Mills were among the crowd at Morazha.²⁷³ The name of Samuel Aron, the owner of the

²⁶⁵ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

²⁶⁶ Vishnu Bharatheeyan surrendered before the police after absconding for some weeks. As K. P. R. Gopalan, the first accused remained uncaptured Bharatheeyan became the first accused in the Morazha case. K. P. R. Gopalan was arrested after his nine-month-long underground life. Subramania Shenoy had remained uncaptured till the end of the case. KN. V. Krishnan Nambiar, *Vishnu Bharatheeyan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2005., Anil Kumar. A. V., *K. P. R. Gopalan*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2001., Keecheri Raghavan, *Subramania Shenoy*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015.

²⁶⁷ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

²⁶⁸ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 14. According to Bharatheeyan the personal enmity that Samuel Aron had with E. Narayanan Nayanar made Narayanan Nayanar an accused in the Morazha case. The reason for Aron's hostility was that Narayanan Nayanar had contested as a candidate against Aron's candidate in the District Board elections from Payyannur *firka*. V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *Op. cit.*, p. 181.

²⁶⁹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

²⁷⁰ *Chandrika* 27&29 July 1941.

²⁷¹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-132.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 141.

²⁷³ E. K. Nayanar says that the crowd in Morazha shouted against Kuttikrishna Menon that 'he deserves to die'. E. K. Nayanar, *My struggles*, p. 32.

Aron Mills was mentioned several times in the Judgement of the Morazha case. The Judgement states that M. N. Venkata Rama Iyer, the Sub Magistrate of Taliparambu gave his telephone message about the incident at Morazha from the Aron's Bungalow at Pappinisseri.²⁷⁴ Samuel Aron had a personal enmity towards K. P. R. Gopalan as he was a trade union leader at the Aron Mills.²⁷⁵

The class structure of the accused in the Morazha and Mattannur cases hints at the composition of the crowd in the anti-repression day agitations. The composition of the crowd shows that the miseries of the War and the repression of the government affected the people who belonged to the different sections of society. In the Morazha case, the accused belonged to different classes. They were cultivators, traders, school teachers, weavers, and students. One of the accused, E. Narayan Nayanar was regarded in the Judgement as a *janmi* or landlord. The fourth accused in the case was an adolescent offender.²⁷⁶ The accused in the Mattannur case included cultivators, traders, school teachers, goldsmiths, carpenters, and coolies. School teachers represented the intellectual class in rural areas.²⁷⁷ Among the two who died in police firing in Thalassery, Abu was a teacher at Odakkayi Mappila School and Chathukutti was a beedi worker from Palayad, Dharmadam.²⁷⁸

4.7. The Crowd in the Kayyur Riot

Kasargod was a *taluk* in the Southern end of the erstwhile South Canara district. Kayyur was a small village in the Kasargod *Taluk*.²⁷⁹ Though Kayyur was part of the South Canara district its political culture was very close to the Malabar district.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁴ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

²⁷⁵ Anil Kumar. A. V., *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.

²⁷⁶ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

²⁷⁷ Sessions Case No.3 of 1941.

²⁷⁸ *Mathrubhumi*, 16 September 1940.

²⁷⁹ K. K. N. Kurup (ed.), *Swathanthrya Samaram Kasargod Talukkil(Smaranika)*, Kodakkad, 1984, p. ix.

²⁸⁰ V. V. Kunambu, *Kayyur samaracharithram*, Kozhikode, 2013(1974), p. 21. V. V. Kunhambu(1907-72) was one of the first graduates of his village who got the appointment as a Sub Inspector, but the patriot in him compelled Kunhambu to refuse the job. A volunteer in the Payyannur Conference in 1928. One of the founders of the *Abhinav Bharat Yuvak Sangham*. Joined the Communist Party in 1939. An accused in the Kayyur and Karivellur cases but he went underground. A member of the Kerala Legislative Assembly in 1965, 1967, and 71. Kunhambu wrote his work on the Kayyur Riot in 1965, when he was in jail. In 1964, following the split of the Communist Party Kunhambu was arrested as he was branded as a Chinese spy.

Malabar district was located at the Southern end of Kasargod *Taluk*.²⁸¹ Kayyur was a village which actualized the slogan of the *Karshakasangham* that 'every peasant as a member in the *Karshakasangham*'. Many peasants including women were joined as members in the *Karshakasangham*.²⁸² A. V. Kunhambu, who was from Karivellur, a village in Malabar district provided the leadership for establishing *Karshakasanghngas* in Kayyur.²⁸³ On 28 March 1941, the *Karshakasangham* organized a demonstration in Kayyur to protest against the arrests of the leaders of the *Karshakasangham*. Subrayan, who was a policeman was killed during these protests.²⁸⁴

On the night of 27 March, when some of the workers of the *Karshakasangham* in Kayyur were sleeping in the tea shop of Madathil Appu. At about 3 A. M. night, a police party led by Sub Inspector Nicholas reached Kayyur from Kanhangad by boat and beat up the workers of the *Karshakasangham*, who were sleeping in the tea shop. Then the police raided some houses in Kayyur. The police left the village by arresting T. V. Kunhambu and T. V. Kunhiraman, who were local leaders of the *Karshakasangham*. A few peasant leaders like K. P. Vellunga managed to escape from the police.²⁸⁵ The news of the arrests of the leaders and the lathi-charge against *Karshakasangham* workers spread rapidly across Kayyur village and the surroundings.²⁸⁶ On the next day, 28 March, a procession was assembled at Pookandam at about 1 P. M. Choorikkadan Krishnan Nair, a young boy, Aboobaker, and others spoke there. Then the procession moved to Cheriyaakkara. There were about 200 members in the procession and about 100 among them were the *Karshakasangham* volunteers dressed in *khaki* uniforms and holding lathis.²⁸⁷ On their return march, they saw Subbarayan, the police constable, and some persons in the procession like Madathil Appu identified Subrayan as the one in the police party that brutally beat up the peasants yesterday. The crowd in the procession threatened the police constable and forced him to walk in the procession holding the flag. When the procession reached Edathil Kadavu he attempted to

²⁸¹ K. K. N. Kurup (ed.), *Swathanthrya Samaram Kasargod Talukkil*.

²⁸² V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

²⁸³ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-220.

²⁸⁴ V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-61.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

²⁸⁶ A. K. Poduval, *op. cit.*, p.62.

²⁸⁷ K. K. N. Kurup, *The Kayyur Riot: A Terrorist Episode in the Nationalist Movement in Kerala*, Kozhikode, 1978, p. 45.

escape.²⁸⁸ He ran away but the crowd chased him. In the meanwhile, another procession from Klayikode came to the place from the opposite direction. The constable got trapped in between these two processions. When no other options were left, he jumped into the river nearby. The crowd pelted stones against him. He drowned in the river and died.²⁸⁹

In Kayyur, *jatha*, demonstrations, and protest meetings organized by the *Karshakasanghams* were very common.²⁹⁰ Several Congress volunteers, who were trained under Sardar Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair were there in Kayyur. These volunteers were at the forefront of all the agitations. Many of them were members of the Communist Party. These volunteers were the main participants in the *jatha* processions organized by the *Karshakasangham* in Kayyur.²⁹¹ On 12 March 1941, *jatha* processions were organized in Kayyur and other places with a demand to release the accused in the Morazha case.²⁹² An Agitation was started by raising the slogan *Krishna Pillai Evide* (Where is P. Krishna Pillai?) for the release of P. Krishsna Pillai, who was arrested from Tiruvitamkur. Demonstrations as part of this agitation were organized also in Kayyur.²⁹³ Many of the accused in the Kayyur case were the people who got volunteer training or the members of the *Karshakasangham* and *Abhinav Bharat Yuvak Sangham*.²⁹⁴

The huge crowd that appeared in the *jathas* organized by the *Karshakasangham* created a sense of fearlessness and organized feeling among the peasants of Kayyur. The fear of the British Government vanished away from the people. On 25 March 1941, a volunteer march of the peasants of Kayyur was started from Kayyur centre under the leadership of T. V. Kunhambu. On the way, from a narrow lane, they saw the Revenue Inspector. The volunteers in the march did not give way to him or stop shouting slogans. With a sense of being insulted, this Revenue Inspector sent many

²⁸⁸ E. K. Nayanar, *My struggles*, p. 45.

²⁸⁹ K. K. N. Kurup, *The Kayyur Riot*, p. 46.

²⁹⁰ K. K. N. Kurup (ed.), *Swathanthrya Samaram Kasargod Talukkil*, p. XXX.

²⁹¹ V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

²⁹² K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

²⁹³ A. K. Poduval, *op. cit.*

²⁹⁴ V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, pp. 123-27.

fabricated reports to the District Government.²⁹⁵ Mocking the symbols of the state is a sign of the increasing fearlessness of the crowd.

Apart from the village officials, an official, who was part of the Colonial Government, which the people of Kayyur were familiar with was a policeman. He visited the village occasionally.²⁹⁶ V. V. Kunhambu states that 'for the common people, the policeman was a symbol of repression.'²⁹⁷ Moreover, the police always created false cases against the peasants and peasant leaders in the false complaints by the landlords. A fake complaint against the *Karshakasangham* by Nileswhwaram Raja, the biggest landlord in Kayyur was also one of the causes of the Kayyur Riot.²⁹⁸ When the procession with Constable Subrayan was passing through the people on either side of the way shouted decisively and applauded with excitement.²⁹⁹ It was an interesting scene for the people that a police constable, who was a representative of the Colonial Government was walking in a procession of peasants, who were shouting slogans against the Colonial Government.³⁰⁰ The feeling that the procession would reach the place of the meeting in a while and he would be humiliated by a bigger crowd instigated the police constable to escape from the crowd and run away.³⁰¹ Moreover, Subrayan was an important one in the police party, who beat up the peasants yesterday. In that sense, the crowd had a special grudge to him.³⁰²

Pelting stones is the most commonly used method of attack by the crowd against the enemy. The crowd pelted stones against Subrayan, who jumped into the river. Applauses and boisterous shouting are always used by the crowd to express their excitement and humiliate their enemy.³⁰³ Niranjana in his novel portrays how the crowd behaved towards the Police Constable and expressed their hostility towards him.³⁰⁴

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁹⁶ V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

²⁹⁹ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 23.

³⁰⁰ K. K. N. Kurup, *The Kayyur Riot*, p. 45.

³⁰¹ E. K. Nayanar, *My struggles*.

³⁰² V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

³⁰³ K. K. N. Kurup, *The Kayyur Riot*, p. 46.

³⁰⁴ Niranjana, *Chirasmarana*, Translated by C. Raghavan, Payyannur, 2015, pp. 129-130.

It seems that the Kayyur incident was also influenced by an ideology. The material objects produced by the prosecution in the court in the Kayyur case included the receipt books of the *Karshakasangham*, Congress circulars, subscription receipts, receipts of the K. P. C. C, Report Book of the Kayyur Congress Committee, and some pamphlets related to the *Karshakasangham* and the Congress.³⁰⁵ A. V. Kunhambu, who went underground after the Morazha incident visited Kayyur very occasionally. He visited every house in Kayyur.³⁰⁶ K. Madhavan says that during those days, the Communist party propagated an ideology against Gandhism, especially against the Gandhian principle of the nonviolent *satyagraha* struggle.³⁰⁷ He added that the Communist party held the view that when the police were suppressing the popular agitations, the people should retaliate without being passive. K. Madhavan further says that the Communist Party consciously preached this view among the people and it was by the influence of this view the peasants of Kayyur resisted police repression by using violence.³⁰⁸ A. V. Kunhambu has claimed that the Kayyur Riot was not accidental but pre-planned.³⁰⁹

The persons accused in the Kayyur case came from different sections of society. Some of them were traders and teachers. One of them was a local physician and three of them were local astrologers. The remaining were engaged in different occupations like tapping, cattle-grazing, weaving, teaching folk dance, and cooly. However, the majority of them were cultivators.³¹⁰ Kayyur was a peasant village.³¹¹ The accused belonged to different age groups but most of them were youngsters. Madathil Appu, Potvara Kunhambu Nair, Koyithattil Chirukandan and Aboobaker who got capital punishment in the Kayyur case were below 30.³¹² One of the reasons for this was that most of the accused were members of the *Abhinav Bharat Yuvak Sangham*, a local youth organization, The court found that Choorikkadan Krishnan Nair was directly involved in

³⁰⁵ K. K. N. Kurup, *The Kayyur Riot*, p. 59.

