

**REVENUE ADMINISTRATION IN
MALABAR
UNDER
ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY**

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ABBREVIATIONS

BRC	Board of Revenue Consultation
BRM	Board of Revenue Miscellaneous
BRP	Board of Revenue Proceedings
BSP	Bombay Secret Proceedings
BSPP	Bombay Secret and Political Proceedings
CMO	Correspondence on Mappila outrages
CP	Canterai pagoda
DC	Diary and consultations
DMJC	Diary of Malabar Joint Commissioners
MDR	Malabar District Records
MJP	Malabar Judicial Proceedings
RMJC	Report of Malabar Joint Commission
RMSC	Report of Malabar Second Commission

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INTRODUCTION

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

INTRODUCTION

RELEVANCE AND SCOPE

Study on the history of revenue administration of Malabar during the company's period is of great significance on account of the fact that it is closely related with many other aspects of the province such as land tenure, religious and caste based social stratification, the unique share division of produce, a decentralised political set up etc. Although the history of almost all these co-related topics were written at length by the native as well as the western historians, no serious attempt had been made on the revenue history of Malabar under the company government (before 1857).

Even when the great scholar on Malabar history William Logan had admitted the nature of the topic as being much confounded and baffling there is no surprise for the subject being eluded from the historians' pen. In this context, this work is an humble attempt to study the subject taking into account all the main aspects connected with Malabar revenue history. Though the topic covers all kinds of revenue under the company government a major portion of the study is devoted to land revenue, due to its vital role in influencing all

areas of Malabar life. Certain connected aspects also are discussed. However the focus of the study is to examine the impact of colonial revenue policies in Malabar. The study attempts to reveal how far the colonial policies have contributed to the economic backwardness of the province, and ruin of the peasantry. The scope of this study lies in the solution of the problems which occur to the readers of the history of Malabar.

PROBLEMS

I. Revenue administration in India under the colonial government was varied in nature, adopted to suit the place and people of different provinces. The land revenue system introduced in Malabar was basically different from the pattern in other parts of Madras Presidency, which had the most ideal and highly acclaimed Ryotwari system of revenue administration. As envisaged by Thomas Munro, under this system the classes of labourers, farmers and landlords were combined in the 'ryot' with whom the settlement was made. But in Malabar these classes were distinct and separate. The government executed revenue agreements with the jenmis and considered them as ryots. Actually the Malabar jenmis had no quality of a ryot since they had totally refrained from cultivation. So, what was

the system of revenue actually evolved in Malabar ?. Was it really ryotwari ?; If not, what were the aims and interests of the company government in introducing such a unique system in Malabar ? One of the objectives of this study is to answer this question.

II. It is unfair to say that the traditional Pre-British Malabar had an ideal and civilized socio-economic set up. It was, ofcourse, thoroughly organised on castism. Quasi-feudalistic customs were the law of the land, and social and economic imbalances were pronouncedly apparent. Yet it generated a culture of humanity and a civilization of self sufficient economic system. The mutual co-existence made the life of the people, at least, possible. But this traditional strucutre of Malabar agricultural society based on sharing of produce equally among all the classes connected with the land, was dissolved by the introduction of the British administrative institutions. The British land revenue policy and land settlements recognised the jenmi as a freehold, proprietor, a position which they had never enjoyed before, and all other classes connected with it were neglectd.

What was the aim of the company government in doing so ? 'Although the professed aim of the British

government in restoring the landlords was stated to be the attainment of the higher objects of good government and the future improvement of the people'¹, the British government did nothing in that direction. So was this a policy of preservation of a class of landlords to act as allies of the company to protect the company's interest ?² This is another important aspect coming under the purview of this study.

III. India was conquered for England by merchant adventurers and gentlemen warriors who thought of England's position in India in terms of profit and advantage.³ In this situation, was it possible for a government constituted of these merchants to afford a government of benevolence ? In his celebrated book 'The Wealth of Nation', Adam Smith the founder of classical economics says, " The greater the revenue of the people to the sovereign, the greater the annual produce of their land and labour, the more they can afford to the sovereign. It is his interest, therefore,

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1. Sir A.J. Arbuthnot (ed) Sir Thomas Munro selection from his minutes and other official writings' (London 1881) Vol.I Sect. I (Revenue) PP.172-3.
 2. D.N. Dhanaghere, Peasant Moments in India, 1920-50 (New Delhi, 1986) P.61
 3. Hutchins. F.G. 'The Illusion of Permanance (Princeton, 1967) P.3.

to increase as much as possible that annual produce.⁴

But how far was the company government able to act as such a sovereign? It seems a company of merchants was incapable of considering themselves as sovereign even after they had become such.⁵ So it is our interest to find out as to how far it enabled the company to give a government for the people of Malabar, and whether it could act as a real government or whether it constituted a body of traders from the nation of shop keepers?

IV. Why a country like Malabar with its rich natural resources and a long history of great trade and commercial contact with Arab, Chinese, and Western countries had remained backward economy in the modern ages? Though it had a soil rich land and a hard working agricultural population, to provide the invaluable spices in the foreign market, why did it not generate any force of industrialization? How did these great traditions of trade and commerce perish? Why did a large majority of Malabar population remain

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4. Adam Smith, An Inquiry in to the Nature and Cause of the Wealth of Nations(ed)Edwin Cannan (Newyork,1937).
 5. P.J. Marshall (ed) Problems of Empire: Britain and India. 1757-1813 (London 1968) P.19.

poor and were maintaining simplicity in domestic life ? Whether it had any connection with the tenurial changes brought about by the company government as a part of its revenue administration ? This is one of the important points of this investigation.

V. The picture of economic history of India drawn by the colonial historians was in terms of a contented peasantry living under the shelter and confer of Pax-Britanica. Apart from the security to life and property provided by the British rule it was argued that the peasants were the beneficiaries of a more benevolent revenue system compared to the surplus extracted by the Indian despotic rulers' like Sultan of Mysore and the Nawab of Oudh⁶. Unfortunately even the nationalistic historians, who have recognised the severity of the colonial and feudal exploitation of the primary produces, have generally ignored the actual conditions of the peasant population under the revenue system introduced by the company government. Their struggle for living was neglected and was sometimes portrayed in communal or other dangerous colours. Fortunately positive attempts in this connection were seen in later years from certain quarters on provincial

6. K.N. Panikkar Peasant Revolts in Malabar in 19th and 20th centuries in A.R. Desai (ed) Peasant struggle in India (New Delhi 1982). P.601.

and local lines. Yet some of the areas are still to be explored to bring out the real reasons behind such struggles of the peasants. Having a unique revenue history under the British government Malabar deserves special attention in this regard.

HYPOTHESIS

The actual reasons for all the above problems are lying in the revenue administration of the company government in Malabar. Therefore, based on this hypothesis the main objective of this study is to examine the role of the company government's revenue administration in the economic impoverishment of the province and also its impact on the Malabar society as a whole.

PREVIOUS WORKS ON THE TOPIC

There are a number of works on the history of Malabar both by the native and foreign scholars. Several books and articles on various aspects of Malabar life during this period are published. The history of colonial Malabar, its land and people, its unique social organisation, family system, history of political ups and downs, agricultural and economic aspects, geographical importance and cultural relations, trade and commerce etc. were subjects of

these studies. But more than all these topics, Mappila Rebellion has attracted a large number of scholars to the history of Malabar. Revenue administration under the company government would be, perhaps, the only subject in Malabar to influence so profoundly all walks of its life in later years. Unfortunately, this topic was not given enough attention.⁷ Academic studies on the revenue affairs of Malabar are few.

The work of Mr. B.H. Baden Powel⁸, who wrote the history of the land systems in British India, however, gives a brief sketch of the revenue and land history of this province. Since his attempt was to write the history of the land systems of all the provinces of British India in general, it lacks depth and proves inadequate in case of Malabar, which requires serious attention. Hence, his study and conclusion on Malabar revenue system cannot be considered as comprehensive and final.

William Logan, the principal collector (1875-1884) and the Malabar special commissioner (1881-82) in

7. Attempt to write the revenue history of Malabar was generally neglected, and if anything in this respect was done that was only about the period under the British Crown (after 1857).

8. B.H. Baden Powel 'Land systems of British India. 3 Volumes (Oxford 1892).

his famous work Malabar⁹ gives a very vivid account of the affairs of Malabar from his extensive knowledge and thorough acquaintance of the province. In this he has included a good collection of data pertaining to revenue and land system of the province. His third volume¹⁰ also provides certain important original letters, proclamations, orders etc. relating to the revenue affairs of the company government. But these volumes also do not fulfil the purpose of a work of revenue history, since it lacks the qualities of such a work. They are simply a compilation of data relating to various affairs of Malabar.

But there are a few works which give partial reference to the revenue and land related history of Malabar. Of these the works of K.N. Panikkar¹¹ E.M.S. Namboodiripad¹² Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai¹³ T.C.

9. William Logan Malabar 2 volumes (Madras 1951). Volume 1st gives the history of Malabar from ancient times with special reference to the English period, and the volume 2nd supplies a large collection of data as appendix.

10. William Logan, A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Other Papers of Importance Relating to British Affairs in Malabar (Madras, 1989).

11. K.N. Panikkar Against Lord and State Religion and peasant uprisings in Malabar (Delhi 1989).

12. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Kerala Yesterday, Today and tomorrow (Calcutta 1967)

13. Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, Janmi Sambradayam Kerala-thil (Malayalam) (Kottayam, 1966)

Varghese¹⁴ P. Radhakrishnan¹⁵ K.K.N. Kurup¹⁶. T.K. Ravindran¹⁷ Sundara Raja Iyengar¹⁸, P.Kodanda Rao¹⁹ M. Gangadhara Menon²⁰ etc. are worth to mention. This work, therefore, is an attempt to write the revenue history of Malabar during the company government in an hisotrical perspective.

SOURCE MATERIALS

The major source materials depended by the present scholar to write this thesis are government records and other documents available in the Regional

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14. T.C. Varghese, Agrarian Changes and Economic Consequences: Land Tenure in Kerala 1850-1960 (Bombay, 1970)
 15. P. Radhakrishnan, Peasant Struggle, Land Reforms and social changes in Malabar 1836-1982 (New Delhi 1989).
 16. K.K.N. Kurup, William Logan A study in Agrarian Relations of Malabar (Delhi, 1988).
----- 'British Colonial Policy in Malabar and its Impact on land settlement and Revenue 1990-1800' Journal of Kerala Studies. Vol.III Sept-Dec. 1976.
 17. T.K. Ravindran, Cornwallis system in Malabar (Calicut 1967)
 18. Sundara Raja Iyengar, Land Tenures in the Madras Presidency (Madras 1921).
 19. P. Kodanda Rao Malabar Tenancy Problems (Madras 1924).
 20. M. Gangadhara Menon, 'Mappila outbreaks of 19th century Malabar'. Journal of Kerala Studies Vol. II June 1975.

Archives, Calicut, Kerala State Archives, Trivandrum and the Tamilnadu Archives, Madras. These records include the Letters sent by the district officials to the government at Madras and back; the Diaries of the Malabar superintendents, supervisors, Joint Commissioners, Malabar Second Commissioners and Tellicherry Factory officials; Reports of the district collectors, and sub collectors; the Minutes of the governors, and Board of Revenue; Government Circulars, Orders and Proclamations, and other administrative documents like Revenue and Judicial Proceedings. Besides, the Reports of the Board of Revenue to the Governor in Council sent home to the Court of Directors have provided a good amount of source materials. These reports include several letters and extracts of reports of collectors, the minutes of governors and of the Board of Revenue and general observations of the government on these subjects.

The annual report of the district collectors sent to the government at Madras contained every minute detail regarding the revenue administration. It also recorded the pulse of the society as it was regularly reported for the knowledge of the Board of Revenue and the governor. Therefore, these reports available in large numbers were consulted as primary source materials for this work.

Moreover, the special reports by various commissioners who were sent to the province to enquire into the affairs of the province also were highly useful. The reports of Joint Commissioners, Malabar second commissioners, Mr. Thackary, Mr. H.S. Graeme, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. T.L. Strange etc. are included in this category. These reports, by and large, have presented things in a credible way. They have generally provided authentic views and attitudes of the officials, and the response of the government towards the problems of the people. Under this category comes the report of Malabar special commissioner Mr. William Logan, but related to a later period. Among the published items also there are a few primary sources as they provide the original documents. Such publications include the works of William Logan²¹ Aitchison²², Rickards²³ Innes and Evans²⁴ T.H. Baber²⁵ and others.

21. William Logan (vide foot note no.10)

22. C.W. Aitchison. Treaties, Engagements and Sunnads Relating to Indian and the Neighbouring Countries. Vol I-X (Calcutta, 1929).

23. Rickards, India or Facts submitted Vol.II (Smith, Elder & Company London).

24. C.A. Innes & F.B. Evans (ed) Malabar District Gazatteers (Madras, 1951)

25. T.H. Baber, Evidence Given in March and April 1830 Before the House of Lords (Mangalore, 1885).

Among the secondary sources, some of the contemporary works from Francis Buchanan²⁶ Durate Barbosa²⁷ and others that throw light on various aspects of Malabar also are no less useful for this study. The secondary source material used for reference includes a number of books and articles. In this the work of K.N. Panikkar (vide foot note no.11) has been used widely as a first rate reference book for obtaining source materials and as model for methodology of this work. The credibility of the facts contained in this thesis and the reliability of the secondary works cited are ascertained by corroboration of them with other sources. So enough caution and care are taken in the selection and use of both the source materials.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this study is generally analytical and descriptive. All the data are critically analysed and presented in detail. The most scientific and objective approach devoid of any bias and prejudice is adopted in writing this work.

26. Francis Buchanan 'A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar (London 1807).

27. Durate Barbosa, The book of Durte Barbosa 2 volume (Trans. M.L Dames) London 1866).

Necessary comments are given in each chapter where and when it is required.

The work is totally presented in a chronological sequence. But this could not be strictly followed, since a chapter on the land tenure is separately given. This chapter (second) therefore is presented as a comparative study of all the important theories on Malabar land tenures. But none of these theories is taken for arriving at an absolute and final conclusion. But a general conclusion is deducted from all of them. It also depicts the pre and post company period's effects on Malabar land system. Likewise the third chapter contains more description than any critical evaluation, dealing with the initial revenue settlements of the company government. As the data of settlements are self explaining, all the facts required to be detailed are presented as they are, without comments. The method adopted in the presentation of this work is quite conventional. No novel method is followed to avoid any confusion.

PLAN OF THE STUDY

The first chapter, for its reference to certain introductory aspect of the subject, is divided into two parts. Beginning with a reference to the term

'Malabar' and its territorial limits the chapter deals with the land and its products, its proximity for trade contact with other countries, the absence of a centralised political set up in the province, its unique social organisation with reference to community based profession and status. The remarkable economic backwardness of this province even after a long period of foreign trade relation also is brought to attention.

The latter part of the chapter deals with the English East India Company, its formation, organisation and its trade ambitions and political aspirations. It also refers to the history of the company in the land of Malabar, and role of the native rulers in accommodating the traders with honour and privileges with special reference to Tellichery Factory, as a forerunner of the company government in the province. The revenue system under the Tellicherry Factory is discussed in detail. Acquisition of Malabar by the company government before 1792 and the final annexation of the whole province in the year are chronologically detailed in this chapter. The company government in Madras presidency and its district level establishments are also briefly discussed. Since the area of this study is limited to the end of the East India Company's power in India, history of the company till that period is briefly traced.

'Possession of land and sharing of produce' forms the second chapter of this work. Since land revenue and possession of land are two inseparably related subjects, this chapter discusses in detail the much complexed land tenurial system of Malabar with its unique system of sharing of produce of the land. This chapter also forms two parts.

The first part discusses various theories for the evolution of Malabar land system, distribution of land in different names, the major tenures like jenman, Kanam, kuzhikkanam, Verumpattam and other features of these tenures and also the tenurial changes during the Mysorean government.

The latter part of the chapter relates to the tenurial developments under the company government including the introduction of landlordism, their empowerment over the other co-proprietors, and the consequent emergence of certain new situation in the land possession, and sharing of produce to the burden of the tenants and the actual agricultural labourers.

The province of Malabar formed a part of Bombay Presidency until June 1800. The history of Malabar revenue administration during this period was fragmented and lacking from uniformity. The method

adopted in writing the history of this period, therefore, necessarily is by explaining all significant points. No generalisation is possible on the revenue policy of the company during this period, since it was different from north to south, district to district and so on. Moreover, the farming system of revenue to the native chiefs also was varying according to place and time. Therefore, the chapter explains at length various revenue settlements effected at different occasions. The pros and cons of these settlements also are analysed. The chapter also deals with the influence of company trade and the private interest of the officials in the revenue administration. The corrupt practices of the British and native revenue officials also are discussed.

The prime part of this work is in chapters fourth to seventh. Of these the first two chronologically explain the history of events regarding the reforms and administrative methods under each collector. Every significant aspect of the revenue reforms is subjected to critical analysis with the support of reliable source materials. The interesting point to note here is that the company government records provide enough evidence for its criticism. The decline of native manufacture and the effect of export

import trade on account of the revenue administration of the company government, and the coercive method the officials adopted for exaction of revenue etc. are also coming in these chapters.

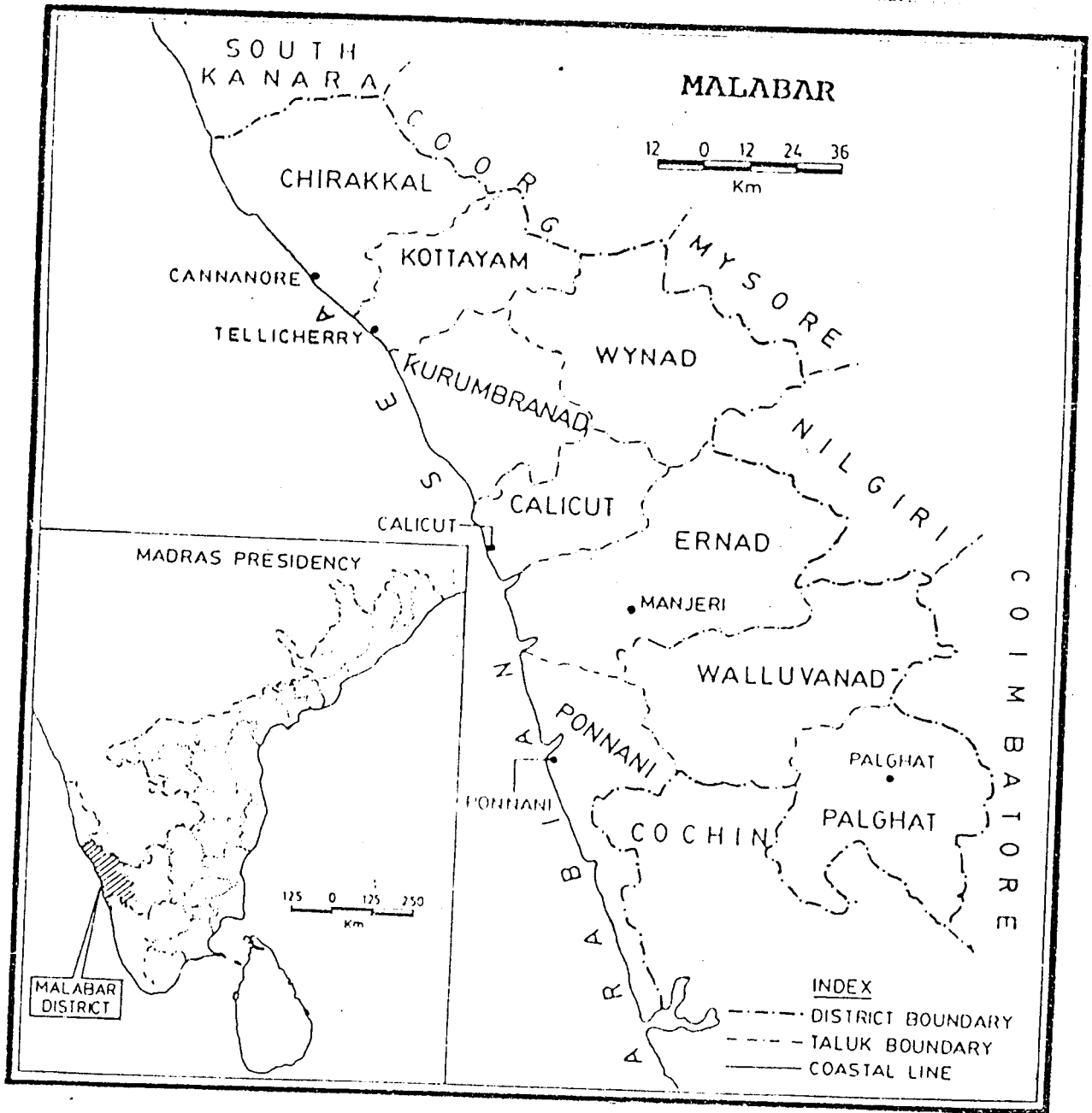
The sixth chapter deals with the system of monopoly in certain important articles, and extra source of revenue and its resultant hardships for the common people. It deals with various sorts of taxes and additional exactions by the company government.

The seventh chapter refers to the net result of the company administration in the province. It explores how the revenue administration made the life of the people impossible and what led to mass uprisings against the government and the lords. Different uprisings, their characters, details of their victims and participants, the situation prevailing and various other aspects of these incidents also are analysed. The lesson also critically evaluates the failure of Mr. T.L. Strange as a commissioner appointed to look into the matters connected with the land and its people.

The murder of the principal collector Mr. Conolly becomes a climax of the series of incidents. Last of all, a general conclusion of the study is

presented, with some comments on all the important points. But, no final conclusion is presented in the pages of this work, as it would emerge in the minds of the readers of this history.

The work contains eight chapters in addition to an introduction, and thirty statistical tables in support of various arguments in the main body of the work. The thesis also contains a glossary of all the important terms that occur in the study. Besides there are a collection of statistical data of revenue accounts for 65 years (1792-1854) in Appendix A and some supplementary data in Appendixes B, C, D and E.



MALABAR AND THE ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY

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CHAPTER - 1

MALABAR AND THE ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY

I. MALABAR

The South Western coast of India, a land of rich spices, was generally known by the name 'Malabar' to the Arabs, Chinese and other foreign traders and visitors, from the very beginning¹. Duarte Barbosa in 1518 used the term to denote the geographical region inhabited by the Malayalam speaking folk. "The land of Malabar" says Barbosa, "begins from the place called Cumbola (Kumbala) and in all from the hill of Dely and ending at the cape Comrin, it is one thousand and thirty league along the coast"².

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1. Malabar is probably a word of foreign origin - to mean the hilly or mountainous country. (Mala = hill, mountain, (Dravidian); bar = continent (Arabic) or country (Persian) Hence Malabar = mountainous country) William Logan. Malabar. Vol I. (Madras 1951) P.1-3. The Arab geographer Yaguti (1179-1229) is the first to give us the names 'Malabar' and 'Ma'bar'. S.Mohammad Husayn Nainar 'Arab Geographers Knowledge on Southern India (Madras 1942) P.19 also Roland E. Miller 'Mappilas of Malabar: A study in Islamic Trends (Bombay 1976) P.18. India acted as a bridge between east and west. Hence the Arab name for the South Western coast of India; Ma'bar' - the Arabic word for 'bridge' or 'crossing'. Sinnappah Arasaratnam. Maritime India in the 17th century. (Delhi, 1994). P.1.
 2. Duarte Barbosa , "The book of Duarte Barbosa", (trans M.L. Dames) (London - 1866) II PP. 1-2.

But Malabar proper, under the company government, only denotes an area extending from north to South along the coast, a distance of about 150 miles, bounded with in the north south canara district, in the east Coorg, Mysore, Nilgiris and Coimbatore, in the south the native state of Cochin, and in the west the Arabian sea with an addition of 19 isolated bits of territories laying scattered, 15 of which are in the state of Cochin and four in Travancore, two other detached bits of land in Travancore - Tangasseri and Anjengo - and four inhabited (Agatti, Kavaratti, Androth, kalpeni) and ten uninhabited islands of Lakshadweep group and the solitary land of Minicoy³. The present area of study is not the whole limits of the Malayalam speaking land, but the district of Malabar under Bombay and Madras Presidencies of the Company Government. Malabar proper embraces an area of 6002 square miles excluding the islands and outlying parts⁴.

LAND AND PRODUCTS

"Malabar derives its importance from its strategic location on the trade route and its

3. William Logan, Malabar Vol. I PP. 1-2 (Hereafter Logan Vol. I).

4. Ibid P.3

production of pepper and spices"⁵ Malabar presents a picture of rare tropical beauty and rich fertility⁶. "The country through which I passed is the most beautiful I have ever seen," says Buchanan⁷ The boundless richness of the natural products of the land was a matter of attraction forever to the ancient trading nations.

Agricultural production was primarily intended for internal consumption, and not for a systematic exportation to the foreign markets. Even pepper cardamom and other spices much demanded by the Arabs and the Europeans were not cultivated or produced in a systematic manner. But the climatic condition helped for natural growth of spices in abundance in the garden lands. But this does not mean that the Malabar peasant was averse to cultivation activity. His enthusiastic efforts in the rich fields, though not so systematic, gave him an abundant production even for the foreign market.

Availability of rain was so abundant that in the fertile soil two or three paddy harvests were

5. Sinnappah Arasaratnam (op. cit.) P.39.

6. Roland E. Miller (op. cit.) pp. 3-4.

7. Francis Buchanan 'A journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar (London 1807) p.347.

possible in many parts of the province. South West monsoon was largely available in this Western district. The average annual rainfall in this area was 120 inches, much better than other districts.⁸ But these waters were easily flown to the Arabian Sea, having no system of preservation for agriculture. In Malabar there were various sorts of paddy which require from 3 to 6 months to grow to maturity. The principal harvest months were August/September and December-January⁹. In the high 'grounds' or on the sides of hills a sort of paddy called Morum was cultivated. This is, for its nature, called dry grain.¹⁰ Other dry grains are few and of little worth to mention. Generally, rice was the chief item of agricultural production in almost all parts of Malabar. Yet nearly 500 grace of rice annually was imported from Canara for the coastal area of Malabar.

Fruits bearing trees of different kinds were largely cultivated in the garden lands. Coconut was the chief item of this. Arecanut (betel nut), Cashnut,

8. Report on the settlement of Land Revenue of the Provinces under the Madras Residency 1852-53 (Madras-1854) Para 14.

9. Major Macleod 'The Jamabundy Report of the Division of Coimbatore and the province of Malabar, 18th June 1802 P.5 (Hereafter Macleod's Report)

10. Ibid.

etc. also were cultivated. The garden items like Jackfruit, mango etc. were used daily by the Malabar population. Besides a number of vegetable products like Pumpkin, Watermelon, Chilly, ginger, Pappaya, etc. were cultivated only for the Malabar Kitchen. These garden items were not so largely cultivated for internal or foreign markets.

The singular attraction of Malabar cultivation was the spices. Sinnamon, cardamon, ginger, tarmeric, pepper etc. included in this. Besides tobacco, coffee, cinchona, tea and other such highland products were also highly cultivated for foreign as well as domestic use. Cardamom cultivation was practiced only in clearing in the dense forest. Pepper was grown largely in vallies. On the bare up lands miscellaneous cultivation consisting hill-rice, ellu (til), sasamum etc. were undertaken¹¹. Still none of these products were cultivated systematically for exportation purpose. The abundant growth of these plants in the fertile soil of Malabar and the hard work of the industrious farmers made their cultivation possible. Otherwise, Malabar spices would not have been a matter of attraction. Little effort was done for a systematic exploitation of

11. for more details on Malabar natural resources see Logan vol.I pp. 49-75

the natural products. Absence of an agricultural class who was interested to invest money in cultivation was the primary reason for this.

Natural forests of great commercial value containing bamboos, black wood, teak etc. are of important resources of Malabar. Malabar had been a great exporter of timber for world market for ship building and other construction works. This was systematically exploited by the native as well as foreign traders.

POLITY

After the fall of second Chera empire (1102) political authority over Kerala, (or the Malayalam speaking country) was divided among four sovereign powers. It was further divided into a number of petty principalities. So, before the occupation of the country by the Mysore Sultans, it was parcelled out into congeries of small states. In 1743 Stein Van Golleness had enumerated 42 small principalities and four important Kingdoms - Kolathiri (Chirakkal), Zamorins of Calicut, Rajas of Cochin and Travancore.¹²

12. Stein Van Golleness wrote his memorandum of administration on the Malabar coast in 1743. Galletty A. (Ed.) The Dutch in Malabar, selections from the Dutch Records No.13.(Madras 1911) PP 45-6.

North Malabar was under the Kolathiri rajas, and the Southern Malabar whole came under the suzerainty of the Zamorins of Calicut. Pride and jealousy among these rulers resulted in perpetual warfare and blood-shed in the land 'won with battle-axe',¹³ Zamorin came out successful in many such wars, and extended his territory¹⁴. Within a century the Zamorin became the most powerful ruler of Malabar.

It was to the Zamorin's court that the 'Ambassador' of the European Voyagers' came in the year 1498, seeking eastern spices and other natural "Manna and Salva". But by the second half of the 18th century, the power of Zamorins began to decrease. Rajas of Valluvanad, Palghat and Cochin did not accept Zamorin's suzerainty. When Vasco da Gama could not win Zamorin's favour against the Arabs, and failed to make trade agreements with him, Kolathiri, the ruler of Kolathnad, received him with honour and conferred on him all trade privileges¹⁵. This occasioned the Europeans to think

13. It is related that the last of the Perumals divided Malabar among his friends and relatives, on the eve of his departure to Mecca (AD 825) for Pilgrimage and to the Zamorin he gave a small village and his sword with the advice, "To die, kill and Amex".

14. For details see K.V. Krishna Iyer 'The Zamorins of Calicut' (Calicut, 1938).

15. Sheik Zainudheen 'Thuhfatul Mujahideen' trans. S.M.H. Nainar (Madras 1942) P.106.

of more exploitation, and to make their strong hold in the land. Soon, Malabar became a stage of intrigues and rivalries among the natives as well as the Europeans. The internal dissention and conflicts among several branches of the Zamorin's royal family accelerated the decline of the house.

The next important ruling dynasty in Malabar was the Kolathiries of Kolatunad (the rulers of Chirakkal). By the time of the advent of the English to this land the country had become a permanent victim of intrigue among its own feudatories, and had dismembered into a number of principalities. When the English established their factory at Tellicherry in 1683¹⁶, the important principalities that became independent out of this Kingdom were Randatara, Iruvanad, Kurungot, Cannanore, Kottayam, Kadathanad and some semi independent ones.

Randatara was under the control of four important houses of Achanmars of Nambiar caste¹⁷. The

16. KKN Kurup History of the Tellicherry Factory 1683-1794 (Calicut University 1985) PP. 37-54.

17. Kandoth, Palliyath, Ayillath and Arayath were the four houses. William Logan A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and other papers of importance relating to the British affairs in Malabar. P.44 note. (Hereafter Logan, Treaties).

modern amsons of Mavilayi, chembilode, Iruveri, Makreri, Muzhiappilangad, Edakkad and Anjarakandy form constituent parts of this country.

Iruvalinad (Iruvanad) was ruled by six houses of the Nambiar caste. Panur, Puthur, Triprangottur, Panniyanur, Perinkulam and Kariya of the present amsans form the original area of Iruvanad.¹⁸

Kurungot formerly a part of Iruvalinad was ruled by a Nair cheiftain. The present amsams of Kallayi and Olavilam belong to this Nair family. The Arakkal Swarupam of the Alirajas of Cannanore, the only Muslim royal fmaily in Malabar enjoyed the suzerainty over Cannanore, Lakshadweep islands of the Arabian sea. In 16th century Maldives was a tributary of the Alirajas.¹⁹

Kottayam or cotiote²⁰ under the Puranad Rajas was an independent principality within Kolathanad. The territory lies between Tellicherry and Wynad. This

18. KKN. Kurup (op. cit.) P.15.

19. PKS Raja 'Medieval Kerala' (Calicut 1966) P.60. About the origin of this Muslim dynasty in Malabar different versions are there. For details see K.K.N. Kurup 'Alirajas of Cannanore'. (Trivandrum 1975).

20. Kottayam is refered as Cotiote in the English records.

house played a prominent role in the last decade of 18th century in Malabar Politics and they were the furious war group against the British under the leadership of Pazhassi Raja in the years between 1795-1805. But the same raja was the first to enter an agreement with the company when the latter established their settlement at Tellicherry.²¹

Kadathnad (karthanad) Rajas ruled the territory laying between Mahe and Kott river (Puthupattanam). Its ruler was known as 'Vazhunnuar (Bynore) of Badagara. Sovereignty over the region was claimed by the Kolathiri. But the ruler was powerful, to assume the title Raja in the year 1750.²² The northern most part of Kolathiri Kingdom was under the management of Rajas of Nileswaram. The dismemberment of the Kolathiri Kingdom was done easier when the rajas failed to prevent the Canarese invasion. so a number of chiefs and petty chieftains possessed areas under their control, and mutual claims and over runnings were so frequent in this period.

In the absence of a paramount power in the whole Malabar these chiefs, chieftains and Rajas could

21. C.K. Kareem 'Kerala under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan (Ernakulam,1973) P.268.

22. Logan Treaties P.13

exercise or enjoy a limited authority in their respective territory. Their power was restricted by the existing quasi-feudal socio-economic system. The chiefs had to reserve certain rights and privileges to the feudal lords. Though the rulers were having their own territory the effective power was in the hands of the Nair aristocracy²³. K.M. Panicker points out that there was strictly speaking nothing in the nature of royal power in Kerala.²⁴

The Zamorins' government was carried on with the assistance of hereditary Nair Chiefs. The absence of a strong central authority provided a good opportunity to the European powers.

SOCIETY

The original inhabitants of Malabar, appears to have been Kurumbras, a pastoral people. They were quickly displaced by certain new settlers.²⁵ soon, the most dominant power of Malabar Population became the Brahmins. A body of some military caste of Dravidian origin called Nairs also obtained a prominent place in

23. K.M. Panikkar History of Kerala (Annamalai Nagar, 1960) P.18

24. Ibid P.19

25. B.H Baden Powel Land systems of British India Vol.III (Oxford,1892). P.157 (Hereafter Powel).

the land. Other major sections of the Malabar population are the Tiyyars (islanders) who had come from the South, bringing with them the coconut tree; the Vellalers, an agricultural tribe from Tamil country; the Mappilas, descendants of the early Islamic preachers from Arabia and the native converts, and a number of other lower caste people, besides a section of Christian, Jewish and other groups. The low caste population were the Pulayar Parayas, Kanakker, Cherumar, Paniyan, etc.

Society had been divided and arranged on the basis of caste in a hierarchical order from the 'sacred' to the 'untouchable'. The highest caste of which was the Namboodiri Brahmins,²⁶ who consisted of landed aristocrats, priests and scholars, and had proprietary and supervising rights over temples and its property along with the ruler. This 'Dvijanma' sacred thread wearers, were respected by all below them²⁷.

26. In Kerala the Brahmins were known by the name Namboodiris.

27. Logan Vol.I PP-127-28. This 'respect' had reached at times so horrible a stage that if a low casteman did not keep a stipulated distance from the Brahmin on the latter's presence in public path, the former would be subjected to inhuman punishment and even for his murder. The life of a cow was more valuable than a low caste man. The woman folk of low caste had to respect the Brahmins uncovering their bosom. These practices mark a 'darkage' in the history of Malabar.

The foreign Brahmins (came from Tulunadu and Tamilnadu) called 'Pattars' acted as the messangers of rulers, cooks of royal houses and temples, and also as inferior priests due to their inferior status, for not having rights of Sambandam connection and land possession.

A Brahmin's status was so much high that it was stated his person is holy, his directions are commands, his movements are processions, his meals is nectar, he is the holiest of the human beings, he is the representative of God on earth".²⁸ Well versed in sanskrit - Vedic works, the Brahmins worked as advisors of native rulers in executive and judicial matters.²⁹ Vedic works like Smriti and Dharma sastras already reserved rights to this privileged class and these works were interpreted by themselves for the judicial affairs of the country. Hence, it is not a matter of surprise why this class possessed the absolute ownership of land without any responsibility of cultivating it. More details of this is refered in the next chapter.

Next comes the Nair non-cultivating military caste with several sub sections like Kurup, Nmbiar,

28. Travancore census Report 1873-75 - P.191.

29. Malabar Joint Commission Report Para.389 gives a detailed account of their role in judicial matters.

Adiyodi, Pillai, and Kartha. Nairs also played a prominent position in Malabar society. It is interesting to know that this caste was elevated in social status on account of their women's Sambandam relation³⁰ with Namboodiri family. The native rulers who called themselves 'Varma', claimed as Kshatriyas, were actually an elevated group from the Nair Caste. Historians say that the Kshatriya ruling class was originally absent in Malabar. So the above section filled their position. They wore sacred thread, entered marriage relations with Namboodiris. But being rulers they actually acted as a cow protecting and

30. Sambandam is a 'loose - marriage' relation without any worries or responsibility, observed by the Brahmins with Nair women. According to the custom, in a Brahmin Illam only the eldest son could marry Brahmin woman. All other males of the family established relation with Nair caste women for quenching their sexual instinct. This practice of a bondless marriage relation has, ofcourse, an economic interpretation. The children born in this union had no right for property of his father, (not only because the paternity may be doubtful on account of the mother's relation with more than one male Namboodiris but) the property of Namboodiri Illam should be kept intact without having subjected to division which they believed a sin. An unfortunate result of this system was that majority of the Brahmin women could not get married as they could not, by rule, marry low caste men like Nairs or others and this naturally led to family problems in Nomboodiri Illam. This poor women had to live in seclusion. The very strange customs like 'Pulppedi' and "Mannappedi" should be studied in the light of this poor fellow being in the Illams. Shortly, this system was not only a social evil but an economic oriented device.

Brahmin welfare group.³¹ The Nairs were born soldiers, always bear one or a pair of swords, mostly unsheathed, so "assassination and murders are a common affair"³² "The Nairs", writes Barbosa, "are the gentry and have no other duty than to carry on wars"³³.

Tiyyas and Ezhavas were numerically the largest but lower caste in Malabar Hindu Society. They were most industrious labourers and toddy tappers.³⁴ Some of them were great warriors (Chekon) and some took the profession of animal husbandry, and were generally a polluting caste³⁵, strictly excluded from the political or religious affairs. They were barred from entering social gatherings and even from suburbs of temples and towns³⁶.

31. K.K.N. Kurup (op. cit.) PP 21-22.

32. Francis Buchanan (op. cit.) P.389.

33. Durte Barbosa (op. cit.) P.124.

34. Buchanan (op. cit.) PP. 415-18

35. A detailed account of this class can be seen in E.Thurston, 'Caste and Tribes of Southern India' (Madras 1909) VII PP.36-116.

36. Nagam Ayya. Travancore state Manual VolIII P.414. They are not permitted to enter into the temples of Nairs and Brahmins. Hence they maintained their own gods in their 'Kavus' and shrines of worship. "They have their own idols in whom they put their faith. Barbosa (op. cit.) n.49 P.60.

Among the lower caste people, below Tiyyas, there were Mukkuvas (fishermen) Kammalans, artisans groups namely Tattan (goldsmith), Kollans (black-smith) musaris (braziers) Asaris (carpenters) Chempothis (Copper smiths) etc. The Kaniyans (Village astronomers), the Vannans (Washermen) and Kavaras (basket makers) came below them.

Again below came the Cheruman, Pulayan, Paniyan, Parayan and other aboriginal castes who according to the joint commissioners are attached to the land and were sold like slaves.³⁷. Living in accute poverty and slavery, this people of the land laboured practically day and night for the welfare of their 'privileged lords.' The society looked down upon them contemptuously and exploited them indiscriminately. Their blood and sweat brought out new areas of cultivating land out of forest, and in this they worked dawn to dusk, but with little outcome for their own needs. Yet they were the victims of 'aparthied', the most heinous system of the feudalistic culture. The code of conduct for this unfortunate

37. Foreign Misc. Serial No.55, P.24 Para.14 quoted in CK Kareem (op. cit.) Note. 13. P.212.

section in Malabar was so horrible that some of them were treated even as atmospheric polluting" caste.³⁸

Out side the Hindu community Mappilas³⁹ formed a prominent group of Malabar population. They are the descendants of Arab Muslim traders and Islamic

38. There were very strict rules of distance for polluting castes to keep away from caste Hindus. 'Tiyypad' was a distance Tiyyans (Ezhavas) had to keep away from high caste - strictly 24 feet, and 'Cherumapad' likely 64 feet. C.Achutha Menon. 'Cochin State Manual' (Ernakulam 1911) P.495. The scale of distance between a high caste and a Nayadi was 72 feet, a Pulaya 64 feet, Mukkuva 24 feet and Ezhava 18 feet. Logan Vol.I P.118. If a polluting caste man occurred in the way of a Nair, the latter would shout to the former to keep away and if it was not followed strictly, the Nair can kill the polluting man without penalty. Barbosa (op. cit.) P.124. It is also found that, if a Nair apprehended of his body being polluted by an Ezhava or Mukkuva, he must cut him down instantaneously as a matter of right. Buchanan Vol.II (op. cited) P.410 But If a Namboodiri was touched by a Nair then only the former was polluted and not by his presence. The Mappilas, Christians, Jews and such non-Hindus also were not an atmospheric polluting group but only by touch. It is highly interesting and ironic that in the event of a low caste man entered to the presinct of a high caste man's house, the purification was done with cow dung. Sheikh Zainudhin (op. cit.) P.82.

39. Mappila is a name applied to the Muslims in Kerala generally and the Muslims of Malabar particularly. The name 'Mappila' is an honorific term applied by the natives of Kerala to respected visitors and immigrants from abroad. S.M. Mohammad Koya, Muslims of Malabar with special reference to their distinctive character (Unpub. PhD thesis University of Calcut 1987) P.30.

preachers who came and settled in Kerala⁴⁰, and also the native converts. The number of Muslims increased in Malabar as the low caste people of the land found shelter in that religion from their former stress and toil under the strict and inhuman caste restrictions.⁴¹ The only muslim ruling dynasty in Malabar was the Ali Rajas of Cannanore.

In the trading and merchant community of Malabar the Jews and Christians formed a part. The absence of the Vaishyas, trading people in Malabar was filled by this section.⁴² In short the society of Malabar was classified into watertight compartments, on the basis of religion and caste in the quasi-feudal socio-economic institution. Whatever be the idea of the so-called self-sufficient village - economy in this stratification of caste and community based professionalism, in the practical aspect it resulted in nothing but a systematic exploitation of one by the other.

40. Malik Ibn dinar and his followers came to Kerala in 7th Century AD. see Sheik Zainudheen. (op. cit.).

41. According to tradition the last of the perumals (Emperor) of Malabar went to Mecca on pilgrimage and embraced Islam. He encouraged his subjects to follow Islam and sent letters to Malabar rulers asking to welcome Muslim Messengers. But the historicity of this tradition is doubtful.

42. C.K. Kareem (op. cit.) P.298.

ECONOMY

Despite everything that described above as natural resources, and the charming beauty of the hilly tracts and pleasing scenery of the valleys, the Malabar coast had been maintaining a backward economy over years. The delightful simplicity of its domestic life was nothing but the inevitable result of its peculiar socio-economic system.

It had a greater number of agricultural products as a result of the abundant rain giving climatic condition, and a very fertile soil. Yet it hardly generated any force of industrialisation. Agriculture was the main source of occupation for a major section of the population, except for a few who were engaged in trade, commerce, fishing and handicrafts and certain traditionally professional class like carpenters goldsmith etc.

Again Malabar had been the land of major exports of a wide range of agricultural products like coffee, tea, timber, pepper, cardamon ginger and other spices. Though this strip of land in the South Western coast of India had enough exposure to the world commercial market and it had great trade contact with Arab, Chinese and other Western countries since the

very ancient times the society of the land had been little influenced by the major economic and social changes of these countries.

Cultivation techniques were generally primitive and the rural portion of the district, notwithstanding the great commercial exposure appears to be surprisingly impoverished⁴³.

Why did a country with a wide range of trade contact and commercial exposure to the outer world remain backward even after centuries of these experiences ? This is a vital question as far as Malabar economic system is concerned. But a study of antiquities only would bring out the underlying facts behind this. The very strange social organisation of Malabar and its unique land owning system and the unequal distribution of produce of the land among the co-proprietors are the basic reason for this backward economy. Besides, those who were responsible for land and its production were not inclined for the cultivation and its improvement.

43. Thomas W Shea. Jr. "Barriers to Economic Development in Traditional Societies. Malabar, a case study". The journal of Economic History. vol. XIX No.4 December 1959 P.504.

In a society which depends largely on agriculture, land forms the basis of its economic texture. The unique land tenure and its complexities and intricacies were the primary hurdle on the way of a better economy in Malabar. In Malabar the state never owned or claimed ownership of land except what the rulers had acquired as personal belonging by escheat, purchase or land acquisition etc.⁴⁴ The land was mainly under the control of an aristocratic social group. They were not interested in agricultural activities, but lived pompously at the creamy layer of the society. This aristocratic land 'owning' class was not inclined for the cultivation work and they never showed interest to invest in agricultural works. So the improvement of agriculture and a consequent development of industry were found stagnated. In the absence of a strong centralised government system this was continued until the impoverishment of economy due to various other reasons.

44. M.A. Ooman Land Reforms and Socio- Economic changes in Kerala: An introductory study. (Bangalore 1971) PP. 28-29

Shortly, the structural frame work of the Malabar economy was conditioned by the heirarchical system consisting of several groups linked by a network of economic and social relationship. This traditional feudalistic aristocracy was controlling the social political and economic areas of the Malabar society.⁴⁵ Their active indulgence in pomp and pleasure and their averse attitude towards land and proudction were reasons for this situation.

II. ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY

On 22 September 1599, in the Founders Hall in London Mr. Stephen Soame, the Lord Mayor of London, occupied the chair at the head of a hundred 'adventurers'. The daring spirit o Elizabethan Age and the frequent maritime exploration of the English adventurs had inspired them to summon there with the aim of a charter of trade monopoly in mind and substantial pounds to finance their venture.⁴⁶ They framed 'The Governor and Company of merchants of London Trading into East Indies' of 101 shares. On 31 December 1600 they secured a charter of monopoly over

45. A detailed study of land and the social structure is give in chapter second.

46. James Mill History of India (Delhi 1972) I P.14

East Indies' trade from Queen Elizebath for 15 years. The Gama Epoch⁴⁷ had already created an enthusiasm among the European traders for their own part in the exploration of new trade route and now the Dutch were a matter of jealousy to the English merchants for the Founders Hall conference⁴⁸.

In 1657 the London Company was converted into "one continuous joint stock" by a charter⁴⁹. On 5 September 1698 a consortium of merchants succeeded in persuading the House of commons to accept proposals embodying them as a new East India Company. The two companies, thus, worked for one nation for the same purpose.⁵⁰ Later in 1708⁵¹ fearing the adverse effect of such a system a "charter of Union" was promulgated by the British government. The result was the

47. Vascoda Gama, a Portuguese navigator, landed at Calicut on 27th May 1498.

48. In 1595 the Dutch sent four ships to trade with the East which made jealous of the English for establishing their trade with India. Ibid P.4.

49. A.B. Keith 'A constitutional History of India'. 1600-1935 (Allahabad 1961) PP-17-8.

50. John Bruce "Annals of English East India Company" (London 1810) III P.251.

51. The year given in P.J. Marshal's Problems of Empire Britain and India 1757-1813 (London 1968) is 1709 P.193.

formation of 'United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies more popularly known as the English East India company'.

ORGANISATION

To manage the affairs of the company a "Court of Directors" elected by the share holders was formed. The trading centres of the company were known as "Factories" and the officials as "Factors". Each of such factory had a chief-factor who managed the commercial and other activities of it. Soon the number of factories and the area of their activities began to enlarge. The extent of the factories' influence began to widen to other non-commercial areas also.

The control of the home government over the company was a little scant. The company officials began to be corrupt and were found chiefly motivated by their personal interest. Therefore, to bring the company under the control of the Parliament Regulating Acts of 1773 was passed. The governor was the head of the provinces. By this Act governor of Bengal, was empowered as the governor general of whole British possession in India and he was given certain powers over the affairs of the company.⁵² To assist and

52. Warren Hastings was elected as the first governor general

counsel him in administration a four member council was formed. The Pitt India Act of 1784 brought the company under the control of the parliament. A 6 member council was constituted in England for the affairs of the company and the council of governor general was reduced to three. The governor general became more powerful and he was answerable to the home government.

TRADE TO EMPIRE

The history of the growth of the company government was the history of the growth of the factories into centres of political maneuver. But was it a policy change from 'Trade to Empire'?. In 1689 the company officials declared that "the increase of our revenue is the subject of our care as much as our trade"⁵³. So in a little over fifty years the East India company was transformed from a body of traders into the rulers of Indian provinces with a population of fifty or sixty million.⁵⁴ This wave of expansion was in no sense the fulfilment of plans of conquest drawn up at home.⁵⁵ In 1767 the secretary of the East India Company told the House of Commons "the general

53. Bipan Chandra Modern India (New Delhi, 1986) P.55

54. P.J. Marshall (op. cit.) P.15

55. Ibid P.17

tenor of the company's orders were not to act offensively. We do not want conquest and power. It is commercial internal only we look for"⁵⁶ But happenings in this land was not like this. He lamented that military "operations" grew insensibly from one trouble to another", and the initiative for conquest always came from the company's servants in India.⁵⁷ Soon the company became Diwan of Bengal and it had fixed revenue collection from the lands of India.

But whatever the company officials in India achieved the home government had no proposed plan for such. Ofcourse, the personal commercial interest of most of the company officials motivated them to this.⁵⁸ Besides company dealings many of the factors carried on their personal trade. Robert Adams, the English chief of Tellichery (1714) made an excellent personal profit by importing Bengal opium and sending it up-river on empty company pepper boats

Gerals Aungier, Governor of Bombay wrote to the Director of the Company in London," the time now

56. Ibid

57. Ibid

58. Alexander Hamilton, A new Account of the East Indies voyages and Travels. Vol VIII. Edited by John pinkerton (London, 1811) P.378.

requires you to manage your general commerce with sword in your hands".⁵⁹ So gradually the traders became conquerors, and their influence moved from trade to political activities like defence, diplomatic negotiation, administration of justice, maintenance of law and order and arbitration. Here the role of a native ruler was not less important.

The wealth of India attracted the attention of the administration in England, and whenever the Parliament loaded criticism of the company's steps in India, they tried to persuade the parliament, that the new conquests in India belonged right to the crown and not to the company. They held that the revenues of India would become the redemption of a nation... 'a kind of gift from heaven'⁶⁰. So "India was expected to contribute to the economic well being of Britain"⁶¹. So the next step from the British government was to bring the company at its sole control. The government of England proposed plans for the company's control and by various regulating acts the company's power was restricted. By 1857 the company was abolished and India was brought under the crown.

59. Quoted in Bipan Chandran (op.cit) P.55.

60. P.J. Marshall (op.cit) P.30

61. Ibid P.78

COMPANY IN THE LAND OF MALABAR

Ralph Fitch was the first Englishman to visit Calicut (1588).⁶² Later in 1591 Captain Raymond started with 3 ships to trade with India. In 1596 again another English trade group came to India. A trade agreement was signed for the first time between an Indian sovereign and an Englishman in 1615. Captain keeling reached at Cranganore with 3 ships and entered a treaty with the Zamorin in this year.⁶³ The treaty was intended to get the English help against the Portuguese. The terms of the treaty was absolutely submissive from the Zamorin's part. It read "the whole trade of the English in whatsoever commodity either imported or exported shall pay, yield or allow no manner of custom, imposition, tax or toll or any other duty of whatsoever quantity."⁶⁴ This clearly reveals the attitude of the native rulers towards the European. So the native rulers were the most accomodative of the European traders.

The tide of political and economic developments in Europe and the power struggle among

62. K.P. Padmanabha Menon. History of Kerala I. (New Delhi, 1984) P.235 also Ralph Fitch M, Voyages of Ralph M Fitch England's Pioneer to India (ed.) Richard Hakluyt PP.185-6.

63. KPP Menon. Ibid I No.4 P.240

64. John Bruce I (op.cit) P.178

their agencies in this land began to reflect the native politics. The situation prevailing in Malabar was so favourable for these powers. Each ruler was eager to spread red carpet for them. One letter sent to England by the factors read, "The King of Batacola and Cannanore offers land and assistance in building forts. The company's neglect of fortification has brought them into contempt If the present offers be not accepted, the Dutch will easily be master of the trade."⁶⁵ To encourage an alliance with the English the Zamorin not only exempted the English from the payments of all export duties except on pepper, but as a mark of special favour agreed to give the chief of the factory an annual present of one thousand fanams.⁶⁶ To build a fort at Tellicherry Zamorin agreed to give "what materials they wanted from Calicut as duty free"⁶⁷. In a royal writing to Mr. Adams (Chief of the factory) the Raja stated that if any dispute arose between the factory and the natives in the name of value of an article, the latter would be compelled to take an oath

65. E.B. Sainsbury.(ed.) A calender of court minute of the East India Company. 1635 - 1679. (London, 1907) P.295.

66. Logan Treaties. Pt. I. No.I. P.I

67. Tellicherry Diary 1743-44 - P.67

in this respect.⁶⁸ and "if any debtor went into the factory for protection, none was allowed to go there to disturb them".⁶⁹

Kolathiri Raja also gave similar royal writings stating, "All the trade and farms within our and our predecessors' territory are given to the English company, save that granted to the Dutch company. If any other emperor or any other stranger comes to this our country, the English company can, in our name, punish, prevent and drive away."⁷⁰ In another royal writing by the King of Badakklenkur on 21st November 1760, the company was to receive the "whole right of collecting the customs in all places in their dominions" on condition of paying 21,000 Silver fanams annually⁷¹. The northern regent of Kolathiri advised the company the necessity of fortifications of their warehouse, and himself laid the foundation stone for it.⁷² The Kurungot Nair consented in 1719 the English

68. Logan 'Treaties' Pt. I No.IV. P.3

69. Alexander Hamilton (op.cit) Vol.I. P.316

70. Royal writing to Mr.Robert Adams 23rd March 1722: Logan 'Treaties'. Pt. I. No. VIII. P.6

71. Logan Treaties Pt. I. No.LXXIV

72. Logan Vol.I, P.395

to erect a warehouse at Moyalan and to do a duty free trade⁷³. In short, while the company continued trade and commercial activities by its shrewed diplomacy, the native rulers mostly were taking pain to accomodate the new 'empire builders'.

Wherever the company failed its tactics to win favour of the natives, they adopted a policy of pressure by helping enemies of the party concerned. War amunities were spent largely among the native rulers towards this end. Retiring from Cochin at its fall in 1663 the English opened a factory at Calicut in 1664.

In 1699 the Zamorin gave a reduction of 25% in the duty on pepper at Calicut,⁷⁴ and facilitated them to continue in this territory. But the centre of company activities turned to the north Malabar, where pepper was abundant. The year 1669 Kolathiri prince permitted the English to occupy an old port in the mouth of the river Balipatam and they paid a custom duty of 2 1/2% and an annual subsidy of 200 sequins to the prince.⁷⁵

73. It was the same Nair, took the banner of revolt for the first time in Malabar against the English over the right of customs in Tellicherry.

74. Logan. 'Treaties' Pt. I. No. II P.2

75. Charles Fawcett, ^{CC} 'The English factories in India 1670-77. I (London, 1936) PP.288.89.

But the natives did not like this, and their hostile attitude compelled the company to dissolve this factory on 20th March 1675.⁷⁶ However the company concentrated its attention in the north. As a result a well established factory was opened at Tellicherry.⁷⁷ Originally a French settlement left behind by them in 1682 and immediately occupied by the English it was assigned by the Kolathiri prince to the English for a payment of customs as was done by the French.⁷⁸ Ali Raja of Cannanore made friendly relation with the English and denied the claim of the French over it. Now the English shifted their headquarter from Calicut to Tellicherry factory on account of its proximity to the finest pepper and cardomom lands in north Malabar.⁷⁹ Later a factory subordinate to this was established under a grant dated 25 October 1751 obtained from the King of Bednur of Honore.⁸⁰

76. KKN Kurup. 'History of the Tellicherry Factory' P.41

77. The factory originated as early as 1683 during the time of John child *ibid.* P.46

78. Letter Dt. 28 August 1682, 108 Surat. 146-147 quoted in Fawcett (*op.cit*) n.23. pp.394-5

79. James Forbes described this settlement as the "Mount pillar of India". Oriental Memoirs I. (London, 1813) P.315

80. Logan, Treaties pt. I No.LXVII p.57

Not only trade monopoly the English were enjoying in these territories, but they enjoyed the collection of custom and revenue either from leased out or from ceded lands. On 1st March 1741 the Randathara Achanmar mortgaged to the Tellicherry factory whole rent from the fields and garden of their lands, in lieu of 60,000 fanams taken on loan from the factory. They also agreed to pay the principal amount after five year with an interest of 6000 fanams, and also to assist the factory in realising revenue from the people.⁸¹ In an obligation given by the King of Badukkelankur to the company, the revenue from Randathara, Pudatedatta nad and Kunhimagalam was mortgaged to it on 9th September 1760 for payment of debts to the company by him.⁸² Again on 23rd March 1765, the Prince regent Ravivarma made an agreement with the company chief, by which the former ceded Randatara and its rents and revenue to the company's protection towards discharging the Achanmar's debts. The Achanmar had to, according to the agreement, assist the company in the revenue collection.⁸³ So the company realised considerable amount of revenue and customs from the land. During

81. Logan 'Treaties' Pt. I. No.XLIV. PP.43-4

82. Ibid. No. LXXV. P.64

83. Ibid. No.LXXXI - LXXXII. P.69 - 70

1671-88, the custom to the crown yielded fanam 5,55,752 per annum.⁸⁴ Shortly a shrewed diplomacy of the factory men, and excessive greed for foreign money and mutual hatred and jealousy among the native rulers, helped this traders to build a nation in this land by the revenue they exacted from the same land.

By the end of the first half of 18th century the territories came directly under Tellicherry factory

Table - 1-1
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF ACQUISITION OF
MALABAR BY ENGLISH EAST INDIA COMPANY

Sl. No.	Place	Year of Acquisition
1.	Calicut (Factory)	1616
2.	Madakara	1669
3.	Tellicherry (Factory)	1683
4.	Chetweye island	1715
5.	Dharmapatam island	1734
6.	Randatara	1741
7.	Fort mount Delly	1753
8.	The Malabar district under Bombay presidency (Except Cochin and Wvnad)	1792
9.	Cochin and Tungacherry	1793
10.	Wynad	1803

84. Anderson, 'An Historical and Chronological Deduction on the Origin of Commerce from the Earliest Accounts. (London, 1801) Vol.II. P.579.

were, Tellicherry proper,⁸⁵ Moyalan⁸⁶, Darmapatam island⁸⁷ Randatarra⁸⁸ and Grove islands. See table 1-1 for the company's acquisition. With the extent of this territory a revenue collection system was organised by the factory men. Later, when Malabar was ceded to the company, the records left behind by the factory officials gave elaborate information for the commissioners and the later rulers in respect to the assessment of revenue.

TELLICHERRY FACTORY, A FORERUNNER

Factory, a lower commercial and administrative unit of the company, was managed by a board presided over by a chief assisted by councillors known as factors. Each member of the board supervised separate branches of its administration. One of such members supervised the revenue and customs collection of the places under the company's jurisdiction. Separate staff was appointed for collection of revenue from each

85. Ceded by the northern Prince of Kolathnad in 1708. Loqan Treaties. Pt. I. No.II

86. Ceded by Kurungot Nair in 1719. Ibid. No.VI. P.4

87. Ceded by Udayavarman of Pallipalace in 1734. Ibid. No.XXI P.19

88. Mortgaged by the Achanmar in 1741 Ibid. No.XLIV. P.43

area. The collection agency was under the immediate supervision of a member of the board. The staff appointed for the collection of revenue from the factory lands other than Randatara were one collector, two asisstants one writer (native) one Tiyar and two sepoy⁸⁹. But as regards to mortgaged Randatara, the factory appointed an inspector of rents under the supervision of the board.

As early as 1740 itself, a collector was appointed to this effect in Dharmapattam with a salary of Rs.20 per month.⁹⁰ The area was properly surveyed into quarts and verges and the improvements in each plot was listed for making assessment. House tax was levied after a proper classification of its owners based on the profession and caste as primary criteria. Houses of Brahmins and Nairs were exempted from taxes. But when an assessment was made in 1785 the Nairs who were enjoying exemption of this tax, was also brought under assessment. Men well acquainted with the locality were appointed to inquire into the productivity and value for assessment. The share of government for grain products was calculated on the basis of

89. Diary 8 July 1788. D.C.MSS. Serial 1502. PP.174-5

90. Letter from Bombay to Tellicherry 20 April 1744

productivity. This was 40% of the gross produce⁹¹. From the rest of the 60% the cultivation expense, seed and the share of the parties connected with the land had to be met. This system, however, was not followed in all parts of the factory's territory in Malabar. But this was the system, by and large, followed by the company government later in Malabar. Waste lands were granted to the native people for cultivation as rent free for the first three years.⁹² Fruit bearing trees were assessed at the following rate.

Table 1-2
Rate of Assessment of Fruit bearing trees

No.	Particulars	Rs.	QS.	R
1.	Jack tree (Fruit bearing)	0	1	60
2.	Pepper vines (one tree)	0	0	80
3.	Coconut tree	0	0	10
4.	Betelnut (Arecanut)	0	0	20

Other important means of revenue were abkary, ferry, custom, etc. Factory established punch houses and enforced rules regarding the sale, rate etc. for articles. Wine, beer, rum and arrack were sold at the

91. Diary 16 March 1772. D.C.MSS. Serial 1483. P.49

92. Diary 18, May 1785 DC MSS serial 1499 - P.78 Under the native system of tenure this type of lands were know as Kuzhikkanam land.

prescribed rate only.⁹³ It was given in auction for 3 years and the auctioned amount could be paid in instalments. Those who do not follow these rules were fined heavily. Revenue from the punch houses alone for the year 1764 was Rs.1008.⁹⁴ The total revenue from Tellicherry and Moylan in the year 1785 was Rs.10120.⁹⁵ These amounts show that at an early period itself the company was able to realize considerable amount from these heads of revenue.

Ferry service right also was given in auction for the highest bidder. Passengers and loads taking across the river had to pay a fixed amount as toll. For each person (man, woman and children) half of a tar (copper coin) was fixed. Armed men and soldiers were exempted from payment.⁹⁶ A person carrying one bulk of pepper had to pay 1.5 tars.⁹⁷ Right for slaughter of animals also was auctioned by the factory. In the year 1776 the factory received Rs.250 in this head.⁹⁸

93. K.K.N. Kurup History of Tellicherry factory. P.250

94. Diary 14 August 1764. DC MSS serial 1478. P.17

95. Diary 5 April 1785 DC. MSS serial 1499. P.78

96. Armed men and soldiers usually would be either English people or the high class Nambudiri or Nair men.

97. Diary 1 August 1767. DC MSS. Serial 1478. A.12

98. Diary 2 December 1776. DC MSS. Serial 1487. P.125

Another source of revenue for the factory was, issuing of passes for private vessals. Customs houses were leased by the rulers to the company, and it was under the strict control of the factory rules.⁹⁹

Another important feature of the factory revenue administration was the system of registration of property. They prepared a revenue register showing the details of each property, and its registration. It was notified that all properties either mortgaged or leased, had to be registered within a particular date, stating every details of it.¹⁰⁰ This system made the affairs of revenue administration easy and systematic. A registration fee was levied for transactions of any property, worth registration, and a prior permission from the board of revenue was enforced. In short the factory was a forerunner of the company in Malabar in respect of its revenue administration. The company government in India later adopted many of these system of administration that the factory introduced in Malabar.

99. Kolathiri leased out customs house of his dominion to the English for a fixed annual payment of 21,000 fanam 'Logan, 'Treaties'. Pt. I. No.LXXVI. P.65

100. Diary 15 June 1763. DC MSS. Serial 1471. PP. 2245

MALABAR COMES UNDER THE COMPANY

The history of Malabar immediately before the company's annexation of the territory was full of problems and turmoi. Mutual rivalry between the Nairs and Mappilas, the prolonged battle among the British, the native rulers and the Mysorean force, and the claims and counter claims for land between Jenmis and Kanakkars and also among the royal family members had created the general condition of the province in utter chaos and confusion. Ever since the invasion of Malabar by Haider Ali (1776) the rulers and chieftains of the province had rose in arms against him. When Tipu succeeded Haider Ali in 1782, the Nair Militia under the rulers of Malabar had furiously fought against him. Though the Mysore Sultan had effected several administrative reforms it could not find lasting result due to the prolonged warfare. But the rulers and chieftains of Malabar were not strong enough to fight Mysorean force. They joined in alliance with the company force against the Mysore Sultan. The tides of I and II Anglo - Mysore wars, therefore had enough reflection in the land of Malabar. But these were not decisive as far as the province was concerned. But the third Anglo-Mysore war resulted in the defeat of Tipu Sultan in the year 1792, was a critical turning point in the history of Malabar. Malabar was ceded by Tipu

to the English East India Company along with his other northern provinces of Mysore State. It was a share division among the victors of the third Anglo-Mysore war. The history of Malabar in the later years was the history of English East India Company.

COMPANY GOVERNMENT IN MADRAS AND

THE DISTRICT ORGANISATION

The government of the Presidency consisted of the governor and a three member council. In 1786 a Board of Trade and a Board of Revenue were established, each consisting of three members, a member of the council being the president. The Board of Trade was in charge of the commercial affairs of the company. But this board was abolished in 1825. The Board of Revenue exercised general supervision over revenue matters. By Regulation IV of 1804 it became a court of wards for the presidency and controlled religion and other endowments for many years. The number of civilian members in the council of the governor was reduced to two in the years 1833 and the local commandar - in chief was added to the council.

The presidency was divided into districts, the number of which varied from twenty to twenty six, each

district being again sub divided into a number of Taluks. The magistrate and collector was the Chief executive head at the District in 1787. He possessed enormous powers and had multifarious duties relating to revenue and taxes, police, jail etc. The magistrate and collector is then "wrote Campbell in 1853, a sort of local governor, and has a great advantage in his management from the combination of powers. He exercises an extended superintendence over his district, and the people look to him as their immediate ruler. In his capacity as revenue collector he was subordinate to the Board, which could receive appeals against some of his orders. The Collectors were given Assistant from 1792, and later on deputees to be stationed at different centres. All these executives were English people. Each Taluk was under an Indian Tahsildar, assisted by a deputy or a Naib Tahsildar. No steps was taken to appoint Indians to the higher executive post until 1857.

END OF THE COMPANY'S SUPERMACY

The control of the home government over the companys activity was loose and at an extent ineffective due to various reasons. Most of the directors had no first-hand knowledqe of Indian conditions, and the experience of those who had been to

India was of little relevance to their new responsibilities. The almost insuperable problem however, was that of distance¹⁰¹ As Warren Hastings put it Bengal was at what may be called a distance of two years from London,¹⁰². Since the average sailing time from London to India was six months, the Directors were always six months behind events in India. Under the most favourable conditions a governor could not know the director's reactions to a situation for at least a year, and for very much longer if he chose to prevaricate¹⁰³. Secondly, the discontinuity of personnels of higher offices was very adversely affected..

If the directors changed from year to year with the annual elections and orders sent one year were reversed the next, the servants in India could defy them with impunity. This is precisely what happened, in 1765 when a Bengal servant was accused of disobeying the director's orders against taking presents from Indians, he replied that as such orders were 'so fluctuating, they were not taken seriously'.¹⁰⁴ Again

101. P.J. Marshall (op.cit) p.29

102. Ibid. P.29

103. Ibid PP. 29-30

104. Ibid P.30

one of the accusation of the critics of the company was that the "servants had become the masters". The alliance between men in India and men in Leadenhall Street, cemented by Indian patronage and Indian wealth".¹⁰⁵ The control of the home government in its parliament over the company was seemed verily ineffective and the personal of the company in India worked more effectively for their selfinterest than for the company's interest¹⁰⁶. Moreover the growing wealth of the company made the English people to think of its unbounded and its control over the parliament. This was looked with anxiety by the house of commons.

The East India Company was formed to trade with the east and there by to benefit the British nation. But company officials began to be corrupt and used to bribe from people. The British parliament found it a scourge upon the government itself. In every respect the company was found drifting away from the set rules. The personal interest of the merchant

105. Ibid

106. Robert Adam, the English chief at Tellichery (1714) made an excellent personal profit by importing Bengal opium and sending it up river on empty company pepper boats. Captain Alexander Hamilton, A new account of the East Indies Voyages and Travels Vol. VIII (ed.) by John Pinkerton (London - 1811) P.378.

turned officials of the company and their individual whims and fancies along with many other natural reasons made it absolutely impossible for the crown to set loose the company government. Therefore, to bring the company under the control of the parliament the first step was put by the Regulating Act of 1773.¹⁰⁷ By this Act the governor of Bengal be^{came} governor general of the whole British possession in India and Bengal, Madras and Bombay came under his authority. To assist and council the Governor in administration a four member council was formed.¹⁰⁸ The regulation reframed the Court of Directors of 24 members, 1/4 for one year 1/4 for 2 years 1/4 for 3 years and 1/4 for 4 years.

To remedy the 1773 Act, William Pitt¹⁰⁹, the British Prime Minister, introduced another act in 1784. By this Act named 'Pit India Act', the company came under the control of the parliament. A six member council was constituted in England for the affairs of

107. Warren Hastings was the first governor general.

108. A petition of citizen of London against this Regulating Act (of Lord North) read: "The said Bill is a direct and dangerous attack on the liberties of the people (of India) and will, if passed into law, prove of the most fatal consequence to the security of property" P.J. Marshall (op.cit) p.107

109. William Pitt is said to be first in history to introduce Income Tax in 1799.

the company. The council of governor general was reduced from 4 to 3 and the governor general became more powerful.

The home government agreed in principle the formation of the government of India. The frame work of the government of India, fixed by Pitt's Act of 1784, however, continued without any substantial modification till 1833. To transfer authority from the company to crown, the strangle hold of the latter was gradually tightened more and more. The charter Act of 1833 empowered his majesty to appoint any person as commissiner for the affairs of India in addition to the official members mentioned in the Act. The Board of Control was improved. It was enacted that no official communications should be sent to India by the Court of Directors until they had first been approved by the Board of Control.

These two bodies were actually keeping a balance of power for the affairs of India. It may be said that the two bodies of the company acting through the Board of Control shared the authority of the Home government and served as checks and balances against each other. The directors of the company possessed the initiative, while the Board of Contorl had a general and absolute restraining power". But in practice, it

was neither the Board nor the Directors that governed India. India was really ruled by the British bureaucracy in India that had slowly but steadily grown up since the days of Cornwallis. It was because of this that, in spite of a sincere and earnest desire not to extend British dominions in India, the home authorities could not control the aggressive designs of the governor-generals in India. The Directors had little effective voice. The Board of Control, which possessed full authority, could not exercise it on account of distance and consequent delays involved in communication between India and England.

The Directors as well as the ministry convinced of the injustice done to Indian states, or even of crimes perpetrated against individuals, but they regarded themselves as helpless.

By the Charter Act of 1833, the superintendence, direction and control of the whole civil and military government of the company's territories in India were vested in a governor-general, and counsellors to be styled 'the governor general of India in council'. The governor-general, this four member council and the commander-in-chief formed the Supreme council for the government of India. The 1833

act established a general control of the governor general over the finance of India.

The Charter Act of 1853 also effected far reaching changes in the affairs of the India Act. The company's power was effectively crippled by these regulations. This Act increased the status and salary of the President of the Board to the level of a secretary of State and it further laid down that every appointment by the Court of Directors shall be subject to the approbation of her majesty. "The act reduced the number of Directors from 24 to 18, out of whom 6 were to be appointed by the Crown. Finally the Act took away from the Directors the right of patronage to Indian appointment. This removed a great obstacle to the transfer of the ruling power in India from the company to the crown. The Act also brought the total financial matters in the hands of the governor general in Council. The whole of the revenue from all the provinces of British India were treated as belonging to a single fund, expenditure from which could be authorised by the Governor - General in Council alone. The Act passed in 1854 also moved a little more forward on this path. After all, the first war of Indian independence throughout the provinces of India in 1857 opened the eyes of the British government. This was

the final reasons for a transfer of power from the company to the crown. Accordingly the Act of 1857 abolished the company and transferred the affairs of the government of India to the British Crown. The period of study of this paper is limited upto the end of the company government in 1857.

LAND TENURES AND SHARING OF
PRODUCE;
MALABAR SYSTEM AND COMPANY
POLICY

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER - II
LAND TENURE AND SHARING OF PRODUCE,
MALABAR SYSTEM AND COMPANY POLICY

"Private property in land in this country depends on the share of the produce which remains to the cultivator, after satisfying the demands of government" But "the Policy of British government has, hitherto, been to restore Private Property in land on the coast".

(William Logan Malabar I PP.622-23)

A study on the revenue administration of Malabar would be incomplete without a proper understanding of its system of land tenure. Revenue administration and land tenure, two inseparably related subjects, were too intricately connected each other in Malabar to exclude one another. A general review of Malabar land system during the company government and before, therefore, becomes indispensable for a study like this, especially when a major share of the revenue of the province was derived from its land tax.

MALABAR LAND TENURE AND COMPANY GOVERNMENT

Land system of Malabar, with all its multiplicity and complexity cannot be taken as a mere historical accident. It is not the choice of the people made in a day or two, but is an inevitable

result of the peculiar circumstances, occasions, tempers, dispositions and moral, civil and social habitudes of the people. In the evolution of the land system of the country several factors have played their part such as the geographical character, sociological considerations, the vicissitudes of political history and religious attitudes of the people¹. The tenurial system prevailed in the land was totally different from any other part of India. "In no country with which I am acquainted", writes Charles Turner, "had the land tenure been more minutely systematised than in Malabar"². The three main classes connected with the land (the Jenmi, the Kanakaran and the actual cultivator) pulled on well in a set up of the "Kanam - Janmam - Maryada"³.

The diversity and complexity in land holding had, no doubt, a profound influence on its revenue administration too. Powel says, Malabar "has had a singularly unfortunate history as regards its revenue

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1. T.K. Ravindran 'Institutions and movements in Kerala history (Trivandrum 1978) P.127.
 2. Charles Turner Minute on the Draft Bill Realting to Malabar Land Tenure (Madras 1885) quoted in Ibid P. 125.
 3. Rules regarding the agrarian law of the country.

administration"⁴. The land revenue policy adopted by the company upset the traditional land relations, bringing about fundamental changes in the nature of land right⁵. This was because of nothing but the unique landholding custom of the province.

MISTAKEN POLICY OF OFFICIALS ON THE SCENE

The constitution of Malabar society when the British took over was essentially the same as it had been for centuries⁶. On the eve of the annexation of Malabar to the company government by the Seringapatam treaty in 1792, virtually the power of the native chiefs and rajas were felt in the land. Some of the chiefs had returned from exile at the close of Third Mysore war and retained their former possessions in a few places, and a ruleship over territorial estates had established. The transformation effected by the Mysore government in the socio-economic structure of the province had been reversed. The system of Mysore

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4. B.H. Baden Powel 'The Land System of British India (Oxford 1898) Vol.3 P.153 (Hereafter Powel).
 5. K.N. Panikkar Against Lord and State, Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar 1836-1921 (Delhi - 1989) P.18 (Hereafter K.N. Panikkar).
 6. P. Radhakrishnan Peasants Struggle, Land Reforms and Social Changes in Malabar - 1836 - 1982 (New Delhi-1989) P.21. (Hereafter P. Radhakrishnan).

revenue collection direct from the ryots also came to a standstill.

When the company government assumed authority in the province, the commissioners found the chief families clung to the land as landlords. A number of Brahmin and Nair caste-men were found in possession of tracts of country, calling themselves 'Jenmis', and claiming to be absolute landowners. Under them were found several landholders as Kanakars and also on several other tenures, and below again were found the actual cultivators. This social organisation of the province based on land and sharing of the produce absolutely had its historical reasons. But, unfortunately, the company officials' superficial view of things made them to find the jenmis superior to other people connected with the land. When "everything was looked at from an English law, or 'lord-of-the manor' point of view"⁷ they asserted without any doubt that "almost the whole of the land in Malabar, cultivated and uncultivated, is private property and held by 'jenman' right which conveys full absolute property in the soil"⁸.

7. Powel (op. cit.) P.153

8. William Thackray 'A Report on the Revenue affairs of Malabar and Canara' 7th Septemeber 1807. P.3 (Hereafter Thakaray's Report)

The above assertion was justified by saying "we find the land occupied by a set of men who have had possession time out of mind."⁹ They attempted to argue by a further assertion that "we found that they (jenmis) have enjoyed a landlords rent that they have pledged it for larger sums, which they borrowed on the security of the land, and that it has been taken as good security"....."Had the creditors ever doubted the validity of the jenman title or imagined that government would have called it in question, it is not probable that they would have risked their money on so precarious a security"¹⁰.

The mistake with the early company officials was that everything was looked at from an English point of view. Instead of trying to enquire how did the jenmis become 'absolute proprietors', they concluded that "the janmakaran possesses the entire right to the soil and no earthly authority can with justice deprive him of it".¹¹ They neither did try to know what was the real status of the major sub-tenure (Kanam) holder,

9. Ibid P.3

10. Ibid P.3

11. Major Walker 'Report on the tenures and forms of transfer of land in Malabar 20th July 1801 (Calicut, 1862) P.29

but simply considered them as mortgagees. These humbler landholders of the same caste had, of course, acknowledged the jenmi, in some sense their superiority¹². Here the very significant fact was that they also were Nairs of lower degree, who were interested in upholding their superior, partly from personal motives and partly from feudal feeling¹³. But the company officials ignoring these facts simply relied on the "valuable security" the Kanakaran advanced to the jenmi, for making their conclusion that these Kanakars were mortgagees. In fact the amount was an advance the jenmi took from his Kanakaran due to his financial pressure, whereby, the former's share of the produce would be reduced to the extent of the amount.

Greater number of jenmis had let their land to farmers (mostly Kanakars) and farmers in their turn used to sublet them and this process continued till the land reached the agricultural labourers who cultivated it for their own accord utilizing their own labour power. "It is therefore, first of all necessary to realise the fundamental idea that certain castes and classes in the state were told off to the work and

12. Powel P.153

13. Ibid P.154

cultivation and the land was made over to them in trust for that purpose and, in trust that share of produce due to the person in authority should be faithfully surrendered.¹⁴

EVOLUTION OF MALABAR LAND SYSTEM

An enquiry into the antiquity of the land and its people only would reveal the evolution and the nature of the land tenure and the bounds and limits of rights and responsibilities, evolved by each group in the peculiar land tenorial system of Malabar.¹⁵ There are different theories for the evolution of the system.

HISTORY AND LEGEND

Usually ownership of land would be concentrated in the hands of people who could wield the spade or the sword. But that principle does not apply to the Brahmin settlers of Malabar, who as a general rule, were the least inclined to fight or plough. "It was their spiritual influence and 'super intellect' that performed the miracle of making them the jenmis of major portion of the landed estates in Malabar".¹⁶ The

14. Logan Malabar^{vol}₁ P.605.

15. P. Radhakrishnan (op. cit.) P.24

16. T.K. Ravindran (op. cit.) P.131.

legitimation of parasurama legend by exploiting the spiritual emotion of the people was found the easiest method for establishing their superior status. The oft-quoted legend that parasurama reclaimed the land of Kerala out of sea and bestowed it up on the Nambutiri Brahmins with absolute proprietary right was accepted the basis of Kerala history. Unfortunately even in this post-modern age this farago of legendary nonsense was given undue importance in the history of Kerala. The results was that the company officials could easily reinstate a pro-British element of landlords in the province.

Logan says, "though inconsistant with available historic facts, the unquestioned acceptance and adoption of this myth as a fundamental truth was an unfortunate mistake made at the outset of the British rule, and one of the consequences of the glamour which the Brahmins managed to cast over the early British administrators"¹⁷. Historicity of this legend is, not at all proved by any satisfactory interpretation. Hence, this legendary nonsense can never give a satisfactory reason for the evolution of Malabar land

17. William Logan, 'Report of the Malabar Special Commission 1881 - 82 Vol.2 P.2 (Hereafter Logan Report 1882).

tenure. But this traditional legend may have some naturalistic explanation. The explanation attest the idea that the land of kerala was a 'boon' to the Brahmins by Parasurama. It was nothing but an usurpation by the Aryan Brahmins from the aboriginals and later on a divine interpretation was given for this. After their immigration to the land they held authority in the land and society, displacing the original inhabitants. But this Brahmins were not inclined to the duty of military, police executive rule, or agricultural labour.

The Kshatriya element originally absent in Kerala was constituted by the Nairs in the province. They were assigned the ruling and protecting duties¹⁸. But this Nairs did not rise to the position of rulers or sovereign. For a sovereign the Brahmins brought a perumal. After the end of a centralised administration under the perumals (825 AD), a number of chieftains held the authority but with a limited power. These chieftains held the land as jenmam property and claimed an absolute right in the soil. Basically all these claims and interpretations were based on Hindu mythology.

18. Logan Vol I. P.133.

ARYANISATION THEORY

The other interpretations are, by and large, based on historical facts, and they attest each other for the fundamental facts. One of these interpretations, the evolution of the peculiar land system in Malabar was attributed to be the creation of the Aryan immigrants in the 7th century AD onwards¹⁹.

It is held that private property began to evolve even before the Sangam age, and the land, until about 6th century AD, was owned by the descendants of the aboriginal group of Kerala who are now found at the lower strata of Hindu Society. This was transferred to the Aryan immigrants' hands since the latter's plight to the land in 7th century AD. When the incursion of this Aryan Brahmins into the land began, it was accompanied with a political organisation of a very unusual occurrence. The government was vested in a sort of hierarchical senate formed of the Brahmins. Even when the sovereign was chosen from outside, the authority of the Brahmins did not wane. The Perumal (Sovereign) had to take an oath on his installation to acknowledge the authority of the Brahmins and to do

19. Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai 'Janmi sabaradayam
Keralathil (Mal) (Kottayam 1966) PP.8-10
(Hereafter Elamkulam)

nothing contrary to their interest²⁰. So they exerted great influence in all spheres of life.

It was a period of great religious activity. As a symbol of religious dynamism scores of temples appeared through out the land of Kerala²¹. Rajas Naduvalis and Desavalis used to build temples and bequeth vast landed estates for their maintenance. sometimes worthy landowners also donated landed wealth to the temples to get spiritual solace and to get exempted from land tax. Lands donated to temples were exempted from land revenue. Whenever a gift was made to temple the deeds used to specify the names of persons in whom the right to cultivate the land should be rested. These legal heirs were known 'Kariakars'. Usually the 'Karaima' was held by the grantors themselves. So it was a practice among wealthier sections to make lands Devaswam and accept 'Karaima' to get exempted from revenue and also get releif from outside attack. Temple land was not attacked or encroached by any outerforce as it was believed that it would cause the wrath of god. In short, much of the private property thus was converted into temple

20. Logan Vol. I P.261.

21. Elamakulam (op. cit.) P.9

property or Devaswam.²² "Most of the lands of the time, says Buchanan," were temple properties"²³.

The affairs of the temple and its property were managed by temple trusts, a body of Brahmins, known as "Urala Samithi". It exerted enormous power. Brahmins, being custodians of authority, wealth, education and ethics, and the temples centres of all activities of the society could exercise great power and influence on the society. Therefore, the more temple and their devaswam properties increased, the more powerful the Brahmin Urala Samitis also became. So this 'cultural fertilizers' already beyond the law, became the 'guardians' of temple properties also. Besides, many of the Brahmins had their own private property. Being an age of great political influences Brahmins, the only people destined to interpret Vedic works, also were bestowed with landed properties by wealthy people. Not only temple property but the property of Brahmins also were exempted from revenue assessment. "Vasishta, Vishnu and other law givers expressly forbade taxes to be levied on Brahmins on the ground that they paid their taxes in virtuous acts"²⁴.

22. Ravindran (op cit.) P.129.

23. Buchanan (op. cit.) Vol II. P.368.

24. U.N. Ghoshal 'Contributions to the history of the Hindu Revenue System (New Delhi 1972) PP.182-3.

In early periods, the Nattukuttams, the Urkuttams, the Naduwalis and Koyil Adikarikal had exerted control over the 'Uralasamitis'²⁵. Several rules and regulations were being framed to prevent the Uralas from usurping the rights of Karalars (persons in whom the right to cultivate, the land was vested), and converting Devaswam into Brahmeswam. But in course of time such controls seem to have been relaxed, and by 11th century they all became ineffective and the Brahmins increased their power and prestige amassing the temple property personally²⁶. The disintegration of a central administrative set up and the emergence of innumerable petty states in Kerala made this process easier for Brahmin settlers. Now, the Nattukuttams and Urkuttams naturally began to support the Uralas because the influential members of these assemblies were also members of Uralas Samitis. So the Uraima had, by and large, become an independent right.

Actually the Uralas could possess the Uraima right until their death - 'Jankmakalam' (living

25. Elamakulam (op. cit.) P.28.

26. For example, in 8th century itself, we can see nine members of Uralas Samitis of Suchindram Temple apportioned the whole Devaswam land among themselves K.K.Pillai, 'The Suchindram Temple' (Madras 1953) P.156.

period), and it was non-hereditary right. But due to the unbounded power and authority of Uralas and also due to the favourable circumstances, non-hereditary Uraima began to become hereditary and Karaima began to be absorbed by Uraima. Yet they used the word 'janmam' to claim their possession to it, now not to denote until death, but it seems to interpret 'by birth' they are the possessors of that right. In short, once the custodians of temple property possessed it as 'jenmam' property, claiming absolute ownership to it. The temple lands they cultivated by means of agricultural labourers, and took a share of produce as custodians, and later as claiming to be jenmakars'.

Once more they emphasised their right to the temple property when the Brahmins, who had Uraima right in more than one temple property, began to exchange, buy or sell these rights.²⁷ Thus the jenmam right was confirmed by themselves by their overall influence in the socio-political realm. This was the way which facilitated this class to get a major portion of Malabar land "parcelled out among themselves".

The fall of the united polity in Kerala under Kulasekara (second chera) empire in the later period of

27. This system is known as 'Vechumaral'.

the chera-chola wars, of 11th century and the consequent rise of innumerable petty principalities on its ruins helped the Brahmins extend their sway further. When they made the caste system and the jenmi-centred land system more complex and rigorous²⁸, it led to the formation of a society based on quasi-feudal structure.

Besides this, there were a number of Nair chiefs and Naduwalis possessing their own tracts of land as jenmis. Some of them were at first local chiefs and then on the break up of their power, members of the caste took or retained possession of, what they could, coming down, under the stress of circumstances, from the position of ruler to that of landlords of smaller or larger holdings, exactly as we can see in Oudh or North India generally²⁹. Thus almost the whole of Malabar land was parcelled out by these upper caste Brahmin and Nair chiefs as jenmam land and the holders calling themselves as 'jenmis'.

Anyway, the final evolution of the new and complex land system involved a long series of land transfers. The cultivators who had more or less

28. A. Sreedhara Menon, A Survey of Kerala History, (Kottaym 1964) PP.325-69

29. Powel P.155.

customary proprietary right in their lands had, as we noted earlier, transferred their land to Brahmin temples and through Brahmin temples to the Brahmins themselves believing the legitimacy of the myth spread by them and also to the chieftains as a token of allegiance³⁰. But these people were not inclined to cultivate the land by themselves. They alienated the land on 'Kanam' tenure to the Nairs. As the Nairs themselves were placed in the upper strata of society as military class, and accepted the caste rigidities imposed by the Brahmins, like the latter they also spurned labour. These holdings were therefore passed on to people of the lower strata of society on inferior tenures³¹. So the social stratification was that the Brahmins who were the upper caste jenmis, performed religious duty and lived a pompous life; and the Nairs, for their Kshatriya elements, became native chiefs and protecting warrior class, and a larger number of them as supervisors (Kanakars); and other Tiyyars and Vellalars as agricultural people; and again other caste people as tenants or agricultural labourers.

30. P. Radhakrishnan (op. cit.) P.24.

31. T.C. Varghese Agrarian changes and economic consequences: land tenures in Kerala 1850 - 1960 (Bombay 1970) PP. 12-16.

JOINT PROPRIETORSHIP THEORY

William Logan gives a slight different version to the evolution of the land tenure system existed in Malabar. It is considered to be "the most exhaustive and systematic account of the history of Malabar land system".³² But the British administrators refused his findings and it was not acceptable for them to effect changes in their basic administrative steps. Unfortunately, the company officials, the sametime, were not able to offer a plausible alternative reason in its historical context³³ as a basis for their revenue administration. Logan found that the company "authorities and the British courts have never properly realised the original state of the relations subsisting between jenmis and the other classes interested in the soil." He also found that "the jenmis interest in the produce of the land was distinctly limited as were also those of the other classes"³⁴. He remarked, "The Jenmi was simply a man exercising authority within a certain defined area and entitled as such to a well defined

32. P. Radhakrishnan P.25

33. Ibid

34. KKN Kurup 'William Logan: A study in Agrarian Relations (Calicut 1981) P.25 (Hereafter Kurup study on Logan).

share of the produce of the land lying within that area".³⁵

He therefore, attempted to trace the history of the land question in Malabar from its ancient days. Based on the historical facts available he first showed that the organisation of the state in the 8th and 9th centuries (AD) was by guilds or corporate bodies', each having its own distinct function to perform in the body politics³⁶. At the head was the Perumal or Emperor, and below came a number of chieftains of the nads, including the chief Rajas of Calicut, Palghat. The chieftain was not an absolute ruler but simply the head of the Nair guilds, the executive agent of the wishes of the 'six hundred', and their representative in all public affairs. Beneath the 'nad' came other but subordinate corporate bodies each with a greater or smaller share of self government. The functions of the corporate body was well devised to each of its functioning organs.

Each nad had a protecting Nair guild known as 'six hundred'³⁷ at the top of the guild organisation.

35. Logan, Vol-I P.495.

36. Logan Vol.I. P.596

37. Ibid

They acted as the protectors as well as supervisors of the society, hence the word kanam (to guard). The Tiyyars were told off to plant up the waste lands and manage the gardens, and the Vellalars to cultivate the wet lands. These two guilds formed the bulk of agricultural population. The handicraftsmen, artificers, etc. (astrologers, carpenters, goldsmiths, washermen etc.) known as the 'cherujanmaker' were part of similar organisation.³⁸ The functions thus acquired in the body politic became birth right, and the holders thereof were entitled for their services to certain portion of the produce of the lands within the limits of their birth rights. In a society thus organised, there could not have been ownership of land in the modern sense.³⁹

So Logan stated that in the pre-British Malabar land system was characterised by a "Corporate Unity" or "joint proprietorship". Each of the principal land right holders, viz, the jenmi, Kanakkaran and Verumpattakaran, was a part-proprietor, who as a matter of customary right was entitled to 1/3 or an equal share of the net produce. The net produce

38. Logan Report (1882) I PP 10-11

39. Ibid

was the share left over after providing for the cherujanmakar or all the other birthright holders, and the agricultural labourers, who helped to gather, prepare and store the produce. The distribution of the respective share was done by the Kanakkaran.

This interpretation also shows it clear that the claim for an absolute right in the soil, on the part of the jenmis, is not justifiable. It also underlines that no class of Malabar people was the absolute proprietor of the landed property. Neither the 'Aryanisation' theory nor the 'Corporate Polity' theory do provide it. By the latter (Logan theory), land was the joint property of all classes connected with it as noted earlier. Though historians do not recognise this as a foul proof theory, none of them confirm the existence of private property in the soil.

Analising the corporate unity theory Baden Powel says, "But nothing of the kind is known to have happened⁴⁰. "There were separate settlements of the different castes, and non-cultivating castes like Brahmins and military Nairs, employed slaves or tenants of the agricultural classes, while the others cultivated their own holdings, paying such dues to the

40. Powel P.164

lord or to the state as the existing organisations required."⁴¹ So the whole theory of a corporate unity rests entirely on supposed meanings of certain terms⁴².

Yet the critics of Logan's corporate unity theory do not find the existence of Private Property of a particular kind in Malabar; Logan rightly observed", "The chiefs were not soil-owners in the European sense any more than any other class"⁴³. The origin of the superior (jenmi) rights of the leading Nairs was in the royal grants, and that the grant gave, not the soil, but a certain position, authority and privileges.

Still one more theory exists in respect of land tenure of Malabar. This theory requires no unusual explanations or interpretations. It underlines also the foreign immigrants extortion of landed property from the natives, as we found before. The original inhabitants of this province appear to have been Kurumbar, a pastoral people,⁴⁴ who were displaced

41. Ibid

42. Logan's theory of corporate unity is mostly based on certain terminological explanations. For example, 'Kanuka' for Kanam, 'Vellalar' to mean water rulers (agricultural people) and 'Nirattiperu' for birthright (janmam). Powel III PP.164-65.

43. Logan Vol.I. P.601.

44. Powel P.157

by the foreign immigrants. Since then the original inhabitants were slaves of the land, and they were bought and sold with the land on which they worked⁴⁵. The Aryan Brahmins from the north, the Nairs and Tiyyars from the South bringing with them the invaluable coconut tree, and Vellalar, an agricultural tribe from Tamil Nadu all formed the part of foreign immigrants.⁴⁶ This provides that, if any one group could be called the original owners of Malabar land, that would be the aboriginals of this land. The descendants of this native tribe were found in the Malabar society at the bottom of it for the last several centuries. The process of erosion of land from this native people is still continuing in the tribal areas of Malabar.

From these various theories of land tenures of Malabar, there emerges certain fundamental idea that the land of Malabar was never an absolute private property of any of the parties connected with it presently. Even the Brahmanical legend recognizes that the Brahmins were provided with the land as a 'gift' by Parasurama. But in the absence of historical facts

45. Logan Vol.I. P.149

46. Powel P.157

there is no credulity for this immaterial devinity, nor any historical existance. What is material that is the Brahmin immigrant userped power and influenced first, and the land and its right later. This reasoning or naturalistic interpretation of the legend corrects the other theories on the land tenure also.

Both the 'Aryanisation' theory as well as the 'Corporate Polity' theory again underline one fact that the foreign Brahmins held a superior status in the social organisation of Malabar, because of their spiritual influence, and those who stood close to them (Nairs) in the social organisation also managed to get an influential status in the land and its control. When a time came in which the sovereign power ceased to exist, these influential class themselves emerged either as chieftains and petty rulers or as holders of large tracts of landed property.

LAND DISTRIBUTION

Presently whole the land of Malabar was divided into either of the below items. a. Lands belonging to Janmakkar (Namboodiris, Nairs, and in a few cases Tiyyars and Mappilas) b. Lands belonging to Malabar rajas and their family branches (Cherikal lands) c. Devastanom or temple lands d. Dhurm or

Chetram or lands set apart for the subsistence of Brahmin travellers. e. Lands belonging to mosques or other religious institutions.⁴⁷

So the Namboodiries are the principal landholders of the country. All the lands possessed by other than the Namboodiries are, Pagodas, Rajas or Naduvalies. There are ryots who have become by purchase the rightful owner of landed property, but they are few in proportion to the number of others.⁴⁸ In short, much of the Malabar Land was in janman possession. Waste and forest lands also were included in this jenmam lands.

WHAT IS JANMAM ?

The use of the term 'Janmam' is quite modern. It cannot be traced back before the end of the 16th century.⁴⁹ Logan says that for the first time the word

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47. J. Smee Report on the survey and assessment of South Malabar 21st August 1799, (Calicut 1871) P.2. (Hereafter J. Smee Report)
48. Thomas warden Report on the condition of the Palghat, Congad, Mannur, Edatharh, Kowilpara and Nurunuttam Divisions of the District of Malabar - 20 March 1801. (Calicut 1916) P.7. (Hereafter Warden, Report 1801).
49. A.B. Thompson Paper in the Malabar Law Report Vol. I (Madras 1887) P.82

janmam came to be used at the end of 17th century especially in certain documents of Namboodiries.⁵⁰

There were two major castes holding landed property by claiming jenmam right. Of these the Namboodiri Brahmins constituted the major section of jenmies. It is already found how these people did manage to get hold of large tracts of land through land grants and also through their unbounded influence as managers of the temple lands. Since the Brhamins never inclined to cultivate the soil, and their life style was confined to the premises of temple and palacial Illams they had Kanakkars and cultivating tenants for cultivation of these landed property. Their pompous and pleasure seeking life made them more and more dependable on the cultivating and other intermediary classes. In a later stage, when transfer of landed property began, they might have used the term jenmam for birth right, which previously was meant only for the period of their life, being members of Urala samithis.

A number of Nair caste-men also were found in possession of tracts of land, calling themselves

50. Report of the Malabar Tenancy Committee. 1927-28. (Madras 1928) (Hereafter Tenancy Report). Para 58.

jenmis. But "It is quite certain from historical evidence that this proprietary claim on the part of the Nairs was a comparatively recent matter"⁵¹. The origin of the superior (jenmi) rights of the leading Nairs was in the royals grants, and that the grants gave, not the soil, but a certain position, authority and privileges. So Logan observed, "the chiefs were not soil-owners in the European sense any more than any other class".⁵²

As long as there was a powerful sovereign or overlord, he kept the subordinate military in feudal subjugation. They were content with their places in council, the privileges of rank, the right to special dues from estates granted to them etc. When the supreme ruler ceased to exist, the country was then held in small groups or estates by the chief Nairs, while the smaller men were content to hold lands under the chiefs, as privileged tenants or on terms of the Kanam; inferior caste men were reduced to being tenants. "And it is, of course, possible that, when at a later period, the Nairs seized upon land as landlord, they may have desired to use a term implying 'birth right' or inheritance.

51. Powel P.154

52. Logan Vol I P.601

When the Mysorean conquest took place the sultan made the surviving Nair overlords his land-managers and extractors of rent. "It is to this period that we must assign the definite soil-right claimed by the so called jenmies.⁵³ The Mysorean government collected revenue from all classes of people. Now as many as Nairs clung to their 'ancestral' lands no longer as rulers nor as heads of any division, "but as landlords, inventing terms to signify their claim to the soil.⁵⁴

LAND TRANSFER AND JANMAM

According to Logan 'Jenmam' is the Sanskritised form of the dravidian phrase 'Nirttipper', means birth right acquired by water-contact.⁵⁵ In the early period 'Nirattiper' was the term used for a complete purchase or sale in the soil. For Gundert it was a "complete purchase of a free-hold".⁵⁶ However, the right conveyed by it was not a free-hold or an allodium, but an office or dignity with a fixed share of the produce of the soil.⁵⁷

53. Powel P.161.

54. Powel P.163

55. Tenancy Report Para 40

56. H. Gundert 'A Malayalam and English Dictionary
(Kottayam - 1962) P.43

57. P. Radhakrishnan (op. cit.) P.27

By this contract "the purchaser, in coming into possession, is bound by all obligations which attached to the proprietor. He cannot disturb those who may be holding the property or any portion of it on Kanam mortgage, but merely receives the surplus rent produce in place of the former landlord. On the other hand, he comes into all the rights and privileges of the former landlord and may pay off otti-mortgages and sell or transfer the property as he pleases."⁵⁸

Here one who purchases a jenman right in a landed property would be an absolute holder of that part of the share, but respecting all the other coproprietors' claims existing in it. That may be the reason for Thomas Munro to view the jenmi as a holder of an office or dignity.⁵⁹ "The idea, then, that the jenmi is absolute proprietor of the soil, and as such entitled to take as big a share of the produce as he can command, is founded on error and has been brought about by engrafting on the customary Malayali law usage, which springs from European ideas of property having totally distinct origin and history"⁶⁰.

58. Proceeding of the court of Sadar Adalat. No.18, 5th Aug. 1856.

59. Tenancy Report Para.53

60. Ibid Para.104.

The early British administrators regarded jenmam as equivalent in all respects to the dominum of Romans. For this their proof of evidence was the deeds executed at the time of transfer of landed property, in which everything was minutely detailed as transferred to the purchaser of the property. But they failed to understand the basic intention of this minute description, as not to show the completeness of the relinquishment of the seller's right in the soil to the purchaser, but to limit the right of the purchaser to enjoy all these enumerated ones only. In short, the Malayali was selling and buying not the soil, but authority of different kinds.⁶¹ So Logan says "the European looks to the soil the Malayali on the contrary looks chiefly to the people located on the soil".⁶² Therefore, when a land on jenmam possession was sold, the purchaser had to recognise the inferior rights of the persons involved in the land, that is, the right of cultivators, the slaves and the interests of the hut-dwellers could not be neglected."⁶³ From this one fundamental truth becomes evident that 'jenmam' tenure was not absolute private tenure, but it had to reserve

61. Logan Vol.I P.603

62. Ibid

63. KKN Kurup, Study on Logan P.3.

certain other rights and privileges of those who connected with the soil.

KANAM

Second to Jenmam comes Kanam tenure, one of the most commonest tenures in Malabar. Though socially subordinate to the jenmi, for the services the Kanakaran enjoyed a fixed share of the net produce of the soil equal in amount to that of the jenmi. In other words, the Kanakaran was a co-proprietor of the soil to the extent of 1/3 of the net produce.

In theory he was never a fixture on any particular piece of land, for he was the hereditary protector of any particular bit of it. In practice, he was permanently attached to his holding, as the jenmi would not dare to oust him for fear of spreading insecurity and discontent among the Kanakkar.⁶⁴ So "it was, indeed, the interest of the jenmis to treat them well, for they were not only the chief means of providing the jenmis income, but composed his retinue of armed followers, so essential to his consequence and weight in the aristocracy"⁶⁵.

64. P. Radhakrishnan P.28

65. Mr. Rickards, the second Principal Collector, quoted in Logan Vol I. P.603

The Kanakkaran was, however, free to transfer his services to any one else who suited him better. If he relinquished his holding he was to be paid for, or allowed to, sell any improvement he made upon it and his position as a member of the protecting caste made it very difficult for the jenmi to refuse such payment.⁶⁶

Kanam was always a matter of controversy in Malabar land system and it was variously interpreted. The British courts sometimes treated it as a lease, sometimes a mortgage, and often a mortgage lease.⁶⁷ In 1801 major Walker treated it as a lease. Mr. Warden observed, the common tenure upon which the ryot holds his ground of the jenmakar is what is called Kanam".⁶⁸ Logan's detailed analysis of the evolution of Kanam tenure found that "the Kanam right was the right to supervise or to protect all the inhabitants of the particular 'nad' or country wherein the land lay, and to enjoy for his service a produce of soil, (ie, of the pattom or pad's share) equal in amount to that enjoyed by the jenmi or lord Paramount."⁶⁹

66. Logan Report (1882) Vol. I PP. 27, 30, 44.

67. K.K.N. Kurup (Study on Logan) P.27

68. Warden Report (1801) P.7.

69. Tenancy Report Para.106.

We have already found the presence of a large number of smaller Nair caste men not able to get domains (as jenmis) but held land under greater men as a sort of privileged tenants. As supervisors (Kanakkaras) they collected the share of the produce due to jenmi. They acknowledged the jenmi in some cases their superiority, but when the jenmi met financial problem they advanced money to their lords and so were not paying any rent, or only a reduced rent to the jenmi because the interest on the money covered the whole or part of the rent or grain share.⁷⁰ So the Kanakaran recovers the interest on the money he had advanced from the share of the Jenmi and the balance is paid over to the jenmi as net rent or Michavaram.⁷¹ On the other hand, the advanced amount was later treated by the company officials as a mortgage lease, and the Kanam tenure was wrongly interpreted for greater consequences.

About the nature of Kanam Powel says that 'mortgagees (Kanakkaras) were Nairs of lower degree who are interested in upholding their superiors, partly from personal motives and partly from feudal feelings. Practically they had become a sort of privileged sub

70. Powel PP.153-61

71. Tenancy Report Para 106.

proprietors, or hereditary tenants with certain rights.⁷² They would not be ejected like ordinary tenants.⁷³ Kanam was the indefinite 'Possession' or 'property' consequent on paying a fee in token of allegiance, which fee (or the interest on it) excused or covered the rent wholly or in part.⁷⁴ The interest was regulated so that it was known how much of the rent was covered. And the custom shows a desire to protect the rights of both parties. The 'mortgage' could certainly not be redeemed at pleasure, not at a term fixed by contract, which at once shows that we have not an ordinary European mortgage to deal with.⁷⁵ But the custom was that when either the jenmi or the Kanakar died, a certain reduction in the principal debt was made and the holding continued as before. Shortly, Kanam was not a European mortgage, and the Kanakkar was permanently attached to his holding as the jenmi in ancient time would not dare to oust him for fear of spreading insecurity and discontent among the Kanakar who remained.⁷⁶

72. Powel PP.154-5.

73. Ibid. P.168.

74. Ibid

75. Ibid

76. Tenancy Report Para.108.

KUZHICKANAM

Waste and forest lands also were included in jenmam possession. Some of these lands also were brought under cultivation by the tenants. Such freshly reclaimed holdings were known as Kuzhikkanam. A Kuzhikkanakaran could enjoy the whole of its produce for a certain period (usually 12 years). Perhaps he paid a trifling fee of two fanams on entry, but that was "more as an act of fealty than as recompense for the privilege of possession".⁷⁷ The customary sharing of the produce of such lands took place among the jenmakar and the tenant only after the period stipulated. When the jenmi wished to take his customary share of the produce (Pattam) of the newly reclaimed land he had to buy it from the cultivator at the rates recognised as customary in such transactions, that is, he had to compensate for the improvement made by the tenant. But the money thus due was seldom or never paid down in cash.⁷⁸ It was allowed to remain with the jenmi, as a debt bearing interest at customary rates, and that interest was made good from the jenmi's customary share of produce.⁷⁹ In short, at the expiry

77. Logan Vol.I. P.606-07

78. Ibid I. P.607; Powel P.170.

79. Logan Vol.I P.607.

of the period in which the tenant enjoyed the whole produce of the land there begins the usual tenure 'Kanam' between the parties involved. So Kuzhikkam will have effect until the jenmi pays compensation for the improvements, or make other arrangements. Anyway, this tenure was certainly beneficial to both the parties.

Under the native customary law the cultivator of this tenure could not be ousted, as the Nair guilds functioned so effectively. So in fact, the holders of the Kanam and Kuzhikanam tenures were practically permanent tenants.⁸⁰ Mr. Rickards, the second principal collector, had recognised the fact that they were practically permanent tenants.⁸¹

VERUMPATTAM

Verumpattam is the simplest form of land 'transfer' in Malabar.⁸² In this an actual cultivator holds land under a Kanakkar or of a jenmi, enjoying 1/3 of the net produce of the land.⁸³ This lease runs only

80. Logan^{Vol.} I.P.608

81. Mr. Rickard's 'India and Facts submitted'. Smith, Elder & Co. (London) Vol.II P.279.

82. Sundararaj Iyengar 'Land Tenures in the Madras Presidency' (Madras 1921) P.244

83. Tenacy Report Para.121.

for a single year, unless and otherwise specified. At the end of the year the jenmi was at liberty either to renew the lease or to let the land to another tenant. If the lease is for a specific period, the tenant cannot be ejected during that period.⁸⁴ Though socially subordinate to the jenmi and Kanakkaran, the verumpattamkaran was also co-proprietor to the extent of 1/3 of the produce.⁸⁵

OTHER FEATURES OF JANMAM AND KANAM

Various other kinds of Kanams were seen in existence in Malabar. In 1856 about 24 items of kanam tenures were noted in the proceedings of the court of Saddar Adalat of Madras.⁸⁶ To enumerate each of them in detail is a laborious work and it does not become essential for this work.⁸⁷ Still, some of them are worth to note here.

If the amount borrowed on Kanam tenure was substantial and the interest was sufficient enough to

84. The court of Sadar Adalat proceedings, on Malabar Land Tenure. Extracts for reference to the acting civil judge of Calicut and Tellichery - P.43.

85. P.Radhakrishnan P.29.

86. T.K. Ravindran (op. cit.) PP.136-43

87. See Glossery for more details

wipe out the whole jenmi's share, the tenure was called 'Otti'.⁸⁸

A jenmi, besides his share of produce (Pattam), held certain other kinds of authority over the persons located on his hereditary land. Once he pledged the whole share of his produce on the tenure 'Otti', still there remains a proprietary right in the land, which was customarily valued at half of the value advanced to the Kanakkar on 'Otti'. The transfer or pledging of this residuary rights as jenmi was known as 'Ottikum Purameyull Kanam', 'Nirumuttal', 'Janmam Panayam' etc.⁸⁹ By conveying these the jenmi could borrow further advances (usually 10% of the otti for first two items). Beyond these three step there was further one, that was the conveyance of janmam right itself.

In these steps the jenmi was conveying or pledging his share of produce, and when that was no longer available, the other resources as jenmi has pledged. So what did he pledge was not the soil itself, but his right, authority and privilages as jenmi.

88. Logan Vol. I.P. 604

89. ibid I. P.605

But in this feudalistic social organisation the rights of the people in the lower strata of society was always exploited. Even when a jenmi had mortgaged his land in possession on 'Kanam' or 'Otti' tenures, certain peculiar customs in prevalence allowed the jenmi again to pledge the same land to another tenant taking an advance from the latter. This was called 'Melkkanam'. In case the previous mortgagee (Kanakaran) would not advance the money, the jenmi applied to a stranger, or a 'sub-mortgagee'. The new lender has, however, now no power of evicting the first mortgagee, though he can redeem the first mortgagee when the time comes 12 years.⁹⁰

Generally, the native system of land possession and sharing of its produce was based on a mutual co-existence of whole classes of people and it provided for a better subsistence for the society. But, the most unfortunate thing was that the idea of 'equal sharing' of produce was not practical by this system. When the tenants had only the share of the produce (1/3) from his single plot of land in which he works, the kanakkaran and jenmi may have share of the produce from more than one, in certain cases many, plots leased to various tenants and actual cultivators.

90. Powel P.169-70

So the idea of equal sharing of produce in the native system also was never practical.

In the quasi-feudalistic society the majority of people (tenants) shared $1/3$ of the total produce of the province, while the other $1/3$ went to the middle class minority (Kanakar) and again the next $1/3$ went to the smallest minority of jenmis. So the equation of population was $1000 : 100 : 1$ and the sharing of produce was $1/3 : 1/3 : 1/3$ respectively.