³⁰⁶ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-221.

³⁰⁷ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

³¹⁰ K. K. N. Kurup, *The Kayyur Riot*, pp. 52-53.

³¹¹ V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

³¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 123-26.

the murder but exempted him from severe punishments as he was a minor, who was only 15.³¹³

In the Kayyur case also, the state faced difficulties in identifying the accused and their offences. Even the trial court admitted that there was some lack of clarity in the Kayyur case as it was a crime committed on a spot, where a crowd gathered.³¹⁴ Some persons, who hadn't any involvement in the incidents on 28 March were sentenced in the Kayyur case. The police included some communist leaders in the list of the accused in the Kayyur case. All of them went underground. E. K. Nayanar, who had no direct involvement in the incident became an accused in the case.³¹⁵ The police attempted to include even the name of K. T. Kunhiraman Nambiar, the President of the K. P. C. C. at that time in the list of accused.³¹⁶ Most of the Communist leaders of Malabar went underground after the Kayyur incident as they had a general feeling that they would be arrested any time soon.³¹⁷

4.8. The Crowd in the Agrarian Struggles

Those who studied the agrarian struggles at the end of colonial rule in Malabar tended to link it with the economic and political changes during the Second World War period and in the post-war period. The economic crisis in the post-war period harshly affected life in rural Malabar. The life of the people in the countryside became hard and miserable. Lakhs of people didn't get enough food. The prices of essential commodities shot up uncontrollably. The black marketers and landlords exploited the situation and made profits. In a situation like this, a large number of soldiers, who had been demobilized from the British Indian Army after the war were returned to their villages as unemployed. The economic crisis not only affected peasants and workers but the discontent spread to government servants and school teachers, who had only a nominal income and they demanded an increase in their wages to overcome the crisis.³¹⁸ Dilip Menon in his study discusses elaborately the economic pressure in

³¹³ K. K. N. Kurup, *The Kayyur Riot*.

³¹⁴ V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

³¹⁵ E. K. Nayanar, *Olivukala Smrithikal*, p. 25.

³¹⁶ K. K. N. Kurup (ed.), *Swathanthrya Samaram Kasargod Talukkil*, p. XXXi.

³¹⁷ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-44.

³¹⁸ K. K. N. Kurup, *Keralathile Karshaka Samarangal*, pp. 20-21.

Malabar in the 1940s.³¹⁹ There was an acute shortage of food and famine in rural Malabar during the World War and the post-war period. The people started to experience poverty with an intensity unprecedented. When the people realized that no measures were taken by the government to lighten the food shortage, the people came forward themselves to take up the issue. They formed food committees. Another way to ease the food crisis was to grow more food through *punam* cultivation and *tarisu* cultivation. For this, a campaign was started in North Malabar under the leadership of the Communist Party to acquire forest lands and wastelands from the landlords for cultivation. The Communist Party became influential in the post-war politics of rural Malabar by taking up the leadership of this campaign.³²⁰ This was the background of the agrarian struggles in the post-War Malabar like Karivellur and Kavumbayi.

When the food crisis continued to be acute, the newly elected Congress Ministry in Madras introduced a new policy to lighten the food crisis. According to this policy, the peasants should measure the surplus paddy at the 'Producers and Consumers Society.' The government could give a rate fixed for it. The paddy procured like this would be distributed through the ration shops. But the *janmis*, who were unwilling to measure the paddy in Societies sold it in the black market. The peasants were organized against this under the leadership of the Communists.³²¹ The peasants started to resist forcibly the attempts of the landlords in Chirakkal *Taluk* like the Chirakkal *kovilagam* and Vengayil Nayanar to sell paddy in the black market. The landlords continued their attempts to sell the paddy in the black market by suppressing the resistance of the peasants with the help of the M. S. P (Malabar Special Police). The M. S. P opened their camps in eight places in Chirakkal *Taluk*.³²²

³¹⁹ Dilip M. Menon, *Caste, Nationalism, Communism in South India: Malabar, 1900-48*, New Delhi, 1994, pp. 161-65.

³²⁰ Dilip M. Menon, 'Conjunctural Community: Communism in Malabar, 1934-48', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXVII, no.51-52, December, 1992.

³²¹ A. V. Kunhambu, *Kayyurum Karivellurum*, Payyannur, 2013(1986), pp. 25-26.

³²² E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Janmimare Sahayikkan MSPkkar', in P. Govinda Pillai (ed.), *EMSinte Sampoonakrithikal (1946-47)*, Vol. XII, Thiruvananthapuram, 1999, p. 223.

Karivellur village in Payyannur *firka* was a deficit area. The majority of the land in this village belonged to Chirakkal Raja.³²³ As a deficit area, sixty per cent of the foodstuffs needed for Karivellur village were coming from outside.³²⁴ Hunger is the most important reality that forces people to turn against the state. Extreme hunger can create a crowd very easily. George Rude argued that the desire for cheap and plentiful food was one of the factors that created the crowd in the French Revolution. He identifies the rise in the price of bread and food riots just before the French Revolution as the strong causes behind the outbreak of the French Revolution.³²⁵ The title of the first chapter in the first part of the work by George Lefebvre about the panic in rural France in 1789 is 'Hunger'. Extreme hunger was a burning reality for the people of Malabar at that time.³²⁶ K. Devayani, who was from Alappuzha came to Karivellur as the wife of A. V. Kunhambu just before the Karivellur agrarian struggle. In the memoirs of Devayani, there are descriptions of the severity of the shortage of food in that period. As A. V. Kunhambu didn't have a house of his own, Devayani used to stay in the house of one Koliyodan Narayanan, who was Kunhambu's friend. There was a huge shortage of rice at that time. Besides, it was a month of *Karkadakam*. So Narayanan, the house owner served pulse gruel to his wife after serving rice gruel to Devayani.³²⁷ It was in this situation the people began to manhandle the government officials, who were helping the landlords to sell the paddy in the black market. There was an incident in the village of Eramam, where the people manhandled a Grain Purchasing Inspector and cut down his ear.³²⁸

Rude in his study explains the role of panic in creating a crowd in a movement. He identifies three types of panics and they are: panics arising from the threat to the property, life, and means of subsistence.³²⁹ Among these, in the post-war period, the panic arising from the threat to life and means of subsistence was very common in the

³²³ A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

³²⁴ E. M. S. Namboodiripad, 'Janmimare Sahayikkan MSPkkar', in P. Govinda Pillai(ed.), *EMSinte Sampooranakrithikal(1946-47)*, vol. XII, p. 222.

³²⁵ George Rude, *op. cit.*, pp. 23&208.

³²⁶ George Lefebvre, *The Great Fear of 1789*, pp. 7-13.

³²⁷ K. Devayani, *Chorayum Kanneerum Nananja Vazhikal*, Thrissur, 2013(1983), p. 46. According to the local tradition in Keralam the Malayalam month of *Karkadakam* is usually regarded as a month of famine and shortage of food.

³²⁸ A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*

³²⁹ George Rude, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

rural areas in North Malabar. The M. S. P arrived in the villages as agents of the landlords. They were roaming through the villages by unleashing brutal repression against the people.³³⁰ Thus, the presence of the M. S. P. in the villages of North Malabar deepened the panic of the people about life and property.

Rama Varma Raja of Chirakkal, the biggest landlord of Karivellur stored the paddy collected from the people as *pattam*(rent) in his *kalappura*(granary) at Kuniyan. On 20 December 1946, Chirakkal Raja with the help of the M. S. P, made attempts to remove the paddy kept in the *kalappura*. The people under the leadership of A. V. Kunhambu resisted this. In this incident, two people died in the police firing.³³¹

The Kavumbayi incident also had a backdrop of the food crisis. There were agitations in the eastern areas of Chirakkal *Taluk* for acquiring *tarisu* and *punam* lands from the landlords. When the landlords expressed their unwillingness to allot the land, the *Karshakasngahm* instigated the peasants to acquire the land forcibly before 15 December 1946. There was brutal police repression against such attempts under the leadership of the M. S. P and prohibitory orders were issued in different places in the *taluk*. On 29 December 1946 by breaking the prohibitory order, many *Karshakasangham* workers gathered at Kavumbayi Hill. On the next day morning, on 30 December, the M. S. P. surrounded Kavumbayi Hill and opened fire against the peasants. Though the peasants resisted, five of them died in firing and in the clash with the police.³³²

The presence of women among the crowd in the agrarian struggles in that period is notable. There were two important reasons for this. First, the shortage of food was a problem that also affected women. No woman can tolerate a situation, where her children are starving. Secondly, the M. S. P. never spared the women in peasant families. The M. S. P. beat up and humiliated women.³³³ Thus, the women in peasant families had an intense hostility towards the M. S. P. On 12 December, a crowd of about 1000 including women held a demonstration in front of the Irikkur Police Station to protest against the police, who arrested and beat up the *karashakasangham*

³³⁰ A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*

³³¹ K. K. N. K urup, *Keralathile Karshaka Samarangal*, pp. 36-38.

³³² *Ibid.*, pp. 41-45.

³³³ A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*

workers. The police lathi-charged them.³³⁴ It was decided early that women would also participate in the fight with M. S. P in Karivellur if necessary. Devayani says that on that day she saw a group of women from the east of the house holding choppers going to the spot. Devayani also joined them. As the firing began before these women reached the spot, they were unable to reach their destination.³³⁵

The intense hostility that the crowd has towards the police force opposite them is a factor influencing the behaviour of the crowd. The people of Karivellur had deep hostility towards the M. S. P. The state force adopted more brutal methods of repression that were never experienced by the people till then. They arrested and tortured the *Karshakasangham* workers in false cases. They didn't spare even women and children.³³⁶ In some places, the M. S. P. were the guests of the landlords of that place. The landlords provided food and accommodation to the M. S. P in return for suppressing the *Karshakasangham*.³³⁷ The government posted two platoons of 22 men each of the M. S. P in Karivellur to help the landlord.³³⁸ Chirakkal Raja was unable to deal with the *Karshakasangham* workers, who were very large in number. Thus, he used a group of hired men from Valapattanam.³³⁹

There was a trained volunteer army in Karivellur. They would rush to a place even at midnight if a whistle blows. Some ex-servicemen in Karivellur provided training to these volunteers to fight landlords and their men. The most important among these ex-servicemen, who provided training to the volunteers were Kanichuvattil Krishnan Nair, Paliyeri Raghavan Nair, and Koolerikkaran Kunhambu.³⁴⁰ On 20 December, when the M. S. P started firing, the ex-servicemen among the crowd instructed the people to lie down on the ground.³⁴¹ It was with the help of guns the M. S. P subdued the peasants of Karivellur, who were larger in number. In Karivellur, the M. S. P made use of machine guns which are capable of multi-rounds of firing. A. V. Kunhambu says that

³³⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, *Keralathile Karshaka Samarangal*, p. 43.

³³⁵ K. Devayani, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.

³³⁶ A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*

³³⁷ K. K. N. Kurup, *Keralathile Karshaka Samarangal*, p. 42.

³³⁸ Sessions Case Nos.14 and 18 of 1947, Judgements of Sessions Court, North Malabar, Thalassery, 1947.

³³⁹ A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*

³⁴⁰ K. Devayani, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-49.