Anyhow, the native system of sharing of produce was not so heavy on the part of the tenants as it provided for a mutual subsistence. Though inequality in sharing of produce existed, it was comparatively a lesser evil than the system prevailed in later years under the company government. Drastic changes were introduced by the company government in the land tenure and the sharing of produce as a part of its revenue administration in the province. Before elaborating the reforms of the company government and its consequences a brief account of the Mysore system of tenurial changes would be much useful.

TENURIAL CHANGES UNDER MYSORE GOVERNMENT

When the Mysorean invasion occurred there was necessarily a disturbance of the existing customary

sharing of produce. The new rulers exacted land revenue from the ryots, but, of course, the share of pattam. This encroched more or less both the share of Kanakaran and jenmi. The government share usually varied place to place during this period. They exacted somethimes 10% of the pattam on the wet lands of cheraned and a 100% of the pattam on the garden lands in the South malabar.⁹¹ This, of course must have created trouble in the province. However, things arranged differently in the commutation rates, which by and large corrected this variation.⁹²

The Mysorean government made their land revenue settlements with the Kanakkars, because the jenmi (Namboodiri and Nairs) had mostly fled from Malabar, or did not dare to attend Muhammadan Katcheries. Majority of the Kanakars remained on the scene were Mappilas or other low caste people. Some of them had taken possession of land on Kanam tenure from the exiling jenmakers on payment of a trigling amount, and others as mere tenants on payment of simple fees. The Mappilas preferred to be Kanakkar or tenants of the jenmis even during the Mysorean period, and they did

91. Logan Vol.I. P.609.

92. Ibid

not claim any jenmam possession of land." Had the Kanakar thought the jenmam to be a real right in the soil, they would surely have seized on it and become the proprietors".⁹³

The local delegates of the Mysore government had in general no other choice than to settle the assessment with the Kanakkars making some reservation (3/20) out of the gross produce for a payment to their jenmakar, together with a further deduction of about 11/20 for their own support and profit and for the charges of cultivation, the residue 6/20 to the government.

Mr. Graeme after an enquiry in 1818-22 stated that 'no such special reservation was made for the jenmi, except in two instances to benefit the Muhammadan community'⁹⁴. But it seems that the jenmis share (3/20) was made over only in case of Mapilla jenmis because they were present on the scene, while other jenmi's were away from the province to be paid. The kanakkars might have taken advantage of this.

93. Powel P.170.

94. H.S. Graeme. Report on the Revenue Administration of Malabar. 14th January 1822 (Calicut 1898) Para 549 (Hereafter Graeme's Report); Logan Vol. I P.611. note 3

Therefore, it would not be correct to conclude that the jenmis share, though trifling, had never paid during the Mysorean government.

In an interview between Mr. Jonathan Duncan, President of the Joint Commission, and a member of influential Mappilas, the latter told Mr. Duncan, "since Haider's time the right of the jenmakaran had been taken or absorbed by government", and consequently the Mappila kanakars were at the time paying nothing to the jenmi except what they gave them out of charity.⁹⁵ The assertion of the Mappila has to be studied in the light of the Hindu-Muslim or landlord-tenant squable in the province. Fistly, the Mappila kanakars wanted the revenue be settled with themselves by the present government as they were, for the last few years, in actual possession of the land. They were not willing to reserve a jenmi's share from the land in their holding. Secondly the former government had not paid the jenmi", share in many case, as noted above, for the jenmis were not present on the scene. So the jenmis share was never taken by themselves. Moreover the jenmis present in the province did not dare enough to claim the share under the Muhammadan Government. It is

95. Report of the Joint Commissioners of Malabar (R.M.J.C) quoted in Logan Vol.I P.611.

also seen that in certain cases the Mysorean government had taken 100% of the Pattam, as it found the jenmi was in exile.

Unfortunately, this assertion of the Mappila and the prevailing landlord-tenant squabble misled the British officials about the true nature of jenmam possession. Moreover, "Oodhut Roy, a Mysorean Maratha Revenue officer, misled the joint commissioners" of the real state of things.⁹⁶ Logan says "Mr. Farmer, one of the commissioners, seems to have been correctly informed as to the ancient system of the customary sharing of the produce". Yet, the European idea of private property predominated in their mind.

The land disputes between the jenmakars and tenants and the vengeance of the Nairs on the Mappilas, and claims and counter claim of chiefs and Naduvalies on their position made the situation more chaotic and confused.⁹⁷

DEVELOPMENTS IN LAND TENURE UNDER THE COMPANY GOVERNMENT

Soon after the assumption of power of the province the company government made temperory

96. Logan Vol.I P.611

97. T.K. Ravindran Malabar under Bombay Presidency - (Calicut - 1969) Introduction.

arrangements for the revenue management of the country. It was made over, on behalf of the company, to the Rajas and chiefs, who had settled in their former possession after their exile, as a sort of Zamindars. These temporary 'Zamindars' "were only too eager to seize the opportunity of bettering themselves at the expense of those who had formerly been the mainstay of their power"⁹⁸. The joint commissioners observed; "they have acted in their avidity to amass wealth, more as the scourgers and plunderers than as the Protectors of their respective little states".⁹⁹ Likewise, the commissioners also were eager to better the collection of revenue from the province as easy as possible. For this, they framed rules and regulations without much strain on their part, and with undue haste and carelessness. The result made far reaching consequences.

LANDLORDS CREATED

The commissioners' settlements reached in a haste made things totally confounded. The conclusions reached on the Malabar land tenure were not based on a systematic analysis of actual deeds or social

98. Logan Vol.I P.612

99. R.M.J.C. *Quoted in Ibid.*

customs.¹⁰⁰ The transaction on hereditary property (Janmam land) long before the Mysorean invasion and the deeds executed during these transactions had misled the commissioners. The minute specifications of everything as conveyed to the buyer by these transactions made them to consider the jenmam possession as absolutely a private property of a jenmi as equivalent as the dominus of the Romans.¹⁰¹ But the European idea of property in the soil was evidently not the idea uppermost in the mind of the persons executed these deeds. They, on the contrary, concerned themselves chiefly with the 'authority'. 'So when European Looks to the soil, the Malayali looks to the people located on the soil'.¹⁰² The essential difference between a Roman dominus and a Malayali jenmi was unfortunately not perceived in the beginning by the commissioners.

The commissioners looked on the jenmi as the 'owner' of the soil and the kanakkar as the owner's lease, and as such liable to be turned out of the lands

100. A very systematic study of Malabar land tenure was conducted only in the last quarter of 19th century by William Logan, an able administrator of the district. Logan, Report (1882).

101. See Pages 92-97 of this chapter.

102. Logan Vol.I P.604.

when the time they leased them for expires.¹⁰³ On 28th October 1793 in a proclamation this was promulgated by the commissioners throughout the district. It read:

"During the time of Tippu it was the practice of many Nairs and Nambudiries to let their kanakkar pay their negudi (revenue) to the circar (government) and out of what remained a part was paid to the jenmakars. By mutual consent this custom remained till the Malabar year 963-64 (AD 1788-89). When Tippu's" ferocious activities forced the Nairs and Namboodiries to flee and to return later "to their jelms (jenmam) and setting with kanakkars have paid the negudi due to the circar". "It is therefore ordered and settled by the commissioners that such jemakar, So possessed of their jenm may continue to possess them paying to the company the revenue as settled by Arshad Beqkhan settling with the kanakkars according to their ancient pattom or agreement, or otherwise as may be agreeable to both parties".

"Those jenmis "who having fled in the year 963-64 have returned and have not got possession of their jenmam may claim the share they received in the

103. Dairy of the Malabar supervisor. dt. 28th Oct. 1793. Logan, Treaties Pt. II No. LXVIII.

year 963-64. If the kanakars do not consent to pay this they may then sue in the Adawlet Katcherry and obtain repossession of their jenmam, when the time they leased them for expires."

These articles were agreed "as fair and beneficial to the jenmakars, who on their part ought to pay the revenue to the company,"¹⁰⁴. The cut date fixed for the jenmakars' claim was 11th September 1787.¹⁰⁵

In this regulation the government did not consider the customary sharing of produce by jenmi-kanakaran and tenant. Besides the state the jenmi and his tenant (actual cultivator) were only taken into account. It was supposed that the Kanakaran was sufficiently protected as 'mortgagee' and could look after his own interests by realizing his securities¹⁰⁶.

In the beginning this omission made no great effect since most of the jenmis were deeply in debt,

104. Diary of the Malabar supervisor, dt 28th October 1793. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No. LXVIII.

105. J. Spencer, J. Smee and A. Walker A report on the Administration of Malabar 28th July 1801 (or Report of the Malabar Second Commission) (Calicut 1910) p.34 hereafter R.M.S.C

106. Powel 173.

and the Kanakars were in actual possession,¹⁰⁷ It was not realized how the new revenue scheme really ousted the Kanakar from a permanent share and interest in the soil-produce. The system continued as usual until there came practical difficulty. Even when Mr. Graeme made his enquiry in 1818-22 the Kanakars were still in some places paying the jenmi nothing¹⁰⁸ and in other places were allowing the Janmis only 20% of the pottom, after defraying the government revenue and the interest of the sum advanced to the jenmi¹⁰⁹.

Therefore, 'It was a matter of hardly any importance to the Kanakars on what principle the government assessment had been fixed'. They were virtually in full enjoyment of their rights. But Mr. Graeme as a part of his enquiry as special commissioner in 1823 into the actual rents, the parties interested in the soil had been brought face to face, and had enabled to realize the innovations brought about in their relative positions by the company government. The Jenmakar realised the real

107. Mr. Warden to the Board of Revenue 12 Sept 1815. Report on the land tenures in Malabar, 12th September 1815. Para 12. Hereafter Warden Turner 1815.

108. Graeme's Report Para. 551

109. Ibid - Para - 732 - 35, 802 - 03

status they had newly acquired, and they found that the kanakars could be evicted at the expiry of the contract existing. Moreover, things changed so fastly in the third decade of 18th century. In 1831-32 prices of produce began to rise considerably.

The hike in the prices of produce made the revenue collection more favourable to the government¹¹⁰ 'since then collectors had no difficulty in maintaining clean balance sheets'.¹¹¹ This higher price enabled the tenant to pay more to the jenmi as well as to the government demand. Here there is every reason to think that it was the cultivators benefited by this and they could easily discharge revenue payment. But it had an adverse result in the immediate years.

In consequence of the price-rise the receipts for the jenmis also began to rise considerably. Now, it enabled them to relieve easily from the debts to the kanakars and they woke up to their new positions and tried to make out everything in their own favour. They found out that they could evict the kanakars as soon as their balances were paid off. The Mappilas, who had

110. For more details on price rise and consequent developments see page 366.

111. Logon Vol. I P.615

been peacefully in possession of the lands since the time of Hyder Ali's conquest, felt it no doubt as a bitter grievance that the Jenmis should have obtained power to evict them.¹¹² The real fact seems to have been that the jenmis' influenced partly by the rise in the prices of produce and partly by the novel views of the courts as to their real position, had at last began to feel their power as 'lord of the soil' and to exercise it through the courts,¹¹³. When the jenmis began to demand extravagant terms and 'renewal' fees or deductions, at the period of revision, before they would consent to the renewal, the lessee, fearing that otherwise he would have to miss altogether, was obliged to consent. This created a lot of resentment among the kanakars, who were mostly Mappilas now. This was the primary reason for the beginning of a series of Mappila (peasant) revolts in this period.

LANDLORDS ARMED

The enormous changes wrought by European idea of property in the relative position of the parties interested in the soil, awakened the jenmakar to arm themselves against the kanakkars. 'Further, the

112. Ibid P.616

113. Ibid.

British courts backed up by police and magistrates and troops and big guns made the jenmis independence complete,¹¹⁴. The civil courts, acting on the idea that the jenmi was dominus and as such entitled to take what he could get out of the land, viewed his pledge as pledge of the soil itself. This upset the native system of customary sharing of produce and it led to various other consequent developments later.

RENEWAL

According to the native custom, the Kanakaran's advance to the jenmi could be periodically revised. But 'these renewals originally do not seem to have taken place more frequently than at succession to the jenmam kanam holdings'.¹¹⁵ The system of renewal was formulated with mutual advantage to both the jenmi and the Kanakaran 'The idea was admirably conceived for binding the two classes together in harmonious interdependence',¹¹⁶.

In case of renewal, either a deduction of 13% from the principal amount will be made, consequently a

114. Tenacy Report. Para.122

115. Logan. Vol. I P.605

116. Ibid. P. 606

diminished interest will be taken by the kanakars for the balance amount; or an equivalent amount of the 13% will be paid to the jenmi, keeping the original advance amount and sharing proportion as such. In the former system, after a series of renewal, the jenmam holding would be freed from 'mortgage' and the parties (jenmi and kanakkaran) resumed their original status. The kanakkaran remained on the holding as supervisor¹¹⁷. But during the company period, the latter method was generally adopted and the periodical renewal fees was extravagantly enhanced, amounting in the most favourable cases to about 25% of the principal amount. The renewal began to take place at every 12 years, at the above rate or more and this constituted a regular source of income for the jenmi.

The idea of 12 years renewals seems to be a late introduction, during the company period. Many historians are of this view. According to Wigram, T.L. Strange was the author of 12 years term as a compromise between the jenmis and a kanakaran's right¹¹⁸. Any way, this further worsened a system already endangered by the erroneous idea that a jenmi was the absolute

117. Powel. P.169

118. Herbert wigram. 'A commentary on Malabar Law and custom (Madras 1882) P.112.

owner of the soil. So the 'force of custom gave way to the 'force of contract'.

If the renewal was made by a deduction of renewal fee from the principal amount, a time comes having the jenmi's debt reduced to nothing. In this case the kanakkaran remained to be the supervisor and the jenmi and kanakkaran resumed their former position. But the civil courts viewing the jenmi as a dominus and the kanakkaran's advance as a mortgagage of the soil, began to hold that, on full payment of the advance the kanakkaran bound to yeild up the soil itself¹¹⁹. This was of course a grave mistake on the prt of the company government. The system of customary sharing of produce and the kanam tenure became a tenure of 'contract'. In the deeds of this contracts, to avoid all troubles and doubts, the jenmi, now frequently incorporated a clause that 'the soil shall be given up on demand.

In later years the kanam tenure was steadily abandoned in favour of ordinary leases and more particularly in favour of leases from year to years or at will.

119. Logan. Vol. I P. 606

COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENT

By the kuzhikkanam tenure the cultivator was entitled to enjoy whole the produce of the newly reclaimed land until the customary sharing of produce began between the jenmi and the cultivator. When the jenmi wished to begin the customary sharing of the produce (Pattam) he had to pay compensation to the cultivator for the improvements made, at the rate recognised by custom. Usually this compensation "was seldom or never paid down in cash", but allowed to remain as a debt bearing interest from the jenmi's customary share of produce. The renewal of this tenure (as noted in Kanam tennure) was done either deducting the renewal fee from the principal amount, or paying the renewal fee. The renewal did not come round very frequently in former days; But the courts viewed the janmi's payment of the 'customary improvement rate'¹²⁰ as payment in full to the cultivator for the improvements made by him in the soil. Actually, the kuzhikanam tenure begins only with the enthusiasm and efforts shown by cultivator and the produce in the soil is the sole result of his work. So the compensation is for buying the jenmi's share from the

120. Logan does not use the term compensation here, as it may mean the jenmi's full payment for the work of the cultivator.

cultivator. But the British law ruled that a cultivator could be evicted permanently from his kuzhikkanam tenure after the customary period (12 years) paying his compensation. As noted before, kanam and kuzhikanam tenures were practically permanent tenures.¹²¹ A very important subject of complaint was the inadequacy of the rate paid to the ryots for 'improvements' when being evicted from his holdings, during the company administration.

EVICTIION

Eviction of holding from the tenants was steadily increasing during the company administration. Usually, the jenmi used to force up rents, from moderate to a very unjustifiable limit to threat a tenant for eviction. If the tenant agrees for enhancement the eviction will not be effected. But if he refuses he is ejected and another one for more rent would take his place. In the first case he has to pay a very unreasonable rent. The result will be the improverishment of the ryot. Various other types of exploitations were resorted to by the jenmi up on the kanakkars and tenants owing to the tenurial changes effected by the company government. Further details of the same is given in the coming pages.

121. Mr. Rickards "India, or facts submitted, Smith, Elder & Co. London. Vol.II. P. 279

REVENUE SETTLEMENTS UNDER THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT 1792-1800

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER - III
REVENUE SETTLEMENTS UNDER
THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT (1792-1800)

"Commissioners, superintendents, committees and collectors succeeded each other, but however zealous and able they might have been order was not established in Malabar. The revenue was inadequate, yet not collected. The government was lenient, yet rebellions ensued..... This deplorable state of affairs may be attributed to the installation of the rajas, for the Mysore government seem to have managed pretty well when they got rid of the rajas.

(William Thackery commented about the commissioners period. Report 7th September 1807. P.9).

After the defeat in the third Anglo-Mysore war Tipu Sultan signed a preliminary treaty with the company and its allies on 22 February 1792¹, and later a definite treaty, signed at Seringapatam on 18 March 1792, by which two of Tipu's provinces, 63 talooks of

1. Bombay Secret Proceedings Diary Vol No.43, PP.200-202; C.W Aitchison 'Treaties, Engagements and Sunads relating to India and the neighbouring countries. (Calcutta 1929) hereafter Aitchison Treaties. Vol. V. P.145; Logan, Treaties Pt II No.I.

Calicut and Palghatachery, were added to the company.² The total Jamabundy (revenue) of the countries ceded to the English by the Sultan was amounted to 1316765 - 54 - 1/4 Canterai pagodas. Of this the 63 talooks appertaining to Calicut alone amounted to 848765 - 5-4 1/4 C.P.³ The table 3-1 shows details of the talookwise revenue of Malabar as given by Tipu Sultan, in Cantorai pagodas according to the treaty of the Seringapatam.

Immediately after the annexation of the territory the company did not directly embark upon the very task of the administration of the province; instead, it appointed a commission to make a close and keen investigation to the capacity of revenue of the province and to make temporary settlements with the native rulers for one year.

STATE OF THINGS AND STATUS OF KINGS

The situation prevailing in Malabar was so confused and chaotic. The Rajas and Nair chieftains who returned from exile were to take revenge upon the Mapplias for the humiliations and losses they had

2. Diary of the Bombay Commissioners. 20th April - 1792; Logan, Treaties Pt II. No.II.

3. Ibid

during the Mysore rule. The members of the Zamurin family were particularly active in this respect.⁴

Mutual fight for possession of land made things so inexplicably turbulent that both sides wielded arms in defence of their cause. Besides, claims and rival claims of various princes to their royalty made the political scene more complicated. It was a tough task for the company officials to consolidate the new province and to effect the administration of law and order. The Tellichery factors had already expressed to the government that 'It will prove a matter of extreme difficulty to satisfy so many claimants and to keep them in any tolerable degree of dependance'.⁵ They further expressed doubt on "what mode of tenure they (Rajas) are to hold their respective possession whether as independent Rajas or as Zamindars of the company'⁶. This indecision generally prevailed even after the commissioners' time for half of a century in the administration of Malabar.

4. R.M.J.C. Para. 89

5. Letter - Tellichery to Bombay, 28 June 1790; Ray. N.B. (ed) Allies war with Tipu Sulthan Poona Residency correspondance Vol - III. (Bombay, 1937) PP. 168-69.

6. Ibid

TRADE OR REVENUE ?

On the eve of the third Anglo-Mysore war the factory of Tellicherry, on behalf of the company had entered into a series of treaty of friendship with the native Rajas and Chiefs providing that 'the company will assist and protect you and do everything in their power to render you independent of Tipu Sultan'⁷, and you shall be considered as ally of the company. While executing such agreements the company had in mind the rich land of spices and unhintered trade and commercial privilege in the immediate future. But, whatever the articles of these agreements provided, presently, neither the governor general nor the factory officials had any definite decision regarding the status of the native Rajas in the future company system of government⁸. The minds of the gentlemen who granted the above mentioned cowles were by no means satisfied, even at the time of issuing them'⁹. At the same time,

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7. Diary of the Tellichery Factory 8 May 1790. Logan, Treaties pt. I. No XCV.
 8. Rajendran, Establishment of British power in Malabar. (1664-1779). (Allahabad, 1979) Hereafter Rajendran PP. 213-17
 9. J. Spencer, J Smee and A. Walker, A Report on the Administration of Malabar, 28 July 1801 or Report of the Second Commissioners of Malabar (Hereafter R.M.S.C). PP 8-9

all of them agreed for taking advantage of a rich trade of Malabar spices with its exclusive privilege.

On 21st September 1791 Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control, wrote to Lord Cornwallis expressing opinion that the Malabar Rajas should become tributaries of the company so that the English could enjoy the great political and commercial benefits to be derived from a free and uninterrupted intercourse with the Malabar Coast'¹⁰. But even on 29th February 1792 Abercrombay, governor of Bombay, did not envisage that the company would assume direct political control of Malabar, and he wrote to his colleague that 'Malabar would be restored to the Nair Rajas under the company's protection'¹¹.

On 17 March 1792, the previous day of the final treaty of Seringapatnam, Cornwallis wrote to Dundas: "The Rajas on that coast are not independent, but now become our subjects, and if we can put them in some degree on the footing of the Bengal Zamindars, and prevent their oppressing the people under them, the

10. Letter - Dundas to Cornwallis - 21st Sept - 1791. Quoted in Pamela Nightingale, Trade and Empire in Western India 1784-1806 (Cambridge 1970). Hereafter Nightingale P.63.

11. Abercrombay to Bombay, 29th Feb 1792. Bombay Secret and Political Proceedings range E.V 202. Quoted in Nightingale P.68

commerce of that country in pepper, spices etc. may become extremely advantageous to the company. The revenue, he pointed out, would also be a great help to Bombay,¹². But the commercial benefits were found to be primary objective of the company government. The prospectus of an enormous profit from spice trade induced the company even to think of giving concessions in its political aspirations¹³ Cornwallis acted in the company's, commercial interests. At the sametime, the Tellichery officials had pleaded with the company to exercise political power for the sake of its commerce, and Cornwallis made a decision on these grounds. He decided for the acquisition of Malabar because the disorder and anarchy prevailed in the territory threatened the spice trade of the company¹⁴. On 23rd March 1792 he wrote to Abercrombay 'to prevent internal dissentions amongst the chiefs and to procure a regular administration of justice, which is capable of affording both revenue and commerce'.¹⁵

12. Letter, Cornwallis to Dundas, 17 March 1792 quoted in Ibid. P.69; Rajendran p.236 also R.M.J.C. Para.146.

13. S.M. Mohammed Koya, Commercial interests in the making of British Policy in Malabar Journal of Kerala Studies Vol - II. December 1975 PP. 511-12

14. Nightingale P.72

15. Cornwallis to Abercrombay 23 March 1792. BSPP. range V. 253-5. quoted in Nightingale P.69

Although territory meant trade, territorial accession and the subjugation of the Malabar Rajas were found to be more lucrative, because it would not only open the doors of trade monopoly, but would provide access to the revenue of the land.

Now they thought of making 'the princes and territories as beneficial as possible'.... bringing them heavily tributary to the company. So its policy changed from a trade monopoly to annexation. It was found that domination itself was a source of profit¹⁶. On 20 April Abercrombay remarked that the treaties signed with the native princes 'were not as comprehensive as could be wished. They provide for the emancipation of the country from Tipu but do not clearly express its dependence on us'¹⁷. In short, the company government was trying to find a reason to bring the Rajas as its subjects and conveniently neglecting the term of the former agreements with the Rajas. The governor General instructed Abercrombay to establish peace and order and to make a temporary settlement with the Rajas for the payment of one year's revenue.

16. J.H. Parry 'Trade and Dominions, The European Oversease Empire in the 18th century (London 1971) P.275.

17. Letter - Abercrombay to Bombay commissioners - 20 April 1792. BSP Diary No.43 PP. 356.

Abercrombay arrived at Cannanore and appointed W.G. Farmer, a senior merchant and Major Dow, the commandant at Tellicherry as commissioners and issued instructions to them¹⁸. Their first task was to establish peace and order¹⁹. But 'neither of them was peculiarly fitted by talents or experience for the post'²⁰. It was an appointment chosen more of a privilege than of merit or talent.

COMMISSIONERS AT WORK

On 22 April 1792 the commissioners met at Tellicherry to discuss the steps to be taken regarding the responsibility entrusted upon them. They had three precise instructions from Lord Cornwallis in regard to the administration of the province, as to make a temporary agreement with the Rajas to deliver one year's revenue to the company; to consider the means of transferring all judicial power in the province into the hands of the company's servants; and to enforce a monopoly of pepper trade in the province. But in the

18. Diary and consultations of Tellicherry factory, MSS-Serial 1520, Diary 21 April 1792. P.71

19. Sir. John Shore 'The Governor General's minute on the General and Supplementary Report of the Joint Commissioner of the province of Malabar (Madras, 1879) Para.5

20. Nightingale, P.73

first meeting itself they recorded their opposition to the policy of the governor general. They recorded their protest against the plan of introducing British administration in to the province²¹.

They pointed out that Tipu had left behind no machinery of government or trained officials which the company could use in its own administration. There were not even records as they had been destroyed and it was unlikely that the Rajas would give reliable information to the commission²². It was also conceivable that they would do everything to obstruct the commissioners enquiries and would falsify their revenue returns so that their tribute to the company should be small. So they insisted that the company should leave the administration of the country in the Rajas' hands²³.

The commissioners found it a difficult task to settle disputes between the rival claimats, and to make equitable revenue settlements with the Rajas and chieftains. The conflicting claims of different

21. Minute of Farmer and Dow 22 April 1792. BSP. Diary No.43 PP 445-512; also Nightingale P.74

22. Ibid

23. Bombay secret and political proceedings minute of Farmer and Dow, Tellichery 22 April 1792. Quoted in Nightingale P.75

branches of royal families, the complicated system of succession, the suzerainty of Zamurin over some rajas and the provisional agreements signed in 1790 and 1791 added to the complexity²⁴ of their task as commissioners.

The powers vested in the commission were similar to those of a Board of Revenue constituted in Bengal presidency in 1786²⁵. The commission was responsible only to the governor of Bombay, and the chief of Calicut and Tellichery were to obey all the orders of the commission. The governor reminded them to use a 'mild language' in their dealings with the rajas²⁶ and instructed them to realize revenue for the year 1792 entering temporary agreements with the rajas and chiefs.

REVENUE SETTLEMENTS

The first revenue settlement was signed by the Raja of Kadattanad on 25 April 1792. According to the agreement the Raja was given charge of his Kingdom 'subject only to the control of the company if he

24. Rajendran P.239

25. KKN Kurup. History of the Tellicherry factory.P.213

26. Diary 21 April 1792. DC. MSS Serial 1520. PP.71-83

abuses this authority by oppressing the inhabitants',²⁷. It also provided that two persons each on the part of the company and of the Raja 'shall proceed and make a valuation of the revenue',²⁸ and 'it shall be settled what each subject is to pay the government in order that no oppression may take place by demanding more. The Raja's tribute to the company was to be finally settled in October on the basis of the appearance of crop. The articles of the treaty also provided that the Rajas tribute to be delivered in pepper at a price fixed in December and the remaining peper of the country to be sold to company merchants.

Similar agreements were entered into with the Rajan of Chirakkal and Kottayam.²⁹ The ease with which they concluded these agreements made the commissioners confident and they asserted that the company should make the power of the rajas the pivot of its administration in the province instead of attempting to force the Bengal system of government in Malabar.³⁰

27. Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.IV, R.M.S.C. P.12

28. Ibid

29. Bombay Commissioner's Diary, 4th May 1792; Tellicherry factory Diary, 1st May 1792; Logan, Treaties pt II No. V & VI.

30. Minute of Farmer and Dow. 28th April 1792. BSPP range V, 374-6; Nightingale P.75.

They claimed that the rajas would rule the province for more effectively than the English could, because the company was temporarily short of trained administrators and was inadequately informed about the province³¹. They opined that the company 'Police is a mockery' and the powers of the Rajas alone efficient for the due protection of life and property³².

Though these agreements permitted the rajas to continue in power, the political sovereignty really rested in the company hands. The clauses of the agreement had been carefully worded in such a way. The agreement did not stipulate the amount of revenue or tribute to the company³³. Partly due to their ignorance of the real state of things in the province and partly due to their eagerness to execute settlements at the earliest possible time, the commissioners had committed certain mistakes in the beginning of their much difficult task. The settlements made at Chirakkal and Kottayam were not with the real rajas. At Chirakkal it was with Unni Amma, a young

31. Nightingale pp-75-76.

32. Minute of Farmer and Dow, 28th April-1792. BSPP range V. 374-6

33. KKN Kurup, 'British colonial policy in Malabar and its Impact on Land Settlement and Revenue (1790-1800)' Journal of Kerala studies vol.III. Sept-Dec. 1976-P.423

member of the family, 'the only one on the spot' and in Kottayam also with a junior member of the family, later known as rebel pazhassi; as the senior rajas had been in refuge in Travancore.³⁴

The territories of Randattara and Iruvazhinad of Chirakkal Rajas were brought under direct administration of the company as the Raja was indebted to the company for an amount of Rs.86546-1-3³⁵. The

Table 3 - 2

Rate of Revenue Assessment of Tellichery Proper³⁶

Items of Assessment		Rs.	Quarter	Reas
1.	Jack tree (1)	0	1	60
2.	Pepper vine (1)	0	0	80
3.	Coconut tree (1)	0	0	40
4.	Betanut (1)	0	0	20
5.	Shop (1)	3	0	00
6.	House of a Nair	1	0	00
7.	" " Tiyya	1	0	00
8.	" " Kaniya	1	0	00
9.	" " Carpenter	1	0	00
10.	" " Muslim	2	0	00
11.	" " Oilmaker	2	0	00
12.	" " Iron smith	2	0	00
13.	" " Malayan	2	0	00
14.	" " Banian	2	0	00
15.	" " Goldsmith	3	0	00

34. Logan Vol.I P.476

35. R.M.J.C. Para 261; Letter-Tellicherry to Bombay, 17 May 1792. BSP, Diary No.43. PP. 435-40.

36. Diary 22 August 1792. DC.MSS. Serial 1511. P. 287. KKN. Kurup, History of the Tellicherry Factory. Note. 17.P.236.

rate of revenue assessment at Tellicherry was extended to Iruvazhinad also. In the year 1792 the total revenue from this territory was Rs.27568-2-36. The rate of assessment at Tellicherry was generally less than the other areas of company territory.

The houses of Nairs which had no revenue previously were assessed by the company now at the rate of one ruppe³⁷. Next the commission made an enquiry into the revenue of the Beebi of kannanore whose territory had been annexed previously. The chief source of revenue of the Beebi was the commerce with Arabia, and the produce of Laccadive islands. But the assessment was not realized for many years due to certain claim of the Beebi, and the same was in pending. The commissioners then proceeded to other northern Rajas and they were pensioned off.

The next task for the commissioners was the settlement of the Zamurin's territory, which proved a difficult problem. When the Zamurin tried to evade a Settlement the commissioners leased the seven talooks of Kurumbranad to Raja Veera Varma, 'who was to act as manager on the part of the company to collect the

37. KKN. Kurup Ibid P.216

revenue due from the country,³⁸, and to administer justice. The revenue of these seven talooks for the year rated at Rs.131898-3-6.³⁹ This assessment was comparatively half of the assessment during the time of Tipu Sultan. Table 3-3⁴⁰ gives a separate assessment of these 7 talooks.

Table 3 - 3

Assessment of Zamurin's 7 talooks leased to Raja Veera Varma in comparison with Tipu's and Arshed Bag's Assessments.

No.	Name of Districts	Belongs to	Tippu's Assmt	Arshad Beq's Assmt	Commissione in 1792 by Zamorins' minister
1.	Coormnad	Raja of cormnad	38,175	-	-
2.	Kolicaut	Zamurin	38,871	61,250	30,000
3.	Paynaad	"	52,630	35,125	38,251
4.	Payoormala	"	51,045	41,000	11,257
5.	Kelekumpuram	"	37,539	29,337	22,378
6.	Vadakumpuram	"	31,605	25,012	18,758
7.	Porvy	"	34,692	15,000	11,254
			2,84,817	2,07,224	1,31,898

38. Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.VII

39. Bombay commissioners Diary. 27 May 1792. RMSC. P.13. The amount given in Logan Vol.III (Rs.5,31,898-3-6) seems to be a mistake. The seven talooks separate is given in table 3-3 for more details.

40. RMSC p.13

All the revenue due to the company had to be paid through the said Raja 'and it was also required that all conicopillas and other persons placed in the collection of the revenues by the zamurin, or by other persons to give up to him the accounts of the revenue stating all the outstanding balance which may be due for the assessment or Jumabandi of the present year'.⁴¹

The commissioners found the Raja 'to be a very convenient stalking horse for bringing the Zamurin and the other rajs to terms for he was apparently willing to accept the management of any district belonging to other people on any term so long as these promised to be advantageous to himself personally'.⁴²

On 12 July 1792 the commissioners reached an agreement with the Raja of Palghatacherry. The raja Itta Punga Achan had to pay Rs.80,000 per annum after deducting a sum of Rs.10,000 for charges of collection and his personal charges⁴³. The estimate of Tipu for these districts is reported to be 88,000 Hoons⁴⁴. By a

41. Bombay commissioner's Diary 29 May 1792, Logan, Treaties ptII, No. VIII.

42. Logan, Treaties Pt-II. No.VII. Note P.150

43. Diary of the Bombay commissioners, 12 July 1792; Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.XI.

44. RMSC P.13

statement made by one of the Achans at Calicut this settlement was for 3,60,000 fanams. They calculated four fanams to one rupee, hence the amount was fixed at Rs.90,000 and 'having no information of the state of its resources, allowing a deduction of Rs.10,000 for the charges etc, they assessed it at Rs.80,000 for the next year⁴⁵. But a few days after the settlement, Mr.Powney sent a statement of Jumma of Palghat, obtained from one of its writers. This statement estimated it at 1,05,000 sultany chakram⁴⁶. But thinking that this chakram valued three to a rupee instead of viceversa, they found Mr.Powney's statement less than what the Achan had engaged to pay, and neglected it.⁴⁷ But later investigations made it clear that it was just opposite of their calculation. The engagement, however, was not revised as the settlement was only for one year⁴⁸. The Raja of Cochin had proposed Rs.3,00,000 for these territories for the next three years. This kind of proposals to get hold of others' lands leased helped the commissioners's bargain easy and to fix a higher jumma.

45. Ibid. P.14

46. Sultany chakram was the term used for Hoons in Cochin.

47. RMSC. P.14

48. Ibid

The commission next proceeded to kavalappura, where the Nairs agreed to be placed as its administrators, on behalf of the company. The revenue estimated, taking from an account of the country, was Rs.18,285. From this Rs.2,285 for charges of collection and another Rs.1000 for the Nair himself was deducted. The balance Rs.15,000 was to be paid in instalments⁴⁹.

According to the agreement between the commissioners and the Raja of Walluvanad (Vellatiri) the country, including the 3 Nairships of Congad, Mannur and Edathara, was given in the management of the Raja for Rs.43,766-2-0 of land revenue and Rs.2,000 of land custom. From the total amount Rs.7,356 was deducted for charges of collection etc. and the remaining Rs.38,410-2-0 was finally fixed. The clause of the agreement also provided that 'If it is discovered that the collection of the country amounted to more, the difference is to be paid to the company',⁵⁰. Meanwhile the commissioners could learn that it was practice with Tipu to exact 10% of the annual demand for charges of collection in the southern

49. Diary of the Bombay commissioners, 12th July 1792; Logan, Treaties pt II. No.XII.

50. Ibid. 31 July 1792. Logan, Treaties Pt II No. XIII

districts. Hence, including this 10% collection charge the amount was increased from Rs.38,410-1/2 to 41,594-1/2⁵¹.

By this agreement the commissioners declared that the Nair chiefs and many of the petty Nairs who held their lands without paying revenue or tribute to the Raja, but were only liable to follow in war, would be paying revenue to the company as it had been in force since the time of Tipu⁵². Their service as warriors was not required for the company now as it had its own troops. The agreement also forbade the Raja from restoring the lands to the temples and Brahmins that would make a loss of revenue to the company⁵³. Later, a dispute arose between the Walluwanad Raja and the three Nair chiefs⁵⁴ and the commissioners agreed with the Nair chiefs to pay their revenue directly to the company⁵⁵. On 23rd November 1792 their tribute was

51. Logan, Vol. I. P.479; RMSC P.15

52. Diary of the Bombay commissioners, 31 July 1792; Logan, Treaties pt.II No. XIII

53. Ibid

54. Kongad, Mannur and Edathara were three Nair Chiefs under palghat Achana. But as they took protection under vellatiri they were asked to pay revenue through the latter.

55. R.M.J.C Paras 102, 106, 109 Logan, Vol. I P.479.

fixed by the company at 14568 1/2 fanam 13442 1/2 fanam and 15050 1/2 ^{fanam} for Kongad, Mannur and Edathara respectively⁵⁶. This rate was afterwards found to be considerably below the collection of their districts in the preceeding years. The Jumma for the year 1788 (MS 963) was amounted to Hoons 5343-4-12.⁵⁷

Parappanad Raju Veera Varma also signed similar agreement with the commissioners. He had to pay 3/4 of the assessment of Arshad Beg, that is Rs.13,560 plus a land and sea custom of Rs.1,500. After deduction of charge the total to be paid was 14,000⁵⁸. The revenue from Vettathunad was fixed according to the account presented by Raja Ramavarma's Kariakaran Kondu Menon, amounting to Rs.34,807-1-0 after the deduction of charges and the maintainance of the Raja and his family⁵⁹. Later in May 1793, when the Raja died without any heir, this country was brought directly under company administration⁶⁰.

56. Diary of the Bombay commissioners 23rd November 1792: Logan, Treaties pt.II No.XXI.

57. RMSC Report P.15 (4 Fanams = 1 Rupee; 2.5 rupees = 1 Hoon).

58. Diary of the Bombay commissioners 11th August 1792; RMSC. P.18

59. Bombay commissioner's Diary 14 August 1792. Logan, Treaties Pt-II No.XV.

60. Logan, Vol I. PP 479-80.

The commissioners found it still a very difficult job to deal the affairs with Zamurin for his territory. Zamurin was the only ruler who insisted for his right based on the 'cowlnama' of 1790⁶¹. His officials had collected revenue and administered justice of the territory even after the Mysorean's disappearance from the land. But the company government was much annoyed at the activities of the Nairs under prince Ravivarma of the family in their vengeance on the Mappila community for the humiliation they had to endure during the Mysore Period⁶². The trade and commercial activities were highly affected due to these disturbances. This was a matter of serious concern for the company. The same time the commissioners were of the opinion that the restoration of Zamurin into power would be harmful to the company and for the province. So they tried to bring Zamurin under control.

Exploiting the internal dissension in the court of the Zamurin the commissioners won his minister Swaminatha Pattar over to their side. As a result Zamurin abandoned his demand and on 18 August 1792 an

61. Rajendran P.244

62. RMJC. P.64

agreement was signed with Manavikram Zamurin for his territory by which the collection from his country (including sea and land custom) estimated at Rs.416366-1-0 was delivered to the Zamurin from 1st September 1792 for one year with full power to administer justice and other rights⁶³. This was a reduced assessment from that of Arshed Bagh Khan's (Rs.663776) on account of the Zamurin's representation that to levy more would distress the inhabitants of the country⁶⁴.

The Rajas of Vettathunad, Parappanad and Beypore were to pay their revenue through the Zamurin. The Raja of Kurumbranad had consented to surrender two talooks namely Vadakumpuram and Kizhakumpuram which were formerly leased to him by the company to the Zamurin⁶⁵. Later the raja of Beypore requested the company to be allowed his country non-dependant of Zamurin. Accordingly the Bombay commissioners made their last tempory settlement with the Raja of Beypore for Rs.10,000 for the year 1793-94.⁶⁶

63. Bombay commissioner's Diary 18 August 1792 C.W Aitchison 'Treaties Vol. V. P. 404. Logan, Treaties. Pt II No. XVI.

64. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No. XVI

65. Ibid

66. RMSC Para.67

All these agreements had been made for one year, and it was specified that the revenue settlements were strictly temporary, and would be liable to change in the event of discovering any improvement or any falsification of the account. The company officials were to inspect these accounts in corroboration with on the spot valuation and the concerned raja would be responsible for any change. The terms of the treaty clearly put that the rajas were only the revenue managers of the company government.

DEFINITE SETTLEMENTS

After these temporary settlements with various rajas Mr. Farmer appointed Mr. John Agnew as collector general of the southern districts and himself proceeded to the north 'to arrange definite settlements' with the rajas. There he was joined by Mr. Page, the third member from Bombay on 12th September 1792.

The first of these fixations was made with Chirakkal Raja, Raja Ravivarma, for a revenue of Rs.50,000, subject to any increase which might appear on the investigation of the inspectors, who had hitherto made but little progress.⁶⁷ Still there was

67. Diary of the Bombay commissioner, 12 Oct 1792
Aictison. Treaties, Vol-V P.366. RMSC P.19.

no fixed principle for the fixation of revenue for Malabar in general, and the officials engaged in the work were least informed of the local variations and circumstances. So most of the settlement works were fabricated in the company offices or revenue katcheries. Consequently like the temporary ones the definite settlements also were not free from false and frauds.

Collection of revenue was fixed at 50% of the produce, in cash or in Pepper. It also stated that to encourage people to plant more pepper vines the customs be abolished, instead they agreed to give the whole pepper to the company at a rate of Rs.100 per candy. According to these agreements, if any dispute relating to revenue arising between the rajas and the people, "it will be enquired by the company and 'the company's forces shall, if requisite, be given to compel the payment of them."⁶⁸

The second definite agreement was with the Raja of Kadatanad made on 23rd October 1792 for a revenue of Rs.30,000. The articles of the agreement were same as in the case of Chirakkal Raja⁶⁹. After

68. Logan, Treaties Pt-II No.XVIII.

69. Bombay commissioner's Diary, 23 Oct. 1792; Aitchison Treaties, Vol.V. P.369.

six days the Raja of Cotiote Raja Kerala Varma agreed to pay Rs.20,000 for the territory⁷⁰. The fixation of these three agreements were at a reduced rate due to representation from the Rajas concerned showing 'inability of the country to pay more from its ruined and uncultivated state',⁷¹. The three Nairship of Kongad, Mannur and Edattara, as noted above⁷², were retained by the company on 23rd November 1792.

The commissioners were not able to take a final decision regarding the territory of Beebi of Cannanore as she claimed the restoration of her Jagir granted to her by Tipu⁷³ and they referred it to the governor of Bombay.⁷⁴ Iravenaad and Randatara were found to be very moderately assessed on the principle 20% or 25% of the crops. These territories were assessed par with the factory territory at Tellicherry, as noted above. The commissioners now ordered for an increase in the assessment to 50% of the produce⁷⁵.

70. Ibid 29 Oct. 1792 Aitchson. Ibid Vol-V. P.370 (in RMSC the amount is given Rs.25,000). RMSC P.19

71. Ibid Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.xx

72. See Page 143.

73. RMJC Para.236.

74. RMSC. P.19

75. Ibid.

The commissioners next wanted to ascertain the real amount of revenue from the territory of Zamurin, and had to realise them with balances. But the collector general represented that the collection of balance would attend 'with difficulties and tend to irritate the minds of the people'. Hence Mr. Farmer ordered in November for suspension of the collection of balances and recommended to the government for its remission.⁷⁶ But later 'it was found that the Zamorin's officers in Shernad and other districts were actually collecting these balances'. They were collecting not one half of the commissioners standard collection, but full 2/3 of Arshad Bagh's Jumma and in some districts the proceeding year's balances also.⁷⁷

At the receipt of this report the commission informed the Zamurin its intention to send their own men to make final assessment of the territory's resources. But the Zamurin stated his usual objection that 'the land having been long neglected the Jumma of Tipu could not be exacted'⁷⁸. He also stated that 'when my people ask for revenue (from the Mappilas) they

76. RMSC P.21

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

shake their swords at them'⁷⁹. But the fact was that from the prevailing circumstances 'the inhabitants of a certain Mappila districts offered to pay not merely the 1/2 but 2/3 of Arshad Beg's Jumma for both the current and proceeding years, if they might be released from the payment of their rent to their Hindoo Landlords'⁸⁰. Another objection of Zamurin was that the government took full revenue without restoring to the raja any share. But this was absolutely baseless.⁸¹ Mr. Farmer delivered in a report that Zamurin's relectance to pay the full Jumma of Tipu was because of nothing but 'from his anxiety to enable the lately exiled Janmakars to live in competence on their recovered estates, by retaining as much of the rents as might serve for their confortuble subsistance', which he doubted would, if Arshad Bag' jenmma was realised, reduce the janmakar to accept 3/20 of the produce⁸².

One of the Rajas of Zamirin's family told Mr. Farmer this time 'that the greater part of the Janmakar, if readmitted to the possession of their

79. Logan, Vol.I, P.507

80. RMSC. P.21

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid.

lands, would gladly pay the full amount of Tippu's Jumabandy, acknowledging that the assessment had not in general comprehended the full produce of the country⁸³.

Zamurin's minister Shamanth in a meeting with the governor of Bombay objected to the proposal of the company's agent collecting the revenue with the Zamurin's agent. This time he did not deny the ability to collect it but demanded, a reduced Jumma in consideration of the numerous branches of the Zamurin's family, which must require a very considerable proportion of the jumma for their establishments, and on being assured of a suitable maintenance for the Rajas, he soon returned'.⁸⁴

On 31st October 1792, the Chief of Tellicherry was appointed as collector - general of the northern district⁸⁵, and the southern districts were already under the collectorship of the English resident at Calicut.

JOINT - COMMISSION

At the instruction of the governor-general Lord Cornwallis, two members from Bengal, Mr. Jonathan

83. Ibid P.22

84. Ibid P.22 (for more details RMSC P.23 & 24)

85. KKN Kurup History of the Tellichery factory P.221

Duncan and Charles Boddam, arrived in Malabar in December 1792 and joined the commissioners from Bombay, hence later known as joint commissioners. The experience of Bengal commissioners in the revenue affairs of Bengal, and the views of Cornwallis, the propounder of permanent revenue settlement in Bengal, were intended to be introduced in Malabar. Finding it impossible to get adequate information about the country as the rajas forbade their subjects to tell them anything⁸⁶ on 2nd January 1793 Charles Boddam declared that it is necessary to make the territory 'beneficial to the company both in point of revenue and commerce', by putting a stop to the existing system and by appointing civil servants from Bombay to take over the collection of revenue and the administration of justice⁸⁷. The joint commissioners determined to institute two courts of enquiry and justice 'the first being intended for the investigation of all such subjects of revenue and litigated landed claims between the Rajas and other principal landlords, for minute enquiry and report, up on which the commissioners will form an ultimate decision'.⁸⁸

86. Nightingale P.89

87. Minute of Charles Boddam. 2 July 1793 BRP range 366, XV. 51-2; Nightingale P.89

In his instruction to the commissioners lord cornwallis said that 'the revenue assessment on them, should in the beginning at least, be in general lighter than that exacted from them by Tipu'⁸⁹. By the ancient customs of the Malabar country, the Nairs, Brahmins and other landlords paid no revenue to the rajas for the land they held, being only obliged to attend them in war. But on the feasts of onam and Vishoo and other occassions, the rajas took presents from their subjects according to their circumstances. Tipu had abolished these and instead 'he taxed the lands framing from these revenue. But still during the company period, besides the revenue, the rajas and their families were exacting presents from the subjects of the company on their several occassions and family ceremonies and that some were even claiming a proportion of the effects of the dead people (Purushantharam)⁹⁰. This the commissioners considered as a great oppression on the

88. Diary of Malabar Joint commissioners. 1st January 1793. (DMJC). Logan, Treaties. Pt II. No XXIV. The second court was for the subjects other than revenue and landed property.

89. Cornwallis' Despatch 18 November 1792, Quoted in Logan, Vol. I. PP.482-3.

90. There was a practice among Malabar rajas to exact a proportion of the estates of the deceased Mappilas, at 1/5 to 1/20, against which the Mappilas had been complaining of frēquently R.M.S.C. P.20

inhabitants. On 9th January 1793 in a circular sent to all rajas of Malabar the commissioners stated that the people 'can not afford to pay the revenue as settled .. and comply also with the customs of ancient times'. Therefore, 'in future you only collect the revenue from the land according to your agreements with the company strictly forbidding exacting presents from the people under any pretence'.⁹¹

When the company government followed a non-intervention policy towards several traditional customs of the country, it conveniently adopted a different attitude towards certain customs like this feudal levies, Nair militia etc. This policy change should be studied in the light of the very lucrative revenue to the company government and the unreliability of the Nair militia in place of a strong standing force of the company. If at all the company stood for a change from feudalistic medieval Malabar to a modern Malabar, it must have been reflected in its every actions. It is worth to note here that the company government waited several long years to effect the abolition of slave

91. D.M.J.C. 9th January 1793; Logan, Treaties Pt II. No.XXV.

trade in this province⁹². Even after the enactment the British traders were highly depending the slave for their plantation here.

A general amnesty was given to the subjects of Malabar for crimes committed before 1st February 1793, to give a normal life for the people⁹³, which only would provide the company, they understood, an opportunity for uninterrupted collection of revenue and a peaceful trade.

REVENUE DIVISIONS AND OFFICIALS

Cornwallis gave consent to divide the country provisionally in to revenue divisions or collectorship etc for its better administration.⁹⁴ Accordingly under the leadership of Jonathan Duncan the commissioners divided the province in to two administrative blocks. The northern division⁹⁵ with its headquarter at

92. In 1843, the government of India Act V was enacted by which the right of any person claiming a slave as jenmam, Kanam and panayam could not be pursued either in a court or before an officer. However, the penalcode came into force on 1st January 1862 only.

93. DMJC 8th Feb. 1793. Logan, Treaties Pt. II. No.XXIX.

94. RMJC Para 154

95. Consisted of Chirakkal, Cannanore, Kottayam, Kurumbranad, Iruvanad, Kurgot, Kadattanad and tributary coorg.

Tellichery and the southern division⁹⁶ with its headquarter at Cherpulasseri were put under each superintendents. Mr.W.Gally was appointed as the superintendent of the northern and Mr.James Stevense as the superintendent of southern divisions. The superintendents were responsible for collection of revenue and the administration of law and order.

General Abercrombay appointed Mr.Farmer as the supervisor and the chief magistrate of the whole province. On 18 March 1793 he took the revenue, civil and criminal oaths.⁹⁷ The supervisor controlled the two superintendents, and Beypore and Calicut proper were put directly under his management. He was in charge of the mint of Calicut also. As in Bengal, for the administration of trade and commerce separate commercial resident also was posted. All interior customs dues were abolished in the province and the company was to appoint its own customs officers to collect the duties on imports and exports⁹⁸. The assessments for these divisions were Rs.1038134-0-2 for

96. Consisted of Romnad, Vettathunad, Ernad, Chovakkad, Palghat, and small chiefships including Chetwail and tributary Cochin.

97. Logan, Vol.I. pp 487-89

98. Minute of Jonathan Duncan. 11th March 1793. BRP range 366 Vol.XV. 171-74 Nightingale P.90

the northern, Rs.1606362-2-0 for the southern and Rs.119488 for the middle.⁹⁹ Charles Boddem and William Page were deputed to Palghat to settle the accounts with the Dewan of Travancore who unduly collected large amounts from Calicut and also to settle the claim of Cochin Raja over Kavalappara.¹⁰⁰

The role of the supervisor in Malabar was something different from that of the Bengal supervision. In Malabar he held some pivotal position in revenue judicial and military administration. In Bengal the Board of revenue or a council did all these activities instead of supervisor¹⁰¹.

The situation now was 'totally new, Instead of a receiver of tribute each superintendent and supervisor in his revenue division has become collector in the first instance, in some districts jointly with the rajas, in others the company collected wholly for themselves¹⁰². Many of the revenue officers of Tipu

99. RMJC Para. 212

100. Ibid Paras 166-67

101. B.B. Misra, The Central Administration of the East India company 1773 - 1834. (Oxford 1954) Pp-133-34.

102. W.G. Farmer to Bombay - 30 Sept. 1793. BRP range 366 XV Nightingale P.92.

were re-appointed for revenue collection. The former rulers were reduced to the status of revenue farmers. Their role was that of a Tahasildar who realised revenue of a Tahasil.

The rules for revenue administration and for the conduct of the supervisor and superintendents were drafted and passed by Duncan, page and Boddam with effect from 1st July 1793.¹⁰³ Rule 38 of the regulation stated, "that the supervisor and superintendents do respectively take care to collect all the country records and accounts of their departments and to preserve them as complete as possible".¹⁰⁴ The staff engaged in revenue collection were forbidden the acquisition of property without the previous permission of the supervisor.¹⁰⁵ How far these regularions helped the company officials to be incorrupt is yet another subject.

PEPPER TRADE AND PRIVATE INTEREST

'Pepper trade and private interests of the officials functioned as deterring factors in moulding

103. KKN Kurup History of the Tellicherry factory P.224

104. Ibid P.225

105. Ibid.

the administrative system in Malabar under the Bombay presidency,¹⁰⁶. In the letters of the Bombay government to the court of directors and to Bengal its' policy can be traced to private and self-interested motives,¹⁰⁷.

'There seems little doubt' says pameela Nightingale, 'that the policy which Farmer put forward for the administration of Malabar was based on Murdock Brown's¹⁰⁸ ideas',¹⁰⁹ Brown was fully aware that the rajas did not possess the power which the commissioners ascribed to them. But urging for this 'he stood to profit by it',¹¹⁰. The Bombay commissioners, as noted earlier, were not men fit to the job, and had no experience at all, but had expressed their objection to the direction of governor general in their first sitting itself. This immediate decision in opposition to the governor - general's Bengal system clearly reflects 'Farmer-Brown association, and mutual

106. KKN Kurup History of the Tellichery factory P.216

107. Nightingale P.73.

108. Murdock Brown, one of the chief English merchants of Malabar, had a good experience and knowledge of Malabar, from his long stay in the province. He had a large estate at Randatara leased by the company government and in this he had obtained large concession from the company government.

109. Nightingale P.79

110. Ibid P.80

interests'¹¹¹. That is the reason the commercial resident at Calicut Mr. John Agnew, declared that 'the company must watch Brown carefully and attend particularly to his machinations and false assertion'¹¹². The commissioners had given enormous concessions and privileges to Mr. Brown. At Randathara the Achanmar had mortgaged to the company all the lands including waste. Later Burdock Brown had largely encroached these waste lands for his cinnamom plantation at Anjarakandy¹¹³. But nothing was done by this officials against his encroachments. A number of native christians from Canara and Mysore had been allowed to settle in these lands with their families, and were granted money advance for cultivation by the company.¹¹⁴ This was another mark of nepotism. In short, 'the period in which Bombay had exclusive control of Malabar suggests that the presidency's imperialism was the offspring of its private trade'¹¹⁵. Their personal interest and private trade were the underlying objectives of their activities.

111. Ibid PP. 76-83

112. BSPP range E.V.418-9 John Agnew to Robert Tylor, Calicut 11 May 1792; Nightingale P.82.

113. KKN Kurup 'Hisotry of the Tellicherry Factory' P.225

114. Logan, Vol.I PP.490-91.

115. Nightigale P.88

In March 1793, governor Sir Rober Abercrombay issued circular to all the rajas acquainting the changes effected in the province for its future administration. The rajas were asked to strictly adhere them, and told that the arrangements were made 'with a view to your advantage and future security',¹¹⁶. At the conclusion of the work of revenue assessment the commission was to dissolve and the entire authority of government will afterwards rest with the chief magistrate and superintendants¹¹⁷.

The joint commissioners now turned for executing new settlements with the rajas. On 31st March the Coorg raja agreed to pay Rs.24,000 per annum as his tribute¹¹⁸. On 11 April the Beebi of Cannanore agreed to pay the arrears of revenue Rs.28,680-12-3 in three instalments¹¹⁹, and half of the produce, and trade profits of her country.

Meanwhile, on 15 April 1793 Duncan and page issued a proclamation to the effect of abolishing the

116. Logan, Treaties pt. II No. XXXII

117. D.M.J.C. 30 March 1793; Aitchison, Treaties Vol-V. P.415

118. Logan, Treaties pt.II No. XXXIII

119. D.M.J.C. 13 April - 1793; Aitchison Treaties, Vol.V. P.395 Logan, Treaties Pt II No. XXXIV.

pepper monopoly within the province of Malabar, excepting Cochin¹²⁰. The Malabar supervisor substituted another proclamation in opposition to this in the southern district, on 21st April 1793¹²¹. The commissioners after rebuking the supervisor for having published this in opposition to their own proclamation resolved that his publication should have effect only in the southern districts¹²² and in the northern, half of the produce will be taken in kind. This conflicting proclamation evidently shows that a uniform system of administration was not effective due to the clash of authority exercised by the commissioners and the supervisor¹²³.

Next the commissioners settled an agreement with the Achanmars of Randathara by which the former had to pay the revenue to the company on the same rate as have prevailed since 1741 when the country was first mortgaged to the company¹²⁴. This assessment was far

120. D.M.J.C. 15 April 1793. Logan, Treaties, Pt II No.XXXVI.

121. D.M.J.C. 21 April 1793. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No.XXXVII

122. D.M.J.C. 27 April 1793. Logan, Treaties Note P.P 182-183.

123. Logan, Vol.I. P.490

124. Logan, Treaties Pt.I No.XLIV

less than that of the neighbouring countries. The commissioners took only 20% of the garden produce and 15% of the rice lands, and neither the temple lands nor the Achanmar's own houses had been taxed¹²⁵.

Revenue collection of Iruvazhinad was entrusted to its former chiefs, the six Nambiars on 14 May 1793¹²⁶ on condition that the poor class of landholders be protected and to put an end to the exactions of feudal dues and fines.

Settlement of Kottayam territory of Pazhassi Raja proved to be a difficult task. Even though he had entered an agreement with the company for revenue collection, he styled as an independent authority. The commissioners, hence, entered an agreement with the kurumbranad Raja, a claimant of the Kottayam country, on 18 May 1793. Five talooks of Kottayam, five talook of Kurumbranad and one talook of Parappanad were placed under the raja for the year 1793-94 revenue collection. A person on the part of the company witnessed this collection, and on the result of which a permanent lease was granted to the Raja.¹²⁷ This denied the

125. Ibid Pt.II No. XXXIX

126. Logan, Treaties pt.II No.XII

127. Ibid No. XVII

Pazassi Raja's right upon the country, hence, Kottayam continued to be a problem territory for the company until 1805,

At Calicut shamnath, the minister of Zamurin had agreed to pay the full Jumma of Arshad Beg Khan. Zamurin had to agree to give up his right of customs and transport duties ¹²⁸. The commissioners had entered similar agreements with the Raja of Kadathanad, Nair chiefs of Palghat, Kavalappara, Kongad, Edattara and Mannur¹²⁹. On 2nd and 5th July agreements were made with the rajas of Beypore and Chirakkal. Zamurin's claims over vettathnad and Chetwai, were rejected, but his claim over payyanad was admitted. He renounced claim over Payyurmala and it was placed under the direct management of the company¹³⁰. Many such claims and disputes were looked into and necessary action were taken. When these settlements were made it was resolved to suspend all claims to the balances due on account of the years 1790-91, and 1791-92, together

128. Shamanath, a palghat Brahmin, was given one percent of the land revenue collection of Zamurin's territory for the services rendered by him to the company. Ibid No. XVIV. P.191

129. Ibid Nos. XVV - XVVI, XLVIII-VI

130. Logan, Vol-I P. 494

with all claim or arrears due to the former government of Tipu Sultan¹³¹.

It was yet reported that several of the Karriakars, protekars, or menons employed in the collections were still exacting money from the ryots for balances of the years.¹³² On 5 June 1793 the commissioners, therefore, declared that all such demands are unjust and unwarrantable and, had complaints in this respect were brought before the supervisor or superintendents there will be redress¹³³.

It was also reported that several of the Nair or Hindu Karriakars have made a difference in rating the assessment between the Hindus and Mussalmans, the latter at more than the former.¹³⁴ This also was declared unjust and contrary to the intension of the company government.¹³⁵

JOINT COLLECTION AND CONONGOES' ACCOUNTS

All the deeds of the agreements were forwarded to the supervisor with directions to appoint

131. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No.XVIII.

132. D.M.J.C. 5th June 1793; Logan Treaties Pt.II No.XVIII

133. Ibid

134. Treaties of II No. XVIII

135. Ibid

Tahasildars or collectors in the several districts with subordinate parbutties and menons. Dewan were appointed to help the supervisor and superintendents in the revenue works.

Conongoes were also appointed as permanant registrars on the part of the government, so as to ensure, such a control over the collections as it would enable the company's servants to ascertain at the end of the year the nature and constituent parts and amount of the public revenue.¹³⁶ Considering the sheristadar's accounts, from shortness of time, incomplete and imperfect, to fix the revenue and also in regard to the intereste of the inhabitants of the country, it was decided "inspectors or collectors shall be appointed on the part of the company and in to every part of the district to carry on the collection jointly with the officers of the rajas in conjuction with the conongoes'.¹³⁷ For ascertaing an exact jumabundy of the revenue this was thought to be the best possible method. So two members each from the company's side and of the rajas side were appointed in every

136. Logan, Vol-I. P.493. RMSC. P.32

137. Logan, Treaties Pt II No.XLIV

districts, to make 'a fair inspection of the property of each jannakar and inhabitants¹³⁸.

But this system of joint collection and a conongoe inspection of the real revenue funds of the country did not from various reasons turn out satisfactory¹³⁹. The rajas disinterest and aversion to divide their authority with the company, and also their thought that 'the year as a period of experiment, the result of which, they hoped, in future, be permanently adjusted. Consequently they concealed from the agents of the company the true state of the revenue resources. By the terms of the settlements the joint collections of a week were to be made over to the company's Tahsildar. But the influence of Zamurin's agent prevented the amount of his collectors from being ever know to the Tahsildars. Much of such money unaccounted was neither gone to the company account nor to the Rajas, but the agents enjoyed¹⁴⁰.

Besides, the conongoe pymaish accounts were merely a collection of the several accounts under the former government, in which a trifling increase was

138. Ibid No.LV

139. Logan, Vol-I P.498 RMSC P.39

140. RMSC P.39

exhibited in each district, without ascertaining the reality of the funds for the payment, and almost universally the temple lands and much of the private property of the rajs and chiefs were left out of the assessment¹⁴¹. A considerable deduction was made for waste lands also.

In the north the rajas complained that the country could not bear the assessment they engaged to pay. Hence, on 11th December 1793, W.G. Farmer made certain concessions to the raja of Kadathanad, from the company demand of 50% of the produce in kind to 6/10 of the pattam in kind.¹⁴² Farmer gave similar concessions to Kurumbranad Raja for the districts of Katirur, Palassi, Kuttiyadi and Thamarasseri. In Cotiote the collection was made in money at 50% of the Pattam by the company and 50% by the jemmakar and where there was no jemmakar the whole pattam went to the government¹⁴³. But later Mr. Stevens, who succeeded Mr. Farmer as supervisor in the beginning of 1794 recommended to repeal these concessions, finding fault with his predecessor¹⁴⁴.

141. RMSC. P.42

142. Diary of Malabar supervisor 12 December 1792. Logan, Treaties Pt. II No. LXXIII.

143. Ibid 20 December 1793. Ibid No. LXXIV

144. Logan, Vol-I P.501

The Bengal government also was of the opinion that the concessions are improper and impolitic as well as opposed to the regulations framed by the governor general on the joint commissioners report.¹⁴⁵

The commissioners next turned their attention to the matter of land-tenure, a much complex subject. The commissioners found it very convenient to confer the sole right of landed property upon janmis, considering them in all respect equal to the 'Roman dominus'. The jenmis were treated as the lord of the soil. 'The matter was very insufficiently investigated by the commissioners',¹⁴⁶. They next regulated the collection of custom house, on various items of export and import, and declared free trade in pepper, sandal, cardomom etc, in the province. A few days before the dissolution of the commission the commissioners ordered the Kondotty Thangal being exempted from revenue payment, for the produce of his land was appropriated for charity purposes, and he had not been paying revenue for it during the time of Tipu. This was on condition that he would not to help the rebels who

145. Logan, Treaties Note. P.217

146. Logan. Vol-I. P.495 (This subject was elaborately discussed in Chapter 2 of this work).

were¹⁴⁷ highly troublesome for the company governments smooth revenue collection. During this period the province was full of rebellions, in north by Pazassi Raja and in the south by the Mappila rebels. Still, the commissioners found it satisfactory because a fair revenue~~was~~ collected without hintrance. On 11th October 1793 the commission dissolved itself, and forwarded its report to the governor-general. Later, on 27 March 1794 Sir John Shore, the governor-general, in a letter to the governor Mr.G.Dick, gave consent for the confirmation of the regulation framed by the commissioners and it also autherised the abolition of the Tellicherry factory with effect on 27 July 1794.¹⁴⁸

After the dissolution of the commission the entire charge of the province was put under the supervisor Mr.Farmer, whose first act was the issuance of Jenmi proclamation' which was 'fair and beneficial to the Jannakars (Jenmi) who on their part ought to pay the revenue to the company. Otherwise the collection would be 'made by the company directly from the Kanakkars¹⁴⁹.

147. Logan, Vol-I P.498. Logan, Treaties PtII No. LXVI

148. Logan, Vol.I. P.500

149. Diary of Malabar supervisor 28 October 1793.
Logan, Treaties Pt II No.LXVIII.

QUINQUENNIAL SETTLEMENTS

Being supervisor Mr. Stevens was directed to enter into fresh agreements for a term of five years. In October 1794 he started to execute certain quinquennial agreements with the rajas and chiefs in the south. By 1795 a number of such settlements were made at the expiry of the former annual settlement.¹⁵⁰

These leases prohibited the levy of all exactions and allowed only the collection of land revenue and the charges for collection while deductions were made for bringing waste lands into cultivation. The temple lands and private lands of the rajas and chiefs were also left out of assessment. The data for fixing the revenue payable in each instance were as follows. It first estimated the gross revenue payable. Out of this 10% for charges of collection was deducted, and 20% as the allowance for the rajas and 3 1/2% for the temple lands and the rajas or chiefs private property.¹⁵¹

This system also was really borrowed from Bengal¹⁵². But soon it was found that the rajas, with

150. Logan, Treaties Pt II No. LXXX - LXXXVII

151. Logan, Vol-I. P.501

152. B.B. Mishra (op. cit.) P.177

whom these settlements were made, failing in realising the amount of revenue they had agreed to. This was due to, nothing but the back wardness and inability of the country. Mr. Steven's Quinquennial lease was based on the structure of Tippu's Sheristader's Jumma of 1788.¹⁵³

Mr. Duncan, now the governor of Bombay, visited Malabar in December 1795, found that out of the total revenue of more than 14 lakhs of rupees due for the year ending September 1795, nearly 4 1/2 lakhs of rupees remained 44 uncollected¹⁵⁴. Hence he insisted on the deposit of good securities by the principal indebted chieftains, for the arrears of revenue, and signing agreements for regularity in the future payment of their dues. In case of default of it one has to pay interest on all arrears in the following rates. After the due date for the first 8 days 12% per annum, and if it becomes 20 days 24%, and for 30 days 36%. On the failure to pay arrears within 28 days the company was at liberty to enter into possession and collect the revenue direct from the ryots until ample security was given for the future punctuality of payment¹⁵⁵. By

153. J. Smee's Report P.36

154. Logan, Vol.I P.505

155. Logan. Vol-I P.505

this type of coercive methods Mr.Duncan overburdened the ryots who were already in stress and strains. Mr.Logan says 'there can be no manner of doubt that the system of settlement adopted by the joint commission... was very unsuited to the circumstances of the country',¹⁵⁶. In such a situation the above interest rate and security deposit made things more pitiable for the revenue payers. According to Logan 'the only thing that can be said in favour of Mr.Duncan's drastic measures for getting in the land revenue is ... that it paved way for speedily undoing the very work which he, as a joint commissioner, had laboriously elaborated',¹⁵⁷.

CORRUPT OFFICIALS

The supervisor and other prominent company officials were charged with corruption and nepotism as already noted. Farmer had left the office of supervisor, and he was succeeded by Mr. James Stevans. Both of them were charged with misappropriation of their office by the natives as well as the company government. So the supervisor's position was now found being mismanaged.

156. Ibid

157. Ibid P.508

After the dissolution of the Joint commission, entire charge of the province was put under the supervisor. As a supervisor Mr. Farmer was verily criticised for his various policies in the administration of the province. As noted above the concessions he allowed to the northern rajas was found undue and with special motives. Soon he left Malabar to become the chief of Surat, and he was succeeded as supervisor by James Stevens superintendent of southern districts. According to Alexander Walker, Farmer left Malabar, 'overcome by anxiety and apprehending it was said a legal enquiry'.¹⁵⁸ So corruption had become a regular phenomenon among the company officials. James Stevens, and John Agnew also were involved in corruption. A charge of extortion from the zamorin led to the suspension of James Stevens in 1797 and a sentence ultimately of two years' imprisonment for both of them¹⁵⁹. It was found that they had taken Rs.85,000 from the Zamorin. The amount was forfeited from them and Mr. Stevens was also fined for 5000 pounds.¹⁶⁰ Accusations were brought against other

158. Quoted in Nightingale Note.3.P.108

159. Ibid P.108

160. KKN Kurup History of the Tellichery Factory Note 65. P.238

public officials also. Mr. Handley, the late supervisor also was charged with bribery, along with native officials.¹⁶¹ Consequently the government now began to think of abolishing the post of supervisor.

SECOND MALABAR COMMISSION

So a series of corruption charges were found against the company officials during this time. In December 1795 Mr. Stevans resigned the supervisorship as charges of bribery and corruption were brought against him also. Mr. Stevans was succeeded by Mr. Handley as supervisor. The Bombay government accordingly appointed a commission in January 1796 for a special enquiry into these charges and some other minor matters, Messers, Wilkinson, Simpson and Fell were appointed as the members¹⁶².

On account of these untoward state of affairs, and also to prevent the clashing of authority later the office of the supervisor was incorporated with the special commission. Besides Thomas Wilkinson, president of the commission, Colonel-Dow and Robert Rickards were posted as members.¹⁶³ In place of

161. Logan Vol-I P.509

162. Logan, Vol-I P.508

163. Logan, Treaties Pt II NO.CXV

Simpson and Fell. Mr. Handley, the supervisor, also became a member of the commission for a short term. The orders for the appointment of this Malabar commission was given on 18 May 1796 by the Bombay government.¹⁶⁴ The duty and authority of the commissioners were to execute the office of the supervisor and chief magistrate of the Malabar province.

Changes were affected frequently among the members of the commission. After Rivett, Mr. Spencer was taken charge as president of the commission, Messers, Smee and Torrins were appointed in place of Messers Dow and Handley. The post of native dewans were abolished and it was resolved to make a radical change in the administration by the appointment of covenanted servants as revenue assistants, to be employed throughout the district.

The new commissioners turned their attention towards various revenue problems existed in the several districts. Earlier the Zamurin in a letter to the former commission had explained the difficulties in collecting the revenue assessed by the company. Though all the statements of Zamurin were not strictly

164. Ibid. This is known as Second Malabar Commission.

accurate¹⁶⁵, the settlement was, no doubt, not free from enormities. The Mappilas of Ernad and Malappuram made troubles to the Zamurin's collectors, withholding their revenue payment. The Zamurin, as a result, entered an engagement on 1st March 1796 with Manjeri Athan Kurikkal for the management of those districts under the raja¹⁶⁶. But when he failed to pay the revenue due for the year 1795-96 from his talooks, the commissioners took over the direct management of them on 5 July 1796¹⁶⁷. But soon he was able to settle the accounts with a deduction and the districts were returned to his management.¹⁶⁸ Later, the Zamurin expressed his desire to be relieved from the charges of collection of revenue from Ernad talook. The 'Committee of Government'¹⁶⁹ put a company servant in the charge of collection in this talook¹⁷⁰. Again the

165. Logan. Vol - I. P.506

166. In 1785-86 this Mappila Kurikkal family had risen in rebellion against Arshad Begkhan, Tipu's revenue officer. Diary of Malabar Supervisor Ist March 1796. Logan, Treaties Pt II No.CXIII.

167. D.M.S.C 6th July 1796. Logan, Treaties Pt II No.CXVI.

168. Logan, Treaties Pt.II Nos. CXIX, CXX, CXXI

169. For details regarding Committe of Government see Page 181 of this work

170. D.M.S.C 21st Nov.1797 Logan, Treaties CXLIX

Zamurin's failure in paying revenue regularly, led the company's assumption of his talooks management on 11 October 1798¹⁷¹.

On 13 September 1796 the new commissioners took the direct management of the country of the Kawalappara Nair, as a large arrear was due from his territory¹⁷². Likewise, the Palghat raja also left a large balance of revenue unpaid to the company for the years 1794-96, under various reasons. Mr. John Smee arrived to superintend the collection and to examine in to the judicial and revenue concerns of the company. The parabutties and Menons employed by the raja were immediately directly to report to the superintendents kutcherry with their revenue collection accounts, and were forbidden to make payment to the raja's agents¹⁷³. The raja was not given the management of the company later.¹⁷⁴

The new commissioners were successful in executing an agreement with the Bibi of Cannanore on 28

171. Ibid. 11 October 1798. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No. CLXXXIV

172. Ibid. 22 Sept. 1796. Ibid No. CXXIII

173. D.M.S.C. 17th Oct.1796. Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.CXXV

174. Logan, Vol-I. P.519.

October 1796, for an annual payment of Rs.15,000 being the jumma on the houses, purram etc. situated at and near kannanore, and on the trade and property on the Laccadive islands¹⁷⁵. She agreed to pay custom duties on all articles except island coir yarn, and also gave up all pretensions to the 1/5 share of the collection granted to other Malayali chieftain and finally renounced all claims to the jagir¹⁷⁶. The commissioners for the first time leased Kurungot Kallai district to Kurungot Nair, for a term of 10 year.¹⁷⁷ Each year he had to pay 4,640-2-76 Hoons to the government. The chief landholder of the same district, the second Nair in rank, also was given for a 10 years lease of the land in his hold. He had to pay 868-0-44-Hooms every year to the company.¹⁷⁸ They made agreements with the six Nambiars of Irnvalinad cancelling the former settlements¹⁷⁹.

Wynad, hitherto having been considered an equivocal possession, a revenue was derived from it by

175. Aitchison (op. cit.) Vol-V. P.345; Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.CXXVI

176. Ibid

177. D.M.S.C. 18 December 1797. Logan, Treaties. Pt II Nos. CLIV & CLV.

178. Ibid

179. Logan, Treaties. Pt.II Nos. CLX, CLXI and CLXVI

the Kurumbranad Raja to whom it was conditionally leased by the commissioners. But now, the governor general, after a detailed examination, declared that Wynad was not ceded to the company by the late treaty of peace and it rightly belongs to Tipu Sultan. The commissioners made a declaration in this effect on 3 Sept.1798.¹⁸⁰.

COMMITTEE OF GOVERNMENT

The company government appointed a committee for the purpose of accomplishing certain objects materially affecting the public welfare of the province on 10 April 1797. Jonathan Duncan President and governor of Bombay and Lieutenant general Stuart were appointed as the committee members.¹⁸¹ The committee during its stay of eight months in the province looked into a number of subjects and finally returned in the beginning of 1798. It had regulated various matters such as regulation of ferries, introduction of tax on all spirituous liquors etc.¹⁸²

The frequent representation to the commissioners from the landholders and ryots in Malabar

180. Ibid. NO. CLXXXII.

181. Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.CXXXIV

182. Logan, Vol-I. P.522

of the inequality of the present system of realising the revenue of the province¹⁸³ Compelled the company government to make a special enquiry to this matter. The inability of several proprietors to contribute according to the rate now demanded was found to 'originate in the neglect of the Canongoes appointed in 1793-94 (MS 969) to prepare a faithful register of the estates and annual revenues¹⁸⁴. Moreover, 'instead of making such an impartial ascertainment of the funds ... by fair and just personal inspection of such ryots estates, the accounts in general were loosly framed from documents and papers,¹⁸⁵ of Arshad begh's Jummabundy. These accounts although might have been correct at the time it was made, it will be far different now, from a variety of reasons. This, of course, would have contributed to murmurs and complaints from the province,¹⁸⁶.

To provide relief to those who really suffer from such assessment and also to acquire a precise

183. D.M.S.C. 31 August 1798. Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No. CLXXXI.

184. Ibid

185. D.M.S.C. 31 August 1798 Logan, Treaties. Pt II No. CLXXXI.

186. Ibid

account of the production and the share of the government and of the ryots, the commissioners determined for an inspection of estates throughout the province under the superintendence of Mr. Smee. In a condied declaration they stated that it is neither their aim to take accounts from interested men to oppress others nor to increase the present rate of taxation, but was 'to prevent taxation becoming burdensome'.¹⁸⁷ This was to avoid doubt and suspecion on the side of the ryots who were fearfully viewing every charges effected by the company government.

SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT OF Mr. SMEE

Mr. Smee conducted a detailed survey in the middle and southern divisions of the province. He had gone through the reports of several inspection and studies conducted in province by the former commissioners and the revenue servants. After a thorough investigation he noted that 'in the absence of any internal commerce of note, nor manufactures, and the spirit of industry and trade still lies dorment, the inhabitants can not bear a greater taxation than that proposed now¹⁸⁸. He also called for the attention

187. Proclamation of the commission. 31 August 1791
Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.CLXXXI.

188. J.Smee's. Report P.9.

of the revenue servants towards the growing wealth of the landholders¹⁸⁹. He also noted in his observation that the spirit of dishonesty and speculation had been a predominant trait in the conduct of the native collectors in many of the division.¹⁹⁰

The system he followed to ascertain the rice resources of the division he had surveyed, was 'generally founded on the principles laid down by Arshad Begh Khan in the Northern districts, by taxing the produce, and not based on the seed sown.'¹⁹¹ The reason for this change was simply that the yield of rice land varies place to place based on the fertility of the soil. In a circle itself neighbouring lands may vary in production due to several reasons, like continuous over flow of water, casualties by cattles draught, and other. In certain plots tillage will be possible twice or thrice while in others only once. In this circumstances his proposal to tax based on the produce of the ground, instead of calculating the produce from the seed sown was highly beneficial to the ryots. Mr. Smee found the basic reason for the discontent of the ryots in the existing system.

189. Ibid. P.10

190. Ibid. P.1

191. Ibid. P.3

His inspectors in the several districts started surveying under his direction. The mode of assessment he adopted was first to ascertain the whole seed each estate requires for sowing at one or more harvests. This was to be taken in the presence of farmers attended by the ryots concerned. Then he examined the quality of the soil, to adjust the annual average produce, a much difficult and complicated part of the survey. Mr. Smee himself was doubtful of its accuracy on account of the unique tenurial system of Malabar. Even a very fertile land may not have expected production as the land holder on Kanam or other tenures have no incentive for that as he may at any time be redeemed on the whims and convenience of the landlord¹⁹². After estimating the gross produce of a ground, he deducted double of the seed sown for charges of cultivation¹⁹³. He did not fix the government revenue on the grain produce 'according to an average monthly price current, but choosing in preference a standard more approximating to the value of that article when sold by the husbandmen at the seasons of

192. J. Smee's Report. P.6

193. The seed sown plus an equal for charges of cultivation. for example, 10 para produces 100 paras. 20 paras deducted from this, 10 paras as seed and 10 paras for expences of cultivation.

the year when it is chiefly disposed of.¹⁹⁴ This was a very positive step in favour of the poor ryots as it prevented the intermediary money lenders and the leading landlords oppressing the former class of agricultural people by the price-calculation adjustments.

Moreover, in regard to the charges of cultivation Mr. Smee found fluctuations from place to place. In comparison to the calculation of Oudhot Roy and Jennia, Mr. Smee had a high proportion of cultivation charges. He rejected that it was because of his employees partial assessment, but because of the nature of land, which some times requires more attention in some cases than the others.¹⁹⁵

In his tour throughout the province, he could ascertain the reason why some garden lands were not cultivated in some parts of the province. Various natural and other reasons for this were accounted in his survey report. A general assessment on all these lands if at all done, would have led into discontent and frequent complaints¹⁹⁶. Owing to the mutual hatred

194. J. Smee's Report. Ibid. PP. 7-8

195. Ibid. PP. 11-12

196. Ibid. PP. 12-15

and enmity between Nairs and Mappilas large tracts of Malabar land was laying uncultivated¹⁹⁷. This of course had affected the general prosperity of the province and the revenue collection.

When he calculated the revenue assessment of garden land he had taken in to account various aspects of its cultivations. For example, the coconut trees are very rich in produce in sea coast, where it require very less care and expence. On the other hand the same plant requires higher expense in the early stage of its plantation and still the produce will be comparatively less than the former. Therefore, he suggested a reduction in the assessment of coconut trees¹⁹⁸. Table 3-4 gives a comparison of Mr. Smee's assessment with the four assesments completed before that.¹⁹⁹

197. Ibid. P.15

198. Ibid.P.19

199. Ibid. PP.34-5

Table - 3 - 4

Mr. Smee's revenue assessment in comparison
with the former assessments.

Sl. No.	Assessment by	Amount Rs. A.P	Comparison with Mr. Smee's
1.	Arshad Begkhan	812699-1-2	Less: 48510-8-4
2.	Tippu's Sheristadar's Jumma. Ms 963/1788	818788-8-8	Less: 42391-0-10
3.	Conogoe pymashy of 969/1794	808134-9-8	Less: 53044-15-10
4.	Mr. Steven's quinquinal settlement of 974/1799 including Devastanam, Chirakal land	780430-5-6	Less: 80749-4-0
5.	Mr. Smee's present Assessment	861179-9-0

This shows a general increase than all other assessments proceeding. According to Mr. Smee 'the increase in the present assessment was owing to the Devastanam and Chirakal lands and also some of the individual lands being now brought into the revenue accounts. This formerly excluded partially, but now assist on the same footing.²⁰⁰ Of the other four assessments, the canogoe account was chiefly a kutcherry modification of the assessment of Arshad

200. Ibid. P.36

Begkhan's, without either a true or nominal inspection being then made of the province resources.²⁰¹ Mr. Steven's quinquinal lease was, as already noted, based on the structure of Tippu's Sheristadari jumma of 1788.²⁰²

Mr.J.Smee, therefore, recommended a remodelling of the revenue establishment. He expressed doubt on the expediency of continuing the conongoes as such, but opined one to be appointed to a Towkery²⁰³, with the accounts' of the present inspection. A Head Menon also be nominated to each Towkery. He submitted the report on 21st August 1799 to Mr.John Spencer, the president of the committee. But little effort was done to introduce the result of Mr. Smees survey and enquiry. Things continued, by and large, the same. By this time, the company government had began to think that the farming system of revenue was generally a failure, and only the elimination of the native forces from the revenue matters can afford a satisfactory revenue administration in the province.

201. Ibid P.36

202. Ibid

203. Towkery or Thukkari, a revenue division of Tippu Sultan in a district.

On 4 May 1799 Seringapatam fell and Tipu was slain, and the company assumed its strong hold in the South India.²⁰⁴ Now Wynad was exclusively ceded to the company. The four Laccadive islands were leased to Chovakkaran Mussa by the company without respecting the Bibi's claim to it. When the Nairs of Payyurmala failed to pay their revenue that country also was brought under the company's control.²⁰⁵ The lease of Chirakkal district for 5 years had expired, and finding that the payment of revenue was highly irregular, a large balance still remained due to the company for the year 1799 and also many complaints of oppression on the Kudians have come from the talooks the company took the direct management of the district.²⁰⁶ This process of annexation continued till at last all the rajas and chiefs relinquished completely from the revenue collection. There were various reasons for the company government to say for their action. Before the expiration of revenue engagement in September 1799, many talooks were brought under the direct management of the company. Still a few more districts continued

204. D.M.S.C. 22 May 1799. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No.CXCI

205. Diary of the Northern superintendent 16 August 1799. Logan, Treaties. Pt II. No.CXCVII

206. Ibid. 18 Oct. 1799. Ibid Pt.II No.CCIII

under the former lease²⁰⁷. The only lease renewed after this was that of Kadattanad Raja, for a period of one year only²⁰⁸. He had agreed to pay Rs.1,00,000 for the year, 1798-99 and the same for the year 1799-1800.

Other rajas and chiefs could, however, enjoy an allowance of 1/5 or 1/10 of the revenue of their respective districts for their maintainance, called Malikkara. The commissioners reporting to the government in Madras said: 'from a general failure in the fulfilment of their management by the rajas, government assumed the collection of the revenue at sundry periods before the expiration of the settlement in September 1799'. 'The collection of the revenue has proceeded under the sole control of the officers of government, an arrangement from which the best effects have been produced'²⁰⁹.

On 3 September 1799 the commissioners gave a proclamation to the effect of collecting revenue from houses, banksauls, shop kinves etc. together with the revenue of small purram of below 7 fanams, to avoide troubles and expenses in collecting revenue. Moreover,

207. Logan, Treaties Pt.II Note.P.329

208. Logan, Vol-I.P.526

209. Ibid

they also resolved that the revenue from Devasvam and Chirakkal lands²¹⁰ 'shall in future be collected by the company's officers in common with the usual revenue, and a fixed allowance in lieu of it, will be given for the expence of temple and Kovilagam from the government treasury.²¹¹

There were a number of cases in the government court in connection with land tenure. Many of which could not be solved without proper evidence in support. In this circumstances, the commissioners 'established as a rule that all writings in evidence of the transfer of landed property on whatever tenure it may be held, shall be registered either in the provincial or local Adalats,²¹². This was expected to put a stop to the systematic forgeries.

Next the commissioners attention turned to a large number of rice-fields laying uncultivated. The janmis were instructed to do necessary to bring them under cultivation or to be mortgaged to the Kanakkars. If they neglect to obey the order the revenue would be

210. Lands appropriated for the support of rajas and temples

211. Diary of Northern superintendent 3 September 1799, Logan, Treaties Pt.II. No.CXCIX.

212. Ibid 17 November 1799; Ibid No CCV

collected from them without fail.²¹³. This, ofcourse, had a good response from the landlords.

SUB COLLECTORS IN REVENUE CIRCLES

On 26 April 1800 the government instructed a change in the administrative system of the province. Accordingly the posts of the two superintendents were abolished²¹⁴. As noted before, no permanent settlement was effected after the expiration of the quinquinal settlement in September 1799. Most of the districts in the province had been brought under the direct management of the company government. Now, the commissioners partitioned the province in to a number of small circles of collection, with limited judicial powers vested in the revenue collectors. Now the government observed that the principles on which the civil administration was carried on were not calculated to support a permanent government, and that every branch of the internal arrangements appeared to be over charged with expensive and unnecessary establishments.²¹⁵ Further, governor general Clive was not satisfied with the system of government under the

213. Ibid. Treaties Pt.II No. CCVI

214. Ibid

215. Logan, Vol -I P.533; Treaties note 1 P.345.

auspices of the Bombay government, as it had failed to establish the authority of government on a respectable foundation. Therefore on 21 May 1800, the Supreme government ordered directing that the civil administration of the province should be transferred from the Bombay presidency to that of Madras with effect from 1st July 1800²¹⁶. The commission of Bombay officers but continued further until the completion of their work.

The government ordered appointing collectors in to smaller circles. Mr. John Law was appointed to take charge of the district of Ernad²¹⁷, Mr. J. W. Wye was appointed to take charge of Vellatire (Walluvanad) Cheranad, betatnad and Parappanad²¹⁸ and Mr. J. Strachey to Tellicherry, Randathara and Dharmapattam.²¹⁹ To the subdivision of Palghat, Congad, Mannur, Edathara, Mr. Warden was appointed²²⁰. Mr. Hodgson, to Cannanore,

216. Logan, Vol. I. P. 528. The commercial department of the province was, however, left to the Bombay authority.

217. Diary of the collector of Ernad circle. Logan, Treaties Pt. II. No. CCXIV.

218. Ibid No. CCXV

219. Ibid. No. CCXIV; J. Strachey. Report on the Northern Division of Malabar 7th March 1801. (Calicut 1908)

220. Warden's Report (1801) P. I

Chirakkal and Cavea; Mr.Osborne to Cartnad and poolwye and Mr.Baber to south and north division of Calicut and porwyee.²²¹

The government realised that the farming system was both politically and administratively unwise, and it began to undertake the responsibility of direct collection of revenue.²²² The deplorable state of affairs prevailed during the commissioners period was attributed to the installation of the rajas as revenue farmers.²²³ The balance of revenue began to increase considerably during the commissioners period. When the district was transferred to Madras government, the balance of revenue was 3,25,841 Pagodas²²⁴. This pressed the company government for a drastic change in the revenue administration.

Accordingly, parbutties were selected for collections choosing generally from amongst the 'most respectable' of the inhabitants, to whom one or more villages called 'Deshms' were entrusted, according to

221. Graeme's Report. PP.33-35

222. W.John Wye. Report on the Southern Division of Malabar 4 Feb. 1801. Para.15.

223. Thackary's Report P.9

224. Ibid. P.9

their character and property',²²⁵. It was ensured whether his own property can be taken as security for the revenue in his Deshum, and one or more land holders, were also taken as ample security for his discharge of duty.²²⁶

Reporting on the revenue arrangements in his circle, Mr. Warden says 'Now the ryot has a fixed revenue, he pays it in stated instalments to parabutty, getting back acknowledgement, and the latter brings the amount of his collection to the Kutcherry²²⁷ twice or more in a month. At the end of every month he had to produce his village account at Katcherry. This account was kept by a person called 'Menon'. In Katcherry the Gumasthan inspected it. As the number of ryots in Malabar was very large and scattered in different directions, a greater number of people called 'Kolkars' were employed to help the parabutties in collection. An additional 10% of the revenue was collected from each ryot to meet the expences of these officers including parbutties, and Menon. This was collected seperate, from Jumma under the head

225. Warden's Report (1801) P.5

226. Ibid

227. Ibid

'Kutywashy',²²⁸. But this was not collected in north Malabar.

Mr. Warden's this description gives a general outlay of the revenue establishment in one of the circles of the province. All the collectors were directed to report regarding the principles and detailed system of revenue administration. On the receipt of these and also the report of the commissioners, the government resolved on 5 September 1801 to abolish the commision, and to put one principal collector with three subordinate collectors, for the administration of the revenue and civil affairs of the province²²⁹.

Major William Macleod, then collector of Salem, was appointed as the principal collector and Messers Strachy, Hodgson and Keate were appointed his subordinate collectors. The commission was accordingly abolished on 30 September 1801 and major William Mecleod assumed charge on 1st October 1801.

228. Ibid

229. Logan, Treaties. Pt.II.No.CCXXX

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION UNDER
THE COMPANY GOVERNMENT
(1801-1825)

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER - IV

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE COMPANY GOVERNMENT

(1801 - 1825) I

"In a country like this, where the proprietary right to the soil is traced by tradition to the sea for its creation, and where the government assessment upon it has remained unaltered for a series of years, it is better perhaps to let the assessment remain unequal as it is, than to hazard the risk of more complicated evils by attempting a new one, on more equal principles". Thomas Warden wrote to the Board of Revenue on 16th June 1813.

The above opinion expressed by one of the collectors who ruled the province for more than 15 years is to be regarded as the guiding principle of the company government for its revenue administration. After 20 years of its assumption of power in Malabar, the company government was still groping in the voluminous reports and records framed by the English officers for a system. Submitting a detailed report on the revenue affairs of Malabar Mr. Warden recommended nothing but a continuation of the existing abuses; as it is. This shows explicitly how far the company government was not successful in its regulation of revenue assessment and its exaction. Unfortunately,

the exaction was the primary concern of the revenue servants, while its assessment was found secondary. This conclusion would never be incorrect when one goes through a graphic picture of Malabar revenue administration presented by Mr. T.H. Baber in 1812.

"The most grievous source of complaint is the inequality in the landlaw, normally the assessment is in some districts a moiety and in others 6/10 of their income. But if ever an account is made of the actual income, in each particular estate, it will be found that some are not taxed at all, and generally the rates fluctuating from 20% to 100%; and there is not one man in ten, who knows what he has to pay on each separate estate. I have in consequence frequently had occasion in the course of my judicial proceedings to call upon the revenue officers for information on these points, but their accounts are very deficient and in some places much mutilated. In such a state of things, it is to be expected that there must be great deal of partiality in assessment as well as the mode in which the collections were made."¹ How did it lead to this state of things. A look into the history of facts would be relevant here.

1. Thomas H. Baber to the secretary to government on 19 June 1812. Judicial consultations Vol.748 PP.3694-3706.

APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL COLLECTOR

The system hitherto introduced in the administrative affairs of Malabar, and the total failure of those systems in accomplishing the establishment of the British authority on a respectable footing, a radical change in the form of government had become necessary. The information of the sources of revenue were not sufficiently authentic, the establishment of its collection was heavy and burdensome, the system of acquiring information was too confused, and a want of practical knowledge and experience too generally prevailed in every branch of its administration.² To remedy these inconveniences, the government restored the revenue and civil authority upon one principal collector, and his assistants. Major Macleod, as noted earlier assumed office as the first Principal Collector of Malabar. 'He was directed to acquire information from local researches, instead of attempting to derive it from the voluminous records of the commission.'³

2. General Report of the Board of Revenue to the Honourable the governor in council sent home to the court of Directors. Dated 10th Oct. 1801. Vol. 7 Para. 384. (Hereafter General Report)

3. Ibid. 30 January 1802. Vol. 7 Para. 384.

MAJOR MACLEOD (1801-1803)

Assuming charge as the first principal collector on 1st October 1801, Major Macleod embarked upon the task of disarming the province, and quell the rebels who were engaged in an antagonism against the government and revenue officials. On 30 January 1802 he made a proclamation to this effect, warning the offenders with severe punishments.⁴ Whatever positive result he must have aimed at, it was not achieved on account of his next steps of reforms. His ill-advised reforms of revision of exchange rate and framing a new revenue account had created so adverse a result in the province that the clamorous rebellion that followed in whole the province compelled his resignation in March 1803. The revision of exchange rate of several coins current in the province created much havoc among the revenue payees. The step he took to frame a new revenue account based on a new assessment, of course, expected to bring an augmented income to the government. But 'the assessment was unequal and defective'⁵. When these two reforms together fell upon

4. Letter from the collector 30 January 1802, Logan, Treaties Pt. II No. CCXXXIV.

5. Warden 'Report on the Revenue system in Malabar 16 June 1813' (Calicut-1916) P.8. (Hereafter warden Report 1813).

the shoulder of the ordinary cultivator they rose enmass against the government.

REVISION IN EXCHANGE RATE OF COINS

The Peasants of Malabar used to pay their revenue in Fanam, but the revenue accounts of government were kept in star pagodas, a coin which was not current in the province, and rupees on the prevailing exchange rate of the coins. Mr. Macleod tried to correct this unrealistic system by a revision in exchange rate. Accordingly on 31 August 1802, he made a proclamation, to be effected from 15 september 1802, to this effect⁶. The proclamation fixed the exchange rates of 23 current coins in the treasury as they are rated and exchanged in the province of Coimbatore. But the result was more unrealistic and unscientific. The data relied on were erroneous as it was proved later.⁷ Now the Peasants had to pay more fanams or Annas or other Malabar coins to pay their revenue. The Malabar Fanams, Anna and various other coins in currency were devalued in comparison to the star Pagodas or rupees which were the basis of government accounts. When the value of each coin was

6. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No.CCXXXVI.

7. Logan Vol.I P. 534.

determined the quantity of gold, content in each was not considered. Hence this made a lot of trouble to the ryots, especially to the tenants. The value of each item of coin before and after the revision was considerably changed. See Table 4-1 for details.

Table 4-1

Value of coins before and after revision

	Value of star Pagodas in gold Fanam	Value of Rupees in Silver Annas	Value of star Pagodas in Virarayafanam	Value of Rupee in silver Fanam
before revision	5 7/8 gold Fanam	14 Silver Annas and 1 Kanny	12 1/4 Viraraya Fanam	5 Silver Fanam
after revision	7 gold Fanam	15 Silver Annas	More than 12 1/4 Viraraya Fanam	More than 5 Silver Fanam

So his attempt to regulate the anomalies became more hazardous and burdensome to the people. It hit hard on every class of inhabitants. The value of Malabar coins fell considerably. Gold Fanam fell from 3 1/2 to 4 7/32 Per rupee. Silver fanam from 5 to 5 1/2 per rupee. Gold fanam fell from 12 1/2 to 14 49/64 per star pagodas while silver Fanam fell from 17 1/2 to 19 1/4 per star pagodas.⁸ The discriminative result

8. A.P. Abdu Rahiman. Macleod Paimaish and the Malabar Rebellion of 1803. Journal of Kerala studies. Vol. IV March 1977 P.68.

was that when the peasants had to pay 20% more in gold fanam or 10% more in Silver Fanam, they got only the old value for their produce.⁹ For more details on this see table 4-2.¹⁰ The new exchange rate coupled the sufferings of the people when it was accompanied a revision in revenue assessment to the loss of ryots. The revision of rate of exchange had two fold result against the ryots. When it interfered with the bazar rate by correcting rate of exchange, it did not make any deduction to the ryot in equivalent to the loss occasioned by the difference between the old and the new rates¹¹. Besides the ryots paid in Fanam and they were carried to account as Pagodas at too high a rate so that the nominal revenue in starpagodas was higher than the real revenue in Fanam¹².

REVISION OF REVENUE

Next Major Macleod endeavoured for a hasty revision of the assessment. Considering experience and

9. Ibid

10. Ibid P.70

One Star Pagoda	=	3 1/2 Rupees
One Rupees	=	12 Madras fanam
One Madras fanam	=	80 kaas

11. Thackary's Report P.15.

12. Ibid

Table 4-2
Macleod's Valuation of Coins

Coin	Macleod's Valuation			Correct Valuation		
	Madras fanam	Kaas	Anna	Madras fanam	Kaas	Anna
1. Spanish Dollar	23	22	-	26	10	11
2. Bombay Rupee (old)	12	-	-	12	46	12
3. " " (new)	12	-	-	11	48	-
4. Surat Rupee	12	-	-	12	12	13
5. Star Pagoda	42	-	-	42	-	-
6. Bengal gold mahur	180	29	-	191	26	10 --- 100
7. Sindakey Pagoda	91	44	6	90	17	77 --- 100
8. Old Ikkeri Pagoda	45	44	3	44	11	10 --- 100
9. New Ikkeri Pagoda	45	44	3	44	73	11 --- 100
10. Bahadury Pagoda	45	62	3	44	57	77 --- 100
11. Bombay Gold Mohur	165	65	-	177	26	66 --- 100
12. Venetian Pagoda	53	26	5 - 8	54	35	55 --- 100
13. 14 - Viraraya Fanam 4	42	-	-	42	-	-
14. Stamboory	45	62	-	51	65	85 --- 100
15. Porto Novo Pagoda	35	-	-	33	55	55 --- 100

ability of the collector in his former service, the actual share derivable to the government from the gross produce and the rate of assessment to be believed on all the taxable products, were left to his descretion.¹³ Accordingly the Menons of the several districts were assembled and were given instruction of inspecting their circle for making up the accounts of Jumma. But the Menons were 'generally very unexpert at accounts and particularly deficient in having details because they were not in the habit of being called on for any.'¹⁴ 'On account of their inability and ignorance for the work, in Cotiote, Chirakkal and Randattara these Menons were recalled from their circles, without completing the accounts of individual ryots. Still, these Menon's accounts were largely relied on for making a general conclusion of the resources of the revenue of the province. Macleod says 'I am convinced that through ignorance, inattention and fraud, very great inequalities still exist which can not be corrected but by an actual survey'¹⁵.

But his belief that the revenue collection from Malabar was far short compared to the other parts

13. General Report 20 February 1804 vol.9. Para.504.

14. Macleod's Report .P.3

15. Ibid

of the company's territory, and therefore, it could very well demand 35% to 40% of the total produce¹⁶, made him to proceed with the revision work for an higher revenue. So he ordered for a survey in the districts. The survey in a haste, was completed within 40 days by the Parabutties (Village officers)¹⁷. On the basis of this survey a new revenue was imposed. He does not explain the detailed principles of this assessment but says that the aggregate revenue is much less than 1/3 of the gross produce¹⁸. His comparison of the revenue for the year 1801, (Rs.2008179) the first year of direct collection with that of Tipu's Jumma in the year 1792 (Rs.2009655) found a decrease in the former for Rs.1476.¹⁹ 'It is reasonable to assume that the value given in the shedule was inflated'²⁰. Actually the present year's revenue under the collector was far better than all other years. It exceeded Star Pagodas 118267-0-0 than the proceeding year's revenue

16. A.P. Abdu Rahiman (op. cit.) P.65; and P.N. Chopra History of South India Vol.III (New Delhi 1979) P.149.

17. C.A. Innes and F.B. Evans 'Malabar and Anjengo'. (Madras 1908). P.314

18. Graeme's Report P.38.

19. Macleod's Report. P2.

20. K.N. Panikkar. (op. cit.) P.5. note.21

by the commissioners,²¹. The actual difference was again higher due to a decrease in the charges of collection for star pagodan 70,483²². For more precision see Table 4-3.

Table 4-3

A comparative table of revenue Assessment of Macleod and the commissioners'

		Star pagodan
1.	Jumma for the year 1801 (Fusly 1210) by the commissioners =	5,51,125-9-59
2.	Current year's Jumma by Macleod =	6,69,392-34-32
3.	Difference =	1,18,267-24-53
4.	A decrease in the civil charges for the current year =	70,483-0-0
5.	So Total difference =	1,88,750-24-53

The balance of collection in the current year (24,561-14-25 star pagodas) if reduced from the total difference, the collector was able to collect star pagodas 164189-12-28 more than the previous year and it was the highest collection in the first 25 years of company administration.

21. Macleod's Report. P.2

22. General Report Vol.7. dt. 9 October 1802. Para. 188.

Moreover he calculated that Tipu had transferred Malabar in the year 1792, with a revenue assessment for cantarai pagodas 944765-5-4²³ and the same can be collected in the present year also. But during the administration of the commissioners the above Jumma was never collected completely and every year there was an accumulation of arrears, due to the inability of the ryots to pay their revenue.

Moreover in the present year the company government had no income from the articles like tobacco, timber, pepper etc. as their monopoly was established later only. So the decrease would not be really less than the former years. When the monopoly amounts also were added to the revenue in later year it was found a very high increase in the total collection. Hence, he thought, 1/3 of the gross produce must form the government share of land revenue for the year. Therefore, to assess rice field, he estimated 35% to 40% and the garden produces at about 1/3 of the average value of the gross produce²⁴. The average produce of a

23. A difference can be noted in this amount for 8,000 C.P. in comparison to the item in Chapter 3, Table 3-1 in which C.P. 9,36,765 is given, It does not include the Coorg Rajas's tribute for C.P.8000. So $9,36,765 + 8000 = 9,44,765$. C.P.

24. Macleod's Report. P.4

coconut tree was estimated at 42 nuts²⁵ while arecanut for 200 nuts, jack tree for 12 jack fruits and pepper 7 1/2 pounds of pepper.²⁶

The accounts were 'calculated by the parra of seed, or the extent of land required to sow a parra'²⁷, but not by real survey. The return from seed sown were so vague and false that in many situations they were not more than six folds and in others 15 folds.²⁸. Macleod was of the opinion that the number of plantations shown in the accounts is much less than the real number existing. But he himself agrees that, 'It was the practice of Menons and Parabutties to 'insert the whole plantations of one farmer as productive, while one third only' was really productive; and the same time 'large proportion of full grown trees as unproductive' in the other farmer's land, while both are of the same sort'.²⁹.

25. (Logan gives 48 nuts Vol.I P.535).

26. Collectorate Records Vol.2311. F.81; Macleod's Report. P.6

27. This mode of calculation was done in the year 1778 under Haider's muttasuddis, Ramlings Pilla who caused a sort of inspection by computation, not by real survey. These accounts were not available as either lost or concealed; Macleod's report P.4.

28. Ibid P.4

29. Ibid P.5

Major Macleod, however, thought that the assessment of Tipu for garden lands was too high, if whole of the trees were included in the account. So he proposed comparatively a lighter rate for each of the garden plantation. See table below³⁰.

Table 4-4

Rate of garden assessment of Macleod in comparison to

Tippu Sultan's

Item	Tippu's rate F.C	Macleod's proposal F.C	Number of plantation for one rupee
Coconut tree near the coast	1-55	1-16	10
Coconut tree inland	-	1-00	12
Bettle arrack	0-45	0.30	32
pepper vine	5-50	4-00	3
Jack tree	3-13	2.00	6

With reference to the innovations and revenue arrangements Macleod proposed, the Board of Directors commented that "he had given an able summary of the abuses of the former system of government and the benefits that were likely to result from the introduction of a mode of management ... and also for

30. Ibid. PP.5-6

the complete realization of an increased revenue and reduction of charges in the valuable province'³¹. This encouragement from the government was due to Macleod's unbounded enthusiasm for an augmented revenue than the previous years. He reported that the revenue civil servants in Malabar exceeded the number absolutely required for the management of the province, hence a reduction of charges was expected. Besides he reported that though the present estimate formed from the reports of Menons shows an increase it was generally calculated to conceal a portion'³². This opinion made the court of Directors to think that under the able administration of Macleod, still an increased revenue would be yielded. The collector now proceeded with the newly revised collection. So when these two unscientific measures came accompanied with a rigid method of exaction the ryots could not pay their obligations. The result was an accumulation of arrears.

A large amount of arrears of revenue was found uncollected in the revenue accounts.³³ Mr. Macleod

31. General Report. Vol.8. dt. 9th October 1802. Para.171.

32. Macleod's Report. P.3; General Report. Vol.8. 31st January 1803. Para 177.

33. William Thackary Report (1807) P.9

Table 4-5

Arrears of revenue for the years between
fusly 1202-1210

Year	Settlement	Balance
Fusly 1202	2,64,326-9-50	46,706-25-30
" 1203	5,19,122-12-45	87,323-14-00
" 1204	3,81,286-14-20	21,169-2-19
" 1205	3,92,379-7-16	31,624-23-17
" 1206	4,02,524-3-34	10,844-15-10
" 1207	4,12,526-31-2	5,774-16-46
" 1208	4,47,548-11-41	47,524-6-44
" 1209	4,64,743-37-62	17,046-37-55
" 1210	5,08,399-23-39	31,140-41-15
	----- 37,92,856-24-24 -----	----- 3,25,841-29-72 -----
Average	4,21,428-21-29	36,204-26-52

found it 'impossible to trace the ryots who ought to pay this long balance of arrears'. He, therefore, thought it expedient not to alarm the inhabituals for such a distant arrears, and in case they are asked for, 'will affirm that they paid off all balance as there are no details or documents to guide enquiries',³⁴.

REBELLION IN 1803

The new assessment ordered by Macleod put heavy burden on the tenants as the calculation of the

34. Macleod's Report P.7

actual produce and the snap-survey were really unscientific³⁵. As the powerful landlords had resisted the inspection the Paymaish account was framed not on actual inspection of land but at the district katcherry. The instructions given to the village officers were too elaborate to executive their work in forty days. The result was that the lands were not only overassessed but in many instances were placed against wrong owners also³⁶. A comparison of his calculation of average produce of various trees with that of Mr.Rickard's and Mr.Graeme's would explain well the excess in his assessment.

Table 4-6

Estimate of average produce of various trees, by Mr.Macleod in comparison with Mr.Rickard's and Mr.Graeme's.

Item	Macleod	Rickwards	Graeme
Coconut	48	19	About 25
Arecanut	200	126	About 150
Jack Fruit	12	5	
Pepper	7 1/2 Ibs	6/10 Ibs	

35. A.P. Abdu Rahiman (op.cit.) P.66

36. Collectorate Records. (Revenue) Vol.2311. F.80

C.A. Innes writes "He estimated the annual produce of a coconut and arecanut tree at the high average of 48 and 200 nuts respectively. Starting with these initial errors, he endeavoured with the help of the Parabutties or village officers to make a survey of the district within 40 days. The time allowed for the purpose was ludicrously small; the Parabutties were as corrupt as they were incompetent, and the resulting accounts were rediculously false. Actual produce was overestimated, produce was assessed that existed only in the imagination of the Parabutties, and assessments were imposed on the wrongman. Not content with revising the assessments, rerevised also the rate of exchange and the unfortunate cultivator, when he paid into the treasury his heavy assessments in Fanams, found that owing to the revised table of exchange a balance was still due from him'.³⁷ Still Mr.Macleod pursued with his aim with the opinion that 40% of gross produce could be collected from the lands where expenses of cultivation is not so high. If that principle was applied, says Rickards, 'agriculture would no longer be an object worth pursuing',³⁸.

37. C.A. Innes and F.b.Evans 'Malabar and Anjengo (Madras 1908) P.314.

38. Collectorate Records (revenue) Vol.2311.F.82

In short, these measures of Macloed made resentments of the inhabitants more blazing and the mass in general rose in revolt throughout the province. In Wynad the kurichiars rose first, followed by the ryots in Kurumbranad by January 1803, and also in other parts of Malabar. Though the measures to crush the rebels found a temporary result, it again resumed in other parts. As a result, on 6 March 1803, Macleod made a proclamation urging the people to present their grievances in the district kutcherry by their representatives³⁹. This assurance was not heeded by the rebels, and at last, on 10th March 1803 Macleod resigned his office, and Robert Rickards was placed himself in his office.

ROBERT RICKARDS (1803-1804)

'The state of affairs in Malabar was so serious a nature' that Macleod had been deemed to transfer the civil and revenue management of the province to Mr. Robert Rickards the first judge of the court of circuit and Appeal.⁴⁰ As a measure of

39. Collectorate Records (Revenue) vol.2311. F.91; Logan 'Treaties' pt.II. No.CCXL Note.

40. Letter from Macleod to the government, 21 March 1803, General Report. Vol.9. Para 517; Logan treaties. pt.II No.CCXL.

pacification, his first act was to revoke both the reforms of Macleod soon after his taking charge as principal collector. He assured the inhabitants that the government would collect revenue on the basis of settlement in force in 1801, and would receive the same in all current coins at the rate prior to 31 August 1802⁴¹. Though Mr. Rickards' actions had very good result, and he could handle the situation well without spreading the rebellion to the southern part of Malabar, the governor in council was not pleased with Mr. Rickards assuming the civil authority of a collector. The governor remarked that 'all the acts of Mr. Rickard's administration appeared to be founded on no other principle than that of the conceding to rebels in arms all that they had been supposed to demand'⁴². To grant these extraordinary concessions was thought to be fatal to the reputation of public authority. The government severely rebuked Mr. Rickards, and asked to give a detailed report of things, through the Board of Revenue.⁴³

As a reversal of things again would make the situation further worse, and 'the revocation of the act

41. Collectorate Records Vol.2310 F.4

42. General Report - Vol.9 Para 517

43. Ibid para 516-17

already done might entirely dissolve the civil government', the government asked the district authority 'to suffer every inconvenience from the immediate violence of insurgents until the military could arrive'.⁴⁴ Mr. Rickards was instructed not to make further concession than those in the proclamation, without the previous order of the government, and it was also directed that he 'should be instructed with the principles of administration of the revenue and civil government in malabar'.⁴⁵ The primary reason for all these problems lies in the time factor for communication between the district authority and the government at Bengal.