³⁴¹ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 306

there were many ex-servicemen among the crowd, and if they all had guns 'the story would have been different.'³⁴² In Karivellur and Kavumbayi the people used stones, the chief weapon of the crowd, to fight the police. In the case of the Karivellur struggle, the people came to Kuniyan to fight the M. S. P. with the weapons available to them.³⁴³ The Judgement refers to that the crowd used guns to attack the police in Kavumbayi. Jamadar Ramakrishnan in his statement says that the leader of the crowd in Kavumbayi, Sardar Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair ordered his gunman to shoot the Jamadar. Ramakrishnan added that he got injured by a gunshot from the crowd. The material objects produced by the prosecution in the court in the Kavumbayi case included six guns (there was one rusty country gun among them).³⁴⁴

The composition of the crowd in the Karivellur-Kavumbayi struggles can be understood by the nature of the accused in these cases. In the Karivellur case, first, the police charged the case against 197 persons. But later, many of the accused were removed from the list of accused before the trial began.³⁴⁵ According to the Judgement, about 300 people gathered in Karivellur at first and later the size of the crowd increased to about 1, 000.³⁴⁶

The Judgement classified the accused in the Karivellur case into three: (1) the leaders of the Communist party and *Karshakasangahm*, (2) those who joined in the frenzy of the mob seeking cheap popularity on association with a mob, for purposes of elections to village associations and quasi-political, (3) idle spectators like coolies, peasants, beedi workers, schoolboys, etc. who didn't think about the consequences of their acts and mostly out of curiosity joined the mob and participated in the crimes.³⁴⁷ There were many aided school teachers among the crowd in Karivellur. Some of them had been dismissed from the service or lost their job for their relation to the Communist

³⁴² A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30. Kuniyan was a place in Karivellur village. The paddy was stored in a granary at Kuniyan, which belonged to the Chirakkal *kovilagam*. K. Devayani, *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

³⁴⁴ Sessions Case No.21 of 1947, Judgements of Sessions Court, North Malabar, Thalassery, 1947.

³⁴⁵ *Karivellur 1946-2006(Karivellur Struggle 60th Anniversary Souvenir)*, Karivellur Struggle 60th Anniversary Organizing Committee, Karivellur, 2006, pp. 116-17.

³⁴⁶ Sessions Case Nos.14 and 18 of 1947.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Party.³⁴⁸ Many of the people were workers of the *Karshakasangham* and *Abhinav Bharat Yuvak Sangham*.³⁴⁹ Keeneri Kunhambu, who died in the police firing in Karivellur was only 14 at that time.³⁵⁰ The reason for the small crowd becoming a large one in Karivellur in a while was that a large number of people rushed to Kuniyan from their workplaces hearing that the landlord was taking away the paddy.³⁵¹ In the Kavumbayi case, 85 of the accused brought for trial were peasants. The rest were school teachers, washermen, *Teyyam* performers, tea shop workers, small traders, and coolies. The Judgment also states that the crowd of Kavumbayi was about 500.³⁵²

The crowd of Karivellur and Kavumbayi was led directly by the leaders. The people of Karivellur gathered together and fought the M. S. P bravely, because of the leadership of A. V. Kunhambu. Kunhambu was familiar to all 1,200 families in Karivellur.³⁵³ Kunhambu, who lost his parents at an early age was brought up by the people of Karivellur.³⁵⁴ Naturally, a rumour that someone died in the police firing against a crowd can easily spread among his relatives and friends. A rumour that A. V. Kunhambu died in police firing spread after the Karivellur incident.³⁵⁵ Devayani, Kunhambu's wife believed that rumour. But Devayani came to know after three days that Kunhambu was not dead but fatally injured in the police action. She was pregnant with her first child then. After a few days, Devayani visited A. V. Kunhambu, who was in Kannur Jail.³⁵⁶

The most important factor that instigated the people in that period to confront the state in violent means was the ideology of the Communists, who argued that to resist the repression of the state by force, if necessary. A. V. Kunhambu wrote about this shift in ideology: in a locality where the message of the non-violent struggle spread from 1930, instead of asking 'did your hand hurt bother when you hit me?', the

³⁴⁸ Karivellur Murali, *Karivellur: Charithram, Samaram, Jeevitham*, Payyannur, 2015(2013), pp. 219-221. Karivellur Murali was the son of A. V. Kunhambu, the leader of the Karivellur struggle and K. Devayani.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 214-54.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 241

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 239.

³⁵² Sessions Case No.21 of 1947.

³⁵³ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 293.

³⁵⁴ Payyanur Kunhiraman, *A. V. Kunhambu*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2015, pp. 18-26.

³⁵⁵ M. N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

³⁵⁶ K. Devayani, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-55.

people gave back a heavy blow to the same hand that hit them, this was what we saw in Morazha.³⁵⁷ It was the Morazha incident that set a model for the peasants and workers in Malabar to resist and retaliate against the repression of the government by using force.

4.9. The 144 in Malabar District

The state had devised and has been using different laws to control the crowd and limit the number of people participating in mass agitations. The most common and widely used law by the Colonial Government of India was issuing prohibitory orders by using section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code limiting the gathering of more than a fixed number of people in a public place. Even today, the governments in post-independent India have been using the same section 144 to control the crowd in public places and agitations. 144 is a section in the Criminal Procedure Code that most of the common people of Kerala are familiar with. They call it in local Malayalam as *noottinalpathinaalu*. This familiarity has a historical background. The Colonial Government in India made use of this section to suppress the agitations as part of the Indian National Movement. The governments in Independent India have continued to use this section to suppress the agitations against the state. These are the factors that had given this much familiarity to section 144 in popular memory.

From the period of the Home Rule- Congress Movement, the District Government in colonial Malabar made use of the prohibitory orders under section 144 to put down the agitations organized as part of the Indian National Movement in Malabar. On 16 July 1917, a big procession and public meeting were organized in Kozhikode to protest against the Internment of Annie Besant and her co-workers.³⁵⁸ Manjeri Rama Iyer led a procession and demonstration in Kozhikode Town by wearing the swadeshi dress and headgear.³⁵⁹ The District Magistrate issued a prohibitory order banning the procession and the public meeting that decided to be held after one month, on 16 August. Prohibitory orders were issued also against K. P. Menon and Manjeri Rama Iyer. These prohibitory orders were issued to crush the new vigour triggered in Kozhikode Town

³⁵⁷ A. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

³⁵⁸ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

³⁵⁹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, p. 55.

after the Second District Conference.³⁶⁰ It seems that the idea of civil disobedience didn't reach Malabar at that time. In April 1917, at Champaran in Bihar, Gandhi experimented with a new method of struggle by breaking the law and facing trial as a protest against the government.³⁶¹

In 1920-21, when the Khilafat-Non-Cooperation Movement gained strength in Malabar, the District Government began to use section 144 extensively to obstruct the wave of agitations. K. Madhavan Nair writes:

I haven't seen Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji before. Though the name of this Kunhahamad Haji is included along with the names of me and U. Gopala Menon in a notice according to section 144 sent by the District Magistrate, I came to know only through this notice that there is such a person.³⁶²

On 5 February 1921, the District Collector of Malabar served a notice under section 144 in the names of U. Gopala Menon, K. Madhavan Nair, and Variankunnath Kunhahamad Haji directing them not to speak at any public meetings in Eranad taluk, and organize meetings related to the *Khilafat* Movement.³⁶³ Madhavan Nair commented on this 144 notice that 'the District Collector believed sincerely that he could save Eranad from this danger by building the wall of 144.'³⁶⁴

The incidents, which took place in Malabar on 15 and 16 February 1921 during the visit of Yakub Hasan made section 144 a hot topic of discussion among the people of Malabar for the first time.³⁶⁵ When Thomas, the District Collector of Malabar attempted to bring the whole Malabar district under prohibitory orders according to section 144, the Madras Government denied permission for this.³⁶⁶ However, he continued to ban the *Khilafat*-Congress meetings in Malabar through separate 144 orders.

Yakub Hasan, within about an hour reached Kozhikode by train, had received a notice under section 144 CrPC. Orders of the same kind were issued also against K.

³⁶⁰ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*

³⁶¹ David Hardiman, *The Non Violent Struggle for Indian Freedom*, p. 129.

³⁶² K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.* p. 160.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

³⁶⁵ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.

³⁶⁶ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.

Madhavan Nair, U. Gopala Menon, and Ponmadath Moideen Koya, who were three prominent leaders of the Congress in the District.³⁶⁷ Consequently, it became impossible for Yakub Hasan and other *Khilafat*-Congress leaders in the District to address the *Khilafat*-Congress meetings decided to be held at Tanur and Kozhikode on 15 and 16 February respectively. Consequently, it was decided to hold a public meeting at Kozhikode Beach breaking section 144, and Yakub Hasan would address the meeting.³⁶⁸ People were informed about this. But before breaking 144, Yakub Hasan along with K. Madhavan Nair, U. Gopala Menon, and Ponmadath Moideen Koya were arrested according to section 107 CrPC.³⁶⁹ That was for the first time in the history of Colonial Malabar, that an important leader was going to break a particular law by giving prior information to the press and people. The press and people were informed early that Yakub Hasan was going to break 144.³⁷⁰ Thus, section 144 became a topic of discussion among the people and some rumours were spread about the violation of 144 in other towns in Malabar. Common people began to talk about the arrests of the *Khilafat*-Congress leaders for breaking 144. Someone said to Moyarath Sankaran, who was in Thalassery then that many people rushed to Kozhikode to see Yakub Hasan without minding that 144 was in effect there. The same man also said to Moyarath Sankaran that the Irish soldiers, who were brought from West Hill fired at unarmed people.³⁷¹ These incidents are instances in which a law will get more popular attention when it is violated than when it is obeyed.

Another important incident, which took place during the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement in Malabar related to section 144 was the arrests of K. Kelappan and K. V. Balakrishna Menon, two important Congress leaders. The police arrested Kelappan and Balakrishna Menon under the charge of holding a meeting by violating 144 at Muthoor in Marancheri. 144 was not declared in this place before the meeting began. The meeting that was decided to be held at another place and when 144 was declared there, was shifted to Marancheri. Kelappan and Balakrishna Menon got one-month

³⁶⁷ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

³⁶⁸ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78.

³⁶⁹ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

³⁷⁰ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

³⁷¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, pp.68-69.

imprisonment each in this case.³⁷² Notably, the first arrest and imprisonment of K. Kelappan, who was arrested and imprisoned several times during the freedom struggle was related to section 144.

Following the arrests of Yakub Hasan and other leaders, the District Government issued an order banning public meetings of any kind in Kozhikode and the adjacent places for two months. This order was extended further for another two months.³⁷³ Madhavan Nair says that, apart from section 144 two other important methods used by the police to crush the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement were, threatening and beating.³⁷⁴ By realizing that public speeches would lead to 144, M. P. Narayana Menon and Kattilasseril Muhammad Musliar adopted a different method for the *Khilafat*-Congress Campaign in Eranad *Taluk*. They established primary *Khilafat*-Congress committees in many places of the *Taluk* with the support of the *Khilafat*-Congress enthusiasts of that area.³⁷⁵ Usually, minor sentences were given for the violation of section 144. In 1921, Kelappan and Balakrishna Menon were sentenced to either one month of imprisonment or a fine of 50 Rupees for violating 144. But both chose imprisonment instead of the fine.³⁷⁶

The District Government of Malabar made use of section 144 whenever the National Movement gained strength in Malabar, to put suppress the renewed vigour. When Malabar reentered the forefront of the National Movement with renewed spirit and more energy during the Civil Disobedience Movement, the District Government began to use 144 again to repress it. The first public meeting related to the Salt *Satyagraha* in Malabar was held at Vadakara before the beginning of the *satyagraha*. Moyarath Sankaran says that the police had made a plan to create a clash in this meeting and by taking it as a reason to declare 144 in the whole of North Malabar banning public meetings and processions.³⁷⁷ When the Civil Disobedience Movement began in Malabar, 144 were declared in Kannur and Kozhikode, the main centres of the Salt

³⁷² M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

³⁷³ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47.

³⁷⁴ K. Madhavan Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

³⁷⁶ M. P. Manmathan, *op. cit.*

³⁷⁷ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, p. 150.