The government, however, later confirmed Mr. Rickard's actions and approved the terms of his proclamation. Matters began to improve slowly, because of Mr. Rickard's timely concession and readiness to look into matters. In the north for the inhabitants of Randathara he proposed a fresh and moderate revenue⁴⁶. On 16 April 1803 Rickards appointed Mr. Burdock Brown to make a new survey in Randatara district with the instruction of a lower assessment and the inhabitants

44. Ibid para.517.

45. Ibid Para.518-19

46. Logan 'Treatise' Pt-II No.CCXLI

were asked to represent their grievances, if any, to the subcollector of the division.⁴⁷ Randatarra was already assessed comparatively less than other parts of the province, and Mr. Brown had a large estate in the district leased for a long period, with large concessions.⁴⁸

In his letter to Mr. Brown on 16 April 1803 Mr. Rickards specified the following rates as applicable to the 1/3 produce of revenue of the district. 1). Coconut, 30 reas or 7 nuts per tree, commuted at Rs.12 per 1000 nuts. 2). Betlenut 9 reas or about 36 nuts per tree at 240 reas per 1000 nuts. 3). Jack 1/3 gross produce. Here the assessment, was by and large, the same to other parts of the district, while the rate of commutation was comparatively lower. So they could make the people calm against the government. In the south also Mr. Rickards tried certain changes. In his report to the Board of Revenue dated 17 June 1803, Rickard, recommended for a new paymaish taking the rent as the rule of guidance on which to fix the company's revenue.⁴⁹ He proposed that "the pattas or leases

47. Logan, 'Treaties' Pt.II. No.CCXLI.

48. See chapter III Page 160-1 for more details

49. Robert Rickards, Report on the Administration of Malabar District' 20 Feb. 1804 (Calicut 1907). P.8. (Hereafter Rickards' Report).

should be granted to Jenmakar (landlords), on ascertainment of the revenue from lands already in the state of cultivation,... and to be immediately confirmed because the security it seems calculated to inspire against future innovations, is likely, not only to produce general satisfaction, but to promote, in an increased degree, that spirit of agricultural industry, which is natural to the inhabitants of Malabar, and it is from increased cultivation alone that government ought to expect increased revenue"⁵⁰. The governor responded in favour of this policy and recommended the system of decennial lease, as adopted in Bengal. But, since this was a basic change from the present system, the governor general's consent was awaited⁵¹.

'VILACHAL-MENI PATTAM'

With a view to remedy the extreme inequality in assessment and to establish some fixed principle on which to base a new assessment Mr. Rickards tried to ascertain from the chief jenmis what mode of sharing of produce could be most acceptable to them. Towards this purpose a meeting of 116 substantial jenmis (including Rajas, Namboodiris, Mookistans) was called at Calicut

50. Ibid P.8

51. Minutes of governor 22 April 1804 in Ibid. P.15

on 29 June 1803)⁵². Accordingly, on rice grounds after deducting from the gross produce the seed and exactly the same for expense of cultivation, the cultivator was allotted 1/3 of what remains (net produce), leaving the residue to be shared by the government and the jenmi in the proportion of 6/10 and 4/10 respectively. On garden lands, 1/3 of gross produce to the kudiyan and the remaining to be divided equally between the government and the jenmakar⁵³. It was also decided that this equation to be permanently fixed on all lands cultivated, and those would be cultivated in future, at the approbation of the Board of Revenue. In short, the company government exacted 40% of the net produce from wet lands, a share higher than that of cultivator's and landlords and more than that from garden lands.⁵⁴ Generally 1/3 of the gross produce was 'deemed sufficient for the Kudian'. The money rates of assessment was to be fixed by the subcollectors under a consideration to local value of the several articles. The agreement was signed by all the 116 principal jenmis.

52. Paper signed by the Rajas, Namboodiries, Mookistans and principal landlords on 29 June 1803. BRC, 1803 No.61, Vol.352; Logan. Treaties. Pt.II No.CCXLI - CCXLIII.

53. Ibid; Rickards' Report P.1.

54. T.C. Varghese (op. cit.) P.25

But in his next report on 20 February 1804, Rickards proposed a change in Pepper assessment. The information he acquired from various channels proved that the quantity of pepper produced in Malabar had been in a state of decline, owing to a want of due encouragement to the preservation of existing vines, or the cultivation of new ones. Therefore, it was proposed only 1/6 of the gross produce instead of 1/3 or for an exemption of the vines from tax for a moderate inland duty exclusive of the established export duty at the several sea ports.⁵⁵ Later conceding to the proposal, the governor remarked that 'Malabar is said to have yielded formerly 20,000 candies. The estimated amount at present does not exceed 6000 candies'. Therefore every encouragement ought to be given to increase its production.⁵⁶ But the reason for this decrease was mainly from the inattendance and negligence by the cultivators in the wake of previous rebellions throughout the province. In regard to the principle of pepper assessment Rickards himself had opined in the former report (June 1803) as 'the rate is too high'. But as the landlords had acquiesced in the assessment he did not feel himself

55. Rickards' Report (1804) P.9

56. Minute of Governor Bentick. 22 April 1804. in Ibid P.15

at liberty to decrease the share of government,⁵⁷. Here a remarkable point is, why the landlords were ready to pay more than the government expected.⁵⁸

The total jumma of the province for fusly 1212 (1803) including the land revenue, licences, customs etc. was star pagoden 624033-14-50. Out of this by December 1803 star pagoden 5,64,306-29-75 was collected leaving a balance for star pagodan 59,726-26-55.⁵⁹

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS

For the convenience of administration, enlarging the area of the former circles the former collector had already divided the whole province into four sub-divisions namely Calicut, the principal division, Tellicherry the central, Cannanore, the northern, and Palaghat the southern divisions.⁶⁰ In the absence of village as units of management, some other aggregate had to be adopted, and civil officials appointed. The social units like 'tara', 'gramam' or 'cheri' etc. were found to be too small and did not

57. Ibid P.14

58. See reference to this subject in Page 233-35

59. General Report vol.9 Para.535

60. General Report.30 January 1802. Vol.7 Para.90

make any clear cut territorial division. There had been a general constitution of small subdivisions called 'desam'⁶¹ and its head called 'desavazhi'. This also was thought too small, while the Mysorean administrative division called 'hobli' was unsuited. The first collectors, therefore, adopted a sort of 'Parish' grouping called 'amisham' (amshum) for each of which there being a headmen and an accountant called Menon. The original 'nad' was also made use of as a sort of larger division or 'taluk', with its naduvazhi (executive head) and its 'deshadhikari' or (accountant).

Robert Rickards in his second report submitted on 20 February 1804 recommended for a reform in the civil establishments of the district. He stressed for an intimate knowledge of the people, their custom, language etc. and a free intercourse with the natives by the civil officials in the province.

He recommended 'the employment of respectable natives of Malabar, in preference to foreign Brahmins, who have under all past administrations, been very

61. Under the perumals there were 'desam' divisions and its head 'Desavazhis'. This desam was experimented by circle collectors with its head as 'Parabutties'.

generally called to fill the situation subordinate to European Agents, to prove another source of conciliation and attachment'.⁶² 'The same time European Agents required to be established as generally as possible over every branch of administration to control them', he stressed.

Besides the principal collector and an Assistant for whole the province with increased power on the subordinate ones, there were four subcollectors in the 4 divisions as Northern, central, southern and eastern.⁶³ Cochin and its dependencies had been put under one Assistant. The appointment of Assistants under each subcollector was found as a future scope for a succession of young Europeans to be furnished to the district later.

The governor, praising the ability of Mr. Burdock Brown, recommended to confirm him in the superintendence of the customs upon the whole line of the sea coast of Malabar.⁶⁴ Mr. Rickards was of the

62. Rickards' Report P.6.

63. Already there was a division in a different manner under sub collectors. But later the posts were kept vacant due to the expence of salary (250 pagodas for each) being the objection. Now the salary was reduced to S.P.200 per month for each.

64. Rickards' Report P.14

opinion that 'Mr. Brown may have a fixed salary for his trouble, instead of a percentage on the collection' of custom⁶⁵. But the governor was so much pleased for his service to the government, and for the duty he was assigned to, a commission 12% on the net amount of his collection was allowed.⁶⁶

In 1804 Rickards found the native rajas and chiefs still powerful enough. The judicial authority, though had been relinquished formerly in favour of the company, 'was still virtually in their hands'. This was found as an hurdle to the effective implementation of company reforms in the country. In this context, he viewed the Malikhana allowance to them. Under an efficient administration, the government expected, an increased revenue, and a proportional increase would be necessary in Malikhana allowance also if the 5% as calculated on the Jumma of the year 1801 (976MS) was continued. So the government fixed the amount on the present sum on 5 May 1804⁶⁷.

65. Ibid P.12

66. The Board of Revenue to the principal collector 5 May 1804 Ibid P.1.

67. Ibid PP.6-8

THOMAS WARDEN (1804-1816)

Mr. Rickards' recommendations were approved by the government and Mr. Warden was appointed as the third principal collector on 10th March 1804. Mr. Warden appointed Messrs. J. Drummond to the southern, T.H. Baber to the northern, J. Pearson to the central and J. Wilson to the eastern divisions as sub collectors on a salary of 200 pagodas each. The Board of Revenue informed the new collector on 5 May 1804 to make proclamation on the principle of revenue assessment, in reference to the former collectors report. The same was soon fixed to be carried out in the province⁶⁸.

JENMI PAYMAISH OF 1805

The year 1805 was important in the history of Malabar revenue, for it was in this year that Mr. Thomas Warden tried to introduce a uniform system of revenue assessment for the whole province, based on a new assessment.⁶⁹ The measures hitherto (1805) adopted had been fragmented and of local application. The revenue assessment and its collection were not uniform and systematic as it was effected by the commissioners and

68. Thackery's Report (1807) P.9

69. Logan vol.I.P.676

collectors with various Rajas and chiefs at different occasions in different methods and rates based on the assessment of Tipu Sultan. So even after 13 years of the company administration the province was still found standing on the first day of its revenue history. Therefore, the first step of Mr. Warden was to carry out the orders of the government revising revenue assessment proposed by his predecessor Mr. Rickards.⁷⁰ On 21 July 1805 he called all the proprietors of land to send in under their respective signatures, a detailed account of their landed property as the number of rice fields they possessed, their names, extent, and net rent and a similar account of their garden lands with the number of assessable trees, past bearing, not bearing, young, etc.⁷¹ The object in view was, first to obtain the name of every field in the country, so as to serve a ground for an actual survey, and secondly, to obtain the accurate unnumerical accounts of the assessable⁷² trees, to regulate the garden assessments. The statements thus obtained are known as the Janmi paymaish of 1805 since the accounts were rendered by

70. Details of which is elaborately related in pages 220-23.

71. Warden's Report 1813 P.8; Logan Vol.II. Appendix XV.

72. Ibid P.8

the Jenmkars themselves. A proclamation was given in the province on this effect on 21 July 1805⁷³.

Mr.Warden thought that the proprietors would be induced to be accurate in those two item, because any falsity in either, was easily detectable, and they knew that the government assessment was only to be fixed on the rent payable to the proprietor.⁷⁴ 'But he was not successful',⁷⁵. On receipt of the returns, in certain places, the assessment were found to fall short of the proper proportion of 50% of the pattam. In such case it was raised, but excesses similarly ascertained were not reduced'.⁷⁶

HINDUWI PAYMAISH ACCOUNT (1806-10)

Besides the arrangement above refered to Mr.Warden also arranged through his sub-collectors 'to ascertain the actual produce on different qualities of soil in different parts of the province, with a view of obtaining data for a classification of the soils in

73. Logan II. Appendix XV.

74. Warden's Report 1813 P.8

75. Powel P.179

76. Logan I. P.629

every taluk. Being furnished with all these documents, Mr.Warden took necessary measures for commencing on the laborious work of surveying the rice lands. He was assisted in this by the Board of Revenue with all the valuable documents, and by the collector of coimbatore, who sent him a number of surveyers, all foreign to this country.⁷⁷ They entered on their duty in the year 1806, and completed the work by 1810. Unfortunately, further works did not progress. The several changes which afterwards took place, brought with them such an accumulation of duty and trouble, with diminished means of getting through them, being left almost entirely to natives assistance, that the new assessment with everything connected with it was laid aside, and the revenue of the province was continued to be collected on the commissioner's jumma of 1800-01)⁷⁸.

Now complaints began to rise from some quarters, especially from the north. Mr.Warden says, 'Not a single alteration has been made by me in the land revenue jumma of the northern division of Malabar'. But Mr.Logan says that 'this was not quite correct' to say so, because, in north Malabar it was

77. Warden's Report 1813 P.9

78. Powel P.179

considerably modified as the steps taken by this account of 1805⁷⁹. Any how, the assessment was, still, much complained of. The chief cause of complaint seems to have been not so much the assessment in themselves, as the levy of them on lands that had deteriorated, and on gardens the trees of which had ceased to produce fruit, and above all, to the sale of land for arrears, to which Malabar jenmis were not accustomed.⁸⁰

Baden Powel says that 'He (Warden) was not very successful, and fellback on some earlier assessments of 1800-01, which he caused to be corrected and written out.'⁸¹ These account are said to be the best accounts yet prepared, but in certain respects they are very defective.⁸² Being written by Maratha Karnams they are called the Hindwi paymaish account or Alava paymaish account.

In the jenmi paymaish accounts, which are the accounts rendered by the jenmakars themselves to Mr.Warden in 1805, the number of sowable parras of seed, in the southern Malabar exclusive palghat, was

79. Logan. Vol.I PP.684, 695

80. Powel PP.179.180

81. Powel P.179

82. Ibid

18,65,040 being 11,60,395 parahs or 164% more than the number of parahs, in the commissioners' (1793) report (704645 parahs) and 10,82,846 parahs, or 138% more than the number shown, in the accounts of 1801 (7,82,194 parahs).⁸³ The estimated produce of the jenmi paymaish accounts was 1,12,62,125 parahs, while the commissioner's report (1793) estimated it at 70,46,450 parrahs with a difference of 4215675 or 59%. So this high difference in both is unaccountable⁸⁴. Either of the accounts (Jenmi, paymaish or commissioners of 1793) must be exagerrated. Graeme says, " If three Fanams were applied to every parah⁸⁵ sown for all the crops according to the jenmi paymaish account, the revenue of rice lands in the southern districts, exclusive of Palghat, which was in 1801 Rupees 6,83,780.00 would be exceeded by Rupee 9,14,825.00 or about 133 3/4% percent and would be Rs.1598605."⁸⁶ It was quite impossible to imagine that the difference of revenue which appears as derivable from the jenmi paymaish account could increase from an extension of cultivation from that

83. Graeme's Report PP.38-9.

84. Ibid. P.39

85. This was the average amount prevelent in the districts.

86. Ibid. P.39

time to the present or that it would have remained concealed to this extent.

The same error is apparent on a comparison with the number of trees brought forward in the Jenmi's paymaish accounts and the number entered in the commissioner's report⁸⁷. Mr. Graeme concludes that the commissioner's accounts might be wrong as it was founded without any survey, but based on the accounts of the Mysoreans, and the same time the present one being accounts rendered by the jenmakars themselves would be accurate without question. But still the assessment was found to be oppressive. Complaints of over assessment or unequal assessment was still found in parts of the provins. To answer the question why this happend again (?), we have to see a further analysis of the present accounts.

JENMIS' ACCOUNT HOW FAR CORRECT

The produce of a land and its distribution can more accurately be rendered by the actual cultivator of the land, than the proprietor who is less aware of the conditions, expences, productivity and other aspects of theland. So the government's reliability of the

87. Graeme's Report PP.39-41; R.M.J.C Para 39.

accounts of seeds, produce etc. furnished by the jenmis alone is questionable. The jenmi is always interested to see an augmented produce, which only would afford a larger share to the government as well as to himself, from the pattam share. So there will be a tendency on the part of the jenmis showing an excessive produce. When the share to the government was collected generally from the tenants, the already fixed pattam and its subsequent sharing between the government and the jenmi will not be affected in any circumstances, because the usual method of assessment was a certain parah of seed produce a certain parrah, and based on this anticipated out put their share was fixed. An increased production was an unlikely and rare instance but a reduced production was quite frequent due to various casualties like draught, flood, cattles overrunning, diseases etc. Since the government's and jenmi's shres are already fixed, they are least affected by these. So an augmented produce by this jenmis account, is not a wonder.⁸⁸ Warden says 'they

88. For example, a field of 10 parahs seed was calculated usually to produce 100 parahs. In this, after deducting $10+10=20$ parrahs for the seed and expences, the remaining 80 parrahs (net produce) was divided in a fixed principle. (That is, $1/3 = 26 \frac{2}{3}$ parahs to the cultivator, and of the residue $(2/3) \frac{6}{10} = 32$ parrahs to the government and $4/10 = 21 \frac{1}{3}$ parahs to the jenmi). In this equation a land of 10 parah seed had a fixed pattam (rent) of

(jenmis) know that the government assessment was only to be fixed on the rent payable to the proprietor'.⁸⁹ Rickards also felt that 'the rate was too high', but as the landlords had acquiesced in the assessment he did not feel himself at liberty to decrease the share of government'.⁹⁰

Shortly, the reliability of the jenmi's account for a perfect system of revenue assessment in the province would be, no doubt, a failure, because the interest of the jenmi and that of the government are mutually protected in these circumstances. Mr. Graeme, on his 'verumpattam assessment', tried to depend the jenmi paymaish account for the gross produce and net produce of the lands. But these statements were found by him on examination to give in most cases grossly false accounts of the rent received by jenmis'.⁹¹

53 $\frac{1}{3}$ parras for the government and the jenmi together. This was converted to money on a fixed rate. In one year if the produce is less than anticipated due to any of the natural casualties, things will change totally to a loss for the cultivator. For example, one year 10 parras of seed produce only 80 parras. The net production will be $(80 - 10 - 10 =)$ 60 parras. From this 53 $\frac{1}{3}$ parras goes as pattam. The cultivator gets only 6 $\frac{2}{3}$ parras, because the former two parties share is fixed already. Naturally, a jenmi is tempted to give an augmented produce in their accounts.

89. Warden's Report 1813 P.8

90. Rickards' Report P.14

91. Graeme's Report. Para. 1131; Logan Vol I .P.667

Complaints from proprietors were of different nature. Of this unequal assessment was quite repeatedly complained of. There were lands in Malabar cultivated either by labourers or by the landowners themselves (but not given on any other tenures for cultivation). In the jenmi paymaish account, it was probable that, the accounts rendered by such proprietors must have shown less productivity and a reduced seed for cultivation. This was because, they were the proprietors as well as the tenants. In this situation lands situated nearby will be assessed at a different rate, and there arrives occasion for complaint of unequal assessment.

WILLIAM THACKERAY'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The introduction of jenmi paymaish account of Mr. Warden was often complained of from various quarters. In this context the comments and recommendations of Mr. William Thackeray, who studied the revenue affairs of the province and submitted a report on 7 September 1807, would be highly significant for reference.

He was of the opinion that "their (jenmis) account of seed and produce are no doubt false", and, therefore, must be checked by survey by examining the

agreements between landlord and tenant by actual experiment, by sowing and reaping certain fields."⁹² A complete measurement and survey of the paddy lands of the country was found necessary because there was no register of lands. Mr.Thackery was of the opinion that the uncertain estimate of produce by seed sown must be set aside for an acre of land for assessment. But for him a survey was more the business of the proprietor than the sovereign.

He estimated revenue from the rice fields of whole Malabar at 3,40,000 pagodas on the basis of 6/10 of the pattam. He wanted to ascertain this by a survey and if found correct, 'ought to divide the whole land tax first upon the district, then up on village, and next up on individual'⁹³ So the revenue officers should proceed with the principal inhabitants to divide the assessment or rather the inhabitants ought to be left to assess themselves so that it be done fairly'. His reasoning was that 'the people of highly assessed districts will, therefore, point out any frauds which

92. William Thackery. 'A report on the Revenue affairs of Malabar and Canara. 7th September 1807. (Calicut, 1911) (Here after Thacker's Report) P.10

93. Ibid

may have been practiced in other districts to conceal the true rental'.⁹⁴.

But this seems to be quite strange a reasoning as it would bring more frauds and troubles. To quote his words, "The individual proprietors of each village will endeavour to relieve themselves by throwing the burden on their neighbours, they will tell each others rents, and by a proper use of all this information the collector may be enabled to equalise the land tax"⁹⁵. This 'trial and errors' methods, of course, seems to be highly hazardous and creating more complications in a society which was already in a turmoil. If this method was followed, leading men in each district may countrive to ease themselves by shifting part of the burden on their simpler neighbours. But Thackery refuted any such possibility saying that "the activity of the revenue servants will prevent any abuses".⁹⁶

Regarding garden land assessment he opined that Mr.Rickard's assessment was unduly lower than the ryots admitted their ability to pay. Therefore he said 'as the inhabitants will always conceal a great deal of

94. Ibid. P.11

95. Ibid.

96. Ibid

the produce it may not be necessary to mitigate the rate,⁹⁷. For him 'the excellent principle adopted in respect to the rice fields had to be extended to garden lands' also⁹⁸. He calculated that the total garden produce of the province would yield a revenue of 1,20,000 pagodan if it was assessed even at 1/4 or 1/5 of the gross produce⁹⁹.

As regards to pepper Mr.Thackery had quite reasonable suggestions. He proposed that pepper should not be directly taxed since any direct tax upon the produce may act as a check on the production of the article.¹⁰⁰ He said, 'Even a 1/10 of tythe on some valuable productions in England led to the interference of Legislature as it led to the farmers to keep their lands under grass for pasture.¹⁰¹ So either 1/2 or 1/3 or even 1/6 of tax on the gross produce may discourage its growth. So he proposed only a land tax, and the peasant may do whatever he pleases for cultivation. Since the product is largely for

97. Ibid

98. Ibid P.12

99. Ibid

100.Ibid

101.Ibid.

exportation purpose he recommended a duty on its exportation, than a heavy tythe on pepper.

His recommendation for an exaction of revenue arrears also was very strange. He said, "In case of a defaulter's estate sold was not enough to meet the amount, the balance be taken from the whole village and if it exceeds 10% of the whole village revenue, the balance be taken from the district it occurs. This type of recommendations and policies of the government and its officials show their particular interest only in the exaction of revenue other than solutions to these matters. In case any such solutions were suggested the executing authority was averse to these recommendations. For example, William Thackery found the rate of exchange of currency oppressive to the inhabitants. So he said, 'the amount of the land tax should be calculated in Veraray Fanam, rupees and star pagodas'. Otherwise 'the consequence is that the revenue is nominally higher than it is in reality',¹⁰². Unfortunately, this recommendation fell into the deaf ears of the government.

102. Ibid P.15

PAZHASSI REVOLT

Being a rich land of pepper and cardamom, Wynad was an attraction to the company servants. According to the treaty of Seringapatam 3 talooks (of revenue 40,001-2-10 $\frac{3}{4}$ canterai pagodas), namely Kudaroor (Kathirur) Patchey (Pazhassi) and Cootyary (Kuttiadi), which were part of the Kottayam kingdom were ceded to the company.¹⁰³ But Wynad was not specifically mentioned in the treaty eventhough it had formed part of Kottayam before the Mysorean occupation of Malabar. Therefore, when the commissioners deputed a revenue officer to Wynad according to the instruction from the governor general in April 1795, the Bombay government did not approve this as it might provoke Tipu against them. The commissioners, hence, wrote to the Madras government requesting them to secure the area for the company negotiating with Tipu.¹⁰⁴

Sir John shore acknowledging the disputed status of Wynad informed the Bombay government that as Tipu did not make any claim to the two districts of Wynad and Coorumbula "the right to them should not be

103. Logan, Treaties Pt. II No.2 P.145

104. RMJC Paras - 280-81

brought to discussion¹⁰⁵. But meantime the commissioners had instructed the Raja of Kurumbranad, who was in charge of the collection of revenue in Kottayam, to pay revenue for Wynad from the year 1795 onwards.¹⁰⁶ Kerala Varma of Kottayam family, who had made an attempt to secure the right of collecting revenue in Wynad, and had been challenging the authority of the company government was neglected. The company government started preparation to take hold of Wynad in July 1796. In December 1796 Tipu made a move again to Wynad and in March 1797 he claimed the right to collect revenue from Wynad.¹⁰⁷

As the situation was leading to much turmoil with three claims together on Wynad, the company tried for an amicable settlement with Tipu. On 3rd September 1798 the commissioners issued a proclamation recognising Tipu's right over Wynad. But by this time Pazhassi Raja had virtually took control of the area. During the IVth Mysore war he enjoyed sovereignty in Cotiote and Wynad. But the death of Tipu Sulthan in

105. Revenue Diaries of the Northern superintendent 1796. P.285

106. Ibid. PP. 281-82

107. Letter commissioners to Bombay 21 March 1797. BSP Diary No.55. PP.250-56

this war (May 1799) annexed Wynad to the company's territory¹⁰⁸. However, the final confirmation of the annexation was done only on 29th December 1803, with the Raja of Mysore.¹⁰⁹

KERALA VARMA PAZHASSI RAJA

Kerala Varma was one of the younger princes of the western branch of the Kottayam family located at pazhassi. During the Mysorean occupation he was left alone on the scene to manage the family dominions as the rest of the family and senior rajas took refuge at Travancore. So he was received the cowl as an ally of the company from the chief of Tellicherry on 4th May 1790.¹¹⁰ After the annexation of Malabar to the company, the Raja had signed a settlement with the company on 4th May 1792, by which he agreed to pay tribute from the revenue collection. For the fixation of the rate of revenue two officials from both sides were appointed.¹¹¹ Later on 29th October 1792 the tribute was fixed at Rs.20,000, and the valuation of revenue was fixed at 50% of the produce.¹¹²

108. Logan Treaties Pt.II No. CXCI

109. Ibid No.CCXLVII

110. Ibid Pt.I No.XCV

111. Aitchison, Treaties Vol.V. P.365

112. DMJC 29th October 1792. Logan, Treaties Pt.II No.XX

Soon the Raja's relation with the company became unhealthy. This is reported to be on account of the attitude of the commissioners towards the Raja and their interest in the pepper monopoly. It was conditioned by their agreement that "the pepper produced in the country should all be collected for the company"¹¹³ It was totally adverse to the interest of the raja.¹¹⁴ Shortly, the private commercial interest of the English officials rather than the long range interest of the company had influenced this decision"¹¹⁵. But another important reason for the worsening of the Raja's relation with the company was the judicial power exercised by the Raja disrespecting the company's terms of agreement.¹¹⁶

Exploiting the occasion the Kurumbranad Raja made a proposal for his co-operation and on 18 May 1793 he agreed to pay the revenue collection for the five taluks of Kottayam. The Pazhassi Raja retorted threatening to cut down all the pepper wines in

113. Ibid

114. Letter W.G. Farmer and W. Page to Robert Taylor. 31st October 1792. BRP. Vol.XIV P.191

115. Rajendran (op.cit) P.259

116. He had executed death penalty for two Mappilas against the terms of the agreement

Kottayam, if the company came to collect revenue. So the entire collection came to a stand still. The Nairs of the country supported the Raja. He claimed the revenue of Kuttiady division exclusively for expenses of his religious duties, on an alleged exemption by Tipu.¹¹⁷ Mr. Farmer conceded for this special concession, and this was kept secret enclosed in a separate paper¹¹⁸ besides other concessions agreed to. The Raja was given 1/5 of the net revenue for his personal allowance, and 1/5 for his religious ceremonies, according to the agreement signed with the commissioners on 20th December 1793.¹¹⁹ The assessment was generally light, and was found to be highly concessional. The company officials criticised this and Alexander Walker remarked that they were "effected by fear and corruption".¹²⁰ Later the governor general revoked these concessions on the ground that "they were extremely impolitic and would only lead to future disturbance"¹²¹

117. Tipu had assessed Kuttiady at 12,828 Hoons

118. T.P. Sankaran Kutty Nair, A Tragic Decade in Kerala History (Trivandrum, 1927) P.8

119. Diary of Malabar supervisor. W.G. Former 20th December 1793 Logan, Treaties, Pt.II No. LXXIV

120. Nightingale P.108

121. Letter governor general to Malabar supervisor, 28th May 1794. BSP Diary No.48 PP.516-20

As a result, engagement was again made with the Kurumbranad Raja for collection of revenue and he was given protection by the company troops. Seeing the dangerous preparation of the company, Pazhassi Raja escaped from there, and proposed for pardon. The request was conceded and was restored to his former position by colonel Dow. But the Kurmbranad Raja did not handover the order of restoration and did not give the booty the company returned to the raja. There was a lot of confusion in this occasion on account Mr.Mardock Brown's double role between the Raja and the company officials. Moreover, the disagreement among the commissioners regarding the restoration of the Raja also made things troubled.¹²² Pazhassi Raja was securing more support and allies during this period. Many peasants of Kottayam and Wynad joined him. From south a prince of Zamurin's family and the Mappila rebels of southern Malabar also encouraged in support of him. There witnessed furious warfare in parts of Wynad and the jungles became an important shelter for the Raja's force. The senior Raja who was in Travancore was recalled and was put in charge of Kottayam. Pazhazzi Raja was pardoned and a pension of Rs.2000, per annum was given.¹²³ in September 1797.

122. Nightingale. PP.115-16

123. Logan, Treaties, Pt.II. No.CXLV, CXLVII

As noted earlier, after the death of Tipu, Wynad was ceded to the company. Pazhassi Raja, had become a hero of the people of Wynad by this time. So in 1800- he again rose from slumber, with the support of people. Many of his supporters were hanged in public. This type of activities of the company government made sympathy in favour of the Raja.

Major Macleod, the principal collector of this period, issued orders disarming the district and in September 1802 he enforced a sudden enhancement of the assessment on land revenue by 20%, as referred in former pages. This again brought the public favour for the rebels. In March 1803, when whole the province rose in mass¹²⁴ the people of Wynad in general joined Pazhassi Raja against the company government. Peasants and labourers, particularly kurichiars, kurimars and kurambar supplied the fighting force to the rebels.

In early 1804 T.H. Baber took charge as sub-collector of Tellicherry. He gave general amnesty to the public, except rebels and sought peace. The force of Kolkars were organised to encounter the guerillas of Wynad jungle. On 30th November 1805 an encounter in the jungle brought to an end of Pazhassi Raja's life.

124. Logan Vol.I. P.534

So a fight began from personal grievances culminated in a popular revolt of the people of Wynad. There was, of course, certain mistaken policy of the commissioners as reason for this revolts. But it was primarily started as a restorative movement for his former position and right of revenue collection.¹²⁵

In former years the Raja and his family had given powerful support to the English company as ally of the company government. They had even sent a troop of 6000 Nair for this. Besides, he was one of the earlier princes to conclude revenue agreements with the commissioners. But when the policy of the company government was found unsatisfactory to the position and prestige of Raja he revolted. The mistakes committed by the company officials by concluding revenue agreements with wrong persons, and also the reversal of certain concessions already conceded to had made resentment in him. Moreover, he got the sympathy of the people on account of the commissioner's placement of the right on the wrong hands for revenue collection. Shortly, although the Pazhassi rebellion of Wynad, had certain reasons in the mistaken policy of the revenue

125. Kathleen Gough, Indian peasant uprisings in A.R. Desai (ed) Peasant struggles in India (Bombay 1972) P.94

officials, It was basically a restorative uprising under the Pazhassi Raja with the support of the public.

KURUCHIA REBELLION OF 1812

After suppression of Pazhassi rebellion, the Kuruchiyars and Kurumbas of Wynad were subjected to untold abuses by the company officials. The revenue officials, the judiciary and the military force of the company made their life unbearable. Their commercial contact was curtailed, the military frequently over ran their habitations devastating crops and further the revenue officials put heavy claims on their produce.

The principal collector of Malabar Thomas Warden himself testifies: "I was sufficiently convinced of their impoverished condition and induced of the scarcity of means, in some to maintain their families during the rain.¹²⁶ But strangely enough, he added to their sufferings by the new revenue settlement effected by himself.

This tribal community was very often siezed to serve as slaves by the revenue officials and Englishmen. Their refusal to work as slaves, "reached

126. Report of Thomas Warden to the President and Members of the Board of Revenue, Malabar District Records, Vol.2323, PP-116-35.

sometimes says T.H. Baber, in cruel punishments like deprivation of their caste by cutting off their lock of hair and making them eat prohibited food".¹²⁷ All these injudicious violent acts of oppression by the revenue officials were done by the knowledge of the collector Mr.Warden.

The direction of Baber, intended to prevent the abuses in the revenue administration were not at all headed by the collector who appears to have derived an inner pleasure in knowing about the misery of this brave and self-respecting tribal people. The collector had full support of the higher authorities in Madras who had their eyes fixed on more revenue. The Secretary to the Board of Revenue wrote to Mr. Warden that Baber's observations are not given much importance and some of which are obviously frivolous. The Board have often had occasion to express their 'satisfaction with your management'.¹²⁸

This Kurichiya and Kurumbra tribals, of course, had support from a few Nairs and Thiyyars of

127. T.H. Baber to the Secretary to government. 12th June 1812. Judicial consultation Vol.74 B. PP. 3694-3706.

128. Malabar District Records. Fort St. George Vol.2254. PP.237-68

the area. Some of them were affected by the wrong revenue settlements, of the company and some others were influenced by the sympathetic attitudes towards the suffering masses. The revenue officials indifference towards their sufferings enlightened them of a rebellious response.

Their religious gatherings and other occasions gave them opportunity for sharing their discontent and they rose in mass. When a well-informed section consisting of the disaffected revenue servants and village officials joined the rebels, it became a great rebellion. Their troubles and suffering were so common and hard that even rebel groups among tribals joined together for a tough fight.

The rebellion started on 25th March 1812. The rebels disarmed two revenue Kolkars who were on collection of revenue. They attacked police and committed atrocities on Englishmen. The rebellion spread all parts of Wynad. They indulged in plunder and theft. This was common in almost all Malabar rebellion. This shows their utter poverty, and that their poverty and sufferings were due to the looting company administrative system.

"The rebellion of course, called the attention of the government. But it did not try to effect much

changes in the extraordinary revenue policy. Necessity for a humane approach towards problems of poverty among the peasantry was brought to their attention. But the revenue hungry administrators little inclined for concessions. So the uprisings were neither nationalism nor patriotism, but the fury and desperation caused by the mad revenue policy pursued by the British, gave birth to these rebellions".¹²⁹ Its nature as a pure and simple peasant revolt, with no stigma of a feudal uprising attached to it, makes the Kurichya rebellion all the more important¹³⁰ in South Indian revolts.

WARDEN'S ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Warden was able to collect revenue quite regularly till 1811, complaints of over assessment started up in Kartanad district. But he refutes any ground for these complaints. He states that the complaints began to arise 'after the magistrates's (T.H. Baber) reception and transmission direct to the government of the complaint of one of the principal landholder in Kartanad'¹³¹. However, similar complaints

129. T.K. Ravindran, The Kurichya Rebellion of 1812. in Journal of Kerala Studies. Vol.III Sept-December 1976. .P.543.

130. Ibid. P.544

131. Thomas Warden Report on the land assessment in Malabar, 20th April 1815.(Calicut, 1916) P.9 (Hereafter Warden Revenue Report 1815)

through out the district was followed saying that they are unable to pay the assessment, and they had now sold everything for paying revenue, which could not be continued again. Except Cotiote and Chirakal all other northern districts have joined them now. Warden says that "The inhabitants of Kartanad have less reason to complain of the present assessment than those of any other district".¹³² He posed a counter question to those who complain of over-assessment and a subsequent sale of land that 'how could property find a purchaser if it was over-assessed (?) and could property find a purchaser if it was unknown what encumbrance existed on such property (?)¹³³.

Strangely enough, the real reason for over assessment on certain fields occassioned in this land transfer itself. Since the revenue assessment of certain field of a jenmi is shown on the whole of the land, after the assessment they may be devided into many smaller ones and the revenue accounts can not be expected to show revenue of each seperate compartment. On transferring the property to another on mortegage or any other tenure, it is settled among the parties

132. Ibid P.10

133. Ibid.

concerned what portion of the general assessment should be put up on the field about to be transferred, and the writer of the revenue accounts accordingly makes cut in the annual rental which guides the revenue officer in the collection of the revenue¹³⁴. Here the land transferred will have a light assessment, sometimes even without a revenue at all, and the other portion with an excessive assessment. This may be a reason for over assessment. But over assessment, in this case, will be reported not from a whole district but in rare cases only from among lightly assessed fields. Besides, if one field is over-assessed the adjoining must be seen lightly assessed. This happened because of the unrestricted transferability of landed property in the province. One could grant a piece of his land to another unencumbered by any revenue, (especially in moderately assessed lands). In such case the land held by the grantee pays no assessment at all, but the grantor's remaining land will be over assessed. This was a possible fraud to be tried by the landholders to complain that their land was over-assessed by the government. If this creates over-assessment, or any other, it must be the responsibility of the government to check such opportunities. But Warden states, "this

134. Ibid. P.P. 10-11

is no evidence of the defective state of revenue accounts"¹³⁵. So the policy of the collector was not to cure the disease but to run away from the physician. He also tried to find fault with the Magistrate Mr.Warden for reporting the result of his revenue administration in the province.

In consideration of the frequent complaints the government began to think of a new assessment of revenue. In this respect Mr.Warden respond negatively saying that it would result only a loss to government¹³⁶, and when the revenue may be more than the existing, from a new assessment, the incumbent on the land, if he is a mortgage, will complain most bitterly. He will argue that he has sunk a considerable capital on the land under a conviction of the unalterable government assessment and that any increase in the present assessment must reduce the income which he was justly and legally entitled, on the capital sunk. On the other hand, where the government assessment is reduced, the income of the incumbent mortgage will be augmented in as much as the assessment reduced, and if the tenure should be

135. Ibid P.11

136. Ibid

equivalent to a foreclosed mortgage, the mortgaged will adventitiously benefit in what was intended by government should be enjoyed by the proprietor. So a revision was not beneficial to government. He says 'It is better perhaps to let the assessment¹³⁷ remain unequal as it is, than to hazard the risk of more complicated evils by attempting a new one on more equal principles'¹³⁸ in the already assessed lands. Speaking about the tenants' complaint he said 'were their complaints left to my own discretion for decision, I should be disposed to yield not a fraction of the present revenue why have they not by their industry, continued to make that land as productive as when the assessment was laid on ?. They should no longer be allowed to continue in the occupancy or tenancy of such land'. So he argued that the complaining tenants or Kanakars should be ousted of their possession, and if there does not arise any purchaser for the existing assessment the next year it can be put to sale for a reduced assessment.

The present assessment, he recommended, to be continued and the accounts delivered by the landed

137. Ibid P.12

138. Ibid

proprietors shall be recognised as the authentic record of the landed property in Malabar. Warden was of the opinion that 'the government revenue being chargeable on the proprietors share of the rent, it rests entirely with him what portion of the remainder to allow to the cultivator.'

This evasive policy of a responsible authority was quite dangerous in the society, since it would make way for highhanded exploitation of the poor cultivator. He forgets, the society was mostly agricultural and as one does not find any other profession, he was compelled to cultivate land on whatever condition it may. But Mr. Warden's primary motive was an uninterrupted collection of augmented revenue.

JAMES VAUGHAN (1816-1826)

Thomas Warden was succeeded by Mr. James Vaughan as the fourth Principal Collector in December 1816. The matters of revenue remained by and large the same. Complaints of the inhabitants began to increase. The balance of revenue uncollected in each year began to augment. In land revenue alone when the balance in 1815 was Rs.74,900 in the next three years it increased to Rs.1,63,131.5, Rs.1,55,025.5 and Rs.1,64,969 respectively. This was more than 120% and above the

former year¹³⁹. The total balance of land revenue uncollected in 1818 was Rs.1,64,992 ...¹⁴⁰. This shows the land jumma of the years was burdensome for the people not to pay their obligation. Table 4-7 shows the balance of land revenue for years 1818 and before.

Table 4-7
Balance of Revenue before 1818¹⁴¹

Year	Star Pagodas
1809	917-11-67
1810	1620-03-34
1811	3200-35-17
1812	6642-34-20
1813	13953-29-31
1814	15830-05-40
1815	21400-27-48
1816	46609-08-10
1817	44865-07-51
1818	47134-43-48

THOMAS MUNRO'S VISIT

In 1817, Sir Thomas Munro then a member of the commission for revising establishments, paid a visit to Malabar, and wrote a most valuable report¹⁴² on the

139. General Report. Vol.26. 25 January 1819. Para 740

140. Ibid.

141. 3 1/2 Rupees = 1 Star pagoda.

142. Revenue selections Vol.I. in Logan Vol I P.685

districts. He received many complaints regarding the assessments of garden and wet lands during his short stay. He directed against the continuation of assessments on lands which had been deteriorated or destroyed by natural causes. The landholders being unable to pay such assessments had their holdings sold; The selling of land to pay arrears of revenue was formerly unknown in Malabar. So this was viewed with a great deal of dissatisfaction. Sir. Thomas Munro found an urgent need of a deep enquiry into the matter. Based on his recommendation on 22 December 1817, the Board of Revenue. Proposed to depute one of its members to the province to carry out the suggestion of Thoman Munro. But on 10th February 1818, the government overruled this proposal and appointed Mr.Graeme, one of the judges of the southern court of circuit¹⁴³. He was directed to find what improvement might be introduced into the revenue administration of this district.¹⁴⁴ Mr.Graeme began his work as a commissioner and studied the real state of things not only from the volumes of reports to the government but by enquiry among the people also. In a proclamation among the people he informed that it was his intention

143. Logan I. P.685

144. Ibid.

to recommend to the government to proportion the public assessment on the land to the 'real state of every man's property'¹⁴⁵. The government showed resentment for such a proclamation against the opinion of the district collector and said that 'Mr.Graeme' had stepped in authority rested in him".¹⁴⁶ The commissioner Mr.Graeme issued therefore, another proclamation, in joint names of the collector and himself, explaining to the people that his duty was inquiry, not the alteration of the land assessment,¹⁴⁷.

In the year 1819 a considerable falling of in all the branches of revenue with the exception of customs was reported. The arrear of the year in land revenue alone was appalingly high (Rs.2,43,537-10-9). The collector attributed the arrears principally to the unfavourable nature of the season. But he added 'much must be attributed to the commission now moving about the country',¹⁴⁸. The collector expressed his opinion that the defaulters would go to jail rather than pay

145. General Report Vol.25. 25 January 1819 Para 699

146. Ibid Para 704

147. Letter from Mr.Vaughan. 26 December 1818 Ibid. Para 1342.

148. Ibid 4 April 1819 para 1345-1348

their revenue.¹⁴⁹ Their land was found not better to sale and the people had their doubts and fear, whether an equilisation is to take place¹⁵⁰. The government, therefore, instructed the district authorities 'to sale the lands of all defaulters, or buy them in on account of the government, where no adequate offers were made by individuals.¹⁵¹

Although the government had invariably opposed any general revision or equilisation of the land tax, they could learn that there were some defects in the local administration of the land revenue¹⁵². Much of the inaquality complained of might be traced to a practice of leaving the proprietor of the land to fix the portion of public revenue upon any portion of his lands disposed of by private sale.¹⁵³ Therefore, all 'unauthorised sub-divisions of the revenue payable for an estates' was deemed illegal and 'the whole estate was continued answarable for the whole revenue with which it was assessed. The person in possesstion of an

149. Ibid Para 1348

150. Ibid

151. Ibid Para.1350

152. Ibid Para.1351

153. Ibid Para 1352. This is refered in detail in Page 253-54.

estate was in the first instance responsible for the revenue on the principle of its being payable out of the produce, but failing which, the owner was responsible on the principle that the land was security for the revenue.¹⁵⁴ So for exacting the arrears first the produce and ultimately the land itself was considered. Unfortunately all these problems arise from the governments inadvertent attempt to do something on revenue. Everything done since last 25 years was worthless and which could do no guideline for the government. Laborious work of various commissioners, subcollectors, and principal collectors could not make a permanent system. No regulation was effectively introduced in landlaw, its registration, transfer etc. The governor in council was of the opinion that it 'was not necessarily required the account of the real state of every man's property in Malabar',¹⁵⁵. He found it a much expensive task on the part of the government. This kind of statements from higher authorities had undone whatever were tried before.

In the next years revenue collection was again found falling balance. The government expressed

154. General Report Ibid. Para. 1357

155. Ibid Para 1358.

dissatisfaction. The collector again reported, the discussion of introducing a "new assessment up on the lands had contributed to lower the revenue, and that the landholders had purposefully withheld payment of their rent and deteriorated their property in the expectation of obtaining more favourable terms from the government when a new survey and assessment should be made."¹⁵⁶ He said 'the ryots had in most cases designedly fallen into arrears, and that when pressed they found the means of paying up their arrears¹⁵⁷. The inference he drew from this was that their complaints of over assessment were ungrounded. But the real fact was different. In a country, where agriculture is the sole means of livelihood, a lack of manufacture is verily affected, and the population - land ratio was verily negative the ryots had no other choice, but to shoulder the burden of government assessment, and to pursue the profitless agriculture. The large majority of Malabar inhabitants were people destined to work dawn to dusk everyday for their daily subsistence. In this context his choice to pay the arrears at any cost to retain the land in possession is to be found as to grab the last straw in the sinking

156. General Report Vol.29. 4 July 1821 Para. 1074

157. Ibid para. 1079

waters. Therefore, the conclusion the revenue authorities reached had no relation with reality. For them it was a matter of convenience. But the same time an inhuman attitude towards the people of the land. But the collector's statement can not be brushed aside as it was possible for the well to do jenmi who had the 'choice' for his revenue among the corrupt officials.

According to the collector, the tedious process of court procedure for law of ejectment was one of the reasons for the revenue falling arrears. The collector reported that 'in consequence of the vexatious, tedious and expensive progress of the law of ejectment, the tenants not only withheld rents, but kept possession of the property in defiance of the landlord, who was glad to compromise matters rather than have recourse to the tedious form of the court, and that the power of the tenants to withhold their rent had been stated by the landlords as a reason for their being in arrears.'¹⁵⁸ This type of pro-landlord statements by the responsible officials were not based on the real facts. Primarily the tenants were not people who were able to draw a case in to the court of law, a most expensive and unprofitable procedure as far as a poor tenant was concerned. The government

158. Ibid

apparatus was not a solace but a scourge to the ordinary tenants since most of the government establishments were either formed of native high-caste (Nair and Brahmin) landed people or of the British colonialists. Therefore, the ordinary tenant who have no influential merit can not expect justice from these courts. On the other hand, the landlord had all the merits for his favour. Hence, the collector's statements was baseless. No such evidence was traceable. There were neither any mass movements for the support of the peasants, during 1820s for a threat to the landlords.¹⁵⁹ So this reason attributed to the problems is absolutely wrong and on the contrary the law of ejection was an arm in the hands of the landlord against the tenant, who can be ousted at will threatening a most vexatious and expensive suit.

An interesting point to note here is that the court of law was not always a tool in the hands of the district officials¹⁶⁰. The collector complained that

159. Mass movements of tenants started only in the 4th decade of the 19th century. Even during the period the tenant was a threat to his landlord not in the floor of the court but in the field.

160. Mr.T.H.Baber, an expert in the land of Malabar, its people, manners etc. was always a man stood with justice. His blind folded judgements were not always tasteful to the collector. During the time of Warden and Vaughan a rift between the court of law and the revenue authority was pronouncedly clear.

'the zilla court and the judicial system had a tendency to throw the revenue in to arrears.'¹⁶¹ The revenue authority in the province frequently complained of undue interference of the court' in the revenue affairs. The revenue reports attest this mutual fight between the two company establishments. Mr.T.H. Baber the judge of northern districts had explained to the higher authorities how affairs related to revenue becomes stress and toil to the inhabitants of the district in his letters to the home government. This was on account of his uncompromising attitude towards justice. This was of course the reason for their rift.

The Board of revenue, which was more concerned of a profitable revenue expressed here that the great defalcations of land revenue in Malabar was not due to over assessment nor due to the vicious and the corrupt administration of the immediate agents employed in the collection of it, whether it zemindars or officers of government' as these both are found in all other districts¹⁶² also. But the Board was not satisfied with any of the opinion expressed by the district authority for the present state of things as

161. General report vol.28.4 January 1825. Para1084.

162. General Report Ibid. Para.1088

to the deperessed state of the land revenue in Malabar, was not due to the present discussion of alteration in assessment nor due to the habit and manners of the people, nor due to the state of property in the province, nor due to the difficulty of recovering rents, nor due to the estalishmend of the courts, as none were peculiar to the district.¹⁶³ Therefore, the Board instructed the Collector for a need of making personal communications with the subjects, which would afford an authentic knowledge of their condition and would inspire them with confidence in his concern for their welfare. Accordingly deputing Mr.Holland to Wynad, the Collector himself proceeded to other parts of the province for the purpose. This action certainly had good result. The collector gave remission of Rs.6,391-8-7 to the inhabitants of Wynad in Cardamom rent for former years.¹⁶⁴ He released prisoners of Mananthody Jail, who had taken part in 1812 revolts. These steps made the people closer to the government. Balance of land revenue for the former years was still found in considerable increase. For the present and

163. Ibid. 1089

164. Letter from the collector 30 September 1820, and government order 27 November 1820. in General Report Ibid Para.1128-1131.

previous years together there was a balance of Rs.1,76,877. Yet number of summons for arrears of revenue, and the process of sale issued during 1820-22 was considerably decreased.

Table 4-8
Sommons and Process of Sale for arrears
of Revenue during 1820-1822

Year	1820	1821	1822
Summon	8,361	5,207	3,792
Process of Sale	6,001	3,701	591

The government expressed satisfaction in the decrease of the process of sale. But it remarked that, 'a summon is not the best way of calling up on the inhabitants for their revenue. The practice would generally be found unnecessary and vexatious, and its common use would destroy the effect it ought to have when a verbal demand was insufficient. Still more objectionable is the issue of the process for the sale of land where not absolutely required.'¹⁶⁵ It also added that the 'sale of the lands on a revised assessment would in every point of view be unjust, it would in fact be a direct acknowledgement that the

165. General Report Vol-31 2nd January 1823. Para.1032

demand of the government was too high and would give the benefit of the reduced assessment to the purchaser instead of to the present land holder who would at the same time be deprived of his heridity^{or} rights¹⁶⁶. But according to the district records, notwithstanding Mr. Vaughan's assurance that the defaulters will not be called upon to pay any arrears except those whom he has satisfied are able to pay, no less than 13 persons have been sent to jail in the next year.¹⁶⁷

COMMISSIONER GRAEME'S ASSESSMENT

Mr. Graeme made an enquiry in to the whole administrative system, and furnished what was described as an exceptionally able report on 14 January 1822. He examined the proportions of the produce the government could take, but unfortunately was unable to go into any of the vital questions which would really have brought matters to a satisfactory conclusion, as how the produce was actually shared between the jenmi and the under proprietors or tenants¹⁶⁸. This would have, if were looked into, elucidated the subordinate rights, and enabled the government not only to fix its share,

166. General Report Vol-30 3rd January 1822. Para.1145

167. General Report Vol. 34 Para 1162

168. Powel P.180

in such a way as to leave a full margin for all the interested parties, but also to make regulation for securing to each party his right. The Court of Directors had turned their earnest attention to this, but even the able commissioner left it unheeded, for an ultimate result of a collision between the parties involved. As Mr. Graeme did not do this, the tenurial problems were left in the unsatisfactory condition that they have so long been in. It was a very explicit truth that all the basic problems of Malabar revenue system could be corrected only through a right proportional division of the produce among the parties connected with the land.

'VERUMPATTAM'

His proposal of the assessment of wet land or rice fields was based on a proportion of the Verumpattam or actual rent received, by jenmi from ryots.¹⁶⁹ As he did not pursue his enquiry into the ratios which this actual rent bore to gross produce or to net produce, he was obliged to have recourse to the statements of jenmi paymaish accounts (1805-6) submitted by jenmis to Mr. Warden. These statements

169. Graeme's Report. Para. 1131; Logan I P. 667; Powel P. 180.

were found by him on examination to give in most cases grossly false accounts of the rent received by jenmis. Resultantly, the lack of precise information as to what the actual rents were, not only spoiled Mr. Graeme's proposals in regard to wet lands and directed his attention away from points in regard to the position of subtenants, as noted above. Shortly, the general information on which he relied was defective, because it did not enable him to distinguish between rent paid by intermediaries and rent paid to intermediaries by sub-tenants¹⁷⁰. So the verumpattam or rent received by the jenmi from ryot¹⁷¹ was not dependable to ascertain the gross or net produce, for reasonable assessment of government revenue.

Mr. Graeme assessed the revenue of wet land at 65% of the actual rent (verumpattam) as ascertained from deeds and statements of the people¹⁷², instead of at 60% of the Vilachal Meni Pattam, of Mr. Rickards¹⁷³,

170. Logan P.667

171. Not necessarily always the tenant, but there was a possible payment to the jenmi by the Kanakkar, or the tenant, or any other intermediary who is in actual holding of the land.

172. Graeme's Report. Para.1244.

173. See page 220-21; Logan Vol I. PP.665-66; Rickards Report (1803) P.1

Mr.Graeme's this change was due to his conclusion that the chief jenmis who assented to Mr.Rickards for this Vilachal Meni Pattam as a standard, as they could enjoy by that a considerably larger share than that they could enjoy up to that time¹⁷⁴. The government approved this plan of change from Vilachal Meni Pattam to Verumpattam taking 65% of the pattam as the right of the government¹⁷⁵. Mr.Powel commenting on the assessment of Mr.Graeme in rice lands said 'it did not progress so satisfactorily. The accounts of the lands were false, and the surveys did not advance, for which the head of the amshams were chiefly to blame.

On garden lands the plan of Mr.Rickards (1804) taking 50% of the pattom was by and large followed. According to Graeme's system, Verumpattam (in garden land) was the balance of the produce in nuts after deducting for the cultivators share of 20% in the north Malabar and 33 1/3% in south Malabar¹⁷⁶. But as the customary commutation rates were respectively Rs.10 and Rs.7-8-0 in the two divisions, the real customary share of cultivators were Rs.20 and Rs.25 respectively on

174. Graeme's Report Para.1245

175. Minutes of Sir. Thomas Munro dt.16 July 1822 - Para.9

176. Graeme's Report Para. 1258; Logan I P.P.667; 686

every 10 nuts¹⁷⁷. The actual number of productive tree he calculated based on the jenmi paimaish account (1805). In this way the rates he reached after certain calculations was not to be altered for 12 years except under particular circumstances. He found the revenue on garden land, in this way would fall for 7% from the existing.