Satyagraha.³⁷⁸ The government made use of section 144 as they liked. The Government declared 144 wherever they liked. E. M. Gowne, the District Collector of Malabar accompanied by police officials visited the *satyagraha* camp at Payyannur. He found that the camp was used for 'unlawful purpose' and declared it illegal according to section 144 CrPC.³⁷⁹ During the salt *satyagraha*, one of the other main centres of the *satyagrahis* was the Mathrubhumi Office in Kozhikode. The K. P. C. C. office was functioning in the same building at that time. The government issued an order under section 144 banning the premises of this office from being used by the *satyagrahis* and put up a notice on the door of the K. P. C. C Office.³⁸⁰

When the use of section 144 by the Government became very common during the Civil Disobedience Movement, the defiance of 144 also became very common. It was almost impossible for the people during this period to participate in the struggle without violating 144. Being arrested for violating 144 became a daily affair in Kozhikode Town.³⁸¹ Many of the important Congress leaders went to prison for breaking Section 144.³⁸² In Kozhikode, On 16 November 1930, several women *satyagrahis* were arrested for holding a demonstration by violating 144 to protest against the brutal lathi charges against the women *satyagrahi* volunteers in Bombay. This was the first incident in the history of Keralam, where women were arrested for participating in the freedom struggle.³⁸³ Breaking 144 was a way for women to be a part of the freedom struggle as the violation of section 144 was either not a grave crime or a crime that would get a severe punishment. When the Civil Disobedience Movement was suspended following the Gandhi-Irwin pact the press communique issued by the Congress leaders of Keralam reiterated that no agitations by the people by breaking the law including the agitations breaking 144 would not be held after that. Breaking 144 was very common during the Civil Disobedience Movement in Malabar as the matter of agitations breaking section 144 was mentioned separately in the

³⁷⁸ P. K. K. Menon, *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, vol. II (1185-1938), Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, p. 204.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

³⁸¹ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, p. 177.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 178.

³⁸³ P. K. K. Menon, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-16.

communiqué.³⁸⁴ Another instance of this was the Malayalam story *144 Adhava Manomohan* (144 otherwise Manomohan) written by one Valiyaveetil Kunhikannan Nambiar. The main plot of the story was that Manomohan, a young man who is the son of Komunni Kurup, a British loyalist and a Retired Sub Inspector participates in the Civil Disobedience Movement and is arrested for violating 144.³⁸⁵

Some changes took place in the use of 144 after the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party in 1934. The government dealt with the worker's strikes and agrarian struggles organized under the leadership of the Congress Socialists and the Communists from 1934 to 1947 also by using section 144. Until 1934, the District Government used section 144 to suppress the agitations held as part of the National Movement in Malabar in its own interest. However, in the case of workers' strikes and agrarian struggles, the District Government used 144 as a tool to safeguard the interests of the landlords and capitalists and declared 144, wherever the landlords and capitalists wanted. In 1935, the workers of the Feroke Tile Company went on strike.³⁸⁶ A. K. Gopalan says that the Government made attempts to repress the strike by declaring 144. A day before the strike decided to start, 144 was declared banning public meetings near Feroke. An order was also issued banning the trade union leaders from speaking in public meetings held near Feroke. But the strike continued with vigour.³⁸⁷ In that period, 144 notices were issued against all the important trade union leaders in Malabar. At that period, in Malabar, there were two types of Congress Socialist leaders: those who had 144 and those who hadn't 144. K. Damodaran spoke in a huge public meeting held near Cheruvannur *Aalthara*. A. K. Gopalan says that there wasn't a 144 order against K. Damodaran.³⁸⁸ The *khaddar* worn friend of the company owner in the play *Pattabakki* written by K. Damodaran says to the company owner that he will make the arrangements to declare 144 to suppress the strike in the company if it is needed.³⁸⁹ When the workers of the Aron Mills went on strike in 1940,

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

³⁸⁵ *Sahithya Keralam*, May 1930.

³⁸⁶ G. D. Nair, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

³⁸⁷ A. K. Gopalan, *Ente Agnipareekshakal*, p. 98.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

³⁸⁹ K. Damodaran, 'Pattabakki', K. Damodaran *Samboorna Krithiaki*, vol. VII, Thiruvananthapuram, 2011, pp. 284-285.

the police came to help Samuel Aron, the owner of the Mill. Prohibitory orders under section 144 were declared in the area, where the Mill was located.³⁹⁰

The Morazha incident was that a crowd killed two policemen by breaking 144. As the Sub-Magistrate of Kannur issued a prohibitory order at Pappinisseri under section 144, the meeting place was shifted to the adjacent Anchampeedika in Morazha, which was out of the Jurisdiction of the Sub-Magistrate of Kannur. However, Kuttikrishna Menon, the Sub Inspector of Valapattanam came to Morazha along with the Sub-Magistrate of Taliparambu, who had the power to declare 144 there. The Sub-Magistrate of Taliparambu informed the leaders of the meeting like Vishnu Bharatheeyan that the public meeting at Morazha was banned under section 144. In that period, banning public meetings and protests by using section 144 without giving any prior information became a common practice of the District Government in Malabar. The incidents at Morazha were also an expression of the popular anger against this.³⁹¹ The crowd that would gather by breaking 144 was regarded by the colonial state as an 'unlawful assembly.'³⁹²

Declaring prohibitory orders under section 144 is the most common and legal precautionary measure that a government in India can take by foreseeing a mass popular agitation. All the important Congress leaders in India and Malabar were arrested on 9 and 10 August 1942, just after the Quit India Movement began. To prevent protests that may hold against this and the agitations that would be organized in Malabar as part of the Quit India Movement, the Government declared 144, first in Kozhikode and the adjacent places. Later 144 was extended to Eranad and Valluvanad *Taluks*. Public meetings and *jathas* were held by breaking 144. In Kozhikode, Dr. A. Chandoo, P. K. Velayudha Menon, K. Ramachandran, K. V. Krishna Menon, V. K. Balan, M. Damodaran, C. Achutha Menon, Lakshmikutti Amma, and E. Ammukkuti Amma were arrested and sentenced.³⁹³

In the post-war period, the District Government in Malabar made use of section 144 to suppress the agrarian struggles. A huge demonstration of peasants was held in front of

³⁹⁰ G. D. Nair, *op. cit.*, p.60.

³⁹¹ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-45.

³⁹² Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

³⁹³ K. K. N. Kurup, *Quit India Samaravum Keralavum*, Thiruvananthapuram, 2012(1993), pp. 49-50.

the Irikkur Police Station, on 12 December 1946, to protest against the arrests of the *karshakasangham* workers. However, the police spread fake news that the crowd had attacked the police station. Following this incident on 30 December, the Joint Magistrate of Thalassery banned demonstrations of every kind at, Padiyoor, Kanhileri, Erivassi, Kandakkai, Kuttiattoor, Malapattam, Srikantapuram, Nediyanaga, and Irikkur. Peasants assembled at places including Kavumbayi by breaking this order.³⁹⁴

4.10. Slogans and the Crowd Mentalities

The ideology by which a crowd is influenced will be expressed by the slogans raised and the flag held by the crowd. The ideological influences on the crowd in the politics of colonial Malabar can be understood by analyzing the slogans raised by the crowd. George Rude argues that the crowd would absorb and adopt the ideas and slogans of political groups.³⁹⁵ Slogans express the political trends of a particular period. Agitations with the participation of the crowd became very common in Malabar in 1920-21 during the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement. In February 1921, following the arrests of K. Madhavan Nair and Yakub Hasan, demonstrations were held in different places in Malabar to protest against this. In a huge procession that was held at Thalassery, to protest against the arrests of these leaders, the crowd raised slogans like *Mahathama Gandhi ki jai*, *Shaukat Ali ki jai*, *Hindu-Muslim aikyam ki jai*, *Down with the British Rule*, *Madhavan Nair ki jai*, and *Yakub Hasan ki jai*.³⁹⁶ The slogans wishing victory to Gandhi and Shaukat Ali, all Indian leaders of the *Khilafat* Non-Cooperation movement were raised in the procession because it was a local agitation held in Malabar as part of an all-India Movement, the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement. Another thing that would be specified in a slogan is the ideology and objectives of the movement. The character of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement was anti-British and based on Hindu-Muslim unity. The slogans shouting victory to Madhavan Nair and Yakub Hasan were raised because the procession was organized to protest against their arrests. In short, the slogans raised by the crowd in

³⁹⁴ K. K. N. Kurup, *Keralathile Karshaka Samarangal*, p. 43.

³⁹⁵ George Rude, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

³⁹⁶ Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, pp.68-69. It is interesting that *Ki Jai* is a Hindi phrase. It is noteworthy that it was used in a slogan raised in a local procession in Malabar in 1921.

an agitation organized as part of a political movement will specify the objectives, nature, and the names of the leaders of that movement.

The purpose of slogans is not merely to excite the crowd. Slogans have the intention to pass the ideology of the movement to the maximum number of people. As slogans are shouted aloud by a large number of people together the sound of it will travel a long distance. Thus, the people, who are living within the distance that the slogan can reach shall come to know about the ideology and the leaders of that movement. Moyarath Sankaran recounts that the slogans shouted by the people in the procession held that day were a new experience for the people of Thalassery.³⁹⁷ A. K. Pillai wrote that the crowd gathered at Ottapalam Railway Station to receive the President of the First Kerala Provincial Political Conference held at Ottapalam in April 1921, shouted the slogans *Mahathama Gandhi ki jai*, *Deshabhandhu Prakash jai*, and *Hindu Mussalman ki jai*. The crowd raised the slogan shouting victory to Prakasam, because of that the president of the conference was T. Prakasam and the crowd gathered at the Railway station to receive him.³⁹⁸ The secular nature of the *Khilafat*-Non-cooperation Movement and the influence and popularity that Gandhi had in the politics of Malabar at that time were clear in the slogans. During the rebellion of 1921, the crowd of the Mappilas shouted *Allahu Akbar*.³⁹⁹ This was an instance of the Malabar rebellion being influenced by religion. During the freedom struggle, the slogans of an all-India Movement were translated into the local language and used in local agitations held as part of that movement. Slogans should be simple and easily understandable even to illiterates. Therefore, the slogans of the all-India movements during the freedom struggle were used in the agitations in Malabar as translations to local Malayalam. The famous slogan of the Simon Boycott Movement 'Simon Commission Go Back' was translated into local Malayalam as *Simon Commissionkare po. . po. . po.* A song with this slogan was very popular in Malabar at that time.⁴⁰⁰ The words and phrases in a slogan should be attractive, easy to remember, and able to convey an idea quickly.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

³⁹⁸ A. K. Pillai, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

³⁹⁹ Case No.4 of 1921 ..., in R. H. Hitchcock, *Op. cit.*

⁴⁰⁰ K. Madhavan, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

The slogans chanted by a crowd during protests are shouted by someone aloud first and then repeated by the other people in the crowd. The chanting of slogans should have the same rhythm and pace. The sound of the person, who chants the slogan for others to repeat in a march or procession should be loud and clear. Because his voice should be audible to all the people in a march or procession. P. Krishna Pillai had a special skill in chanting slogans. The gestures of the person who is chanting the slogan first are important. To express the extremeness of the protest fists are folded while chanting slogans. The first image of P. Krishna Pillai for the people of Malabar was that of 'the dark-skinned thin young man' in the Salt *Satyagraha* procession who was chanting slogans by folding fists.⁴⁰¹

Usually, the crowd shouts slogans as loud as they can. If so, the slogans will travel to the maximum distance and will reach the maximum number of people. During the Civil Disobedience Movement, Moyarath Sankaran and his co-prisoners in Kannur Jail protested against the bad treatment of the jail authorities to political prisoners by shouting aloud the slogans '*Bharatha Matha ki jai, Mahathama Gandhi ki jai, Muhammad Ali ki jai, and Deshabandhu Das ki jai*'. As they shouted this slogan aloud which was audible to the people in Kannur Town, many people from the town gathered at the jail gate to know the matter.⁴⁰²

The shift in the ideology of the National Movement after the formation of the Kerala Congress Socialist Party was also reflected in the slogans. The importance given to Gandhi in the slogans started to diminish. The practice of raising slogans only against the British Government began to change with the beginning of the peasant movement in Malabar. The birth of the new slogan *janmitham nashikkatte* (let the landlordism perish) took place during this period. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, one of the founders of the peasant union in Malabar says that the slogan *janmitham nashippikkum* was raised first in a peasant conference at Perumparambu, which was attended by A. K. Gopalan. Later it became the main slogan of the peasant movement in Malabar.⁴⁰³

⁴⁰¹ A. V. Kunhambu, 'Dheeranaya Porali, Ajayyanaya Nethavu', in C. Bhaskaran (ed.), *Sakhakkaludeyum Sakhavu*, p. 19.