On miscellaneous lands Mr. Graeme recommended the continuance of the prevailing system in south Malabar of taking not more than 20% of the gross produce of modan lands¹⁷⁸. Other trifling items he did not make any assessments. The proposal of Mr. Graeme was approved by the governor Thomas Munro on 16th July 1822¹⁷⁹ and he was sent back to Malabar to work out this proposal in practice. He ascertained the total assessments of Hubblies or circles of villages and constituted the Amshom divisions instead¹⁸⁰. Then he proceeded to the other works and began with the garden assessment of Calicut Talook. Unfortunately he left the district before he had time to complete it leaving

177. Logan Vol. I P.667

178. Graeme's Report Para 1273-4

179. The only exception in approval was a defective principal of cutting down old trees, treated as unproductive.

180. Powel P.180

the individual distribution of the assessment to the collector Mr. Vaughan.

But before leaving he had set certain plan for working to the collector. Accordingly he obtained from the people returns of the actual number of trees and it was corroborated with inspections conducted by himself in some gardens. The mistakes if any, was corrected by the people by his instruction. After getting so, the correct number of trees, he calculated the gross produce and divided it as noted before (1/3 to cultivator and 1/3 each to government and jenmi). The next important work of communicating with the people regarding the assessment also was planed. Before he devided the garden lands in to two as 'Attu veppu' and 'Kara veppu' for lands fertility and there by proeductivity. This helped to fix the production of every tree in different lands according to the lands fertility and other aspects. This was a great step because in one Amsham itself a lot of variations were found in this. Then the plan was left to the collector and his execution of the plan was reported to be not satisfactory. The principles laid down by Mr. Graeme were adhered to, but the execution in detail appears not to have been equal to the design¹⁸¹.

181. Powel P.180

WEAKNESS OF CIVIL ESTABLISHMENTS

Mr. Graeme left the district in 1823 directing the principal collector Mr. Vaughan to continue the survey. The accounts of rice land rendered by the proprietors to the collector seemed by no means credible. The accounts the 'Deshadikaries' gave were grossly false beyond description. They were excessively backward in the survey of the rice lands and did not pay least attention to orders of the collector. The principal collector could not make any impression upon them. They tried to conceal the deeds making it impossible to ascertain the resources of the country. The collector was hopeless of the chances of getting any true deeds through the Deshadhikaris¹⁸². The collector says 'the jumma is still too high, the village officers appointed to make the survey have not performed their duty, in any case, on sufficient data or in a proper mode'¹⁸³. But the Board observed that the irregularities and negligence of the native officers arose in a great measure from want of

182. Letter from Mr. Vaughan to the government 3 June 1824. Para 24

183. Report of the collector to the Board of Revenue on 20 August 1825 General Report vol.36 Para 1185.

arrangements on the part of the principal collector himself.¹⁸⁴

However, these officials frequently made superficial inspections with their menons or accountants even without calling upon the proprietors to attend it. In these there were under assessment rather than over assessment.¹⁸⁵ They made large fortunes from corrupt practices and the country teemed with every kind of fake deeds to suit the present purpose. Neither punishment nor reward tried to get a faithful record was a failure to the collector. Partiality of Deshadikaries in their Hublies was possible according to the collector, as the present mode of assessment did not allow as before, to depute the village officer of one Hubly to inspect that of another Hubly and vice-versa.¹⁸⁶ However, the Board of Revenue observed that it was the collector's particular duty to check the influence of Deshadikaris against partialiy and corruption.¹⁸⁷

Whether these officials were liable to punishment like other inferior ryots or not (?). This

184. General Report Vol.38 . Para 903-4

185. Ibid

186. General Report Vol.34. 3rd Janauary 1825 Para 1173.

187. Ibid

was a matter of indicissiveness for the collector, and he was, unfortunately, scared about the response of the government, if anything was done in this regard. Generally the company government was quite neglegent and averse to the officials irregularities and corrupt practies, especially in regard to the officials immediately connected to the people as to avoid shaking confidence of the people in the permanancy of the office by removing them on slight ground. This, unfortunately, led to inexcusable and wonton irregularities on the part of the Deshadhikaries. Their down right disobedience of orders and cuntempt for their superior authority was reported regularly. The government accordingly ordered that they also equally punishable like any poor ryot with deserving penalties.¹⁸⁸ However, these orders came late but the practice of irregularity in payments and corruption and missappropriation of public money were regular feature of the provincial administration.

Shortly, the grand object of Mr.Graeme's survey and assessment reached nowhere and the same was

188. General report vol.35. para 1726; Letter from Board of Revenue to the collector 13 September 1824. Ibid Para 1178 still the collector was indecisive whether the Deshadikaris were liable for punishment under regulation IX of 1822 for appropriating moneys paid to him on account of government.

followed by the district officials for little result. The collector's attempt in this regard was a failure. The people began to rise in opposition and they objected Mr.Vaughan's settlement. On 15 November 1825 the government directed 'no further collection to be made until a more correct survey had been affected. On 28th February 1826 Mr.Vaughan was promoted to the judicial department and Mr.Sheffield was appointed as the principal collector of Malabar.

REVENUE ADMINISTRATION UNDER
THE COMPANY GOVERNMENT
(1826-40) II

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER - V
REVENUE ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE
COMPANY GOVERNMENT (1826-40) II

Neither any of the enquiries and studies into the Malabar land tenure and the system of sharing of produce at various times, nor several surveys and assessments conducted at different occasions by the company officials into the capacity of Malabar revenue had created any effect for establishing a realistic and reasonable revenue system on a permanent basis, until this period. Mr. Graeme's able report also did not help much for the same as he could not pursue further his survey. As noted before, he had failed to study the very important aspect of the revenue system, that is, the relation between the tenant, kanakkar and jenmi with respect to their sharing of produce.

WILLIAM SHEFFIELD (1826-1831)

Taking charge as the principal collector of the province Mr. Sheffield had adopted measures for affording redress to the ryots, by a new revision¹ of assessment, especially in those villages where Mr. Vaughan's revision had resulted in a clamorous

1. General Report vol.40, 3 January 1828. Para 936

situation. Accordingly he proceeded first to Tellicherry and organised a survey of five villages (amsams) of Kottayam Taluk, where people first raised the banner of revolt. Next he turned to 21 villages (amsams) of Kadattanad, all the whole villages of Kurumbranad, and then to 22 'dissenting amsams' in Calicut Talook, 70 gardens in Puluvalinad, one amsam in Ernad, and 2 in Nedunganad increasing or decreasing the assessments as he found it necessary.² The results of this survey were put in operation in Kurumbranad, Calicut and Kadattanad and Kottayam in the years 1827-28, 1828-29 and 1829-30 respectively. But, in some parts of northern Malabar clamour did not cease and the collection of revenue was done with at most difficulty. Logan says that this survey also 'had been far too hastily conducted and put in force even in places where no clamour was raised'³. The people of Karthnad Talook had complained of the taxation on modum crops cultivated in their paramba. Considerable portion of land entered in the Jumma had remained for years uncultivated due to arrears which had accumulated against the former possessors, and the fear that any

2. Logan Vol. I P.690

3. Ibid

new occupant would be held answerable for them⁴. The reason attributed to this was that the method adopted for its valuation was not uniform everywhere. It was 'formerly assessed on different principles in different parts of the district. In some places it was assessed on the actual gross produce as ascertained by annual inspection, in others the amount assessed upon each individual at some distant period was continued in the account and formed a permanent addition to this jumma payable without reference to the extent of his dry cultivation, and indeed whether he cultivated it or not'⁵. Without considering these variations the government thought of disposing of such lands putting them for sale (lease) for arrears of revenue to the extent of the arrears due⁶. The collector therefore was instructed that, if the former possessors are not forthcoming or refuse to take the lands on the terms proposed they may then be rented out to the persons who may offer the most favourable terms.⁷

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4. Principal collector to the Board of Revenue 15 September 1826. General Report Vol.40. Para.937.
 5. General Report Vol.42. 3rd January 1829; BRP. Para.972.
 6. In that case the government will become the legal possessor of the land.
 7. Collector to the Board of Revenue 15 September 1826. General Report Vol.40. Para 937.

Mr. Graeme's proposal had not given any specific scheme for modum land, which was not always cultivable like other lands. Mr. Sheffield revised the modum assessment in the year 1827-28. He classified the lands into three classes according to the productivity of the soil, and calculated their yielding at an outturn multiple of seed sown in the proportion between. $6 \frac{18}{64} - 4 \frac{43}{64}$; $4 \frac{26}{64} - 3 \frac{16}{64}$; and $3 \frac{15}{64} - 2 \frac{9}{64}$. For each class of land a fair and moderate quantity of seed was assumed as necessary for 100 square kolls (a measure) of land. The land was next measured and its square contents found. Lastly he calculated the gross produce in the equation square kolls x quantity of seed x out turn multiple = gross produce. The government share was fixed at 20% ($\frac{1}{5}$) of the gross produce, and was commuted to money rates fixed for each taluk with reference to the average local prices⁸. Mr. Sheffield found the existing commutation rates if applied as being 'very exorbitant and arbitrary' and too oppressive to pursue cultivation. In Ernad taluk a very extensive area of cultivation had been left due to this reason.⁹.

8. Logan Vol. I. PP. 696-7

9. General Report Vol. 42. 3rd January 1829. Para 939.

The scheme of the collector seemed very systematic. From the higher variation of outturn multiple (2 9/64 to 6 18/64) it is clear that if a uniform average was taken, as before, it must fall too heavy on the poor lands and too light on the fertile lands. This system of Mr. Sheffield continued for more than 3 decades until 1861 without much change. The same method was followed by the collector for the cultivation of 'Ellu', for which also Mr. Graeme had made no specific proposal. By the year 1826, there was a huge amount of irrecoverable revenue in the head of land revenue alone. By taking charge of the principal collector Mr. Sheffield could effect a satisfactory change to this. In the year 1826, the first year under Mr. Sheffield, out of Rs.15,79,637-3-7 only a balance of Rs.18,727-12-5 was there on 31 August, and the collector reported that 'the whole can be collected without placing a single ryot in confinement'.

Table 5-1

Balance of Arrears between 1809 and 1825				
Year	1809-1811	1812-1823	1824-1825	Total
Amount	3,039-1-9	78,085-9-4	28,900-10-2	1,10,025-5-3

In the year the collector reported a balance of Rs.6,876-5-6 from an 'assessment of lands which have been devastated by encroachments of the sea and had overgrown with jungle, or have been laying waste for many years from want of occupants or other causes',¹⁰.

The collection of pepper tax had been suspended until a more correct survey was completed on it. Mr. Sheffield had submitted a plan of reimposing tax on pepper without waiting for a survey on the garden. He proposed any of the following modes.

1. To levy the government share of the gross produce by mean of the Hawlut duty or excise.
2. To levy export duty and exempt the vines from taxation.
3. To equalise the tax about to be imposed by levying the half of it by mean of an additional export duty and the remainder by a tax upon the vines.
4. To form a settlement up on an inspection of the vines, while in a bearing state, with the view to levy the assessment up on the probable produce.
5. To adopt a fixed average produce per annum, applying to it a fixed but moderate price per candy, and after assuming a fair proportion

10. Principal Collector to the Board of Revenue 15th Sept.1826.Para 17; General Report Vol.41 Para 948.

thereof as the government share, to levy the same by means of a tax up on every bearing vine¹¹.

The Board of Revenue adopted the fifth proposal as the most eligible. So the share of the government was fixed, whatever increase or decrease the pepper cultivation might be. The government share was fixed at $1/5$ in place of $1/4$ (suggested by Mr. Graeme) and the collector thought the reduction of 5% ($1/4 = 25\% - 20\% = 5\%$) from the government share would make the people satisfied without objection. The price to be fixed was Rs.65 per candy. The collector classed the bearing vines into five and a rate of assessment was fixed for each according to its productivity. This varied from 2 Anna $1 \frac{13}{16}$ pice to 3 $\frac{11}{16}$ pice. The government accepted all the recommendations but a change in the rate was ordered, that is to regulate the rate of conversion with reference to the preceeding or current years' average selling prices or to both, than to fix it permanently at a particular sum, although moderate one. This was a justifiable one as the price fluctuations were always occurring. The above system of revenue in pepper was introduced in the year 1827-28.¹²

11. General Report Vol.41 - 3 July 1828 Para 952-55.

12. Ibid. para. 969

Regarding remission of balances which were deemed irrecoverable due to reasons like devastation overgrowth of jungle, etc, the collector recommended for a permanent removal of them from the jumma, as it must not necessarily enter in the revenue accounts every year, and later for a remission. But the Board of Revenue observed that 'This will lead to abuse of the land being kept uncultivated for reasons like pastrol land, firewood etc.' Therefore, 'the assessment upon each estate should not be altered in the accounts in a case of this kind, but that a special remission be allowed annually and deducted in the settlement',¹³.

The government however, was inclined for remission of such balance though not permanently removing from assessment. The result of such large remission in the previous year had a very favourable result in the whole revenue affairs of the province. It was most gratefully received by the inhabitants, as they have been 'relieved from responsibility on this account, and are no longer harassed by the importunity of the revenue servants in pressing demands which they could not satisfy',¹⁴. Consequently 583 rice lands, and

13. General Report Vol-43. 3 July 1829 - Para. 978

14. General Report Vol.43. 3 January 1829 Para.983

2317 garden, which had been altogether abandoned, were reclaimed during this year (1827), the former being again brought under cultivation and the latter in every respect properly attended to¹⁵. "The principal ground of complaint against the rice-land assessment was the ryots being compelled to pay for devastated lands'. The collector reported that, 'loss of crops owing to inundation and other causes are totally beyond their control, and they would gladly dispence with the proposed survey of their rice land otherwise'¹⁶.

The collector pointed out a very satisfactory condition in Malabar from the side of the inhabitants as they are almost entirely engaged in agriculture and mercantile occupation. The Board of Revenue expressed satisfaction in Mr. Sheffield's administration as not a single ryot was placed in confinement for backwardness in revenue payments, and it was not required to sell personal property of more value than Rs.539. 'No land was sold, very little attached'. It was only due to a very judicious and able administration that he could make such a great change from Mr. Vaughan's time, which

15. Ibid.

16. Mr. Sheffield's Report 7th September 1827; Ibid Para 987.

was remarkable for confusion and chaos in revenue administration and complaints and clamours from the revenue payers.' The annual inspection conducted by the revenue servants in dry grain since 1825 was reported to be unjustifiable - as 'It was customary since 1825 to impose an extra percentage on every individual cultivator in any village when the taluk or village servants suspected concealment of the gross produce'¹⁷ of dry grain. This practice had given so much dissatisfaction that some reform appeared indispensably necessary and the principal collector accordingly introduced a new method of assessing dry grain in the year 1829.

RIFT AMONG THE REVENUE OFFICIALS

Mutual rift among the revenue officials in the province also had no less a role in the revenue of the province. Personal grudges and feelings had verily influenced their administrative steps. There was a rift between principal collector Mr. Sheffield and sub collector Mr. Maclean. A series of correspondance was conducted between the government and the district authorities in this regard between 22 November 1829 and

17. Collector's report to the Board of Revenue 14-April, 1829; in General Report Vol.47 - Para 477.

19 July 1830¹⁸. The Board of Revenue observed that 'these complaints had been greatly aggravated by personal feelings and it was of little public importance, but it prevented a better co-operation between them for a better administration.¹⁹ At last Mr. Maclean was transferred and Mr. Sheffield was asked not to enter any correspondence on this in public records.

All the reforms proposed by Mr. Sheffield was objectionable to Mr. Maclean. The period of Mr. Sheffield's collectorship also could not make any permanent effect in the revenue administration of Malabar. On 15 March 1831 Mr. A. F. Hudleston succeeded Mr. Sheffield as the principal collector of Malabar.

A. F. HUDLESTON (1831-1832)

Soon after assuming office as the principal collector on 5 April 1831 Mr. Hudleston submitted a report to the Board of Revenue containing his view in regard to the resources of the province and his opinion to the effect of the assessment on the condition of its inhabitants. He found, a general distress prevailing

18. General Report Vol.49. Para 485

19. Ibid. Para 485

among the ryots of the province in consequence of the heavy pressure of the government assessment. This distress was found to be not less but in many places greater than in Canara where an open resistance to the authority of government prevailed²⁰. The collector attributed the chief cause of the present distress to the depreciation that occurred in the value of agricultural produce in the late years, from the closing of those foreign markets, which have hitherto received the surplus produce of Malabar and Canara. The present selling price of grain was stated to be nearly 1/4 less than those on which the late commissioner Mr. Graeme had founded in estimating the resources of the province²¹. The district records show that prices run very low in 1828-31, so much so that there was in 1830-31 some fear that Mr. Graeme's commutation rates for garden produce would prove too high. Mr. Hudleston in 1830-31 had to give no less than Rs.69,317, as remission on gardens²²

The stagnation in the timber trade and monopoly in tobacco, salt etc. are said to have

20. Letter of Hudleston 5 April 1831 - General Report Vol.48 para 371

21. Ibid; Logan Vol.I P.697

22. Logan, Vol.I P.718.

aggravated further the grievances of the people as reported by the collector²³. He suggested 'an average remission or suspension of the current demand to the extent of 20% until a favourable change takes place in the markets and to effect a 'permanent modification of the assessment of the province, which he consider to be urgently required is'²⁴. Inequality in assessment was the most greivous source of complaint since the company administration in the province. The subject was reported at several occasions by collectors and commissioners. The government however did not pay any attention at all towards these matters. Such opinions were brushed aside as frivolous and alarmists.²⁵ Mr. Hudleston also pressed the government to find a solution to this problem. He thought that there was hardly a village without sharp disparities in assessment.²⁶ But the government already held a view that even if inequality existed, it arose as much from the different degrees of labour bestowed on the land as from any original disparity of assessment. But the

23. Ibid

24. Ibid

25. Board of Revenue Proceedings. 18 June 1812. Vol.573 PP.6273-74; MDR Vol.4920 PP.248-50.

26. BRP July 1833 Vol.1374-PP.9135-41; MDR. Vol 4920 PP.175-84.

government view was not correct. Thomas Munro had earlier contested this view and held that the inequality is the product of the original disparity of assessment and no part of it arose from improvement.

The collector was of the opinion that the work of such a permanent modification in assessment should not be left to the collector, but to some competent officer deputed to the province, and a proclamation by the government may be issued expressing its anxiety to regulate the demand according to the real ability of the ryots, and declaring that remission shall be granted to those who by the production of fair and honest accounts *may* establish a claim hetherto.²⁷ But the Board of Revenue expressed doubt on the expediency of publishing a proclamation by the government as the people might look for a relief as necessary from the part of district authority.

The sources of Mr. Hudleston's opinion were *mainly* two native servants and the reports of Mr. Graeme. Mr. Graeme on his first mission to Malabar, had recommended a reduction to the extent of Rs.1,71,620 upon the rice lands to be made up by a tax

27. Logan, Vol. I P. 718

upon pepper to the amount of Rs.1,20,000.²⁸ Table 5-2 gives a glance of Mr.Graeme's proposal.²⁹

Table 5-2

A comparative table of Mr. Graeme's proposal

	Item	Present	Proposed	Difference
1.	Low land rice	10,71,828	9,31,905	1,39,922
2.	Up land rice	21,887	21,887	-
3.	Garden	4,26,201	3,94,503	31,698
	Total	15,19,917	13,48,296	1,71,620

But Mr.Thomas Munro did not think it fit to adopt this recommendation, but ultimately confind his approval to temperory remission which Mr.Graeme on his second deputation to Malabar proposed.Accordingly, the collector was asked to make a temperory remission only where ver overassessment or too heavy from gradual deterioration of the produce was evident. Studying the present state of assessment Mr. Hudleston therefore, concluded that Mr.Graeme has done nothing good to the province in regard to assesment of

28. Graeme's Report (1822) Para.1262. in General Report Vol.49, Para. 372

29. Graeme's Report (1822) Para.1262.

revenue. 'When Mr.Graeme himself succeeded to the charge of the government he not only did not take any measures to carry out his first recommendation of a large permanent reduction, but proposed for imposing an additional tax up on part of the produce of the land growing pepper vine.³⁰ Mr. Hudleston found the recommendation of Mr.Graeme for imposing a tax upon the pepper vine as wrong. Therefore, he recommended for an immediate revocation of that measure and it was accordingly executed. He says that, this measure was warmly welcomed by the inhabitants expressing great gratitude to him. He observed that the assessment presses heaviest on the rice lands and it requires urgent modification³¹. But the response of the government towards the proposals and opinion expressed by the collector was extremely discouraging. The government totally refuted Mr. Hudleston's report on Malabar grievances and he was accused of irresponsibility for not collecting the full jumma of 1831, while his predecessor Mr.Sheffield could easily collect the revenue of 1830. The government was of the opinion that while making a comparison on the

30. Board of Revenue. Proceedings in General Report Vol. 48. Para 372.

31. Letter of the collector 5 April, 1831, Para-9 General Report Vol.48, Para 373.

population basis the aggregate amount of the taxes paid by the people of Malabar was less than those realised from most other provinces under the company government³².

The government observed that "the conclusions of Mr.Hudleston were baseless allegation against the previous collectors as being short sighted, and he would be able to learn things in a few months living in the Cusbah station of Calicut district if he lives long the district. The words of the government as seen in the proceedings, were extremely humiliating to the principal collector³³. The Board of Revenue also rebuked the collector for his opinion that the government assessment alone was the reason for the people's grievance, and it found fault with him in depending the native servants for the source of his opinion instead of 'the English records of his Cultchery'³⁴. Unfortunately, Hudleston could not continue long in his office as Mr.F.F. Clementson was appointed as the principal collector of the province in August 1832.

32. General Report Vol, 48. Para 375. They found that in Malabar a person does not pay 3 rupees annually.

33. General Report Vol. 48. Para 372

34. Ibid

F.F. CLEMENTSON - (1832 - 1839)

A change in the principal authority in the province could do nothing good to alleviate the grievances of the people, until the government concede to the proposals forwarded by the authority immediately in contact with the people. But the deaf ears of the government towards the grievances of the people made the situation more aggravated. Mr. clemenston also found the revenue system of the province in an unsatisfactory condition. The land revenue of wet land was still based on the Mysorean system, and the garden land on the principles established by Mr.Graeme. 'The only portion of revenue annually fixed according to the extent of cultivation was that assessed on the lands in the Wynad and Nilgiri³⁵ talooks, under the denomination of 'poonam' and 'moddom' and oil seed³⁶. The general result of the present system was an unequal and oppressive taxation ever to continue on the poor agricultural class of the Malabar society.

35. Some portion of the Nilgiris namely Nambolakkad amsam and Attapadi valley were transferred to Malabar in 1830, and formed a part of Nilgiri Taluk. Mr. Hudleston in 1831 made it part of Waynad and Walluvanad Taluks respectively. Later in 1843 they were retransferred to Coimbatore. Logan Treaties Pt.II No.CLXXIX, CCLXXVII.

36. P. Clementson, A Report on Revenue and other matters connected with Malabar. 31st December 1838 (Calicut 1914) P.1. (Hereafter Clementson Report).

TABLE 5-1

GARDENES SURVEYED BY CLEMENTSON BETWEEN 1834 - 1838

TALOOKS	TOTAL GARDENS	GARDENS SURVEYED	REMAI- NING GARDENS	EXIST- ING ASSMT	PRESENT ASSMT.	INCREASE	DECREASE
AVYI	17619	13915	3704	16453	18107	1654	-
HERICAL	15436	11983	3453	29808	30073	265	-
ELlichery	22970	14224	8746	37338	36278	-	1060
ARTENAD	25173	20385	4788	63659	60029	-	3630
MOORMENAD	32478	21258	11220	53033	51465	-	1568
ALICUT	26797	20126	6671	55320	50774	-	4546
RNAD	13082	9376	3706	19313	19113	-	200
HERNAD	20772	18041	2731	27257	29282	2025	-
ETATNAD	19462	15722	3740	28214	31115	2901	-
OOTANAD	10055	6211	3844	8742	10290	1548	-
HAWGHAD	25936	23394	2542	51024	66038	15014	-
EDINGANAD	14954	6662	8292	7103	8279	1176	-
ALLUWANAD	20216	8030	2186	8695	9109	414	-
ALGHAT	16934	7470	9464	2271	2934	663	-
EMALPOORAM	9287	5621	3666	1407	1571	164	-
AHE	745	593	152	1455	1497	42	-
TOTAL	281916	203011	78905	411099	425959	25866	11004

In 1833, however, the government was compelled to accept overassessment and unequal assessment as the reasons for the ryots' inability to discharge their revenue obligations, and had therefore, to sanction remission in several taluks.³⁷ With the concurrence of the Board of Revenue Mr. Clementson introduced an annual settlement in the year 1833 'as the only means of relieving the poorer classes and others from over

7. BRP July 1833. Vol 1374. PP.9135-41; K.N. Panikkar (op. cit.) P.8

assessment' and of ascertaining the internal resources of the country. The result of this was an increase in the demand than the previous 8 years and a collection of nearly the total amount leaving a trifling balance³⁸.

Of the 16 talooks surveyed, 11 talooks had an increase of Rs.25,865-4-8 and five talooks³⁹ had a decrease for Rs.11004-12-6⁴⁰. Of the 2,81,916 gardens (according to the jumma of 1833), 203011 gardens were surveyed in 5 years (1834-1838) leaving a balance of 78905 gardens to be surveyed. From this 72% of gardens alone a net increase of Rs.14860-8-2 was made. Table 5-3 gives a clear account of the survey conducted by Mr.Clementson in five years.

Thus 'relief was granted to many who were unduly saddled with higher assessment than they could afford to pay, whilst the under assessed had been made to account for what was justly due to the government.'⁴¹ This shows that if a systematic survey

38. Clementson's Report P.1.

39. Tellicherry, Kadatanad, Kurumbranad, Calicut and Ernad.

40. Clementson's Report P.25 In the table amounts are rounded to the nearest figure for convenience.

41. Clamentson's Report P.4

of garden had been conducted much earlier than this, much of the grievances of the ryots could have been solved and a reasonable revenue from each collected, without any hindrance from the people. Unfortunately, the company government was averse to any such scientific analysis of things and for a realistic solution, but instead it aimed at very lucrative revenue without much exertion, nor daring to introduce any basic change, to alarm a section of pro-government jenmakars.

Justifying a need of revision upon the rice lands, Sir.Thomas Munro had observed that 'the original assessment was extremely unequal, and what is a greater evil, it was in many places much too high. This inequality had not grown up gradually but was created at once by taking in some cases 10% and in other 90% of the landlord's rent.⁴² But Mr. Sullivan, who made an enquiry into the revenue affairs of Malabar later, says that "It is to be regretted that a revision which appeared to be so necessary, was not made at that time (1820s). What might have been done without exciting uneasiness in 1822 could not probably be done in 1840

42. Sullivan Report on the Provance of Malabar and Canara 29 Jan. 1841 (Calicut 1916) P.2 (Hereafter Sullivan's Report).

without a serious disturbance of vested interests and an imputation upon the public faith".⁴³ Therefore, he reported 'All wishes for a change appears to have subsided, and the revenue is now collected with unusual punctuality.'⁴⁴

Mr. Clamentson reports that "the revenue of this district have been gradually augmented by new taxes, such as the salt and tobacco monopoly, the abkarry and stamps, the increase in the rates of customs etc. But these imposts, however, have not affected land revenue."⁴⁵

Shortly, though the company government had convinced the facts that the revenue assessment prevailing in the province is, as it was until this period absolutely unequal and in many cases overassessed, and the sametime the government share of revenue was exceeding gradually, the government was not inclined to make any basic change in this system fearing either a decrease in government share or the alienation of the section of the Pro-British element in Malabar society. The company's policy of

43. Sullivan's Report P.3

44. Ibid

45. Clementson's Report P.1

non-intervention in the traditional system of the people was an idea absolutely adopted for its convenience. So the government never tried to effect, a change in the tenurial system, to adversely affect this Pro-British element, eventhough the government was aware of a need of this to rectify all the existing anomalies. The natural result was uprisings from the lower section of the agricultural society. Though various other factors had played behind these uprisings, the fundamental reason was an exploitation of this weaker section both by the jenmi and the government.

SULLIVAN'S REPORT

Mr. Sullivan reported on the revenue and other affairs of Malabar and Canara to the government at Madras on 29 January 1841. He wrote that the revenue and trade of the provinces are highly prosperous and 'nothing seems required to ensure a full development of the resources of the provinces but a perseverance in the system under which they are now administrate.⁴⁶ He was of the opinion that "the province of Malabar has a very lenient system of land revenue since 'only certain articles of produce are being assessed to the

46. Sullivan's Report P.1

revenue"⁴⁷. In every other district even in Canara, which adjoins it, every kind of produce, on the land which bears it is liable to assessment.⁴⁸ The total annual value of the agricultural produce of the district he calculated at Rs.10304254. Of this he found only Rs.1611658 that is 15.6% is the land revenue paid to the government. Nearly a same amount of this value was annually exported to the foreign market. Therefore, he calculated that 84.4% of the value of the produce is left to the cultivator while the payment of 15.6% is derived through foreign trade alone⁴⁹. This was sufficient to enable the land owners of Malabar to pay the land tax, and leave a clear surplus produce for his subsistence.⁵⁰

So he concluded that the land revenue was highly favourable to the inhabitants. But how did he calculate the total produce of the province is not given in his report. There is no chance for such a huge amount being the total amount of the produce in the province. Generally 1/3 was the

47. Mainly rice, coconut, jack, betlenut, oilseed, upland paddy, etc. leaving many garden item like vegetables,

48. Sullivan's report P.1

49. Ibid

50. Ibid

government share. If 16,11,658 was the land revenue to the government the total produce would never be more than four times of the government share. So this calculation had no connection with the living reality of the province. We have already seen, in the garden lands the government share was 40% of the net produce and in wet lands 6/10 of the pattam which also would never be less than 1/3 of the gross produce. Therefore the calculation of Mr. Sullivan was appallingly high, having no relation to the reality. Even if he takes into account the other produces which were not accounted in the assessment, this huge difference will never occur, as these products were not cultivated in any part of the district in large scale as a money crop but only to serve Malabar kitchen. It served the minor necessity of day to day life. These products were never cultivated anywhere in Malabar in a large scale like the other adjoining provinces. Again, the share of the government was mostly not less than 1/3 or the least 1/4 of the gross produce so the remaining 2/3 was to be taken for the expenses, for the share to all the parties connected with the land namely cultivator, Kanakkar, jenmi and again, sometimes, other intermediaries between them. So the conclusion of Mr. Sullivan of a satisfactory and favourable assessment was never a reliable source of facts.

Besides a land tax the monopolies in several rich articles of the province were more vexatious under the company government. Pepper, cardamom, cinnamom, ginger, tarmaric, woods like teak and sandal, forest items like ivory etc. were brought either under a monopoly or under a strict regulation imposing duties for their sale or cultivation.

Sullivan reported that 'the proprietors of the province do not pay anything direct to the land revenue to raise pepper, coffee, silk, sugar, cinnanan etc.' But this was never a lenient system, but could be treated as more obnoxious to the cultivators of the articles because, so long as these produces are not very much used for the internal consumption and is mostly exported by sea, a very considerable revenue from such articles were taken by the government by means of sea custom duty'. But this articles were not always treated in the same footing throughout the province. This also had created hardships to the cultivator. For example, in Wynad and that portion of Coimbatore district which was transfered to Malabar in 1830⁵¹ coffee planting was done in a very considerable extent. In Wynad land - tax was free for

51. Logan Treaties Pt.II NO.CLXXIX, CCLXXVII. See foot note 35 in chapter 5.

lands planted with coffee, tea etc. and in other districts adjoining to it had to pay a heavy assessment. The produce of both the land had to meet in the same market. The result will be unjustifiable inequality. This uneven assessment in adjoining districts was adopted to promote the trade of the British officials. To equalise the system, if Wynad also was assessed like the other districts, they found that the culture of such articles in Wynad would be left neglected making great loss to the trade of the company.

The ultimate result was that, when such articles were brought to a common market land owners of the already assessed articles had a heavy price to pay in total as revenue, while ~~from~~ others, fetched a light revenue. This was a disparity among the many existing ones.

Certain articles were cultivated in a very distant area away from the seaports. So the transportation charges and other intermediary expences had to ^{b2} borne by the owner of such articles. But the value of all articles were same in the market. This also was a disparity existed. But the government did not pay any attention to such subjects.

DECLINE OF MANUFACTURE AND PRICE DECREASE

Manufacture of Malabar was never remarkable. Coarse cotton cloth was manufactured in Palghat and Temalpooram talooks and here and there on the coastal areas. The company government never paved way for their improvement. Instead, the availability of vast quantity of European piece goods which were procurable at very cheap price, 'discouraged this branch of industry' so much so that the poor class found it more profitable to turn their hands to agriculture⁵². Mr. Sullivan who reported the revenue affairs of Malabar to the company government recommended that 'Nothing is required to restore the Indian manufacture.'⁵³ consequently there was a concentration of population in agriculture. The result was the price of agricultural produce decreasing in proportion to the produce increased. So the policy of the government to import foreign cheap goods not only discouraged and paved way for decline in the native manufacture, but also it adversely affected the agricultural population with a huge mass concentration in agriculture. This ofcourse had its effect of competition for land and cheapness of labour etc. That is, when agricultural population

52. Clementson's Report P.2

53. Sullivan's Report P.4.

increased the landlords found it easy to oust the existing tenant for a new one for cheaper terms. Again, this made the wages of labour cheaper on account of more people in agricultural labour.

PRODUCTION INCREASES

But generally this mass concentration in agriculture, and a consequent increased production must be more profitable to the cultivators. But that principle was not relevant in the case of Malabar cultivator. 'In Malabar the revenue has always been paid in money'⁵⁴. This increase in production had an effect of decrease in prices of produce⁵⁵. Therefore, the cultivator had to keep a larger share of his (cheap) produce for the payment of pattam and also a larger share to the government revenue which was already fixed and in most cases were paid by the cultivator. Besides, the seasonal fluctuations in the price calculation made the increased produce of the cultivator of no use, and in most cases more hazardous. Clearly speaking, when he has enough produce soon after

54. Clementson's Report P.3

55. But Mr. Sullivan reports that increased production had never occasioned for a decrease in price, because increase in population had made up the difference. He also says that in several talooks prices were much higher than the commutation rate Sullivan's Report P.3.

the harvest the prices will be at the lowest, and in consequence he has to spend a large share for his obligatory payments. But in the off season he will have nothing for sale, the prices will be the highest, so that the jenmi who had a larger share from his different plots of land can sell his share for a dear value and the cultivator has to pay more for that.

Augmentation in cultivation did not make a corresponding increase in the price of labour in

Table 5-4

EXPORT OF PADDY AND RICE FROM MALABAR
BETWEEN 1822 - 1838

Years	Exported by Sea		Exported by Land		Total	
	No. of Mooras	Value	No. of Mooras	Value	No. of Mooras	Value
1822	1,64,514	3,13,305	34,161	35,556	1,08,675	3,48,861
1823	1,44,198	2,11,360	16,881	20,663	1,61,079	2,32,023
1824	2,08,900	3,67,652	17,567	16,665	2,26,467	3,34,317
1825	5,12,128	8,36,204	42,068	44,235	5,54,196	8,80,439
1826	3,89,238	6,64,668	67,566	64,434	4,56,894	7,29,102
1827	2,25,257	3,53,489	87,774	83,594	3,13,031	4,37,083
1828	2,48,543	3,57,667	89,885	85,604	3,38,428	4,43,271
1829	2,57,910	3,66,852	81,369	58,483	3,39,279	4,25,335
1830	2,44,178	3,34,781	95,409	90,866	3,39,587	4,25,647
1831	2,34,292	2,43,533	1,67,297	1,64,682	4,01,589	4,08,215
1832	1,43,335	1,69,413	1,34,923	1,28,498	2,78,258	2,97,911
1833	1,38,664	1,99,540	2,74,849	3,43,561	4,13,513	5,43,101
1834	3,05,268	4,16,398	3,37,920	3,85,784	6,43,188	8,02,182
1835	36,677	1,19,608	1,54,308	2,06,275	2,40,985	3,25,883
1836	3,07,985	3,65,313	1,78,011	1,51,386	4,85,996	5,16,699
1837	2,78,112	3,53,577	2,12,136	2,02,194	4,90,243	5,55,771
1838	3,21,190	4,10,830	3,23,982	3,27,368	6,45,172	7,38,198

Malabar. The reason being, increase in the population and the cheapness of grain. These two made an opposite result of reducing the price of labour. The consequence of reduction in price of labour will affect none other than the poor agricultural labourers only,

Shortly increased production and the same time cheapness of grain made the share of the jenmi (pattam) exceedingly higher and the cultivating tenant's share comparatively less. The result was "an increased consumption of luxuries among higher and middle classes", and the same time, the increased labour for little result "greatly ameliorated the condition of the lower order",⁵⁶.

Mr. Clementson reported that 'the produce of the country when the company acquired Malabar and for several subsequent years, was not equal to the consumption. Now it supplies not only for its own increased population but for many other districts, to a large extent'⁵⁷. Table 5-4 gives a total exportation of Malabar paddy and rice between 1822-1838.⁵⁸ But this surplus produce exported from the province would

56. Clementson, Report P.5

57. Ibid P.3 statement E.P. 27

58. Ibid

never be from the share of the poor tenants, but largely from the share of the jenmis. There was many chances for this. When a cultivating tenant had 1/3 share of the produce from the only land he occupied, an intermediary tenure holder (Kanakaran) may have such plots of land sub let to the actual cultivators. Therefore, the share of the produce the Kanakkaran derives from his tenants will be several times larger than a share of a tenant. Again, a jenmi may have many such Kanakkars under him holding very considerable area of landed estates, some time in one taluk itself or in many talooks in scattered locations. For example the Samutiri's lands were distributed over 6 taluks and 520 villages.⁵⁹ Therefore, a jenmi's share of produce would be a multiple of the total jenmkar and the total cultivating tenenats under him. This share, in comparison would be appallingly very higher than the other two tenure holders. We have already seen a large number of substiantial jenmies in Malabar holding a large area of land. (For more details see coming pages).

In short, in one harvest when an individual tenant gains 10 parras, an individual kanakkaran may

59. K.N. Panikkar P.25.

derive 100 parras or more, and an individual jenmi a mutiple of the two being 1000 or more. In this calculation the surplus produce for exportation for foreign market, derives without explanation from the two higher tenure holders only.

In an agricultural society like Malabar, even if it produces its sapple food at an excessive quantity, in the event of its price being cheap, there would be a naturla result of enjoying the excessive production by the richer section of the society, while the poor agricultural class who produces the same would get very little value for their production. The consequence will be the latter class will have to struggle hard for money for their other necessities. So when a cultivating tenant struggled hard to touch two ends of his life, because of verious obligation burdened upon him the higher caste, upper tenure holders were enriching by their share of produce through exportation into foreign market. So the increased production also was not at all a source of relief for the tenent but for the luxury to the high caste jenmakars and a few kanam holders.

After a debacle of prices (1828-31) of the commodities in the province, prices began to rise very sharply in the coming years. A rise in price was

reported^{ed} since 1832 in almost all parts of the country. During this favourable change the substantial landholders (jenmis) and some of the Kanakkars began to sell the grain for higher prices from their store houses. So a stock of grain during abundance of their share due to low price, now helped them to sell for an higher price. This made great changes in the economic prosperity of higher tenure holders but with little goodness for the cultivating class.⁶⁰

CONCENTRATION OF LAND WITH A FEW JENMIS

Sharing of produce in the province was characterized by the concentration of land. Land was concentrated in the hands of a few individual jenmis. When an overwhelming majority of the population held a very limited percentage of land, the microscopic minority of jenmis held a major portion of Malabar land. Sharing of produce also, therefore, was never otherwise.

The data available regarding land holding in the province demonstrate how unevenly land was distributed in the villages. Unfortunately, the data available are of later years and the ones available for

60. The result of the change is referred to in page 366.

the period of this study are not accurate. The earliest one available is from Mr. Graeme prepared in 1822 on the basis of revenue assessment. According to his estimate half of the revenue of the district was realized from estates paying land revenue between Rs.1000 and Rs.5000. Those who paid less than one rupee as revenue formed majority of the (Pattadars) revenue payees⁶¹ This vividity explains that the land was unevenly distributed in the province. The number of jenmis holding more than 100 pieces of land were 113 in Ernad, 179 in Walluvanad, 219 in Ponnani and 96 in Palghat.⁶²

A detailed talukwise rent roll was prepared for the first time in 1849. But it did not record the accurate extent of land actually owned by the jenmis.⁶³ According to this data 0.74% of the Pattadars were paying 30% of the revenue while 73.5% of the Pattadars were paying 20.42% of the revenue. From this it

61. Graeme's Report p.291

62. K.N. Panikkar Peasant Revolts in Malabar in 19th and 20th century in A.R. Desai (ed) Peasant Struggles in India. (New Delhi 1982) p.608

63. It was only in 1888 a correct picture of jenmam holding was taken, for realizing revenue direct from the landlords. So the data furnished herein are based on the revenue paid from their land lord but not howmuch extent of land they held.

can easily be presumed howmuch land each of the section held. Table 5-5 clearly indicates that, 63.4% Pattadars were paying an average revenue of Rs.1.66 whereas 0.74% Pattadars were paying Rs.206. Of this 88 Pattadars were paying more than Rs.500 and 24 Pattadars more than Rs.1000.⁶⁴

Table 5-5

Landholding in Malabar in 1849
on the basis of Revenue Assessment⁶⁵

Sl. No.	Range of Payment	Number of Pattadars	Percentage	Amount	Percentage
1.	Below Rs.10	216070	63.4%	360619	20.42
2.	Between Rs.10-30	21749	6.4%	366420	20.75
3.	" Rs.30-100	100073	29.4%	516360	29.25
4.	Above Rs.100	2533	0.74%	521929	29.56

The records available from later years clearly give the actual possession of land by each individual. In 1915 C.A. Innes identified 86 jenmis paying a revenue of more than Rs.3000. The following table (5-6) indicates the economic status of certain jenmis. In

64. BRC 22 July 1849. No.26, Vol.2356. PP.541-2 Logan Vol. II P.IX

65. Ibid

Kulathur a single jenmis held 646 acres and 95 cents of land, out of a total of 1214 acres and 47 cents in the

Table 5-6

Payment of Revenue by individual jenmis in 1901⁶⁶

Sl.	Jenmakkaran	Revenue Assessment
1.	Samuthiri of Calicut	Rs.1,20,000
2.	Raja of Kizhakke kovilagam	Rs. 56,000
3.	Raja of Chirakkal	Rs. 40,000
4.	Raja of Kuttanad	Rs. 37,325
5.	Tirumulpad of Nilambur kovilagam	Rs. 21,000

village.⁶⁷ and in Kottakkal the entire village belonged to a single jenmi.⁶⁸

A comparison of substantial land holders and the landholders of the lower order (table 5-7) from a few villages can clearly substantiate this uneven distribution of land. According to the 1901 census the

66. C.A. Innes and F.B. Evans Notes on Tenacy Legislation in Malabar Para 41.

67. Settlement Register of Kulathur Village. 1900-01

68. Settlement Register of Kottakkal village 1900-01

Table (5-7)

Landlords of lower and higher level in 3 Southern Villages⁶⁹

Sl. Village No.	Higher level		Lower level	
	Number of landlords	Acre of Land held	Number of landlords	Acre of landheld
1. Kulathur	1	646 Acres 95 cents	4	1acre 2 cents
			42	85 acre 8 cents
2. Pukottur	1	242 Acre 7 cents	33	20 acre 14 cents
3. Chevayur	12	635 acre 49 cents	85	43 acres 86 cents

number of landlords in the district was 57040.⁷⁰ Of this, most of the landholders, as evident from the above table, were dwarf holders who did not possess more than one acre of land. In this total of 57040 landholders 27638 were cultivating landlords.⁷¹ The substantial landlords, almost exclusively drawn from among the upper caste Hindus, did not cultivate the land themselves but lived on rent collected from their

69. Settlement Registers of Kulathur, Pukottur and Chevayur villages 1900-01.

70. The census India. Madras Presidency 1901-Pat II P.231.

71. Ibid.

tenants. The consequence of the non-cultivating jenmis owning a lion's share of land was sub-infuedation and, as its sequel, the rise of Kanakkar to social and economic prominence. A substantial section of the kanakkars, mostly upper-caste Nairs, did not undertake cultivation, but sub-leased the land on 'Verumpattam' or for crop-sharing. The extent of land under such leases was quite extensive. One third of the wet land was cultivated on sub-lease from the kanakkar. So the intermediaries were simultaneously a rent - receiving and rent-paying class who apportioned a lion's share of rent from the cultivators. Thus a class of non-cultivating jenmis and a large number of non-working kanakkars could get a larger share of the produce.

REVENUE AND EXPORT-IMPORT TRADE

A comparative study of the import and export trade by sea in the province shows that it not only was in a progressive state but the export was many times higher than the import. The export trade of a nation is usually meant the enrichment of that nation's economy. But in case of Malabar⁷² province under the company administration, this export trade could never

72. This was no way different in other parts of India where the imperialistic company government had its domination.

Table 5-8
 Official Value of Import and Export
 by sea Between 1804-1838⁷³

Year	Value of Imports Rs.	Value of Exports Rs.	Total Rs.
1804	4,95,606	12,67,820	17,63,426
1805	7,12,091	9,49,441	16,61,532
1806	11,22,672	12,01,470	23,24,142
1807	10,00,002	19,06,902	29,06,904
1808	9,20,412	19,92,149	29,12,561
1809	9,25,316	19,45,172	28,70,488
1810	11,54,221	23,26,285	34,80,506
1811	7,21,040	22,36,718	29,57,758
1812/13	4,82,381	27,81,670	32,64,051
1813/14	9,03,463	26,51,604	35,55,067
1814/15	7,60,894	22,27,916	29,88,810
1815/16	8,10,939	23,16,538	31,27,477
1816/17	8,86,056	22,19,416	31,05,472
1817/18	6,99,044	26,58,722	33,57,766
1818/19	9,17,927	25,83,135	35,01,062
1819/20	7,18,794	26,92,285	34,11,079
1820/21	9,35,069	36,90,295	46,25,364
1821/22	12,30,861	30,83,812	43,14,673
1822/23	9,85,693	28,27,032	38,12,725
1823/24	12,08,267	31,47,938	43,56,205
1824/25	12,22,429	40,32,448	52,54,877
1825/26	9,59,361	42,84,087	52,43,448
1826/27	10,28,001	40,24,159	50,52,160
1827/28	13,49,078	38,03,244	51,52,322
1828/29	11,79,203	36,73,029	48,52,232
1829/30	11,55,453	40,84,933	52,40,386
1830/31	11,32,881	42,81,789	54,14,670
1831/32	8,86,001	34,37,173	43,23,174
1832/33	8,21,465	32,21,224	40,42,689
1833/34	9,22,690	40,21,721	49,44,411
1834/35	10,07,369	44,24,201	54,31,570
1835/36	10,95,766	41,55,500	52,51,266
1836/37	11,61,122	50,87,290	62,48,412
1837/38	13,83,200	43,14,110	56,97,310

73. Clemenston's Report P.13

do any economic prosperity. On the contrary it was a 'systematic drain of wealth' of the province. See table 5-8 of export and import trade of the province between 1804 and 1838 showing official value of import and export by sea. Export trade increased many times greater than the import trade. For this the revenue collected from the province was profitably used. The large amount of revenue helped the government to buy the rich natural produce like spices, silk etc. from the country at a very lower rate.

The monopoly in several such exportation items helped the government to get it at a cheap value. So the revenue was invested in procuring Indian articles for a double profit through trade. Besides, the articles exported were subjected to various duties in land and sea. This also augmented the government revenue while such indiscriminate exaction through various channels demoralised the individual peasantry. Individual export trade became no longer profitable. The same time the agricultural products got very cheap value from the company exporters. The result was a natural abandoning of growing such articles. Pepper cultivation was largely abandoned for this reason. So the more the Indian export increased the more the natural resources drained. So, the export trade was never an encouragement to the Malabar peasantry.

Likewise, the import trade also created a negative impact. The cheap products of the foreign countries weakened the Indian manufacture and it at last perished totally the growth of articles for foreign trade. The result was again drain of the national wealth through its procuring foreign articles.

Besides, the cultivation in the province was entirely depended up on the natural rain. Any seasonal change as to lack of rain, or excess of it or sometimes an untimely rain had very adverse effect to the produce. The government never inclined to invest for the welfare of the agriculture in the province. In the absence of rain the construction of tanks and reservoirs of water would, of course, satisfy the interest of the government as well as the ryot. But the ryots of Malabar, usually, mere cultivators of small plots of land could not afford it, by themselves. Nor the substantial jenmis interested in such works, for they were entitled to get a good portion of produce, otherwise also. Their interest in the cultivation of land was always evasive and indifferent. In this situation if the government had initiated for such construction works it would have been beneficial for all the parties interested in the land. The collector opined that 'although the undertaking would

involve a large outlay of public revenue, it would under judicious supervision, secure the government a gradual increase of revenue and would be the most feasible way of preventing the deterioration of public finance, for it is obvious that if we do not lend our assistance in promoting agriculture, the revenue of government. must fall,⁷⁴. So the collector recommended for advancing loans for ryots where they may be found to be requisite⁷⁵. But no such works were undertaken by the government. So the policy of the government was exaction of the resources of the country without any heed to the promotion of the resources. The consequence was an, immediate drain of natural economy, and the total impoverishment of Malabar peasantry. This of course had accelerated the process of awakening the peasantry in general against the government and the jenmis.

Generally in every respect the province was exhausting for its economy, its resources, its manufacture etc. Day by day the sufferings of the ordinary man increased. Resentment among agricultural population began to emerge in the form of protest.

74. Ibid P.3

75. Ibid P.7

Shortly, the people of Malabar felt laying in hot bed. They worked hard but saved nothing. They paid revenue and other obligations still, their obligations found due. The more they struggled the more they suffered. This awakened the agricultural population against the oppressors. The result of this awakening is discussed at length in chapter 7 of this work.

After F.F. Clemenston Messers W.E. Underwood and E.P. Thompson were appointed as the principal collectors between February 1839 and February 1840. In this short period of one year they were not able to effect any reform or innovations, but merely to continue as it was before. Followed by Mr. Thomspen Mr. H.V. Conolly was appointed in February 1840. His period was full of riot and revolts, and himself was a victim of the same in 1854. Before going to the details of that a review of the government's monopoly in certain articles and other extra revenue items would be significant here.

REVENUE FROM MONOPOLY AND EXTRA SOURCES

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER - VI
REVENUE FROM MONOPOLY
AND EXTRA SOURCES

Reporting on the affairs of revenue administration in Malabar Mr.Sullivan says that the "blots up on the fiscal system of the company government in Malabar were slavery, tobacco monopoly, ferry tax, inland custom duties etc"¹. This statement of Mr.Sullivan was partially correct since many other items, which were more perilous to the inhabitants, were not accounted by him. Rather than a blot it was terrible mark on the unclean face of the company government. The salt monopoly, house rent, professional tax etc. also were more obnoxious like the other items. The already burdened land revenue, a rather dangerous price mechanism and an additional exploitative extra revenue added to the misery of the common folk of Malabar. Still more alarming was the method of coercion adopted by the government in case of failure on the part of a tax payee to discharge his obligations. Monopoly in certain important articles of the province and a strict execution of the rules of this, increased the layman's sufferings. When monopoly in certain rich articles of the province like timber,

1. Sullivan, Report on the provinces of Malabar and Canara 29th January 1841. P.5

cardamom, pepper, etc. impoverished this land, the monopoly in common articles like salt, tobacco etc. made the life of people more acute.

REVENUE FROM MONOPOLY

The company government found it more lucrative a policy to establish trade monopoly in all important commodities in the territory and thereby enhance its revenue from these articles. The company assumed monopoly in salt, tobacco, timber and in the rich spices of the land. The revenue yielded by the monopoly was too strong an incentive to the government to abolish it for the hardships the people entiled by it.² The monopoly not only pushed up the prices of these articles but led to loss of employment for a large number of people also. But augumentation of revenue from these made the government deaf towards the hardships of the people, because by 1835 the revenue from salt and tobacco monopoly alone had amounted to as half as the landrevenue.

It was not unaware that most monopolies are grievous and that of salt might be considered more so than others, but it is better perhaps to resort to such expedients for an augumentation of revenue to

2. K.N. Panikkar (op. cit.) P.16

government which is the avowed object of their adoptions than to obtain the same end by raising the land assessment.³ Several petitions were submitted to the government describing hardships suffered by the people due to the monopolies. In 1812 and 1813, in desperation, peasants attacked and plundered government tobacco depots.⁴ In the year 1812 Mr. Baber reported to the government about the mismanagement and oppression in the revenue affairs of Malabar⁵. These charges were mainly of salt and tobacco monopoly and a resultant oppression. But the Board of Revenue found, that these charges 'no longer affect the administration of revenue affairs of Malabar,' and it was considered unnecessary to examine his charges against warden's management.⁶ The Board observed that 'there was no occasion for reducing the monopoly price of salt, in order either to afford relief to the people, or to provide a security against smuggling⁷. Thomas Warden, an advocate of the monopoly admitted that the monopoly retail price of salt bore heavily on the people, that the cry for a repeal

3. BRP. 16 July 1815 vol.669. PP.819-20.

4. Ibid Vol.667

5. General Report vol.22. 6 July 1817. Para 686

6. Letter from govt. 29.Feb.1816 Ibid Para 687

7. Ibid Para.690

or a modification of these monopolies rings throughout Malabar⁸. In 1819 a memorandum pleading for abolition of the monopoly asserted that the expences of a family on salt and tobacco had increased by 15 times after introduction of the monopoly⁹.

SALT MONOPOLY

Monopoly in salt was introduced in 1806. Salt manufacture was so extensively under taken in the district before this¹⁰ and the production yielded a surplus for export besides the local consumption. In the beginning, though the government did not forbid local production of salt, it began to decline due to the obligation on the producers to sell their salt to the government at a price fixed by the latter for its purchase. The government price was so meagre that its production became uneconomic and could not compete with the salt imported from Bombay by the government contractors¹¹ and by 1823 salt production in Malabar totally declined leading to loss of employment for a large number of salt manufacturers. The British

8. BRP 16 January 1815 Vol.667.

9. BRM Vol. 110 B PP.449-508

10. Buchanan (op. cit.) Vol.II.PP.479-487.

11. Innes and Evans, Malabar (Madras 1951) P.372

records attest that the salt monopoly had affected 6000 proprietors of salt pans¹² in Malabar. Within 5 years of the introduction of monopoly in salt, the price had gone up by 300-400% and the retail price in certain areas by as much as 700%¹³.

Before the introduction of the monopoly the price of salt in the district ranged between Rs.19 and Rs.25 per garce (4800 sers)¹⁴. Table 6-1 shows the average price of salt before the monopoly¹⁵. The

Table 6-1

Average Price of Salt before monopoly

Year	St.P. Fan	St.P. Fan
1801	5 - 30	8 - 34
1802	5 - 30	7 - 36
1803	5 - 30	11 - 12
1804	5 - 30	9 - 24
1805	5 - 30	7 - 36
1806	5 - 12	7 - 36

Average of 1801 - 1806 = St.P.8 per garce

12. BRP 1 August 1822 vol.921.P.7258.

13. T.H. Babar 'Evidence' given in March and April 1830 before the House of Lords. (Mangalore 1885) P.38 (Hereafter Babar Evidence).