⁴⁰² Moyarath Sankaran, *Athamakatha*, p. 167.

⁴⁰³ V. M. Vishnu Bharatheeyan, *op. cit.*, p. 110. The year in which this conference was held is unclear. But according to the clues in the autobiography of Bharatheeyan that may be in 1938.

The Judgement states that the crowd gathered at Morazha shouted the slogan *Inquilab Zindabad* (Long Live Revolution). According to the Judgement, this slogan was shouted first by K. P. R. Gopalan and then repeated by the crowd. The influence of the formation of the Communist Party was there in the raising of this slogan by the crowd. The Judgement also states that the police saw ten to twenty flags in Morazha and among them, some were tri-colour Congress flags and the rest were red flags with the emblems of hammer and sickle.⁴⁰⁴ At Mattannur, the crowd held both the tri-colour and red flags and a placard bearing the slogan in 'Malayalam' Protest Day 15 September.⁴⁰⁵ Though the Communist Party was formed by that time, the Communists were secretly working within the Congress. Thus, the tri-colour flag of the Congress along with red flags were used in the agitations and public meetings organized by the Communists. However, after September 15, the Communist Party became independent of the Congress, and thereafter only the red flags were used in the agitations and public meetings organized by the Communist Party. In the Kayyur incident, which occurred only some months after the ant-repression day agitations the crowd forced the policeman to hold the red flag.⁴⁰⁶

The crowd in a protest march had a tendency when seeing their enemy, or someone supporting him, to mock them by shouting the slogans more loudly. The peasants in the *jatha* led by T. V. Kunhambu from Kayyur center on 25 March 1941, didn't give way to the Revenue Inspector. The Revenue Inspector had expected that the peasants in the *jatha* would stop shouting slogans when they saw him. However, the peasants in the *jatha* shouted slogans more loudly.⁴⁰⁷ A common tendency in Malabar during the 1940s was that slogans supporting the Soviet Union were raised in all agitations that were organized by the Communist Party.⁴⁰⁸ We can understand the mentalities of the crowd, their ideology, their leaders, and their antagonists by analyzing the slogans raised by the crowd in the different phases of the National Movement in Malabar.

⁴⁰⁴ Sessions case Nos.6 and 11 of 1941.

⁴⁰⁵ Sessions case No.3 of 1941.

⁴⁰⁶ V. V. Kunhambu, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

⁴⁰⁸ K. K. N. Kurup, *Keralathile Karshaka Samarangal*, p. 14.

4.11. Conclusion

The history of the crowd in Malabar politics between 1900 and 1947 can be classified into five different phases according to the differences in the mentality and behaviour of the crowd. The crowd expressed different behaviours and mentalities in each of these phases. Among these phases, the crowd in the Malabar rebellion in 1921 and the Communist-led agrarian struggles in the 1940s had nonviolent behaviour. The crowd demonstrated its presence in the political history of Malabar in different ways as the participants in the *jathas*/ processions and as participants and onlookers in public meetings. Among these, the period from 1934 to 1940 was different. Because in this period the politics of Malabar was controlled by the leaders of the left-wing within the Congress, who later became the Communists. The process of organizing and mobilizing ordinary people like peasants and workers, who later became the solid base of the Communist Party in Keralam took place during this period. Though by this period the leaders of the left wing had abandoned the Gandhian ideology completely, the agitations organized by the Congress Socialists and the Communists were nonviolent. Because, though most of the Congress Socialists in Malabar were not believed in Gandhism, they were working within the Indian National Congress led by Gandhi. Thus, the crowd in the agitations in this phase in Malabar had nonviolent behaviour.

Almost all the Congress Socialists in Malabar later became Communists by 1940. The Communist Party justified the use of force by the people in popular agitations, if necessary. This ideology of the Communist Party was the main reason behind the armed resistance against the colonial state at Morazha, Kayyur, Karivellur, and Kavumbayi. The crowds in the Communist-led agrarian struggles in Malabar were not diverted to violence accidentally. In Karivellur and Kavumbayi, the people in the crowd had already a plan to use violence against the police and they were prepared for that. However, the crowd of Morazha was different. The crowd in Morazha was not prepared for a confrontation with the police and the conflict in Morazha was not pre-planned. However, the behaviour of the crowd of Morazha was like that it would retaliate if there were even a small provocation from the police. This indicates that the political leadership and their ideology had a strong influence over the mentalities of

the crowd in Malabar. When the political leaders didn't promote the use of violence between 1934 and 1940, the crowd expressed peaceful behaviour, and when there arose a situation where the political leaders didn't disown the use of violence in agitations the crowd expressed violent behaviour.

Historians have always tended to link the crowd with violence. They always linked the crowd only with revolutionary politics and limited its scope in this regard. The role of the crowd in the success of the movements led by Gandhi shouldn't be ignored. The state will take a movement seriously by not only considering the strength of its leaders but also the size of the crowd that took part in that movement. A popular movement should not be successful without the participation of the crowd. Because there are only a few forms of protests that could be organized with a limited number of people. Even the success of a public meeting can be determined by the number of people attending it. The people who gather in demonstrations, marches, processions, and public meetings are also a crowd. Thus, new studies and research should be conducted about the role of the crowd in Gandhian politics.

The crowd with violent behaviour could be located in the Malabar rebellion in 1921 and the Communist-led agrarian struggles in the 1940s. The basic character of the crowd in both these struggles was different. Religion played a major role in the organization and mobilization of the crowd to the rebellion in 1921 and in deciding its mentality but the organization and mobilization of people to the agitations led by the Communists were oriented around peasants and workers.

When dealing with the history of the crowd in Malabar, we can see that panic was a major factor in creating a crowd. We can see the crowd with violent behaviour in the rebellion of 1921 in the post-First World War period, in the 1940s during the Second World War, and in the post-war period. A panic dominated the mentality of the people of Malabar during these junctures. The people had a feeling that something was going to happen. Another factor that created the crowd was hunger. During the Second World War and the post-war period extreme hunger became a reality for the ordinary people. One of the factors that mobilized a large number of people to the Communist-led agrarian struggles was the extreme hunger they experienced.

Most of the studies about the crowd in Modern Indian history are centred around the Quit India Movement. But the case of Malabar was different. As the Quit India Movement in Malabar was largely in the form of isolated sabotage activities, huge crowds couldn't have been located in the Quit India Movement in Malabar.

The crowd that appeared in the politics of Malabar is influenced by ideology. The crowd was influenced by the ideology and politics of each phase and it was clear from the slogans they raised and the flags they held. Besides, the crowd in the political movements in colonial Malabar was not solely the product of local politics and affairs, but it was influenced by local, national, and international politics and affairs.

When considering the case of Malabar, the mentality of the crowd depends upon the mentalities of the individuals in it as the crowd is a collection of people. The changes in the mentality of an individual in the crowd may change the mentality of the crowd. For instance, if an individual in a crowd pelts a stone against the police or a building, naturally other people in the crowd will follow it. Besides, the mentality of an individual may change if he becomes part of a crowd. A person, who has a peaceful character may become violent when he becomes part of a crowd.

In the case of Malabar, the targets of the crowd in each phase were different. In the Gandhian phase in Malabar, the target of the crowd was the state only. However, in the rebellion of 1921 and the Communist-led agitations the targets were 'the lords and state'. When the number of targets increases the crowd will become more powerful.

It is impossible to study the behaviour of the crowd in the politics of colonial Malabar solely by using the features of revolutionary politics proposed by George Rude. Even the crowd in the armed struggles as those in the rebellion of 1921 and the Communist-led agrarian struggles can't be explained totally by using the arguments of Rude. Because Rude's study is concentrated around Paris City. Rude is dealing with the people in an urban area. The rebellion of 1921 and the Communist-led agrarian struggles took place in rural Malabar. The social composition, ideas, lifestyle, and style of politics in rural areas are different. Besides, the study of Rude is only about the revolutionary crowd. Thus, a new methodology is required to understand the crowd in the freedom movement in colonial Malabar.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1. Introduction

This study attempted to make a relook into the National Movement from a perspective based on two focal points. The mentality of the Raj and the counter strategy of the Indian National Movement. Though the strategy of the National Movement was devised by its leadership, the masses were the heart of the freedom struggle. The people whom the leadership targeted appropriated ideas given by the leaders in different ways which resulted in diversified forms of movements and mentalities in the country. Thus, the mentality of the masses also played a crucial role in India's freedom struggle.

5.2. Colonial State's Defeatist Mentality

A pivotal point of the study is the discussion of the defeatist mentality of the colonial state in India. The defeatist mentality was an intense feeling felt by the British Empire during 1900-47. Britain's defeatist mentality was reflected in Indian politics in a deeper way leading to reflections in all walks of life. The leadership of the National Movement including M K Gandhi cleverly utilized this feeling to fight against the *Raj*. Britain's defeatist feeling gave immense confidence to the masses to fight against the *Raj*. This is clearly visible in the national movement and imperial strategies during the days of Indian freedom struggle.

5.3. Crafting An Alternative

Nationalism as a sentiment or emotion found expression in the early Malayalam novels published during the last decades of the 19th century. These novels also represented a new mentality. The formation of the social background for the emergence of nationalism in Malabar took place in the late 19th century. Factors such as colonial modernity and the emergence of an English-educated middle class were part of this social background. The territory of India was imagined in the early Malayalam novels. Thus, though the activities as part of the National Movement

started in Malabar during the First World War period the roots of nationalism in Malabar were in the late 19th century. The creation of an 'alternative modernity' and the negation of colonial modernity in Malayalam novels became a form of resistance. Even before the beginning of Gandhian nationalism, language, and dress became forms of protest in Malabar. During the years of the First World War, speaking in Malayalam in public spaces and appearing in public spaces by wearing Malayali-style dress became notable forms of protest.

5.4. The Evolutionary Journey

The impact of Britain's defeatist mentality in the 20th century was profound on the politics of Malabar during 1900-47. The active phase of the National Movement began in Malabar during the First World War, one of the peak stages of Britain's defeatist mentality. The strategy of Annie Besant's Home Rule League was based on the crisis of the British Empire during the First World War. The Home Rule League leadership had a logic that India should raise its demands strongly when Britain was facing a crisis. The Mappilas had realized that Britain was facing a crisis during the First World War. The feeling of the Mappilas that Britain would lose the war and the war economically ruined Britain became a cause of the Malabar rebellion of 1921. During the First World War, some of the non-Mappilas, who had a strong anti-British mentality also realized that Britain was in crisis. M. P. Narayana Menon's speech opposing the War Loan to Britain embraced this idea. The Malabar rebellion became a turning point in doubling the defeatist mentality of Britain in India. The British Government, which just escaped from a total defeat in the Malabar rebellion was haunted by the memories of the rebellion and the fear of its recurrence till 1947.

Another peak stage of Britain's defeatist mentality was during the years that followed the Great Slump of 1929. The vigorous Civil Disobedience campaign took place in Malabar in the years that followed the Great Slump. The strong psychological impact of the Great Depression of 1929 was the crucial factor behind the notable changes in the politics of Malabar in the post-Civil Disobedience period such as the admiration for the Soviet Union, the growth of internationalism, and the birth of radical politics.

The climax stage of Britain's defeatist mentality was during the Second World War years. During this period, the tales of the British Empire, trembling before the advance of Japan and Germany reached the people of Malabar through the Malayalis living in South East Asia and the soldiers serving in the British Indian Army. The famine and epidemics during the war and the failure of the colonial state to solve these problems made the anti-British mentality intense among the masses of Malabar. This was the background of the active participation of the masses in Malabar in the strike wave of 1946-47. Factors such as inflation, famine, and unemployment during the war and the post-war period induced the masses in Malabar to become active participants in the popular movements during 1946-47, which became the 'final assault' on the British power in India.

5.5. Global Solidarity

The changes in international politics deeply influenced the politics of Malabar, a predominantly rural district. This was due to the presence of three groups: the Mappilas, Communists, and the Malayali people living outside India. Islam has an international aspect. This factor gave the *Khilafat* Movement immense strength in Malabar and became an important cause of the rebellion. However, the Mappilas were alienated from the Congress-led National Movement after the rebellion. The large number of Malayali people living outside India became the factor behind the profound impact on the politics of Malabar of events such as the world wars and the Great Economic Depression of 1929. The crucial role in the politics of Malabar from 1934 to 1947 for the leftists in the Congress turned Communists, who believed in internationalism gave a strong link to Malabar to international politics.

5.6. Experimenting with Ideas

Hopes of the masses was the base of the Indian National Movement. The hope for India's freedom was the factor that strongly bonded the masses with the National Movement. M K Gandhi always created enthusiasm and energy among the masses by giving them promises about India's freedom. The feeling that 'freedom is near' always created excitement among the masses. For instance, Gandhi's promise in 1920 that 'freedom within a year' excited the Mappilas and became a cause of the Malabar

rebellion. The strong belief of the people about the ultimate success of a political struggle is important in a long drawn-out hegemonic struggle. The hopes for India's freedom gave confidence to the masses and the capacity for limitless suffering. The impact of the Congress rule in provinces during 1937-39, which became an important stage in the erosion of colonial power in India also reflected in the politics of Malabar. The Congress had a tremendous victory in the assembly seats in Malabar in the provincial elections in 1937. The Congress rule in Madras gave enormous confidence to the peasants and workers in Malabar. During 1937-47, the feeling that 'freedom is near' was common among the people and leadership. The coming of Congress into power in the provinces gave genuine to this feeling. The shocking and sharp setbacks that Britain faced in the Second World War made the people feel that Britain could not hold India longer. A question about the ideology that would dominate India after independence emerged from this feeling. Different political groups in India began to think about their role in the politics of independent India. This was the factor that made the Muslim League-Congress conflict intense after 1937.

5.7. The Subaltern in Charge

Historians tend to limit the history of mentalities and emotional history as a concept related to the middle class. The tendency of Indian historians to focus solely on the mental world of the Bengal Renaissance limited the scope of the studies on the emotional history in India to middle-class emotions. However, the mentality of the masses played a crucial role in deciding the strategy and methods of protests adopted by the Indian National Movement. The Gandhian strategy heavily depended upon the mentality of the masses. The change in the attitude of the Mappilas was the factor that gave vigour to the Non-Co-operation Movement in Malabar. The attempts of the leftists to give a strong popular base for the Congress movement during 1934-40 became successful due to the changes in the subaltern mentalities.

5.8. The Youth at the Forefront

One of the main sources of strength of the National Movement in Malabar during 1900-47 was the enthusiastic participation of the youth. Youths were at the forefront of the freedom movement in Malabar from its beginning. The youths such as K. P.

Kesava Menon, K. Kelappan, M. P. Narayana Menon, and K. Madhavan Nair were among the first generation of politicians, which emerged in Malabar during the second decade of the 20th century. They were in the leadership of the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement. The active participation of the youth was one of the main strengths of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The fearlessness and courage expressed by youths to suffer lathi charges and go to jail became the crucial factor behind the success of the Civil Disobedience struggle. The youths, who entered politics during the Civil Disobedience campaign became the makers of the radical politics in Malabar in the post-Civil Disobedience period. The youth played a vital role in empowering the people's resistance to imperialism and it also empowered the masses to stand in favour of social renaissance.

5.9. The Complete Fighter

The transformation in the agitation techniques during the freedom movement marked the transformation to a complete freedom fighter, who was totally fearless. The process of shaping a fearless freedom fighter was completed during the Civil Disobedience period in 1930-32. Among the sufferings of a freedom fighter during the freedom struggle, suffering lathi charge was the most harsh and painful. The courage expressed by the *satyagrahi* volunteers to suffer lathi charges denoted the peak of the fearlessness of a freedom fighter.

5.10. The Empowered Masses

The presence of the crowd was the most visible symbol of the support of the masses to the freedom struggle. The crowd that appeared in the National Movement in Malabar during 1900-47 was influenced by three factors. First, the enthusiasm created by the agitations organized by the Indian National Movement. Second, the crisis and defeatist mentality of Britain. The biggest crowds appeared in the politics of Malabar during the years when Britain was haunted by intense defeatist mentality. The third was the changes in material conditions. The period between 1920-22 witnessed the frequent appearance of the crowd in the politics of Malabar. The crowd during this period was influenced by the enthusiasm created by the *Khilafat*-Non-Cooperation Movement and the economic problems during the War and the post-war period. Huge crowds appeared again in the National Movement in Malabar during 1930-32. These

years had the background of the vigorous Civil Disobedience campaign and the Great Economic Depression in 1929. The crowds in the Anti-Repression Day Agitations in 1940 and the Kayyur riot in 1941 were influenced by factors such as poverty and inflation during the Second World War and the fear and anxiety created by the war. Unlike the crowds during 1920-22 and 1930-34, these crowds did not have the backup of a mass political struggle such as the Non-Cooperation and Civil Disobedience campaigns. However, at that time, the feeling that 'a mass struggle is preparing' was prominent all over India. The crowd in the agrarian struggles in Malabar during 1946-47 had the background of factors such as inflation, food shortage, and unemployment in the post-war period and the popular movements in India during 1945-47.

5.11. The 'Shameful Flight' of the British

What forced Britain to leave India in 1947? This question has an answer based on two different perspectives. The first perspective is based on the argument that Britain left India in 1947 due to popular pressure of the agitations organized by the Indian National Movement. The second perspective relies on the argument that Britain became weak due to the changes in international politics and agreed to transfer power as the colonial rulers realized that they could not hold India more. Though the crisis of the British Empire and the changes in international politics were important causes of decolonization in India, the strategy of the Indian National Movement was more and more important. The strategy of the National movement, which was based on factors such as the nature of the colonial state, the crisis of the British Empire, and the psychology of the masses and the freedom struggle according to this strategy put immense popular pressure on Britain and this forced them to leave India in 1947. The British Government always unleashed extreme repression against the mass movements organized by the National Movement. Thus, the intervals between the mass movements were used for surviving the pain and impact of repression and as the preparatory stage for another mass movement. The period between 1922 and 1930 had been used as an interval to overcome the political depression followed by the rebellion. Then the Civil Disobedience campaign was held vigorously in Malabar. The interval between 1934 and 1940 was used to strengthen the popular base of the Congress by mobilizing the peasants and workers.

The British concessions to Indians did not denote their generosity and sympathy towards Indians. It was a way to cool down the agitational mentalities of Indians. For instance, the opportunity given to the Congress to rule the provinces in 1937 was Britain's major concession to Indians. However, the British Government sought every possible way and tried hard to defeat the Congress in the elections held to the provincial legislative assemblies in 1937. In Madras, the British Government supported the Justice Party and conspired to keep the Congress out of power. Thus, the tremendous victory of the Congress in the elections in 1937 was not gifted by the British. The Congress wrested it. By this, Congress showed its huge popular support to Britain and created a feeling among the masses that 'freedom is near. 'After 1937 Britain could not think of continuing in India or surviving their crisis by depending on its colonies. Many mass agitations were organized in India against the British Government during 1942-47. The popular movements in India during 1945-47 put immense pressure on Britain and became the final blow to colonialism. These popular movements were active in Malabar.

The efforts of the Socialists, followed by the Communists in Malabar, played a pivotal role in dismantling the colonial state during the final decades of colonial rule. The increasing number of trade unions, including those of peasants, workers, teachers, and students, posed a significant challenge to both the colonial state and the feudal forces in the region. The ideological foundation of these unions fostered solidarity among the people against colonial and feudal oppression. Recognizing the severity of the situation, the colonial state reactivated the Malabar Special Force, originally formed in 1921, to suppress these movements, labelling them as 'criminal' activities. Consequently, Communists and leftists who were imprisoned or punished were treated as 'criminals,' whereas members of the Congress-led national movement continued to be regarded as 'political prisoners.' This marked the peak of the colonial regime's 'defeatist mentality' in India

5.12. Strategic Success

What was the overall strategy of the National Movement in Malabar? The leftists in the Congress in Malabar, who had a radical mentality and adopted the Socialist ideology used the Gandhian methods except the constructive programmes as the

techniques to mobilize the masses during 1934-40. The leftists in the Congress did not organize any mass agitation during 1934-40. Though the 'Anti-Repression Day' Agitations in September 1940 and the Kayyur riot in 1941 showed the symptoms of an agitational phase under the leadership of the Communists, the 'People's War' Line adopted by the Communist Party during 1942-44 changed the scene. Then the Communist Party organized mass agitations of peasants and workers in 1946-47. By these agitations under the leadership of the Communist Party, the Malabar district became part of the wave of popular movements across India during 1945-47. The Agrarian struggles in Karivellur and Kavumbay were the local reflections of the enthusiasm created by the peasant struggles all over India during 1945-47. The strategy of the National Movement during 1920-47 is similar to the Struggle-Truce-Struggle strategy. Though the Communist Party did not support this strategy, the phase when the Communists were forced to adopt the 'People's War Line' brought them to the framework of this strategy. After the 'People's War' phase, the Communist Party began another phase of struggle in 1946-47, by utilizing the enthusiasm created by the popular movements in India during 1945-47.

Practicality, symbolism, and emotional connection to the people are the essential features of an effective method of protest and the technique of mobilization in a political struggle. The methods of agitation and techniques of mobilization devised by M K Gandhi such as picketing, *jatha*, and the *khadi* movement had all these features. The acceptance of a method of protest depends upon the mentality of the people. For instance, the post-rebellion period between 1922 and 1930 was regarded as a period of political depression in Malabar. During this period, all over India, Gandhi decided to avoid mass movements and to focus on constructive programmes. Gandhi would begin a phase of constructive programmes in the atmosphere when the masses were not mentally prepared for a mass struggle. The Gandhian constructive programmes were active in Malabar during the post-rebellion period. The mentalities of the Congress leaders and the people in Malabar were favourable for a campaign like the constructive programmes. During 1922-30, there were some vigorous agitations in other parts of India such as the Flag *Satyagraha* in Nagpur and the peasant *satyagraha* in Bardoli. Such agitations were absent in Malabar during 1922-30 because a

movement like the Bardoli *Satyagraha* was impossible in the mentalities of the Congress leaders and people in Malabar in the post-rebellion period. The Civil Disobedience Movement began in Malabar in 1930 only after the attitude of the people changed. Thus, the anti-British protest in Malabar during 1922-30 was more symbolic than political. Jatha was another notable example. *Jathas* were popularized in Malabar after the Salt *Satyagraha Jatha* led by K. Kelappan, a Gandhian Congress leader in 1930. Then the *jatha* processions were widely used by the Kerala Congress Socialist Party activists to mobilize the peasants and workers during 1934-40. The mobilization of the peasants and workers by using *jatha* became successful as the *jatha* demonstrations were familiar to the masses and they had an emotional connection to it.

The high points of the Indian National Movement and the peak stages of the National Movement in Malabar were almost the same. However, we can't locate every peak stage of the Indian National Movement in Malabar. Sumit Sarkar identifies high five points of the National Movement. For R. P. Dutt, there were three phases of the 'great wave of struggle' in the National Movement till 1940. The first high point of the National Movement, which was from 1903-08 (For R. P. Dutt, it was from 1905-10) was absent in Malabar. The second peak stage of the freedom struggle in India was between 1919-22. This phase was from 1920 to 1922 in Malabar. The third agitational phase of the National Movement was from 1928-34 (For Dutt, from 1930-34). This phase was between 1930 and 1934 in Malabar. The fourth peak stage was in 1942 and the fifth was during 1945-47. The period during 1946-47 was a high point of the National Movement in Malabar.