14. BRP, 22 June 1808 vol.467 PP.4607-10.

15. See table (1 star pagoda = 3.5 rupees) therefore 8x3.5 = Rs.28

fluctuation in every year is due to the lowest in the coastal areas and the highest in the interior areas.¹⁶ Originally the monopoly price of salt was star pagodas 20 (Rs.70) per garce.¹⁷ It had reached later st.p. 25 and 27 per garce, and in 1813 it was fixed at st.p.25 (Rs.87.5) per garce¹⁸. In 1807 the wholesale price at government store was fixed at Rs.60/- per garce for local and Rs.72 per garce for imported salt¹⁹ and the retail price at Rs.70²⁰. In 1811 it was raised to Rs.75 for locally manufactured salt and Rs.90 for the imported variety. In this year there was a great increase in salt revenue. This was a result of the salt monopoly. The reason being the country salt manufacture had failed in the year throughout the province and the district became entirely dependent on foreign supply for its consumption. So the government salt only was sold. This year the revenue from salt was Rs.1,64,402. It was an increase of Rs.28,052 above the former year²¹ The price underwent another revision

16. Warden (Report 1813) P.1

17. Warden (Report 1813). P.I

18. Ibid

19. BRP. 16 June 1813 and 1 July 1813; K.N. Panikkar (op. cit.) P.13.

20. MDR. Vol.2571.P.105

21. Letter from Warden to the government 31st Dec. 1811 in General Report Vol.18 Para.379.

in 1813, in which local salt was sold at Rs.81 and imported variety at Rs.105 at government stores, the retail price in the market going up to Rs.127.5 per garce.²² Though the sale was very low due to heavy rain in the year 1828, a very high increase (Rs.6030) in the net revenue was reported. This the collector explains to have arisen entirely from the price of salt having been raised 50% (Rs.70 to Rs.105).

Besides all this increase, the inhabitants of the interior area had to pay again an higher amount being expenses of conveyance, profit for several intermediaries, loss from wastage etc. This made a rise of 70% in the interior areas of the province.²³ But according to Mr.Warden this disadvantage would be compensated by a very moderate land assessment in a most abundant grain country. But in the practical level this moderate assessment was never enjoyable to the interior people on account of various reasons.

In short the revenue from this very common article increased year by year to the advantage of the government but the same time at the cost of the sufferings of the common people. A comparison of the revenue from the salt and tobacco monopoly with the

22. BRP 16, January 1815, Vol-667-P.799

23. Warden's Report 1813 P.2

land revenue (table 6-2) would reveal how much it augmented the government revenue.

Table 6-2
Revenue from Salt and Tobacco Monopoly
Against Land Revenue 1809 - 1853²⁴

Year	Salt Rs.	Tobacco Rs.	Total Rs.	Land revenue Rs.
1809-13	1,30,756	21,426	1,52,182	17,18,782
1814-18	1,32,053	1,99,235	3,31,288	16,95,530
1819-23	1,84,517	2,21,267	3,04,784	17,45,587
1824-28	1,81,212	3,41,449	5,22,661	15,93,379
1829-33	2,44,363	4,14,125	6,58,488	15,48,839
1834-38	2,96,837	4,65,587	7,62,424	16,13,060
1839-43	3,40,121	5,34,006	8,74,127	16,40,098
1844-48	3,42,680	5,59,423	9,02,103	16,40,992
1849-53	3,35,870	4,88,270	8,24,140	16,35,574

By an appallingly strange reasoning Mr. Warden calculates the amount of salt one family consumes per annum and what amount it spends for it out of the annual income etc. He concludes that there was no oppression of salt monopoly on any individual. The conclusion was, of course, based on a milkmaid's calculation.²⁵ But the living reality was absolutely different.

24. Statistical abstract of Malabar 1873-74 - (Calicut 1874) Appendix.A.

25. He calculated that in a family of 6 members, 4 members will be earning wages and their average income would be at Rs.110/- per annum. But he did not find people with single family members as wage earner, with a number of dependants.

TOBACCO MONOPOLY

Tobacco yielded a very trifling revenue in Malabar under Tipu's government and was subject only to a moderate tax till 1806, when the monopoly was introduced.²⁶ But soon the price of tobacco shot up to a very unreasonable level. Before the introduction of monopoly the market price was Rs.60 per candy of 680 lb, Plus a duty of 80% to the government²⁷. By 1812 the retail price had gone upto Rs.106.5 per candy and by 1821 it had reached Rs.229. In the year 1822 the monopoly price was raised from Rs.157.5 to Rs.175 per candy by the government.²⁸ Consequently the retail price rose again. However in Coimbatore, from where the government procured tobacco, the price was only Rs.22 per candy in 1812, the monopoly price in Malabar being about 484% more in 1812 and 1359% more in 1821 than the purchase price. To the consumer the price was about 200% in 1812, 500% in 1821, and about 700% to 800% more than the pre-monopoly price.²⁹

26. General Report Vol.22. 6 January 1817. Para 691.

27. Graeme's Report P.256

28. Govt. order for 26 March 1822. General Report Vol.31, 2 Jan. 1823. Para 1073.

29. K.N. Panikkar. (op.cit.) P.13; Graeme's Report. P.259.

Tobacco was not a luxury, but a habit largely among the peasants and labourers. After the introduction of monopoly these classes could not afford the enhanced price and there was a deep decline in its sale. The result was of great consequences. The people began to smuggle tobacco at least for their own usage, though not for sale in market. The consequent decline in revenue was a matter of great concern for the district officials who adopted several coercive methods to push up the sale. When tobacco yielded a good revenue to the government the smuggling in this article became a much disturbing source. The government adopted measures for its prevention. However in Wynad some modification in the rules of tobacco monopoly was found necessary. Being the climate excessively bleak, and cold, the rain continued and violent throughout the years, the consumption of tobacco among the natives, particularly the Paniyans or slaves was greater. So the tobacco grown in Wynad was allowed for their personal use and not for smuggling below the ghats. Therefore, the monopoly in foreign tobacco only was continued in this area.

But smuggling in other parts of the province was strictly prevented and to increase the government sale in the article each taluk official was assigned

five candies of tobacco per month for sale and those who failed to achieve the target were threatened with dismissal.³⁰ The Tahasildar in turn compelled the people to purchase tobacco, sometimes leaving it in their houses and collecting its price along with land revenue.³¹ So the interest of the government official was to increase the revenue from the monopoly as high as possible.

The collector and the higher revenue officials were entitled for a commission in the item of monopoly articles.³² The governor in council authorised the principal collector and Head Assistant in Malabar to draw the usual commission on the net revenue from the tobacco monopoly, on the condition that the principal collector's total commission in the extra sources should not exceed 15,000 pagodas per annum.³³

In the month of March 1827 the collector Mr. Sheffield introduced a new system for conducting the

30. Collector to the Tahasildar of Nedumangad. 29 March 1827; Baber 'Evidence' P.61

31. Baber, Evidence P.61.

32. General Report vol.30. 3 January 1822. Para.1157. In 1821 (F 1230) there was a balance of commission due to the collector and his assistant for Rs.2,348-6-10.

33. Govt. letter to the collector. 18 December 1824. General Report Vol.34. 3 January 1825. Para 1183.

sale of tobacco in the province. The chief object of this was to reduce the price of the article to the consumer. He also anticipated an increased consumption and a consequent increased revenue to the government on account of the considerable reduction in price. This would, also discourage the smuggling in the article. So when this system was practised between 12 March 1827 and 11 March 1828, the quantity of tobacco sold was 2778 candies, 594 candies excess than the previous year and 619 candies excess of the average quantity sold in the five preceeding years. The gross amount realised by the sale was Rs.4,86,197 the net revenue after deducting charge being Rs.3,42,100 exeeding Rs.92,531 to the previous and Rs.99,575 to the average of the net revenue of the preceeding year.³⁴

The collector found no complaint from the people regarding the system when he visited the province next. The new system, says the collector, has thus been ultimately successful for not only in reducing prices at 60% for the benefit of the people but also the government has gained an increase of revenue to the amount of 41%.³⁵

34. Collector's letter 17 March 1828 in General Report Vol.34 Para.1011.

35. Letter from the collector 30 Jan. 1828. General Report vol.34 Para.1004.

But Mr. Sullivan expressed doubt on the expediency of the increase of the revenue, as the augmented revenue has been produced by artificial means. He found the interest of Tahasildars in profiting the sales from the commission allowed to them. They will be apt to force the sales by all means to increase their commission in addition to their salary as a remuneration to their additional 'trouble' in managing the monopoly. But the Board of Revenue declined Mr. Sullivan's opinion on this saying that Mr. Sheffield's new system was beneficial both to the government and to the inhabitants.³⁶ Mr. Sullivan also found the supplies of the article often bad and uncertain, that the government had too much to do in the actual trade, that the collector of Malabar had no means of knowing whether the growers are well or ill paid. But the Board always showed a green sign for the collector's steps. However the system of Mr. Sheffield was not successfully continued as the collector of Coimbatore began to export only bad quality tobacco to Malabar.

The net result of the monopoly of tobacco had been analysed by Mr. Graeme in his report as follows.

36. General Report Vol.42, 3 Jan. 1829. Para 1002.

1. The monopoly had extinguished the trade of the article between Malabar and other tobacco producing districts, being the government the monopolist, carrier and wholesale dealers. 2. It reduced the consumption of the article though the population had increased much. 3. It demoralised both its producers and consumers by compelling them to make united efforts for smuggling it. 4. It compelled the people to take bad article from the government store at a four fold price. 5. It made the growers to give the government best sort of it at a low price fixed by the government and to retain the inferior sort from the market.

Mr. Good Wyn, the sub collector says, "the complaints of the badness of the tobacco are universal all over the northern division, and the natives say with justice that it is most cruel and unfair on the part of the government to force them to use such bad tobacco, when the government monopoly price is about four times the original cost of the commodity in Coimbatore."³⁷

6. It occupied much of the time of the public servants of both the districts to engender constant

37. Letter of Mr. Good Wyn the sub collector. Sullivan's Report P.14.

dispute between them and to make the sale of tobacco a primary duty of the public servants in Malabar, their emolument to a certain extent depending upon the quality of tobacco which they sell.

In all other districts tobacco is a luxury which can be purchased for a moderate price. In Malabar from the moisture of the climate it is a necessity of life. But here it was so enormously taxed that it put out of the power of lower classes to consume it. Therefore, the consumption of the article had considerably reduced after the introduction of its monopoly. The average consumption of tobacco in Malabar before introduction of monopoly was candies 3360 for one year, but under the monopoly the highest consumption in 1837 was only 2975 candies.³⁸ The difference become again more when the population of the period also is considered.³⁹

The justification of the company government for this higher tax on tobacco was that "the land-tax of the western districts, is so much lighter than that of other parts of the territory. It is quite equitable that the people of those districts should make up their

38. Sullivan's Report P.6

39. Population in 1802 was 465594 and in 1837, it was 1165489.

quota of taxation by indirect payment through tobacco and other articles"⁴⁰. But this would be a valid argument if the tax fell only upon the landed proprietors, and if there was no other way of raising revenue. But the burden falls heaviest upon the lower orders, the agricultural labourers and slaves. Shortly the effect of tobacco monopoly was highly oppressive.

MONOPOLY IN TIMBER

In the early decades of the company administration, the government was markedly indifferent to forest conservancy. During this period forests were viewed by the administrators as an impediment to the expansion of cultivation. "with the state committed to agricultural expansion as its major source of revenue, the early decades of colonial rule witnessed a 'fierce onslaught' on India's forests. The first show of interest in forestry - the reservation of teak forests in Malabar in 1806 was dictated by strategic imperial needs".⁴¹ The government gradually restricted access to the forests. The chief motive for this, no doubt, was to assure a supply of wood for their great colonial

40. Sullivan's Report P.6.

41. David Hardiman (ed) Peasant Resistance in India, 1858-1914 (N.Delhi, 1992). pp - 261-262.

cities, ship building, railway etc. Nilambur teak was found highly valuable and rich for ship building and other construction works in the home country.

Towards this end a survey in the Malabar forests was undertaken during the time of major Macleod by Mr. Maconachie, an expert in the woods of Malabar. The collector was requested to state his opinion on the best means of rendering the timber as an available source of revenue.⁴² Later Mr. Warden was also requested to furnish details regarding the Malabar forests.⁴³ But his attempt in this regard was not completed as "the survey had been interrupted by the commotions which soon after ensued."⁴⁴

In the year 1807 the company government established monopoly in timber, with the aim of obtaining a permanent supply of teak from the province when a deficiency in oak supply was confronted for the ship building in England. This monopoly also adversely

42. General Report Vol.7, 10 Oct. 1801 Para.389-96; Vol.9, Oct 1802 Para 177.

43. On 7th October 1805 Mr. Warden wrote to the govt. that he was "unable to discover among the English records of the province any information relating to the survey commenced under the order of Mr. Macleod". General Report Vol. 11. 31 January 1806 Para 377-78.

44. Ibid.

affected the inhabitants of the province, especially those who engaged in the timber trade and the building of ships and other vessels. Beypore, an important centre of ship building had totally declined. Timber monopoly also made a number of people unemployed, particularly a large number of Mappilas engaged in coastal trade.⁴⁵

Moreover, the monopoly in timber restricted people seeking their livelihood in forest on account of the strictness of rules. Tribal women and children engaged in collecting firewood experienced hardships from the forest officials. It was on account of the repeated complaints that in 1823, the government ordered for the abolision of the office of forest conservator, whose control over trees of all denominations had created much hardships to the inhabitants of Malabar and Canara.⁴⁶

Deforestation was another very significant aspect of the company government's, monopoly in timber. The indiscriminate cutting of woods in the forest led to an alarming state of deforestation. When

45. Baber, Evidence pp.11-12; K.N. Panikkar (op. cit.) P.15.

46. General Report Vol.32 5 January 1824 Para.1039.

over-cutting of teak and other valuable woods led to a dwindling of supplies in the 1830s, the government turned their eye to the forests of South Gujarath.⁴⁷ The military expedition of Arther Wellesly against the Paissy Raja (1800-2) also cleaned forests to a mile on either side of the roads as a measure to destroy hide outs of the enemy force⁴⁸ Sir Thomas Munro remarked to the young Raja of Padukottai in 1826 that the forest had been dense when he had travelled this way as a young officer in the 1780s, but now the woods had been almost cut down and cultivation was going on, some thin woods remaining in places"⁴⁹

Movements of peasant cultivators had also pushed forward the degradation of the forest in many areas. Under the pressure of the heavy land revenue levied on the better soil farmers moved up into the hills or on to poorer soils and cleaned forest as they went.⁵⁰ The consequence was an acceleration of felling

47. David Hardiman 'Power in the Forest in David Arnold & David Hardinan (ed.) Subaltern Studies VIII (Delhi, 1994). P.112.

48. C.A. Bayly. The New Cambridge history of India. Indian society and the making of the British empire. (Delhi, 1990) P.139.

49. Ibid

50. Ibid P.139.

trees in the higher lands. The growth of population and a search of new abode by the people and also an increased demand for fire wood and wood for river boats also fastened the deforestation proces.

Shortly government monopoly in timber of Malabar forests was not a step to preserve the Malabar woods, instead it systematically looted the Indian forests for the needs of the home government. In 1849 Delhousie ordered certain waste lands to be formed into government estates. In 1852 he issued instruction for the creation of fodder, fuel and forest reserves. The Imperial Forest Department was created in 1864 and the first Indian Forest Act was passed in 1865. Thus large areas of forest was demarked as reserve in which the government would have a monopoly right to all produce.⁵¹

Briefly, the company administration in Malabar created a hot bed for the agricultural population who sought asylum in the wilderness of Malabar forest from the hardships in their former agricultural fields. The timber monopoly affected people from all category in

51. David Hardiman Peasant Resistance in India. 1858-1914 (New Delhi, 1992) P.47. Later the forest department of Malabar was changed to the Bombay presidency for the adminstrative convenience.

one way or the other. When the poor children and women who collected fire wood experienced troubles from the forest officials, ordinary people lost their means of livelihood, and other timber traders lost their business opportunity.

The government had established monopoly in spices of Malabar at various occasions. But these were changed for the convenience of administration and also on account of various reasons. When the company established a monopoly in pepper, the article was largely smuggled to Mahe and also the production of the article was adversely affected. This compelled the government to think of abolishing monopoly and introducing land tax and an export duty. When this also was found highly oppressive to the cultivation and the government did not get adequate pepper for its trade necessary changes were effected later on. Likewise, cardamom, tea, coffee, ginger etc. also were brought under company's sole control either by a monopoly or by other means.

TAX ON SPICES

The monopoly of pepper, cardamom and other spices which were the major trade articles of the Europeans in this coast, helped the company government's trade as well as revenue interest.

In the last years of the 18th century the English attempted to enforce a strict monopoly over pepper in the north of British Malabar. It was a forced system of Purchase at low prices. Strigent measures were adopted against smuggling, and military pockets took up their innumerable positions, yet smuggling to Mahe increased. At Mahe the French gave a very reasonable rate for the pepper, while the monopoly price of the company gave only a nominal amount.⁵²

In April 1792 it was arranged that the princes to the north of Calicut should pay half of their revenue in pepper⁵³ and the monopoly in the article would be relinquished. The commissioners were aware that this collection of revenue in kind would lead to the oppression of the cultivators by officials of the princes.⁵⁴ In the southern districts of Malabar they issued a proclamation for a free trade in the article, finding that their former attempt to collect whole of the pepper had created a great oppression and violence to the cultivators, merchants and people.⁵⁵

52. Ashin Das Gupta 'Malabar in Asian trade 1740-1800 (Cambridge 1967) P.128.

53. R.M.J.C. II PP.24-5; Logan Treaties Pt.II No.XXXVI

54. Tellichery Factory Records Index No.II P-147.

55. Logan 'Treaties' pt II No. XXXVII. This proclamation of the supervisor was in contrary to the proclamation issued in the northern Malabar on 15 April 1793 by the commissiners Page and Dungan.

This very dear article had verily diminished in its production as well as in trade, soon after the company's access to the province. The high tax on the pepper vine and the high export duties levied on that articles were the causes for this negative result.⁵⁶ In the year 1806 the collector reported that an urgent measure was necessary to "relieve the cultivator from the distress which he suffered by having the whole of the late crop upon his hands, the cultivation of this staple commodity could not fail to be neglected."⁵⁷ Therefore, he proposed "either to reduce the heavy duty on the exportation of pepper, imposed for the purpose of repressing private trade, or that the company should resume their customary investment."⁵⁸

The Collector therefore, proposed to abolish the tax on pepper vine and exempt all export duty in the province until the next January (1807) for an immediate relief. This was given approbation by the government.⁵⁹ The assessment of pepper vine was a 1/3 of the gross produce and a 11.5 % of duty on all

56. General Report Vol.12, 5 Oct. 1806. Para.551.

57. Ibid Para 548.

58. Ibid Para 549.

59. Letter of Collector 28 April 1806 in General Report Vol.12 Para 550.

exported pepper. Since the article was exclusively used for exportation all the cultivators of pepper had to pay at least 45% of it as government tax in these two heads.⁶⁰ Therefore, later on the 1/3 of the tax on pepper vine was reduced to 1/6.

Mr. Macleod had proposed for a limitation of the government share from 4/10 to 6/10 and it was given approval.⁶¹ Still in 1813-14 a very considerable balance was seen in the head of cardamom. This was because the produce had remained in hand unsold until 1815. During 1813-14 a large quantity of cardamom was "Pilfered and smuggled". In the next year (1815) however, an increase in the collection was seen on account of it being put for farming and was rented for st.pagodas 6,328-25-57 1/2. The collector says that 'no plan had been found so eligible as that of farming when there had been no combination among the bidders'⁶². In Wynad the article had been annually farmed to the highest bidder up to 1813, at which time the amount offered for the rent being very small, the collector suspecting a combination among the bidders

60. 33.33% tax on pepper vine + 11.5% export duty = 44.83 % of tax.

61. General Report Vol.13. 10 October 1807. Para 741.

62. Ibid Vol.21, 26 December 1815 Para 1558

took it again under Amany management under which it continued in the next years⁶³. In short the company government adopted a policy of expediency for the best means of affording its revenue and trade objectives.

ADDITIONAL TAX

The company's system of taxation embraced almost every necessity of daily life such as houses, shops, cattle, looms, ferries, fishing nets, tapping knives, toddy and arrack etc.⁶⁴ As many as fifty different taxes were realized from the people.⁶⁵ The revenue derived from these additional taxes was so substantial that the government was reluctant to repeal these taxes despite repeated representations from the people and recommendations from subordinate officials. By the middle of 19th century these taxes amounted to 25% of the land revenue and 15% of the total revenue of the district.⁶⁶

The government seemed to be insensitive to the suffering of the people. The burden of revenue pressed

63. Ibid. Para 1556

64. K.N. Panikkar. (op. cit.) PP 16-7

65. BRP, 29 Aug. 1822, Vol.923, P.8250

66. K.N. Panikkar (op. cit.) P.17

much harder than the cultivators could bear and cry for a repeal or modification heard throughout the province.

HOUSE TAX

House tax was collected by the company government in either of a two methods. Wherever it was of a nature of poll tax it was brought under Moturpha, and wherever it was regarded as a quit-rent for the site of the house, it was brought directly under the land tax. Under Haider Ali's government it was imposed in lieu of a poll tax denominated 'Tulla-Punnum' and not as a ground rent. So this was recommended to be brought with the extra sources under moturpha. But in Malabar house tax formed a part of landjumma while in the other districts under the head of moturpha. The Board of Revenue, therefore, directed to change this into moturpha for making a uniform system.

In the year 1825 an entire revision in the tax was made and all houses gone to decay had been struck out of jumma, and those houses belonging to castes usually taxed only brought to account.⁶⁷ Of the 1,79,768 total houses in the district 10,158 houses were entirely exempted from assessment as it belonged

67. General Report Vol.36, 2 Jan. 1826. Para 1191

to persons in very indignant circumstances and the tax would become a burden up on them. So the remission was made for Rs.4,818-2-11. A further remission amounting to Rs.2,623-5-7 was allowed in the Cotiote Taluk on the houses of Mappilas with a view of equalising the assessment and putting that class of people on the same footing with the Hindoo inhabitants.⁶⁸ Notwithstanding deductions, the revised tax was an increase of Rs.2,563-8-11 for the year.⁶⁹ But this revision did not correct certain basic irregularities and inequalities existed in the taxation.

The collector said, "Irregularity and unaccountable partiality are the nature of this head of revenue, needs an entire modification". Justice seems to require that either all should be subject to the tax or all exempt'.⁷⁰ The collector, therefore, recommended that the exemption in favour of the Malabar Brahmins should not be continued. But the Board of Revenue observed that the collector has not offered the reason why this privilege of a class should be annulled and if abolished how it can be stated that they were

68. General Report Vol.44 - 1 Feb. 1830 Para 620

69. Ibid

70. Ibid vol.36 2 Jan.1826. Para 1191.

improperly given exemption. The Board's reasons were, verily unrealistic and evasive. They stated that "it is wrong to interfere with the prevailing custom, and unless it injuriously affect to the interest of another, section, this privilege can not be annulled. They held that present dissatisfaction can not be removed by imposing a tax which now does not exist, but it will help to excite more dissatisfaction only. So the Board's reasonings were explicitly evident as a pro landlordism. They held that the concession given to the higher caste Hindus were honorary distinction.⁷¹

On the other side the lower strata of the society was taxed heavily. The people of Calicut town gave a petition representing the hardships of a house tax. In Calicut taluk 2,115 houses were taxed in 1801, which included the houses of the poor fishermen, ironsmith, washermen, barbers, carpenters and goldsmith. Among them were 856 houses of mappilas and 593 houses of Tiyyas whose occupation was not listed, but who were either peasants or labourers. They were taxed according to the value and size of each houses. At Calicut coastal areas many of the houses paid 8 to 10 fanams. Some of them paid about 16 fanams. The

71. Ibid Para 1193

average rate of a house was 2 fanams. There were house paying 32 fanams also. In some of the large houses of the city there were staying some poor old family struggling to earn their livelihood. Such a decayed family may find it convenient to occupy one corner of a large house which may be the only property they have inherited from ancestors once opulent.⁷² In a town, where trade and population have decayed it may be impossible to rent a large house, even if they intend for. It was, therefore, Mr. Thackary opposed the idea of taxing houses and ware-houses on the basis of the percentage of the value of the property.⁷³

In short, the house rent was a source of considerable hardship, particularly to those who gain their daily bread by daily labour, and a source of resentment which drew repeated representations urging either its repeal or revision.⁷⁴ Buildings of the trade centres of the province namely Calicut, Quilandy, Parapangad, Tanore and Peourvay were also assessed at a rate varying from 6 to 1 1/2 homes. These store houses

72. There were many such families in Malabar especially at Calicut city among the caste Hindus and Mappilas.

73. Thackery's Report Page 16

74. Ibid

(Pandikasals) were assessed according to their size, extend of trade etc.

FERRY TAX

The primary objective of ferry tax of the company government in Malabar was to find financial resource for the construction of communication system. Most of these construction of roads and bridges of the province were completed with the objectives either of suppressing the rebels who revolted against the company revenue systems or for a more convenient transportation of goods and its easy revenue collection. The roads of Wynad were constructed mainly to suppress the Paissy and Kuruchiar rebellions. The road and railways of Nilambur, Cannanore, Tellicherry etc. were built for easy conveyance of the rich timber and spices of the area. The government found it convenient to make use of the ferry taxes for these construction works whereby the financial loss from the government's side can be avoided.

The ferry tax was not peculiar to Malabar, but it operates with peculiar severity in that province (and Canara) from the number and width of the rivers and back waters, and from their being full throughout the year which is not the case in other districts.⁷⁵

75. Sullivan Report P.7

Though there was an understanding that the amount should be expended in improving the communication of the province, when the accumulations amounted to a large sum they were carried to the credit of the government and the collection formed a regular item of the public revenue.⁷⁶ When the ferry tax collected in the year 1820 was Rs.23531 in 1830 it was Rs.41681 and in 1840 it was Rs.32780⁷⁷. Toll was collected for some of the bridges of Malabar. Though originally it was intended only to meet the expences of the construction, it was continued to levy even after the target amount was completed. Sullivan opined that, 'this appears to be very unhandsome proceeding, and it lays the government open to an imputation of bad faith'⁷⁸. According to Sullivan "the ferry tax in Malabar is in one respect more obnoxious than that of the tobacco-tax".⁷⁹ All classes are subject to the latter. 'But while the carriage and the Pullakin of the wealthy are allowed to pass toll free, the poor women whose livelihood depends upon the bundle of sticks which she

76. Ibid

77. 'The fall in 1840 was not from any diminution of rates on decrease of population, but from successful attempts to evade it'. Ibid P.14

78. Ibid

79. Ibid P.6

is carrying can not pass until she has paid. So hard does this tax press upon the lower orders that lives have been lost in attempt to swim the rivers for the purpose of avoiding it,⁸⁰.

Sullivan in his report commented that the company government was not successful in providing adequate facilities for the development of the districts and its resources. Improved communication by land and water and a secure harbour for the reception of shipping and trade were urgent requirements for Malabar, because every article in Malabar had to pay very high expence for its conveyance because of its poor conveyance system. The cost of transportation of one tone of goods for a hundred miles by cart was Rs.26-8-0, by bullocks Rs.46-8-0, by collies Rs.53-8-0 and by water only Rs.2-8-0. This shows the vast importance of water communication⁸¹. Yet the government did not pay any attention for this. Otherwise, the province would have been economically improved very much. The same was the government attitude towards irrigation facility or agriculture.

80. Ibid. P.7 also BRP. 6 March 1843. Vol. 1849 PP. 3641-2.

81. Sullivan's Report P.19

TRANSIST DUTY

The transist duty system introduced for the articles brought to the district and sold outside were unscientific and unrealistic. The system authorises the levy of an additional duty upon enhanced tariff valuation of all goods passing from eastern to the western districts.⁸² Though this has been frequently brought to the notice of the Board of Revenue as unrealistic, no modification was effected.

It was absolutely difficult to say "why a man who resides 30 miles west of the district should pay more for a piece of cloth than one who resides the same distance of any other part of the compass", says Sullivan. The tariff value of a bale of piece goods at Palghat⁸³ was 75% higher than at Coimbatore itself⁸⁴. A merchant first pays 5% at Coimbatore, upon the tariff of that place often travelling 30 miles, his goods are unpacked, searched and compared with the pass, to ascertain-whether they tally. He then has to pay a second 5% up on a fresh valuation. But if his goods are for export by sea, the two inland duties are

82. Ibid P.7

83. Palghat is 30 miles from Coimbatore.

84. Sullivan's Report P.7

returned to him, in principal, and a sea custom duty of 2.5% only up on a third valuation is collected⁸⁵. This returning of 10% of the two former valuation would be unrealistic for two reasons. Firstly, by the time an article reaches for sea export the article would be in the hands of a second or third party. If so, the looser would be the first. Secondly, it would be extremely difficult for a merchant to regain an amount once paid as tax. In short, the tarrif duty pressed hard on the Malabar merchants. It is said that the tarrif duty intended to make the lightly taxed people of Malabar to pay more for their clothing than the people of other districts⁸⁶. Sullivan rejects this reason also as 9/10 of the goods so treated are for foreign markets. The government therefore, will not get any revene by it as what is paid in the first two instances, is returned. The sufferer from first to last will be the exporting merchants.

PROFESSIONAL TAX

The company government exacted professional tax from almost all the professional class of the province. The professionals of Malabar included

85. Ibid

86. Ibid

fishermen, toddy tappers, blacksmith, gold smiths, oil-traders, and various other skilled workers.

Toddy was extracted from coconut and palm trees. These toddy tappers required to take licenses for the work and had to pay a professional tax or tapping knives tax per month at the rate of one silver fanam.⁸⁷ The government tax on the license is intended to operate as an indirect duty on the sale of fermented liquors. Moreover the licensee had to pay a vary considerable amount to the owner of the tree also. So all the three amounts sometimes made irregularity in the toddy tappers payment. Attachment of property for not paying this tax also was regular.⁸⁸ A fisherman had to pay two direct taxes one for their nets and the other for their huts. This tax varied in the different parts of the province. At Calicut and Beypore each net taxed at 6 Hoons. Fishing was entirely a seasonal work. This made the fishermen community's sufferings too much under the government taxation system. Most of the fishermen were living in a very miserable situation⁸⁹.

87. Thomas Warden (Report 1813) P.4

88. Ibid

89. Ibid

Oil mills were assessed for tax according to their total number of bullocks used and the capacity of oil-production. The shops of the bazars were taxes from 2 to 20 fanams according to the size and its business. The bullock carts and other such conveyance system also had their tax fixed from 2 to 5 fanams. Taxes paid by mechanics and skilled workers were as follows (table 6-3)

Table 6-3

Professional Tax paid by Mechanics

1.	Iron melter	8/6/4	Fanams
2.	Iron smith	2	"
3.	Sawyer	4	"
4.	Weaver	4/2	"
5.	Carpenter	2	"
6.	Goldsmith	2	"
7.	Polisher	2	"
8.	Chunam maker	2	"
9.	Earthen pott maker	2	"
10.	Copper smith	2	"

In short, the company government's revenue system spared no one in this land from paying revenue. Every individual had to pay two or more types of revenue under various denominations as house rent, professional tax pattam, etc. Each of these payments brought heavy burden upon individuals of the province. Whenever the individual tax payee found it difficult to pay these obligatory payments the government adopted

coercive methods up on him until their regular payment. He was indiscriminately fined for the delay of payment.

COERCIVE METHOD FOR REVENUE EXACTION

The disparity in conversion rates and the pressure of overassessment were already felt by the rural population. When it accompanied with the problem explained above the complaints and representations against them were "loud, general and numerous". The Assistant collector of north Malabar personally received 700 complaints in a month from a single taluk and did not doubt their veracity⁹⁰. Unfortunately, these complaints were rather summarily dismissed by the government as attempts to obtain undue reduction in revenue assessment.⁹¹ The peasants often had to sell their movable property to discharge revenue obligations⁹². The collection of revenue became increasingly difficult and arrears started accumulating, swelling from only Rs.917 in 1810 to

90. B.R.P. April 1829. Vol.1187. PP.4186-94. and
BRM on, Vol. 110 B, PP - 499-508, 559-90.

91. BRP, 1 July 1813, Vol.611 and 28 April 1831,
Vol.1283.

92. BRP. 16 January 1815, Vol. 667.

Rs.1,70,707 by 1820.⁹³ The 'heavy and progressive deterioration in the land revenue' did attract government's attention but over assessment as a possible reason was not seriously taken up by the administration, even when so suggested by certain local officials⁹⁴.

The government never recognised the revenue demand as unduly harsh, and the district officials were instructed to realise the maximum revenue possible. In this circumstances, they found it difficult to do so without resorting to various methods of coercion and distraint and the sale of movable and immovable property, is not surprising. In the process of revenue collection personal restraint and violence were not infrequent. Collectors received numerous representations to this effect and in one case a ryot was kept in the sun in a stooping position until, in his agony, he struck his guard and was then killed by the adhikari⁹⁵. Instances of peasants mobbing and treating revenue officials in protest against the

93. Revenue Letters to Madras, 12 December 1821;

94. BRP, 18 Sept. 1820 Vol.5071 and 14 March 1856.
Vol.2518

95. MDR, 1831. Vol.4058, PP-1-48

unduly harsh methods of revenue collection are also on record⁹⁶.

The inhuman treatment of the government to the lower order of people was frequent, T.H. Baber says: 'Their situation are truly deplorable, everything that can be laid hold of even the most trifling article, has been disposed'⁹⁷. He continues: 'I cannot sufficiently deplore the numerous seizures of personal property which have now extended to the most necessary articles of life; every utensil, even the rice beaters, curry stones and even the doors and windows of the houses of the poorest cultivators have been seized and sold for revenue'⁹⁸. In the year 1812 in Cotiote taluk, apart from personal property, the landed property of 203 people was distrained for non-payment of revenue. Of these, distraint was enforced in 199 cases.⁹⁹ There were 55 land lords, 85 tenants 20 tenants-at-will and 30 labourers among the distrain.¹⁰⁰.

96. Ibid

97. Judicial proceedings 30 June 1812.Vol.74,PP.3706-07

98. Ibid

99. Ibid

100. Thomas Warden, Report on the land Tenures of Malabar. 12 Sept. 1815. P.47.

In Cotiote taluk alone an amount of Rs.3683 was collected by sale of land in the years between 1825-29.¹⁰¹ In Kurumbranad taluk 1330 gardens and rice fields were sold in 1821.¹⁰² The government had to appoint a commissioner in each parabuttyship to look after work in connection with distraint and sale of property. This was an indication of the number of cases that the local administration had to handle.¹⁰³.

In 1820, 1821 and 1822 years 8631, 5207, and 3792 summons for distraint were issued respectively, but the actual process of sale was instituted only against 6001, 3701 and 591¹⁰⁴ cases. The others either sold their land independently or found some other source to discharge their revenue obligation. Briefly the company government not only burdend the inhabitants with heavy revenue assessment, but it adopted very inhuman methods for its collection.

101. BRP. 30 April 1829, Vol.1187, P.4146

102. Graeme's Report PP.267-8; Thomas Munro. A Report on the revision of the Judicial system in the province of Malabar 4 July 1817. (Calicut 1912) P.25.

103 Ibid. MDR. Vol. 2572, P.115,

104. BRP. 29 Aug.1822, Vol.923.

REBELLIOUS RESPONSE OF THE RURAL PEASANTRY (1840-1857)

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER - VII
REBELLIOUS RESPONSE OF THE RURAL PEASANTRY
(1840-1857)

The last two decades of the company government in Malabar had to undergo through a tough phase of rebellious response from the rural peasantry of South Malabar. During this period practically the government was inactive in the sphere of revenue assessment and reforms, on account of its active engagement with an enhanced revenue collection in the new situation. The government did not try to effect any changes which the time most required in revenue administration. It was in this period that Mr. H.V. Conolly had taken charge as the principal collector of the district.

H.V. CONOLLY (1840-1855)

During a period of more than 15 years of administration in the province collector H.V. Conolly had introduced no survey or assessment worth to note. During his administration the province witnessed a series of rebellions especially in the Southern parts. The government was engaged only in the collection of revenue, which was in a progressive state on account of a favourable price rise. The government had little to do in the new situation. Therefore their attention

never turned to any of the revenue reforms. Instead, the government apparatus was primarily engaged in a ruthless suppression of the prolonged struggle of the Mappila peasants. This can be seen as a net result of a continuous exploitation of Malabar peasantry both by the government and the landlords through various reforms effected in the land law.

After the commencement of the direct management of revenue collection in 1801, the company officials had made several attempts to arrive at a satisfactory settlement of revenue.¹ "All of them", unfortunately, "proved to be inadequate to provide a sound basis for settlement and collection of revenue."² Mr. Huddleston's attempt to persuade the government for a solution to the present follies of revenue was brushed aside. Eventhough the government had to accept the existing inequality and overassessment as the basic reasons for the 'lawlessness', "no step was taken to revise the pattern of settlement and the situation remained unaltered till the end of the nineteenth

1. See in the former pages survey of Macleod (1802) attempts of Richards (1803-04) Mr. Warden's Jenmi and Hinduvi Paymaish (1805-10) the enquiry of Mr. Graeme (1818-22) and the attempt of later collectors in this regard.

2. K.N Panikkar P.7

centuary"³ Wet lands of the province were assessed with extreme inequality.

Regarding garden Mr. Graeme's incompleted survey was followed by Mr. Sheffield's selected talooks survey in 1829-30, and in 1833 Mr. Clementson's detailed survey and assessemnt. This was continued until 1840-41. The result was a small increase of revenue to the extent of Rs. 18.849 instead of the 7% deficiency which Mr. Graeme had originally anticipated. The actual number of gardens on which this small increase occured was 2,79,896⁴. According to Mr. Graeme's scheme the garden assessment had to be revised in every 12 years. But no survey was conducted afterwards till 1861.⁵

Now various taluk orders were issued regarding the assessment of miscellaneous lands. The period of continuous assessment and reassessment, survey and resurvay with little outcome, had come to an end for the time being. Now the government did not turn any serious attention towards the revenue and land tenure

3. K.N.Panikkar P.8

4. Logan Vol.I P.690

5. In this year a revision was ordered going back to the accounts of 1805-10 (Hinduvi Paymaish), with subsequent corrections for new cultivations. Powel P.181.

but instead obsessed with the process of pacification of the province suppressing the rebels to enable the government for an easy collection of revenue.

RESULT OF PRICE RISE

As already noted, in 1830s a steep rise occurred in the prices of produce and landed property. As land acquired value corresponding a price rise the rates which were once heavy became easily payable. Powel says, "The fact seems to have been both as regards garden land, wetland and miscellaneous crops in the upland and forest, that the soil is so fertile the crops generally so good, and the rates so generally light by reason of increase in prices, that revenue collection has been in practice easy however complicated the various taluk rules were".⁶ Prices before 1830, according to Mr. Logan were abnormally low, but an increase of about 27% was recorded over 1831-33.⁷ An account of the price of paddy of an earlier period, available as preserved in the house of a landlord at Palghat shows well (table 7-1) the increase in prices after 1830.⁸ Prices of other

6. Powel P.181

7. R.M.S.C. Appendix I Para.257.

8. S. Srinivasa Raghava Iyengar. 'Memorandum on the progress of the Madras presidency during the last 40 years of British Administration Appendix (E) P.CIV. (Madras, 1998)

agricultural produce also had increased substantially during the period.⁹

Table 7-1

Average price of paddy in the years between 1820 - 1865

Year	No. of Paddy per Rupee	Year	No. of Paddy per Rupee
1820	77	1845	57
1825	80	1850	61
1830	81	1855	25
1835	76	1860	22
1840	71	1865	19

The abnormal hike in prices of commodities made again an unfortunate result up on the already over burdened cultivating tenants. The hike in prices usually would be a relief to the cultivator who produces the grain and other commodities for the whole society and even for the foreign market. But instead, this principle made a result on the contrary. The overwhelming majority of actual cultivators of Malabar had no surplus to sell, but had to make purchases from the market even for their daily subsistence, especially in the non-harvest seasons. On the other hand, the

9. K.N. Panikkar P.38

substantial jennis and majority of Kanakkars, had a large surplus produce to sell for the market at the higher prices because most of them had more than one, or in many cases a number of, shares from different lands scattered in one or many villages and taluks. They also could store these surplus products for the non-harvest seasons, in which prices shot up very high, and sell it at a very higher prices, while these were bought by the poor agricultural labours, or cultivating tenants and others. Therefore, the more the produce and prices increased the more the burdens of the poor cultivators increased, and at the same time the rich landlords amassed wealth through the price mechanism.

Actually this happened because whenever the prices are favourable the landlord preferred the payment of government share from the pattom received in kind ($\frac{2}{3}$) and he kept the jenni's share himself. Otherwise, in the unfavourable season, he made the tenant to pay these both, in kind or money whichever is better.

The hike in prices made the government share also increased. So the collection of revenue became easy without much difficulty. The government became satisfied when the revenue was collected nearly full of the yearly jumma and an annual increase in

corresponding with the price rise. Therefore, the attention of the government since 1830s did not turn for any reform in the existing system. It neither tried for a price control. For the next three decades there was little effort to revise or survey the garden or wet lands or any other produce, except in Kurumbranad¹⁰,

Mr. Graeme's proposal for a revision of 12 years for garden lands was found unnecessary by Mr. Conolly in 1844.¹¹ Mr. Conolly pointed out that no fixed periods of revisions could be named and that "the chief object of periodical revision was to counterbalance any extensive remissions which partial bad seasons or private misfortune might render indispensable"¹² He further observed that the landholders "are aware also that, though we do not think it desirable to bind ourselves to a permanency of aggregate amount of tax, we do so to a permanency of the proportion of the government demand to the

10. In 1850-52, here a general complaint of over-assessment of gardens pressed the government for a survey, but for a result of Rs. 366 decrease only. Logan, Vol.I, P.691

11. H.V. Conolly, Jumabundy Report of 1844 quoted in Logan Vol. I P.690.

12. Ibid

produce". A renewal at a fixed period would create uncertainty regarding the assessments for an ultimate result of curbing the garden industry, he thought.

Therefore he left things to go on as they were and examined only such gardens as their holders were "forced by their necessity to submit for inspection".¹³ He was of the opinion that a general revision was necessary only when the just rights of government owing to remission requires it. But this policy of expediency by the government for not making reassessment even at a distant interval must be seen in the light of the increased and unhindered collection of revenue in a totally changed situation due to the price rise. The government was least bothered about the clamour of the people on over assessment or unequal assessment, and it failed to understand the basic reasons for a frequent uprisings of the rural peasantry against the lord and the state.

Unfortunately things were going in an appalingly dangerous situation. Mappilas of South Malabar rose in arms. Between 1836-1853 no fewer than 22 outbreaks had taken place besides numerous abortive risings and conspiracies.¹⁴

13. Ibid P.691.

14. Innes C.A. and Evans F.B. 'Malabar District Gazatteer Vol.I P.78.

WHY MAPPILA OUT BREAKS ?

Mappilas, who were a flourishing trading community along the Malabar coast, became predominantly rural when the Europeans dominated the scene and soon began to decline in their fortunes. They were compelled to migrate to the interior parts of Malabar in search of employment and largely occupied in agricultural labour. When a large number of the Hindu population continued to follow their traditional profession¹⁵ in the new situation 'an overwhelming majority of Mappilas were cultivating tenants, landless labourers, petty traders and fishermen. Landowning Mappilas were very few.¹⁶ Even in south Malabar ^hwere Mappilas population was concentrated, the number of Mappila land holders were very few, and the land was almost exclusively held by the upper caste Hindus (Table 7-2).

Their number limited in government services under the British and excessively tied to the agricultural labour and trade, a desperate occupation

15. Most of the skilled workers like carpenters, gold smith, iron smith, weavers, potmakers, coppersmiths, etc. were from the Hindu and the Mappilas were not generally in such areas of profession.

16. K.N.Panikkar P.53

Table 7-2

Number of principal Jenmis holding more than 100 pieces of lands in southern taluks of Malabar

Taluk	Jenmis				Total
	Rajas	Brahmins	Nairs	Mappilas	
Ernad	6	62	43	2	113
Walluvanad	14	111	54	-	179
Ponnani	9	142	54	10	219
Palghat	11	30	52	-	96

in the changed situation under the company government. When trade began to decline their number largely concentrated in agricultural labour. The Mappilas began to feel as being alienated from the mainstream of Malabar society. There were certain reasons for this. Looked up on as the supporters of Tippu Sultan, they were treated as natural enemies of the new government, based on the erroneous assumption that the Mappilas benefited from the Mysorean rule and had become the 'principal landholders' in South Malabar'.¹⁷ Any way

17. R.M.J.C. Para 119. This view of the company officials was written at length in the pages of the history of Malabar. But KN Panikkar contests this view. He says "The Mappilas in general did not improve much under his rule". So the Mysorean phase in Malabar was neither a period of Mappila domination nor of Mappila rule. In fact Tipu Sultan encountered resistance from the Mappilas in his endeavours to collect revenue and one of the Mappila chiefs, Attan Gurukkal led a revolt against him. This rebellion was suppressed with the help of a prince from the Zamorins family. MDR. Vol. 2073 PP-58-90, Vol.2167, PP 21-6 - Vol 2137. PP. - 1069-71. K.N.Panikkar PP. 55-56.

in the beginning the British attitude was generally equitable. This underwent changes in the later periods of the commissioners' rule.

When the commissioners introduced the 'system of farming land revenue to the Malabar Rajas and chiefs, it exposed the peasants to the exorbitant demands of the Rajas, Chiefs and their agents.¹⁸ "The assessment of the Rajas again were unequal and Mappilas were rated more highly than the Hindus".¹⁹ Even when the revenue settlements were done by the company officials, they were relied on the accounts furnished by the Rajas Nambudiris, and Mookistans and the principal land holders.²⁰ The Mappilas of South Malabar refused to pay the revenue and, in some areas, even resorted to violence.²¹ There were frequent clashes between Nairs and Mappilas and the latter attacked 'Katcheris and threatened the village officials.²² This obstructed collection of revenue and the government was annoyed at these developments. The

18. MDR Vol. 1710 PP 35 & 146.

19. Innes C.A. & Evans F.B. Malabar P.73 n(1).

20. Ibid P.329 n(1)

21. MDR Vol. 1727 PP 332-66.

22. Ibid Vol.1743 PP.445-7.

government consequently started repressive methods against the insurgents. This must be the initial step of alienating Mappilas from the government.

Moreover, the appointment policy of the company government was seemed 'to buttress the power and position of upper-caste Hindu landlords. After 1800, most appointees for posts of Adhikaris (Village headmen) and Menons (Village accountants) were from Hindu landowning classes.²³ In the first half of 19th century all the Tahasildars and an overwhelming majority of village officials were Hindus.²⁴ In 1817 Thomas Munro recommended for the appointment of the Mappilas to the posts of Menons.²⁵ But the proposal was not heeded by the government. The first Mappila Tahasildar was appointed only in 1842. The Hindus who had monopolised these posts till then represented against this shift in the policy and ascribed the Mappila outbreaks to the leniency shown by the collector. This was petitioned by 29 Hindus of Ernad,

23. K.N. Panikkar P.58

24. BRC 2 April 1801 No.23. 9 March 1801. No.31; 13 July 1801 No.31, 32, 26 May 1803 No.31, 7 January 1836, No.38.

25. Thomas Munro, A Report on the Revision of Judicial system in the province of Malabar 4 July 1817, P.13.

Walluvanad and Chernad.²⁶ But the collector argued that no outbreak originated in any village presided over by Mappila headman.²⁷ In 1851 H.V. Conolly, the Collector, estimated that there were 1,55,686 Hindus and 1,27,734 Mappilas in Ernad, Chernad and Walluvanad together. There were only 20 Mappilas among 81 adhkarris, none among the village accountants and only 20 out of the 142 village peons.²⁸ So the Mappilas, who had participation in the revenue and police administration in the southern taluks of Malabar in the early years of company government were suspected for their loyalty to the government and Hindus were largely preferred for the government post.

The revenue policy favoured them and the decisions of courts safeguarded their interests'.²⁹ The Mappilas felt insecure, and they did not expect justice from the officials therein. 'Such fears, however, were not confined to the Mappilas alone, they were shared by Hindu tenants as well.'³⁰ 'The rural

26. Correspondance on the Mappila outrages in Malabar for the years 1849-59. Vol.I (Madras 1863) PP.216-20 (Hereafter C.M.O I).

27. Ibid I, P.218; K.N.Panikkar P.58 note 48.

28. C.M.O I P.214.

29. K.N.Panikkar P.59

30. Ibid

society of Malabar in general was in a state of perpetual ferment'. So revolts began to occur almost regularly. Dr. K.N. Panikkar says, they "were essentially an expression of the protest of the rural poor against oppression and exploitation."³¹ The insurgents of these revolts were drawn predominantly from the rank of poor peasants, agricultural labourers, artisans and petty traders."³²

But 'in these, Hindu participation was totally absent. The Mappilas alone were able to translate discontent into organised revolts. It suggests a religious background for these revolts. But unfortunately this itself was the major reason for an interpretation of these revolts being fanatical. The very basic reasons like tenurial changes and revenue administration and an oppressive system of assessment and exaction of various taxes by company government were side tracked in this misinterpretation. But the facts were explicitly clear that the prevailing system was highly oppressive for the agricultural population in general and Mappila peasantry in particular.

31. K.N.Panikkar P.49

32. For details Stephen F. Dale' Islamic society on the south Asian Frontier Mappilas of Malabar' 1498 - 1972, (Oxford, 1980) PP.228-32.

The Mappila chiefs like Unnimutha Muppan, Chemban Pokkar and Athan Gurukkal rose in revolt against the British government in the early years of the company administration. Athan Gurukkal and Chemban Pokkar were the daragas (Police chiefs) of Ernad and Cheranad taluks respectively, and had amassed landed property and power through their official influence.³³ They took leadership of the frustrated Mappila community, and rose in arms against the government and the landlords. These leaders maintained their own armed force and collected taxes from the people of South Malabar.³⁴ The Mappilas found able leadership in them against the landlord exploitation and joined the uprising. Whatever were the motives of these chiefs can be disputed. But the poor Mappila peasant community joined the uprisings against the oppression and exploitation of the landlords and government.

Not only the collection of revenue and maintenance of law and order was in question, the very authority of the British government was threatened. Officials could not attend to their duties in the face of Mappila resistance. Outbreaks in Chavakkad,

33. Cornard Wood Historical Background of Mappila Rebellion, Social scientist III 1st August 1974 P.551.

34. RMJC Para 120-1.

Mannarghat and Pulawayi called for government intervention. The officials attributed these uprisings to the inherent aggressive characters and lack of civilization of the Mappilas'.³⁵ But they failed to understand the basic reasons. Veliyankode Umer Qassi and Sayyid Alavi Thangal of Mamburam, the traditional leaders of the community also came forward in criticism of the government. Umer Qassi was quite agitated over the heavy taxes imposed by the British. He gave 'fatwa' for non payment of the taxes.³⁶ Sayyid Alavi Thangal also gave fatwa to fight against the British rule till the end.³⁷ So these uprisings were primarily against the British governemnt rather than the Hindu landlords. When the rural community found an encouragement from the traditional leaders like Umer Qassi and Mambaram Thangal they rose in large numbers at different occassions.

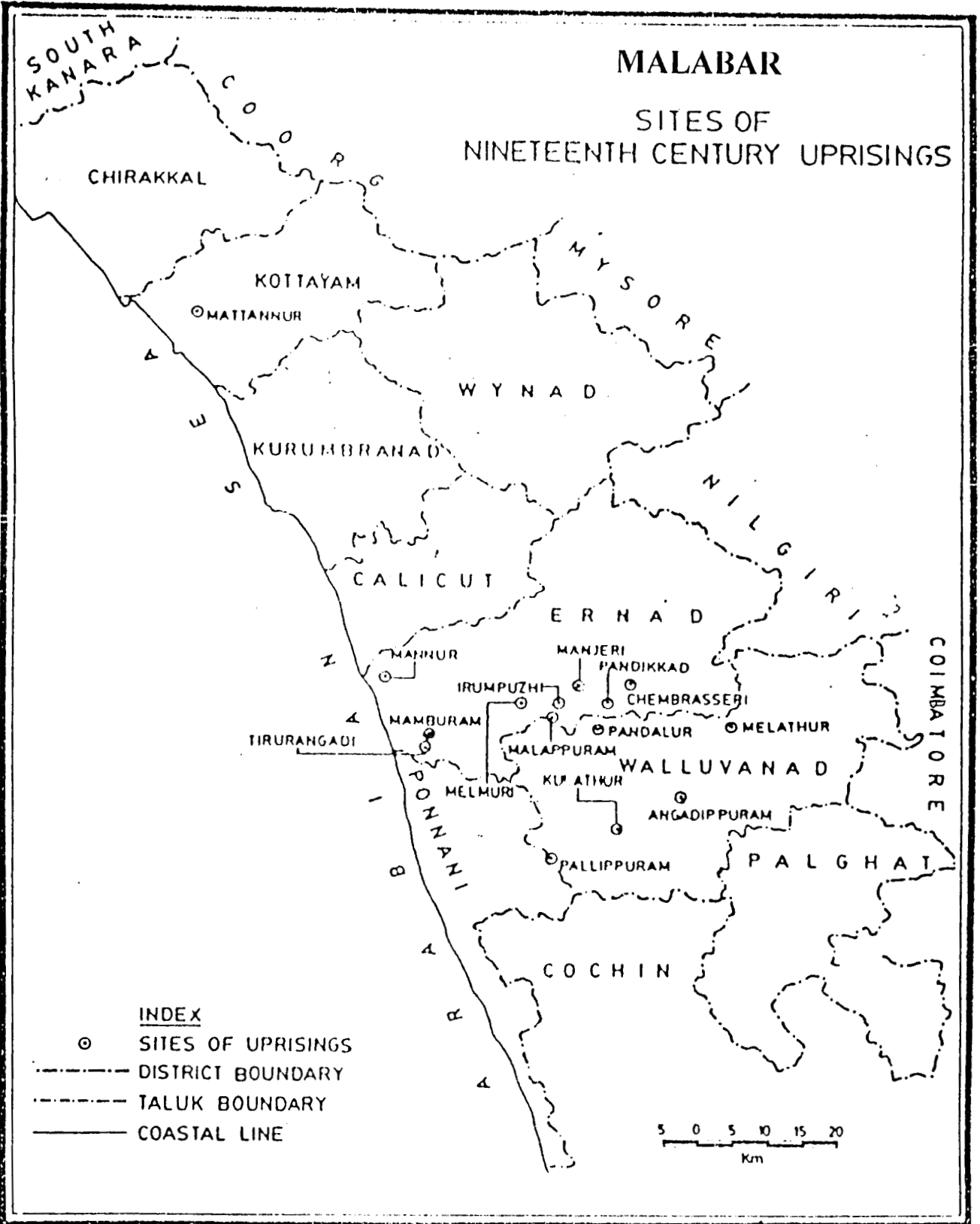
REVIEW OF UPRISINGS

A review of these uprisings would reveal certain peculiar characteristics of these uprisings. In the first half of 19th century the uprisings were

35. M.D.R (Revenue) 1799. PP 15-6.

36. K.N.Panikkar P.60

37. Ibid

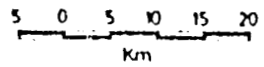


MALABAR

SITES OF NINETEENTH CENTURY UPRISINGS

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concentrated in Ernad and Walluvanad taluks (map 7-1) of south Malabar. The total land area of Ernad was 6,18,496 acres of this 1/4 only was under plough. So here the man-land ratio was the lowest in the district and in the presidency itself.³⁸ Besides, double cropping was very limited due to the absence of irrigation facilities. Trade was limited to timber, coir, ginger and dried fish and there was hardly any industry. Shortly the economic condition was generally poor. 60% of the population of this impoverished taluk was Mappilas. The man-land ratio and almost all other aspects referred above were same in Walluvanad taluk also. Living condition was so poor and the misery of the ordinary man was acute. The Mappilas were tenants or tenants-at-will or tilled as agricultural labourers. In Walluvanad 35% population was Mappilas. In these taluks, where the man-land ratio was lower, land was predominantly concentrated in the hands of a few jenmis. Of these jenmis the number of Mappilas were very few. In 1803 when Mr. Thomas Warden assembled 103 Malabar jenmis for consultation, there were only 8 Mappilas in it, all the others except one who was a Tiya, were upper caste Hindus.³⁹ Shortly, the

38. P. Kodanda Rao 'Malabar Tenancy Problem' (Madras 1924). PP 26-7.

39. BRC. 1803 Vol. 353 No.61.

uprisings were concentrated in an area where agricultural population was in an impoverished condition. Wherever the population was mostly composed of Mappila peasantry their leaders took their cause against the unjustifful government and landlords.