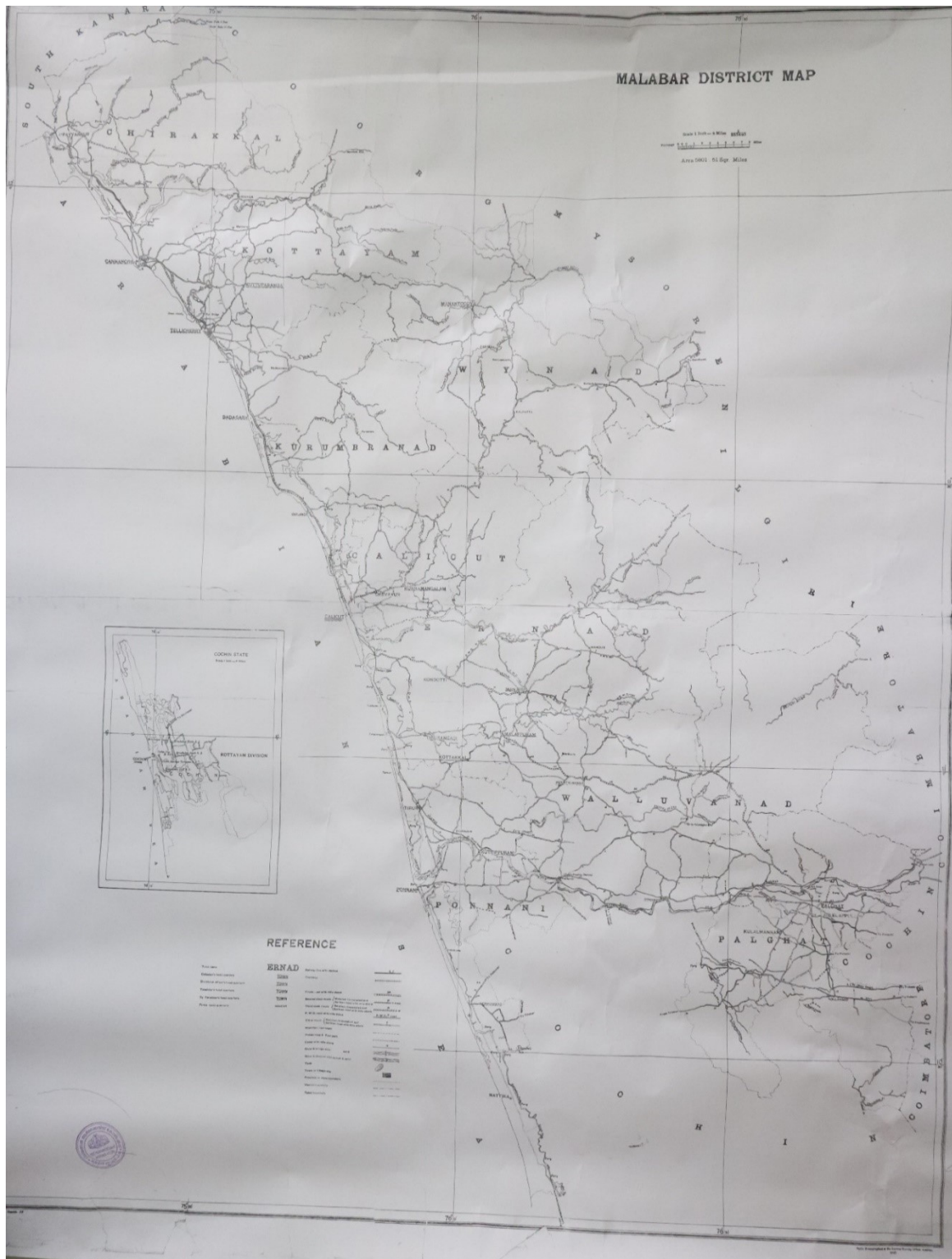
5.13. Conclusion

The roots of Britain's defeatist mentality were in the international politics. However, the defeatist feeling of Britain was reflected in Malabar, a small district in British India. The high points of the National Movement in Malabar were also the peak stages of Britain's defeatist feeling. When the erosion of colonial power became intense during this stage, the confidence of the masses rose to the peaks. This phenomenon can be observed throughout the country in various forms.

Glossary

<i>adhihari</i>	: Village officer in Malabar with some powers and functions related to revenue collection and maintenance of law and order.
<i>ammavan</i>	: Uncle
<i>banku</i>	: Call for prayer from mosques.
<i>chantha</i>	: Market
<i>Chayakkada</i>	: Tea Shop
<i>gumasthan</i>	: Clerk, scribe, or writer under a lawyer.
<i>janmi</i>	: Landlord
<i>jatha</i>	: March, procession
<i>kalappura</i>	: Granary
<i>karanvar</i>	: The head of a matrilineal joint family.
<i>Karshakasngam</i>	: Peasant Union.
<i>karkadakam</i>	: A Malayalam month.
<i>kodi</i>	: Flag.
<i>kovilagam</i>	: The residence of a royal family.
<i>kulam</i>	: Pond
<i>kudiyan</i>	: Tenant
<i>maidanam</i>	: Vast land ground
<i>mundu</i>	: a garment worn around the waist, a traditional dress of Keralam
<i>Namboodiripad</i>	: An elite Malayali Brahmin
<i>neerkoli</i>	: A non-poisonous water snake
<i>olakkuda</i>	: Palmyra leaf umbrella
<i>Pracharakan</i>	: Campaigner
<i>Pracharavela</i>	: Campaign
<i>peedika</i>	: A small shop
<i>palli</i>	: Mosque
<i>pandal</i>	: Temporary thatched shed for marriages, feasts, etc.
<i>parambu</i>	: Plot of land around the house or building.
<i>pattam</i>	: Rent
<i>pattini</i>	: Hunger
<i>pudava</i>	: Cloth to wear (usually by women), cloth presents by the groom to the bride
<i>punam</i>	: Forest, hill tract.
<i>Sammelanam</i>	: Conference
<i>sayippu</i>	: Local term for Sahib, European, or white man.
<i>taravad</i>	: Residence of a matrilineal joint family.
<i>tarisu</i>	: Wasteland, fallow land, land unfit for cultivation.
<i>Vayanashala</i>	: Reading room.

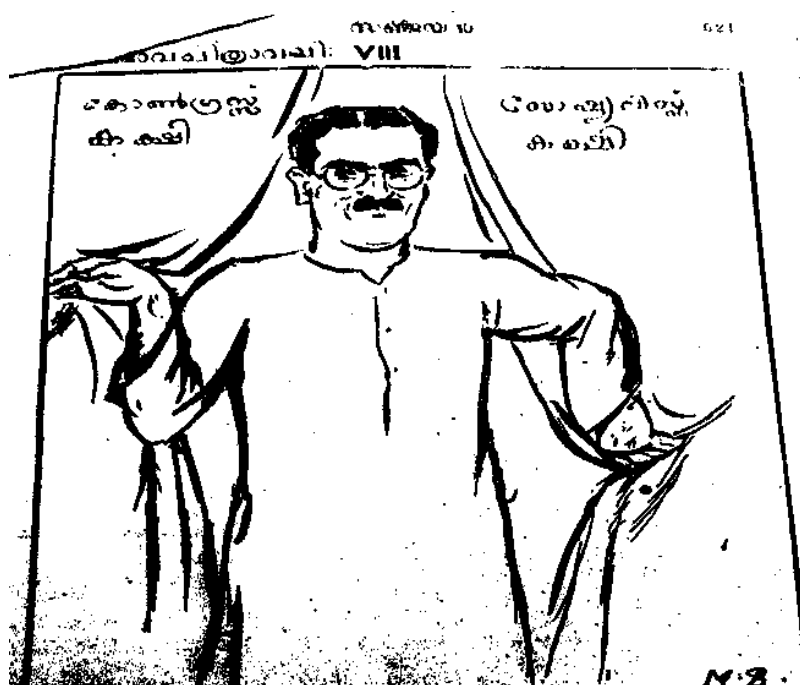
Appendix



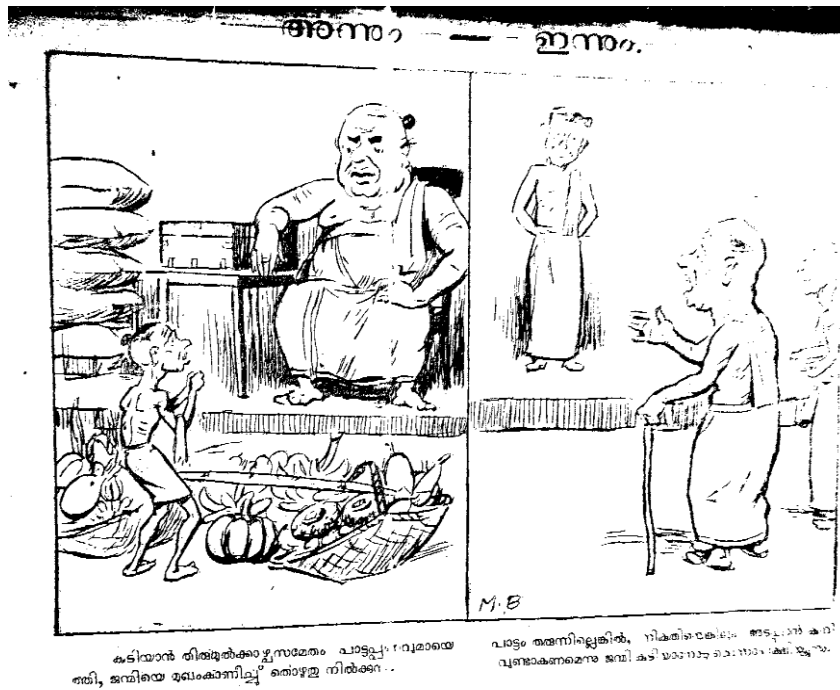
1. Map of the Malabar District (Source: Regional Archives, Kozhikode)



2. Picture from the *Sanjayan*, August 1939.



3. Cartoon, *Sanjayan*, February 1938.



4. Cartoon from the *Sanjayan*, April 1939.



5. Cartoon, *Sanjayan*, January 1938.

25 — 1883 ജനുവരി 2

ശോഭനം

സോപകഥ

കേരള വനിതകളുടെ ശ്രദ്ധക്ക്.

ശ്രീമതി ആനിബെലൻ്റെ വാത്സല്യം— വാടകത്തിൽ താമസം ചെയ്യുന്ന ഒരു വനിതയുടെ കഥ. അവർക്ക് ഒരു കുഞ്ഞ് ഉണ്ട്. അവർ അവനെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു. അവർ അവനെ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. അവർ അവനെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു.

ശ്രീമതി അമ്മയുടെ വാത്സല്യം— വാടകത്തിൽ താമസം ചെയ്യുന്ന ഒരു വനിതയുടെ കഥ. അവർക്ക് ഒരു കുഞ്ഞ് ഉണ്ട്. അവർ അവനെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു. അവർ അവനെ പഠിപ്പിക്കുന്നു. അവർ അവനെ സ്നേഹിക്കുന്നു.

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— അമ്മയുടെ വാത്സല്യം —

ജയകാന്തം കമ്പനി,
തൃശ്ശൂർ 88, മലപ്പുറം

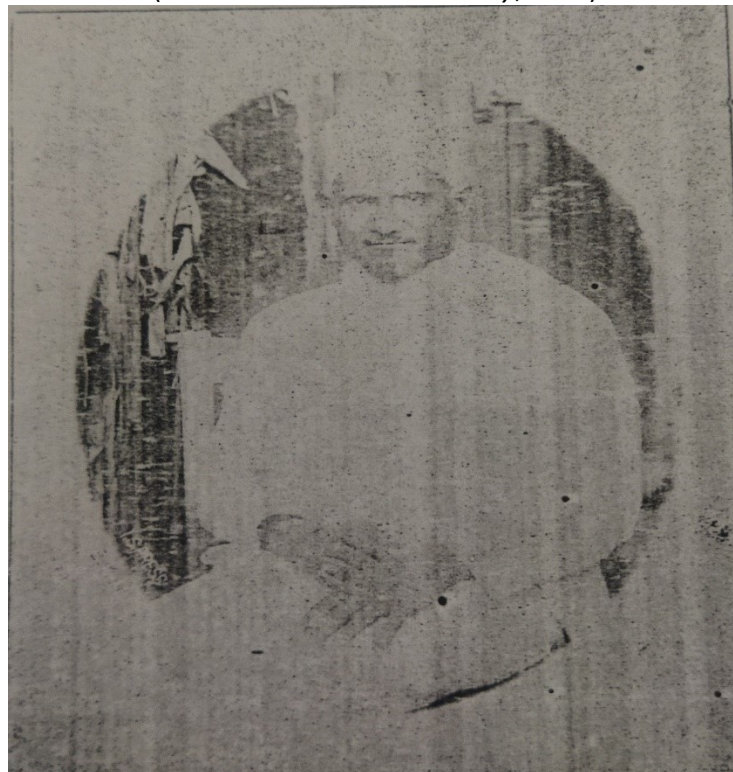
6. Mathrubhumi Weekly, 2 January 1933



7. Mathrubhumi Weekly, 17 March 1946



8. E. C Kunhikannan Nambiar, Founder of *Shakthimandiram* and the Secretary of *Kerala Yuvak Sangham*
(Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1932)



9. T Hassan Koya Molla (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1932)



K. T. Kunhiraman Nambiar (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1932)



Samuel Aron (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1932)



Kurur Neelakantan Namboodiripad (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1932)



K. Madhava Menon (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 1932)



Members of the *Charkha* Club at Azhiyoor (Source: *Mathrubhumi* Weekly, 14 December 1941)



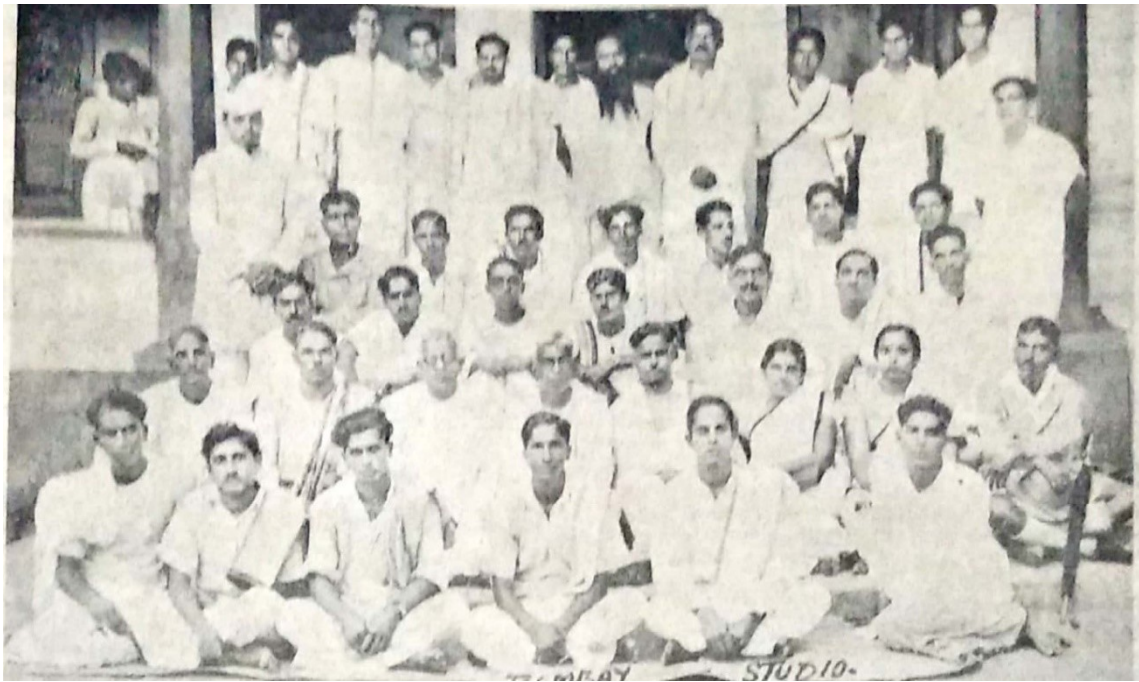
Gandhi Jayanti celebration at Palakkad in 1941 (Source: *Mathrubhumi* Weekly, 19 October 1941)



Members of a *jatha* organized by Chirakkal Taluk Aided Teachers Union in 1938
(Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 10 October 1938)



The procession held in Kozhikode Town during the Gandhi Day celebrations in 1930
(Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 8 January 1939)



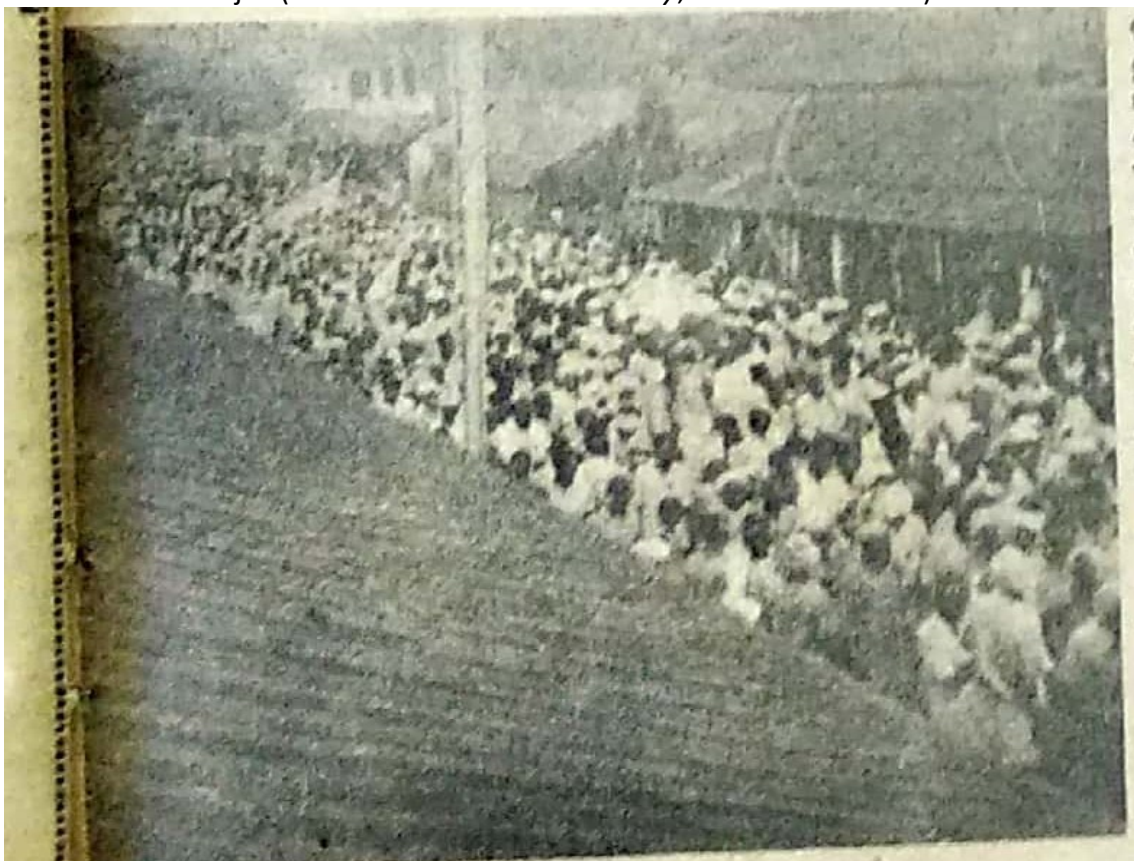
Congress workers of Keralam gathered at K. P. C. C Office (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 15 February 1942)



A group photo of Congress leaders taken during the *Khadi* Day Celebrations in 1941 (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 12 October 1941)



Muhammad Abdu Rahman, when he returned to Kozhikode after spending five years in jail (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 2 December 1945)



Funeral Procession after the death of Muhammad Abdu Rahman (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 2 December 1945)

സേവനത്തിനുള്ള അവസരം

വില കോൺഗ്രസ്സുകാരെങ്കിലും നിയമസഭകളിലേയ്ക്കും പ്രാദേശികസഭകളിലേയ്ക്കുള്ള തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിനു നിന്നു കഴിയാവൂ എന്നു ഓർ വിശ്വസിച്ചു. ഇതിനുമുമ്പ് ഇത്തരക്കാർ രാജ്യവ്യാപകമായി അതിലു നിയമസഭാബഹിഷ്കരണം പുണ്യമാക്കണം ഓർ ആശിച്ചിരുന്നു. എന്നാൽ അതിനെയല്ല കാര്യം സംഭവിച്ചത്. ഇതിനും പുറമെ കാലം മാറിയിരിക്കുകയാണ്. സ്വരാജ്യം സമീപസ്ഥമായപ്പോലെ തോന്നുന്നു. ഇത്തരക്കാർ പരിഭവമറിയില്ല കോൺഗ്രസ്സ് നിയമസഭയിലെ ഓരോ സ്ഥാനത്തിനുവേണ്ടിയും സൗകര്യമുണ്ടാവുകയാണെന്നായിരിക്കണം.

നിയമസഭയിൽ പോകുന്നതിനും നിയമസഭാസ്ഥാനം നൽകണം പറയുന്ന ആ ബഹുജനമായിത്തീർന്നു നിങ്ങളെ ആകർഷിക്കുന്നത്. കോൺഗ്രസ്സുകാർ ആകർഷകമായിത്തീർന്നു എങ്കിലും സേവനത്തിനുള്ള അവസരം അതിനു ലഭിക്കുന്ന അവസരവായിരിക്കണം.

— ഗാന്ധിജി.

തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിൽ നാം ജയിക്കണം

ഒരു പുതിയ അദ്ധ്യായം ആരംഭിക്കാൻ പോകുന്നു. സമൂഹത്തിനും നമ്മുടെ സ്വാതന്ത്ര്യം നോക്കേണ്ടതായിട്ടാണിരിക്കുന്നത്. അത് നമുക്ക് അടുത്തായിട്ടു വരും. ചിട്ടിയെന്നു വരും—നമ്മുടെ നിയമസഭയിലേക്കിറങ്ങുന്നതിനാൽ മാത്രം. അതിലേക്കു നമുക്ക് പങ്കെടുക്കണം നമ്മുടെ സ്വപ്നങ്ങളേയും അഭിലാഷങ്ങളേയും കേന്ദ്രമായ ഇന്ത്യയെ പടുത്തുപൊന്തിക്കുക എന്നതാണ്. ഓരോ ഇന്ത്യക്കാരനും സമർത്ഥൻ. ഓരോ ഇന്ത്യക്കാരനും തൊഴിലില്ലായ്മയും അജ്ഞാനവും എന്നുള്ള ഇന്ത്യ. 1946 ഒക്ടോബർ 14 നു വന്നിട്ടുള്ളതാണ് മാനസംമെസ്സറുകൾക്കായിരിക്കണം. തിരഞ്ഞെടുപ്പിൽ നാം ജയിക്കണം. പക്ഷെ അതിലുമേറെ വലിയ പരീക്ഷണങ്ങൾ വരാനുണ്ടാവും. അതിനു നമുക്ക് തയ്യാറായിരിക്കേണ്ടതുണ്ട്.

ജവാഹർലാൽ നെഹറു.

Statements of Gandhi and Nehru seeking votes for the Congress in the elections in 1946 (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 17 March 1946)



Congress leaders when they were released from jail in 1941. A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, P. K. Moideenkutti, R. K. L. Nandkeolyar, K. Kelappan, N. Sundara Iyer(sitting), Sankara Menon, Sankunni Menon, M. P. Govinda Menon, Ambalakkattu Karunakara Menon, Padmanabhan Nair(standing) (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 19 October 1941)



Congress leaders K. Kelappan, A. V. Kuttimalu Amma, K. Madava Menon when they visited the house of poetess Balamani Amma in Calcutta. They went to Calcutta to attend the A. I. C. C meeting in 1939. (Source: *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, 14 May 1939)

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