The attempt to see the 18th century developments and 19th century uprisings on the same footing is not desirable.⁴⁰ Such a view is to overlook the significant changes in rural society brought about by colonial rule.⁴¹ The 18th century incidents were motivated by Mappila-Nair rivalry on the wake of Mysorean domination and aftermouth incidents. They were mutual conflicts between these two communities on account of the assumed favourism or non-favourism towards these groups by the Mysore government. This was justfully pacified by the company officials in the early days. But the 19th century uprisings were totally different in nature and character. The latter had a social character, and it was reflected as a response towards injustice by a group of people. These uprisings had certain general characters.

40. Stephen F. Dale argues that there is no qualitative difference between these two. The Mappila outbreaks Ideology and social conflict in 19th century Kerala. Journal of Asian Studies XXXV, 1 Nov. 1975 PP. 85-97; 'Mappilas of Malabar' P.124.

41. K.N. Panikkar, P.68

Now there are a few questions to be answered as why these uprisings came only from among the Mappilas (?); Were it basically fanatical or communally motivated (?) or ^{it} happened because of the uncivilized nature of the revolters (?). Again, were they on account of the company government's revenue policy (?) if so, why did it not affect the other low caste population (?), or why did they not respond like the Mappilas (?). Likewise, why the Mappila population in the coastal area did not respond, (?) and why it was confined only among rural Mappila peasantry (?). Before answering these questions a short glimpse of the 19th century uprisings and its reasons and victims can be looked into.

CERTAIN ISOLATED INCIDENTS OF UPRISINGS

On 26 November 1836 Kallingal Kunholan of Pandallar in Ernad taluk killed one Chakku panikkar of astrologer caste and also wounded 3 others. He was shot dead by the police.⁴² The reason for this incident is not clear from the records. He may ^{be} tempted for this by personal grievances or enmity. On 5 April 1839 two Mappilas killed one Kelil Raman and set fire to a Hindu temple.⁴³ Two stabbing incidents also

42. C.M.O I P.400; Logan Vol.I, P. 554

43. Logan Vol.I, P.554.

were reported on the next day. These incidents seems to be not of any general nature of social importance.

On 15 April 1837 one Alikutty of Chengara amsam Kalpetta desam Ernad Taluk, inflicted numerous and severe wounds on one Brahmin jenmi and took post in his own shops. He was followed by the tahsildar and peon and was shot dead by the Police. Here the victim was a jenmi and the rebel was a Mappila tenant. On 19 April 1840, in Irumbuli of Ernad taluk one tenant named Alikutti wounded one Nair Jenmi and his dependent and was shot dead by the police. From these incidents no conclusion can be arrived at, as there were no evidences for their reason and victims' involvement for any such instigation.

PALLIPURAM INCIDENT

On 5th April 1841 at Pallipuram in Walluvanad taluk took place one peasant-landlord rivalry. Here one tenant named Kunholan was deprived of his land through 'Melcharth'.⁴⁴ He killed his landlord, Perumbali Nambudiri, assisted by his two sons and six neighbours belonging to the lower order. Those who assisted him found cause for their action with the great injustice

44. See 'Melcharth' in page

done by this Brahmin landlord against the tenant.⁴⁵ There was no other reason evident for these people's former enmity with the landlord. All the participants were soon killed by the government force.

MANNUR INCIDENT

On 14th November 1841 at Mannur in Ernad taluk took place this incident. This also was a peasant landlord dispute. A note written before the uprising by one of the participant addressed to the tehsilder gives a vivid account of the developments. According to the note a gardenland was given on Kanam tenure to Pathylvalia Kunholan by Tottachery Kelu Panikkar. 1820 a tank, shop etc. were erected there and the government tax was paid by the possessor. In 1832 the jenmam right also was purchased from the jenmi. In 1832 a mosque was built and 1841 a mud wall also was raised. But now the Panikar made a false representation in the taluk Katchery and the tahasildar without any consideration of the state of things sent a peon and four or five men to seize Kunholan and others in the mosque. Their request to report the Katcherry after their prayer and breaking fast were not heeded by the peon and others. They used force to drag

45. MJP II May 1841 No.47 India Office Records quoted in K.N Panikkar P.68.

them. This led to the killing of the peon.⁴⁶ The cause of Kunholan was supported by a great number of Mappilas. They killed the Pannikkar also as planned before. They tried to defy the police's attempt to arrest them. They could anticipate the judgement of the British court as nothing less than hanging to death. So they preferred to die in an encounter in which they found the reward of a shahid (Martyr). 11 of them were killed in an encounter. The district officials' attempt to humiliate the dead body of the rebels was not successful. 2000 of the Mappilas did the burial with due respect.

So the struggle for possession of land and government support to the landlord were the major reasons for this incident. The attitude of the government or the adhikari (a native officer) towards the Mappilas and their problem was absolutely negative. Besides the landlord's attempt to take hold of the land by false assertion and the government's favourism without respecting any reason also is explicitly clear.

Again, all the while the Mappila rebels were followed and shot dead soon after every outbreak. This

46. M.J.P 21 December 1841 No.5 Ibid P.69.

was done not by the military or the government agency alone. The government encouraged private individuals especially Hindu-armed public to bring the rebels under control ⁴⁷ and at last to shoot them ^{to} death. This must have influenced the other Mappilas to find a religious character in the rebellions. In all the above incidents between 1836 and 1841 the victims of the rebellions were either jenmis or village revenue peon, or the dependants or others of the landlords.

Most of the wealthy jenmis and other influential men of Malabar had a number of servants and they also retained a group of armed adherence in support of their life and property. The Nair militia of the former days were largely found in this armed retinue. During the time of these uprisings the Hindu jenmis and the company government used these warrior people for suppressing the Mappila rebels. In many of the incidents before the arrival of the army the rebels were routed and killed by this force.⁴⁸ The villagers of Hindu community also joined in this activity.⁴⁹ This, of course, would have aroused antipathy in the Mappilas against the Hindu community.

47. Logan Vol.I PP.554-55.

48. Logan Vol.I P.565.

49. Ibid.

On 22 April 1841 one Pulikot Raman Nair was killed and one sepoy, 5 peons and 4 villagers were wounded, by one Kunholan and his followers. The cause assigned was the duplicity on the part of the Nambudiri jenmi in the matter of a garden for which Kunholan advanced Rs.16 and wished to confirm. But another Mappila brought a suit in the Munsiff's court to evict the former on a strength of a deed of 'Melkanam' obtained from the Brahmin. In December 1841 again in Pallipuram village an uprising took place. The leader of the uprising was a tenant who had been ejected from his land by a court decree. His assistants were his younger brother, one black smith, three labourers, one unemployed person and a fifteen year old boy.⁵⁰

On 19 October 1843 Ali Athan and five others killed one Krishna Panikkar, the adhkari of Tirurangadi, and proceeded to the house of a Nair of Cherur.⁵¹ The military first failed to attack them, and with the help of taluk peons and villagers all the 7 rebels were killed.

On 11 December 1843 one Sulaiman and nine others killed one Govinda Mussat, the adhkari of

50. M.J.P 8 Feb. 1842 No.36 IOR. quoted in K.N. Panikkar. P.71.

51. Logan Vol.I P.557.

Pandikkad in Walluvanad taluk, and one of his servants. They also were soon killed by the government force. After this incident a number of minor incidents were reported from different parts. But all of them were minor ones and it is very difficult at this distant period to trace thier connection with a land or other problems. The same time it is difficult to say that all the incidents were only peasant revolts. An incident of Ponnani on 19 February 1847 was one of this kind.⁵²

MANJERI UPRISING OF 1849

On 25 August 1849 the rebels of Manjeri targeted one Marat Nambutiri of Pandikkad. A wealthy landlord and money lender, the Nambudiri was very cruel in his attitude towards tenants. On the fateful day a band of Mappilas under Nelangara Ali who had a score to settle with the Nambudiri, set out to the Nambudiri's illam. But the Nambudiri fled with family leaving only a servant there.

52. The cause of this riot was that a native (Sindh) Muslim woman was kept in the custody of Captain Partidge in his Bungalow of Ponnani. The Mappilas of the locality did not taste this. They found it their moral duty to relieve the woman from the British officer. P. Ramachandran 'Ponnani Riot' Journal of Kerala studies. Vol II March 1975. pp.33-40

A statement addressed to the collector (on 26th August 1849) by Athan Gurukkal was found in the Manjeri temple clearly stating the grievances of these tenants.⁵³ Kunhikoya Thangal (a Muslim priest of Mamburam) justified his taking part in the uprising giving leadership to the poor tenants at the grievances under the new government.⁵⁴ According to these sources, the said Ali's father had taken 100 paras of land on Kanam from Marat Nambudiri for a value of Rs.28 As 8 Ps 1 as mortgage and 100 paras of Paddy as rent. In 1847, rent falling arrears, the Nambudiri filed a suit to eject Ali's father from the land. The subsequent settlement allowed him to possess the land, but only as a tenant-at-will on 150 paras of Paddy as rent (a 50% increase), and his Kanam right was deprived. The Nambudiri could now demand renewal of the lease every year, charging renewal fees and increasing rent. The next year he increased the rent by 10 paras.⁵⁵

Thus insecurity of tenure and possibility of eviction threatened him. Many other tenants of the

53. C.M.O I P.67.

54. Ibid P.53

55. Ibid P.76

Nambudiri had the same experience with him. Those who involved in the uprising were 9 tenants, 33 labourers, one tangal, 2 Musliyers who were the sons of an impoverished tenant, two charcol burners, one gold washer, one son of a gold smith, one barber, one leper and 14 unidentified,⁵⁶ a total of 65. Of the sixty five 64 were shot dead by the army. In this 45 were below the age of 24, mostly unmarried and either unemployed or agricultural labourers.⁵⁷ Generally they were in poor circumstances with nothing to hope and nothing to lose. The cases of Kunhi mammu and Aiderman involved in the uprising, are good example for showing the participants being extremely reduced to impoverishment. Their family had Kanam lands of a mortgage value of Rs.1428 As. 9 Ps.1 paying 2000 paras of paddy as rent to various landlords. Most of these lands were lost in course of time owing to legal action instituted by landlords. By 1849 the land possessed by the family had been reduced to a mortgage value of Rs. 17 As.2 Ps.3, which was obviously not sufficient even for their subsistence.⁵⁸ The religious sentiment of

56. Ibid PP. 108-37

57. D.N. Dhanaghere Peasant Movements in India 1920-50
(New Delhi 1986) P.62

58. C M O I P.124.

Mappilas was instigated by a related incident to this. But that also had a certain economic obligation for the peasant community. That is, towards the construction of a temple the Raja had ordered all his tenants including 214 Hindus and 311 Mappilas to contribute a year's rent in 1847-48. They were threatened for an eviction on otherwise.⁵⁹ This had pressed hard the tenants who had been already experiencing burden of tax.

Attacking temples these rebels were chiefly motivated to procure the storage of granary. The rebels left to Angadipuram temple after looting the Manjeri temple. In Angadipuram temple there was a well-stored granery for feeding the Brahmins. Taking the food item they left the temple unmolested.⁶⁰

Illiterate Mappilas' religious sentiment, which is not a matter of discussion here, also was there. But it was not the primary reason. Leading Mappilas like Athen Gurukkal and Mamburam Tangal had given them leadership. But they were seivours of the rural poor who were unjustly threatened by government officials or

59. Ibid P.51

60. K.N. Panikkar P.76 A very detailed report on the Manjeri uprising presented by W. Robinson, the Assistant Magistrate, was described by the Madras governemtn as unnecessarily minute and prolix. C M O I P.145.

landlords. For instance the Gurikkal once compelled the village accountant of Chembakasseri to return a bribe of Rs.30 taken from a Mappila woman.⁶¹ He once threatened the life of an Adhikari who had over taxed a Mappila peasant.⁶²

KULATHUR UPRISING OF 1851

The target of this uprising was some landlords of Kulathur village in Walluvanad taluk. On Friday 22 August 1851 a band of Mappilas about six in number attacked Kottuparambath Komu Menon, Karyasthan of the Walluvanad Raja and former Adhikari of Mangada village. He was a man of considerable wealth and influence, who used his position for increasing his holdings through eviction, overlease and acquisition of land against loans advanced to peasants.⁶³ He was so cruel and abusive in his behaviour to his tenants that he was dismissed in 1845 from the post of Adhikari.⁶⁴ For many years he had been on bad terms with Mappila neighbours⁶⁵. Komu Menon was an addict of intoxication

61. C M O I P.66

62. Ibid

63. K.N Panikkar P.77

64. Ibid

65. Letter from Magistrate of Mal^ubar to the secretary to government 24 August 1851. (T.N.A.)

and in both drunken and sober hours his behaviour to those about him was generally overbearing and obusive especially towards Mappila tenants⁶⁶. On this particular day he was on his way home passing along the road, having himself a battle axe and accompanied by a servant with a loaded gun. The rebels first cut the servant down and seized the gun and soon performed their ultimate aim, that Mr. Komu Menon's murder. Their target was limited to the avarious, oppressive and overbearing landlord and his brother (which will be related here next). Some Brahmins and a Nair women who witnessed the murder of Komu Menon were not attacked by the rebels.⁶⁷ They were asked to leave the premises. The reason attributed by the Mappilas for this jenmi's murder was that he scoffed at their religion and was wicked and hard in his dealings with the poor ryots.⁶⁸

The rebels next went to the house of this jenmi's brother Mr. Ittunni Rama Menon. He also was an usurer and hard in his dealings with the poor. He lent money and grain to a large extent and often on most

66. Report by C. Collet Assistant Magistrate to H.V. Conolly 20 Sept. 1851. C.M.O. I P.187

67. T.K. Vijayamohan 'Kolathur Outbreak of 1851, A case study. Journal of Kerala Studies Vol.V March 1978 P.69.

68. Letter from Magistrate of Malabar to the government 30 Aug. 1851 (T.N.A).

usurious interest, and it was expected his death would release many a men of their (Mappila) caste from a heavy responsibility.⁶⁹ Two of the rebels were indebted to him and another joined them later, had borrowed twenty-five paras of paddy from him at an interest of 40% for a period of eight months.⁷⁰ At the time of his death there were several suits pending against his tenants in the court. He had another serious dispute with Melamannil Emalukutty, a wealthy Mappila of that locality, about some devaswam land.⁷¹ The rebels killed one Kadakkattil Nambudiri who happened to be there and had a dispute regarding kanam with a Mappila. They burnt all the accounts books of Kulathur Varier⁷² and killed him, a very rich landlord with extensive landed property in the Walluvanad, Ernad and Palghat taluks, receiving Rs.20,000 per annum as rent.⁷³ They procured arms and distributed booty taken from Ittunni Rama Menon's house among themselves. They procured more arms from the house of the adhikari,

69. K.N.Panikkar P.78

70. Ibid

71. Report dated 20 Sept. 1851 in (T.N.A)

72. Report by C. Collect to H.V Conolly, 20 Sept. 1851 C.M.O. I PP.177-180.

73. K.N.Panikkar Peasant revolts in Malabar 19th and 20th centuries in A.R. Desai (ed.) Peasant Struggles in India (New Delhi 1982) P.610

Edavallatu Rama Menon, but did not harm him. The rebels travelled about 15 miles through the area well populated with Hindus. But no one was murdered except only the 4 wealthy landlords. Their aim was only an end to the injustice perpetrated by these inhuman jenmis.

This Kulethur Variar had obtained through court order and by his influence a lot of landed property from his tenants. About 15 years back several Mappila tenants, who were the close relatives of Variyar's assassins, were ejected by him from their land and dwellings to make room for houses for priests and other attendants of an adjacent Hindu temples,⁷⁴ creating ill-feeling among the Mappilas. Besides, a rift between the vario r and the Mappilas existed in connection with a mosque construction and all attempt for an amicable solution for this was failed because of his stubborn nature.⁷⁵

On 23 August he was mercilessly massacred. The rebels procured all the movable property, money and jewels worth totally Rs.1500⁷⁶. They also burnet all documents connected with the landed property.

74. Report 20th Sept. 1851. (T.N.A)

75. T.K. Vijayamohan (op.cit) P.71

76. Petition from Kolathur to the governor in Council of Fort St. George 2nd August 1853 (T.N.A).

Now, who were the rebels ? In the beginning the rebels were four tenants, two landlords and two labourers, worked under them. Later their number increased to 17. All these rebels were in very strained circumstances and each had some grievance or other against these landlords.⁷⁷ Some of them had lost their lands during their life time, others had become landless by the ejection of their parents. Others were burdened with outstanding debts.⁷⁸

The ill feeling between Varior and the Mappila of that locality was a decade old. Hence they were waiting for a genuine reason, under the guise of which they could wreck vengeance on the Varior. When they got occasion responded violently and furiously. As noted before they also were aspirants of god's Paradise and on 27th August all the rebels were shot dead, fighting against the British troops.

MATTANUR UPRISING OF 1852

'The struggle overland as a principal motivating factor was clearly indicated by the Mattanur uprising, the only one to occur in North Malabar'. The target of this rebellion was one Kallatil Brahmin, He

77. K.N.Panikkar P.76.

78. K.N.Panikkar in A.R. Desai (ed.) Peasants Struggles in India P.611

was a principal jenmi, pepper merchant and moneylender. 'He was a severe and unpopular landlord who often raised land rent and charged unusually heavy 'Ponnam Varom', (Landlord's share of hill cultivation) and his general management was exacting and not invariably just towards his tenants.'⁷⁹ The initial participants in this uprising consisted of 9 members of Chooryoot and Tayyil families. The former was heavily indebted to the jenmi and the latter had been threatened with eviction through a suit filed in a court.⁸⁰ One of the insurgents remarked, "I am determined to die as a Shaheed. The Kallatil Brahmin has forged deeds against me, and has filed a suit, and looks to ousting me out of my 'parambu' and I will not live longer".⁸¹

On 5th January 1852 armed with guns and knives the rebels marched to the house of Kallathil Brahmin. The original band consisted of 9 were joined with many and when they demolished the compound wall of the Brahmin and attacked his house it had a strength of 200.⁸² They murdered the Brahmin all his family members and servants, numbering 15 in all, destroyed

79. C.M.O I PP.300-01

80. C.M.O I P.304

81. 4 Feb 1852 CMO I P.298

82. K.N.Panikkar P.81

all documents and accounts dug up the floor in search of hidden jewels and valuables, set the house on fire and took away about Rs.7000 in cash.⁸³

Shortly, during a period of 18 years (1836 to 1853) no fewer than 22 outbreaks took place besides numerous abortive risings and conspiracies,⁸⁴ and for almost all the participants had a land related problem in these risings.

INSURGENTS AND VICTIMS

Participants of the uprisings were predominantly drawn from the rural poormen of the lower if not the lowest order. Table (7-3) give s a picture of the participants and their status etc.

The victims of the uprisings were mostly men of property and government servants or the servants or relatives of the both. Table (7-4) of the total victims killed in the riot gives a correct picture of the same.

83. Ibid

84. M. Gngadhara Menon 'Mappila outbreaks of 19th century Malabar' Journal of Kerala Studies Vol. II June 1975. PP.141-156; Innes and Evans Malabar District Gazatteer. Vol. I. P.78

Table 7-3

Participants of Manjeri, Kulathur and Mattanur uprisings

Uprisings	Tenants	Labourers	Religious workers	Miscellaneous	Unknown	Total
1849	17	28	3	8	9	65
1851	7	9	-	3	-	19
1852	15	-	-	-	-	15

Table 7-4

Victims of the Mappila uprisings

Jenmis, their relatives and servants	Government officials & relatives	Low caste men as jenmis servants	Mappilas	British officials	Unknown	Total
42	11	10	5	1	14	83

In this with an exception of 5 Mappilas all others were Hindus. But more important than this religious division an economic related division of the victims would be more relevant. One thing clear from this accounts is that the jenmis and revenue officials were the main target of the rebels. Fanatism was not the over riding motive force of the rebels since many instances show that they spared Hindus in general, but their victims were particular and chosen from whom they had much to suffer as tenants or labourers.⁸⁵

85. K.N Panikkar P.88

Unfortunately the British government failed to understand the basic reasons behind the uprisings. The causes initially attributed by them was fanaticism^{ci} and the turbulent character of the lower classes of Mappilas.⁸⁶ The nature of conciliatory measures adopted as a result did not at any rate refer to economic grievances or to the operation of a judiciary inimical to the interest of the peasants.⁸⁷ As most of these revolts were localised ones, the government did not view these revolts as a challenge to its authority, but as conflicts within the society.⁸⁸ Therefore the government adopted a policy of indiscriminate suppression of the rebels using European and native forces. But the rebellion became more stronger in later days and it began to spread other areas also. Though the government used a regular force to quell the rebellion it became a popular rising of the Malabar society.

Until 1852 the government did not take any measure to find the root cause of these outbreaks. On 28 January 1852 Mr. H.V. Conolly the collector and

86. M.J.P May 1841, No.27

87. K.N.Panikkar P.92

88. Ibid P.93.

Magistrate of the province, reporting on the Mappila outrages, suggested to appoint a commission to report on the question of Mappila disturbance generally".⁸⁹ Expressing regret on his part for the disturbances becoming more fearful than before, he wrote " If any mistake in management on my part had led in the slightest degree to these fearful evils, I am most desirous that a remedy be applied, whatever be the effect as regards my personal interests. I have acted to the best of my judgement, but my judgement may be in error"⁹⁰. Thus he requested the government for an urgent step for a solution to the horrible situation. The government accordingly decided to adopt his suggestion and on 17 February 1852 ordered appointing Mr. T.L. Strange as a special commissioner for enquiring into the Mappila disturbances, their causes and remedies.⁹¹

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER T.L. STRANGE

Appointing the commissioner Mr. Thomas Lumsden Strange a judge of the Sadar Adalat the government

89. H.V. Conolly. Report, 28 January 1852; Logan Vol.I P.566.

90. Ibid

91. Extracts from the minutes of consulation. 17 February 1852 in correspondance regarding the relation of landlords and tenant in Malabar 1852-56 (Madras 1881) Para.10.

observed that his "former long service in Malabar and intimate acquaintance with the people and their peculiar habits and feelings eminently qualify him for the tasks while his employment in a different sphere of late years saves him from the influence of any prejudice or bias"⁹² He was instructed to trace out the causes which have produced or influenced the unhappy state of feeling between the Mappilas and Hindu population"⁹³, and also to consider whether with reference to the position of Hindu and Mappilas in their relation of landlord and tenant, mortgager and mortgagee, any measures seemed to be necessary for defining the landed tenures of the country and placing them on a better footing"⁹⁴ For this he was directed to enter into the freest intercourse with all classes, official and non-official to ascertain the causes of past outbreaks and the manner in which they may be most effectively prevented for the future.

Unfortunately the direction from the part of the government itself was sufficient to mislead the commissioner from his grand object of the enquiry.

92. Ibid

93. Minutes of consulation 17 February 1852 C.M.O. I. P.271.

94. Ibid P.272

Giving direction to the commissioner the government observed that "for some years past the province of Malabar has been disgraced by a succession of outrages of the most heinous character, perpetrated by the Mappilas of the province up on the Hindus"⁹⁵. So these instructions were concentrated on a Mappila versus Hindus subject, rather than Mappilas (tenants and kanakkars) versus landed aristocracy. But the government went further instrusting the commissioner that the grand object which he "should have in view and short of which he should not rest satisfied is to secure to the Nair and Brahmin population the most ample protection and safety against the effect of Mappilas fanaticism"⁹⁶. Thus in the direction itself the government had given its conclusion of a fanaticism, and Mappilas versus Hindu enmity. The instruction to the commissioner was so biased and prejudiced that the commissioner also easily came to a conclusion of a fixed fanaticism.

On 25 September 1852 Mr. Strange submitted his report to the government rejecting any explanation that the disturbances had their origin in agrarian

95. Extracts of Minutes of consultaiton Ibid para.10

96. C M O I P.407.

depression or landlord-tenant relation. He said that "the Mappila outrages have been one and all marked by the most decided fanaticism".⁹⁷

The commissioner pursued his enquiry on this line and brought things to such a conclusion. He not only brought all the blames upon the Mappilas alone but also tried to justify the landed aristocracy. He found that "of those who have broken out in South Malabar only 14 had any cause of provocation as discoverable". In 7 instances land has afforded the personal ground of quarrel". The other 7 cases were mostly of an equally unreal nature". In 9 cases the parties had been instigated to engage in crime by others who were to profit thereby or had malice to satisfy. 5 were induced to crime because of relatives having wrongs, fancied or real to redress, and the remaining 144 were without any personal provocations".⁹⁸ Of these some of the land problems were of about 6 or 15 or 16 years old and in two cases the real ejectors were Mappilas relatives of the parties turned out.⁹⁹ The real cause

97. T.L. Strange, Report submitted to T. Pycroft, Secretary to government, Judicial Department (Fort St. George) on 25th Sept. 1852; C.M.O I P.442.

98. T.L. Strange to T.Pycroft Ibid Para 19; Logan Vol.I. P.570.

99. Ibid.

therefore was indubitably instigation by others for selfish ends, he concluded. He also stated that, "It is apparent thus that in no instance can any outbreak or threat of outbreak that has arisen be attributed to the oppression of tenants by landlords. A great clamour is now raised on this regard, prominently in the southern taluk visited by me, the Mappila population seeking redress to throw the blame of these outbreaks upon the landlords by thus charging them with being the cause thereof"¹⁰⁰.

THE COMMISSIONER FIXES ON FANATICISM

It was a common complaint among the tenants that they were under the threat of eviction from the greedy landlords who still insisted to obtain so frequently from their tenants¹⁰¹ fines and presents, which¹⁰² after the introduction of a regular revenue by the company government, were declared illegal. But the commissioner Mr. Strange observed that the exactions the tenants 'clamoured' against, existed from time

100. Ibid Para.20.

101. H.V. Conolly to Strange 30 March 1852 (Extracts of correspondance on Mappila outrages) Para.5.

102. According to the ancient custom these fines and presents were existing, but on a lightness of leasing.

immemorial, and were levied from Mappila and Hindu tenants alike,¹⁰³. "The complaints are chiefly about the items of fine at renewal of leases. The other exactions are fees of various descriptions, but of a petty nature, taken more or less on the granting of deeds, such as for signature, for writer of the deeds for the witnesses and for oil for the pagodas and certain contributions of fruit and palm and plantain leaves designed originally to express the good will of the tenant towards the landlord. All these are sanctioned by custom"¹⁰⁴ Here the commissioner does not say that the complaint was unreal, but he tries to simplify these exactions, though they were declared illegal by the company government. This type of justification on the side of the landlords by the commissioner was clearly evident. How far these illegal exactions troubled the poor tenant did not much matter for the commissioner as he was instructed to assure ample protection and safety for the Nair and Brahmin population.

Regarding the complaint of ousting a tenant of his possession of land on obtaining an higher sum on

103. T.L. Strange to T. Pycroft 25 Sept. 1852 C.M.O. I P.442.

104. Extracts of correspondence on Mappila outrages Para.23.

mortgage from another, the commissioner stated that "to get rid of an obnoxious tenant some small and nominal addition to the mortgage money has been taken from another and the tenant there upon ousted. Hindus have admitted its existences."¹⁰⁵ Thus for every complaint the commissioner responded quite negatively and he viewed everything from a communal outlook. He went further saying that the country is notoriously teeming with false deeds and false witnesses placing the interests of landlords in perpetual risk"¹⁰⁶ This justification of the commissioner in favour of the landlords was countered by the government saying that, "It is out of question to suppose that this state of things is not as common with the Hindus as with the Mappilas and equally an instrument of wrong and oppression"¹⁰⁷. During his enquiry the commissioner was told by the Mappilas that distitution, oppression and exactions of the Hindu landlords have been the causes of these outbreaks".¹⁰⁸ But the commissioner was biased and ^{his} attention was preoccupied with a

105. Ibid Para.23

106. T.L. Strange (Report 1852) Para.69

107. Extracts from minutes of consultation, correspondence on Mappilas outrages para.44.

108. Minutes of consultation 17 February 1852 Madras Government C.M.O I P.408.

fanaticism. However, evidences do not attest this view of Mr. Strange as his conclusion was found quite strange against the source he collected.

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF MR.STRANGE'S ENQUIRY

The mass evidence collected and incorporated by Mr. Strange in his report, does not warrant his conclusion of fanaticism. It gives ample source for a landlord-tenant rift over land as the basic reason for these outbreaks. His view of religious fanaticism failed to take into account the economic factors involved.¹⁰⁹ The poverty of the Mappilas engaged in the agricultural pursuit appears to have some inextricable connection with the outbreaks.¹¹⁰

Commenting on the land system of Malabar Mr. Strange himself admits that "under our court due attention has not been always paid to the rules by which these tenures are governed, and the benefit of them has been so far forefieted. The Mappilas, as I have noticed complain of the Hindu landlords ejecting them at shorter intervells than what is prescribed by the ancient usage of the country, and this is an evil

109. M. Gangadhara Menon Mappila outbreaks of 19th Century Malabar. Journal of Kerala Studies Vol II June 1975. P.149.

110. Ibid P.150

which to some extent prevails"¹¹¹. The commissioner also finds the problem between Hindus and Mappilas lies mainly on the land and its possession. He says the problem between "landlord and tenant cannot be otherwise satisfactorily settled, it may be desirable to interfere by legislative enactment, so as to fix some terms to the landlords' indefinite paramount right over the tracts of vast land and forest to which he now lays claim"¹¹². Passing orders on the report of the commissioner the government observed that "It is worthy to note that Mr. Strange here recognised in apparant opposition to his previous statements, the frequent injustice done to the tenant or occupant more often Mappila than other caste".¹¹³ It gives testimoney to the fact that a pervation of justice indubitably largely prevails in the district, and as the native judges are chiefly Hindus, it is not to be supposed that this pervation favours the Mappila population.¹¹⁴

So Mr. Strange was constrained to comment on the consequences of evictions which prevailed in the

111. T.L. Strange (Report 1852) Para.-69.

112. Extracts from minutes of consulation 23 August 1853 in Correspondance on Mappila Outrages. Para 44; C.M.O I P.527.

113. Ibid

114. Ibid

district. In a supplement to his report he had observed the distress caused to hill cultivators from over-assessment.¹¹⁵ In his findings Mr. Strange underlines that the outbreaks were occurred in the interior parts of the Ernad and Valluvanad Taluks where the Mappila population was a majority and they were largely engaged in agricultural occupation.¹¹⁶ Those who engaged in the outbreaks predominantly, with a few exception, were tenants or agricultural labourers, and these outbreaks were inflicted upon the wealth landlords, their immediate relatives and people connected with their land related matters.¹¹⁷

Moreover an economic gain or goal was a general character in almost all these incidents¹¹⁸, as the rebels looted grain houses, jenmi's houses and temples where wealth was amassed in the form of money, gold and grain. His observation that the tenant landlord relation had worsened not only among Mappila tenants against the Hindu jenmis but Hindu tenants against Hindu jenmis also, was absolutely right. Here

115. CMO I PP-470-75.

116. M. Gangadharan Menon (op.cit) P.147.

117. See page of this work. T.L.Strange (Report 1852) Para 399-407; Logan Vol.I P.615.

118. T.L. Strange (Report 1852) Para. 399-407

the commissioner's argument may be right that the land related problems were not adequate reason for the Mappila outbreaks since this was common to the Hindu tenants also. Here two questions arise as to why the Mappilas only turned against their landlords and why the Hindu tenants could not translate their discontent against their oppressors. The commissioner's argument of a fanaticism of the Mappilas was based on these two questions. But he could not find the basic reasons for these questions for he was easily misled by a preconditioned mind of Mappila versus Hindus.

The grievances of the tenants and agricultural labourers in general marked an existing fact under the company system of government, which unduly privileged the landlords. The judiciary much more aggravated their sufferings through judgements of ejection.

The table (7-5) vividly presents a picture of the Malabar tenant's depressed condition and his feeling of discontent against his landlord. There was nothing peculiar to the Mappila tenants but for the Hindu tenants as well. Now the above questions are pertinent to be answered for why the Mappilas alone, not the tenants in general, were able to translate their discontent into a form of revolts. Though the subject does not come under the area of this study, it is highly imperative to deal here.

Table 7-5

A yearly average of suits brought for ejectment
from the land.¹¹⁹

		Suits laid	Ejectments decreed	Ejectments refused	Rased or struck of
1.	Hindus against Mappilas	232	81	5	127
2.	Hindus against Hindus	680	207	45	325
3.	Mappilas against Hindus	73	24	5	32
4.	Mappilas against Mappilas	155	43	10	79

WHETHER FANATICISM OR ECONOMIC GRIEVANCE ?

Mr. Mac Gregor Wrote about the essential nature of Mappila outrages as 'perfectly agrarian. Fanaticism is merely the instrument through which the terrorism of the landed classes is aimed at'¹²⁰. But there is a view that economic grievances or agrarian unrest alone was not the sole cause of the outbreak¹²¹. It is true, and of course it, was not the sole reason. But

119. T.L. Strange (Report 1852) Para.21 Suits pending and also suits against Mohammadans and Hindus jointly are excluded from the account.

120. Mr. Mac Gregor, a native resident in Travancore and Cochin was collector of Malabar for several years. Quated in Logan Vol.I. P.581.

121. M. Gangadhara Menon (op. cit) P.150

it was the basic cause and beginning of all other causes. The fact that the position of low caste Hindus was in no way better and they were largely settled in the taluks like Ernad Walluvanad and Ponnani, where the Mappilas outbreaks frequently occurred. Neither they received any preferential treatment from the Hindu landlords. In fact, they were as alien as the Mappila to the upper caste Hindus, and their position was even worse than that of the others.¹²² Their social status was not better than a domestic animal. Still they did not rise in revolt against their oppressor, because for him the jenmi was the 'lord of the field' and the 'god of the temple', who was so venerably respected by everyone in all walks of life. To question this lordship or to disrespect his holy man was considered as a sin according to their social custom and religious faith. So a variety of ties bound the Hindu peasantry with their upper caste landlords, who very often had not only economic but also social and religious powers vested in them. So the Hindu peasantry's subjection was not limited to the economic sphere alone but extended to the social and ideological spheres as well. Upper caste Hindu Jenmi was able to bring a recalcitrant Hindu tenant to submission through social

122. Ibid

sanctions, including excommunication and the denial of ritually important village services¹²³.

Besides these social bars, there were no platform or any congregation of the low caste people for sharing their feelings. Nor there was any middle class men to lead a social movement among the low caste Hindu society, as the middle class, if any, was the land owning class itself. The same time the Mappila peasantry had all these elements in favour of their rise against the oppressor.

To say the low caste Hindu tenants and labourers were silently suffering all these oppressions is not absolutely correct. But they responded indirectly. When the peculiar social organisation based on Hindu mythology did not permit him to question his lords, most of them silently suffered their destiny. But a minority of them chose a different way. They found a solution for their problems in the religious conversion to Islam, in which they could enjoy a free air. 'A low caste Hindu rose in social scale on his conversion to Muhammadanism.'¹²⁴ Mr. Graeme writes 'He (a low caste convert to Islam) is no

123. K.N. Panikkar. P.194.

124. Mr. Gangadhara Menon (op. cit) P.150

longer a link in a chain which requires to be kept in its particular place. His new faith neutralises all his former qualities'.¹²⁵ Besides, by conversion he not only could free himself from the bondages, but was 'merited for the sympathy and protection of the organised Mappila community',¹²⁶. The large scale conversion of low caste people in Malabar must be studied in this light¹²⁷.

When the Mappilas were largely up to the task of vengeance up on their oppressor, these new converts also joined the Mappila rebels against his landlord. The Mappils outrages records attest the involvement of a number of new converts in those uprisings. But it may not be correct in all cases that they converted for a vengeance, but more than that an enjoyment of freedom from fear.

At the same time no one can neglect an important role of Islamic religion in these uprisings. The religion gave moral lessons, and morale for the

125. Graeme's Report. Para.21

126. D.N. Dhanagare. (op.cit) P.57.

127. 'The increase, in the Mappila population' says K.N. Panikkar 'was mainly due to conversion from lower castes, particularly cherumas, Pulayas, Vettuvans and Mukkuvas' K.N.Panikkar (op.cit) P.52

rebels to act against injustice. They could obtain legitimacy for their action against evils and injustice within the religion itself. But of course, when this movement of rebelism came to the hands of illiterate Mappilas it had its own demerits. A few of them must have exploited this movement for their own ends. But more than all that when the rebels observed certain religious rituals before their action, it got religious character. This occassioned the people to brand it with fanaticism. Fanaticism must have been resorted to by rich Mappilas to instigate Mappila tenants. But there is no such evidentce pointing to the communal nature of the rebellian. Unfortunately, to neglect all the available sources and to confine the conclusion on a tenaticism and refute the most important economic aspects of the rebellions is absolutely a negative attitude towards the historical reality. The first and foremost reason for these 19th century uprising of Malabar Mappilas lays in nothing but an economic exploitation of the peasantry by the landlord and the company government through the tenurial and revenue systems introduced by the latter.

Shortly Mr. Strange failed to suggest to the government to make necessary arrangements to effect a better relation between the tenant and landlord, which

was considerably worsened since the company government's assumption of power in the province. Mr. Strange did not consider why the Mappilas of the interior areas occupied in agricultural activities only broke into rebellian and why the coastal Mappilas and others engaged in fishing and trade did not turn out.

To say that 'the common element of the protest was not social or economic but religious'¹²⁸ is also not a valid statement since the common element of all these were underlying a worsened landlord tenant relation. The reward for a 'Shahid' in his death fighting to murder an infidal and the pleasure of paradise in the hereafter birth were not the ultimate aim of the rebels. But 'the pleasures of paradise were particularly alluring to the poor Mappilas because of the hell they experienced on earth 'the weariness of a laborious life'¹²⁹ in the existing system. In 1849 Athan Gurukul had said 'No body will throw away his life, unless forced to it'.¹³⁰ So the view of a promised paradise and a fight unto death for the simple

128. Stephen. F. Dale 'The Mappila outbreaks. Ideology and social conflicts in 19th century Kerala'. Journal of Asian Studies vol. XXXV. 1 November 1975. P.87

129. K.N. Panikkar (op. cit) P.89

130. Quoted in Ibid. P.89

fulfilment of this aim alone does not complete the interpretation of the Mappila outbreaks of 19th century.

RECOMMENDATION FOR REGULATION V OF 1822

According to Mr. Strange a 'remedy for all this plainly lies in registration' of all land transaction with the government¹³¹. He recommended a requirement of regulation V of 1822 be brought in to operation in Malabar. Under this enactment the question chiefly in issue between landlord and tenant will be decided summarily by the collector and will lead to amicable and equitable, as well as prompt decisions. He noted that 'the cause why this regulation has not been had recourse to in Malabar is simply that the collectors have taken no means to bring it in to operation.'¹³²

Mr. Strange was of the opinion to introduce the regulation in the province when he was judge of Tellicherry in 1843-44. But Mr. Conolly found that it was not much worth for the province. 'My impression is that, he said, 'it would be of doubtful benefit to the

131. T.L. Strange (Report 1852) Para.69

132. Ibid. Para 71

tenants,'¹³³ 'Recent events have led me to pay particular attention to the vexed question whether the landlord or tenant is most to blame in the disputes which are frequently occurring in Malabar regarding land. My impression on the whole certainly is that the fault lies more with the former - knavish tenants of course there are - but the possession of land is so priced in the country and an ejection from it so much feared that self-interest as a general rule is sufficient inducement for the tenant to pay his fair rent.'¹³⁴ Therefore, Mr. Conolly recommended a law similar to the Regulation XXX of 1802. According to this, 'proprietor or farmers of land shall not levy any new assessment or tax on the ryots under any name or under any pretence, exactions other than those consolidated in the puttah, or otherwise authorised by government, shall up on proof, subject the proprietor or farmer to a penalty equal to 3 times the amount of each exaction'¹³⁵.

133. H.V. Conolly to the Board of Revenue 30 September 1853 No.133. Extracts from Correspondants on Mappila Outrages para.4

134. Ibid

135. Section VII Regulation XXX of 1802 in extracts from minutes of consultation. Extracts from Correspondance of Mappila Outrages. para 4

However, the Board of Revenue recommended the introduction of Regulation V of 1822 in Malabar¹³⁶. The collector's objection was not admitted and it stated that 'this was successfully carried out in Canara, a district similar to Malabar, with excellent effect¹³⁷. The tenants of these disturbance affected areas, when consulted, opined that something more than the laws was required to reach the real source of dispute between the landlord and tenants',¹³⁸. But the landlords were of the opinion that the law (Regulation V of 1822) is to be introduced in Malabar.¹³⁹ The collector remarked that the tenants more especially the poorer tenants will not be pleased to have the power of restraint given to their landlords unless they receive at the same time some compensating benefits in excess of what are provided for in Regulation V of 1822,¹⁴⁰. So this regulation also was useful only to arm the landlord against the tenants.

136. Ibid. 27 April 1854. No.503. Mr.Knox, the sub collector also was in favour of the introduction of this regulation.

137. F.N. Maltby Collector of Canara to the Board of Revenue 19 July 1854 in Ibid.

138. C.Collett, sub collector to H.V. Conolly. 10 may 1855. in Ibid. Para 3.

139. Ibid

140. H.V. Conolly to the Board of Revenue. 9 June 1855
Ibid. Para 3.

There were a lot of examples for the landlord's revengefulness up on their tenants. The case of the Kolathur Variyar who proposed to eject 173 Mappila tenants as fully is not altogether a solitary one. The Collector says "In a case which occurred not very long ago some 30 Mappils tenants were ousted by a great (absentee) landlord in a very harsh manner. I shamed him into reinstating them"¹⁴¹ However whatever objection the officials on the scene expressed for an unfit and unsuitable regulation, the government did never care for them, but insisted upon a policy of preserving at any cost an element of elite loyal pro-imperialistic group in the province.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF MR. STRANGE

The commission appointed to look into the whole unfortunate incidents in the province failed to take into account the very basic reason of the uprisings and it left the remedy in a military solution. Mr. Strange recommended for a stern policy of ruthless suppression. His recommendations were mainly of three pointed: a). The repression of fanatical outrages, b). controlling the construction of mosques and c). restricting the possession of arms. The

141. Ibid. Para 8.

commissioner's recommendation had gone further to a proposal of organising a special native force exclusively of Hindus. But his recommendation left aside the very important aspects for pacifying the province.

However the government adopted only the first one and rejected the other recommendations. Accordingly the Mappila outrages Act and Mappila War Act were passed in 1854¹⁴². The enactment sanctioned fining of all the Mappilas in a village where revolt took place, the confiscation of the property of those who involved, deportation of the suspected etc. Unfortunately, this commission failed to recognise the basic reasons of these uprisings, and also failed to suggest that the real solution lays in reorganising the tenurial changes brought about by the company government as a part of its revenue system.

MR. CONOLLY FOR A SOLUTION

In this totally unpleasant situation of a series of uprisings Mr. Conolly began to think in terms of certain changes in the existing systems of revenue.

142. Act XXIII sanctioned for fining the localities disturbed and punishing the persons suspected for revolts and the Act XXIV for illegal possession of war knives. Logan Vol.I. P.572

In the province, in course of time, properties had changed hands, and holdings were subdivided or added to, the original allotment with its distinct assessment, disappeared from the revenue accounts, and at the present day each holder of land paid a consolidated amount in money for the aggregate land in his occupation, which is composed of plots situated either in different parts of the same village or in different villages. 'Owing to this feature in the mode of assessment and to a comparatively light land tax', (according to the collector) it was not deducted any allowance in the district at the annual settlement for land not cultivated in consequence of adversity of season,¹⁴³. But in other districts the assessment was fixed on each separate field, and such fields as are left uncultivated through failure of the season, are deducted at the settlement, which is made in the actual cultivation only. Therefore, In 1852 the collector entered into engagements with the ryots as to the extent of land they are disposed to occupy.¹⁴⁴ This

143. Letter, Board of Revenue to government. 17 August 1852. Report on the settlement of the land Revenue of the province under the Madras Presidency. 1852 - 53 (Madras. 1854) Para. 32

144. This is called 'Dittum', a term which indicates something fixed or arranged and whatever portion of land thus engaged for, but not cultivated and therefore entitled to be deducted at the settlement is denominated 'Kabulatry' or waste, appertaining to the land engaged for. Ibid. P.32.

was a positive approach from the collector in this turmoiled situation.

Mr. Conolly also abolished the monopoly of tobacco in the province since January 1853. This made a decrease in the total revenue collection. Now Mr. Conolly was at the work of such an appeasement policy. In 1854 he began to think for a fresh survey as it was necessary owing to considerable remissions in the last 3 or 4 years. But this did not materialise. Since then no extensive survey had either been made or called for, and the rule has been that any one claiming remission of assessment in one of his garden must submit the whole of the lands for inspection¹⁴⁵. Unfortunately, Mr. Conolly's attempt did not reach anywhere. Before that he was barbariously murdered by a gang of Mappilas¹⁴⁶ on 11th September 1855. Various reasons were suggested as the motives of the rebels for his murder. But the important reasons may be the repressive measures he adopted against the Mappilas in general and the punishment the murderers had to endure in jail¹⁴⁷ under the collector's order.

145. Logan Vol.I. P.691

146. G.B. Tod, Assistant collector to the Chief Secretary to government. 12 September 1854, Logan Vol.I. P.573.

147. The assassins were the prisoners absconded for this particular action see details in Logan Vol.I. PP.573-75.

The government imposed a fine over all the amsham implicated in the outrages and a sum of Rs.3833-8-0 was collected as fine from 719 people belonging to 9 villages¹⁴⁸. The fines were unbearably harsh because they hardly had any personal assets or other resources on which they could raise money¹⁴⁹. Yet the action of the assassins could never be justified.

After Conolly's murder Mr. T. Clarke took charge as the principal collector of the district on 12 September 1855, and after one year he was succeeded by Mr. W. Robinson in October 1856. During their term there was nothing worthy to note in the realm of revenue administration. The country was then in a very disaffected state owing to scarcity of rice and the outbreak of the 1857 revolt in all over India. After this great war of Indian Independence in 1857 the administration of Government of India was transferred from the company to the hands of the British Crown.

148. Logan Vol.I. P.575

149. K.N. Panikkar (op. cit) P.100

CONCLUSION

Ismail. V “Revenue administration in malabar under English East India company” Thesis. Department of History, University of Calicut, 1999

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

It is a fact that India was conquered by the English merchant adventurers, exclusively based on the idea of profit and advantage to their home country. The administrative machinery of the Company government in India was developed to serve these ends. Even when the administrative policy of the Company government underwent changes in later years it never lost sight of its main object of increasing trade and revenue collection. Even the maintenance of law and order was directed for the attainment of the objectives of an uninterrupted trade and an easy collection of revenue.

On account of this ultimate imperialistic aim the early decades of company rule saw an outright plunder of the country's wealth coupled with ruinous taxation of the peasantry. Revenue in the early decades was used chiefly for government expenses, wars, private fortunes remittance to Britain and public works designed to increase imperial trade.¹ The result of this imperialistic administration had created far reaching consequences in every walk of Malabar life.

1. Kathleen Gough, Indian peasant uprising in A.R.Desai (ed) Peasant Struggles in India p.89

MYSORE SETTLEMENT BLINDLY FOLLOWED

In the absence of a regular revenue collection in the native system and on account of the unyielding and complex nature of the native land relation the joint commissioners drew guidance from the Mysorean system which existed in the province immediately before. Guided by a Mysorean Brahmin employee (jinnea) they adopted the Mysorean principle and rates as the basis of their settlement. But this system of settlement, of course, had its own merits and demerits. Since the settlements they reached had been conducted in a hurried time frame of wars and conquest it tended to be arbitrary. The revenue resources of the territory were hardly examined,² and the intention of the governor Mr. Arshad Beg Khan was to collect the maximum possible to meet the expenses of the war the Sultan was waging against the British.

Adopting the same system the Company's settlement of rice field also suffered from over and unequal assessment, and the rates levied on garden produce became extremely high.³ Finding the settlement

2. K.N. Panikkar p.3

3. Ibid. According to this settlement the rice land was assessed based on the assumption of a 1:10 productive capacity of every parrah of seed. This was an over-estiamtion. In most part of the district the ratio of seed produce were 1:5 or the least 1:3 G.W Gillis collector to J.B Travers, secretary, Board of Revenue 14 April 1801. MDR Vol. 2551.

and rate of revenue over and high the attempt to correct it also created an unequal assessment. The individual who could square the officials got off with comparative immunity and those who could not do so had their land excessively assessed.⁴ The Malabar peasantry who had been already impoverished due to a long and incessant warfare could not pay the revenue demands of the company government through the Rajas and Chieftains. This adversely affected the Malabar peasantry in the initial stage itself.

FARMING SYSTEM, A FAILURE

The system of revenue farming was already found a failure in Bengal. Yet this was implemented in Malabar for reasons of expediency but was found again unsuccessful. This failure was attributed to the ignorance and incompetence of the Rajas and the rapacious conduct of their agents who were entrusted with the task of collecting revenue.⁵ The company government believed the large accumulation of arrears is due to the failure of the revenue farmers and the revenue potentiality of the province was much higher than the present settlement.

4. William Logan Vol. I p.701

5. Board of Revenue consultation 13 August 1801 No.46 Vol.294 pp.9907-17; Thackary's Report para 31.

The commissioners, therefore placed the land revenue collected by Tipu Sultan at 6,69,885 pagodas (Rs. 20,09,665) and proceeded to collect the amount by farming the revenue to local Rajas and chieftains. The Rajas and chieftains on their part collected their maximum possible revenue from the peasants. The corrupt practices of the company agents in revenue collection helped the Rajas to maximise their collection without it being entered in revenue accounts. So the collection was complete in a few cases, or more in certain others, but still found as arrear in revenue accounts.

There were certian other factors also for this situation. The absence of centralised government system and a consequent deterioration in law and order, mutual rivalry between Mappilas and Nairs, rift among princes and chiefs for the right of revenue collection, exhausted resources of the country due to incessant warfare for the past several years etc. had badly affected an undisturbed cultivation. The revenue capacity of the country, therefore diminished day by day.

In this situation the revenue farmers were more keen on the collection of revenue, than any matter of administration. This was highly adverse to the

general resource and prosperity of the country. Two evils of great magnitude were the consequence of this. The extortions and corruption in the administration were continued, unabated while the ancient feudal institutions were revived, for it is well known that none of the inhabitants dare complain against the Raja, whatever injuries they may have sustained. It is not surprising that under such conditions agriculture did not flourish."⁶

(The government was later convinced that the system was both politically and economically unwise and, therefore, the leases were cancelled one after the other and it took the direct collection of revenue.

(Another major defect of the revenue system of the time was that it was never uniform for the province in general. During this period there was no unanimity among the company officials about the actual proportion of government share of revenue. North Malabar and South Malabar had been ruled on different rules of revenue. When a 10% of collection charges was exacted in addition to the government revenue in the south, it was not collected in north, and when 80% of the Pattam

6. S. Sreenivasa Raghava Iyengar (op. cit) Appendix section 3.

was taken as government revenue in the north 40% of the gross produce was the share of government in the south. This type of variation was general from district to district and even from village to village. It was only in 1805, a general system of revenue administration was introduced in Malabar. But it continued many of the evils of feudal character for several decades.

CREATION OF LANDED ARISTOCRACY FOR STABILITY OF REVENUE

The revenue policy introduced by the company government in Malabar had two main characteristics. First it provided for the state's approbation of the largest share of the produce and secondly it recognised the jenmi as the absolute proprietor of the land. These two aspects were mutually complementary. It is true that there were certain contributory reasons also for re-instating the Malabar aristocracy with an absolute ownership on land and bestowing a superior power and prestige for this class over the other native population. Firstly on account of a close association of the British with the native rulers and chieftains for overthrowing the Mysore power from Malabar, they could not entertain a hostile approach towards the native aristocracy. Secondly, these aristocratic jenmis were found as the only native population who could invest capital in agriculture so that the British

interest of trade and revenue would be stable. Thirdly the actual cultivating class or peasantry of Malabar were neither politically nor socially a potential section for the company government to rely on. Fourthly, the English utilitarian theory of private property in land was predominant in the minds of the officials. Fifthly creating a social basis for serving the needs of colonial government. But above all, the primary concern of the company government was the security of revenue and its easy mobilization through a class of landed aristocracy. To serve this end the British officials totally upset the traditional system of Malabar society.

It is not a valid argument to say that the recognition of the jenmi as absolute owner of lands was not due to the compulsion of revenue realization.⁷ It is true that most of the revenue was collected by the government from the cultivators or the intermediary Kanakkars instead of the proprietor jenmis. However, the company officials found the security of revenue

7. K.N. Panikkar, p.22 Thomas Munro said that "It is not essential to the realization of revenue that we should have a body of landlords in Malabar, the present and even a much greater revenue might be drawn from the profit of the cultivators" Revenue consultation 16 July 1822, Vol. 282-No.2

much more stable in the hands of this aristocratic jenmis. They were found essential also as rural gentry, loyal and amenable to the British, who would act as interpreters between the government and the governed and thus from the channel through which colonial ideology could be disseminated in rural area.⁸ So this aristocratic jenmis were found the better group of native population to serve the government for the easier access to the native economy and politics

The recruitment policy of the government also was directed to this end. The subordinate offices of revenue and judicial departments were filled with people who had the objective condition of substantial economic wealth and social status. They could exert very great influence over the society. Thus the company government effected a mutual 'contract' with the Malabar aristocracy so that the interest of both the parties could be protected. Once the jenmis' influence helped them to maximise the rent (Pattam), the government share of the pattam also increased proportionally. So it was nothing but a sheer policy of expediency to serve the company's aim of revenue collection.

8. K.N. Panikkar p.22

DISGUISED RYOTWARI REVENUE SYSTEM

In the early days of company government in Madras it was toyed with the idea of introducing Bengal system of permanent revenue settlement in this presidency also. Richard Wellesly in 1798 declared that the Bengal system would be established in Madras. But the Court of Directors held that no permanent revenue should be established without a better knowledge of existing system of tenure in these territories⁹, and declined the idea. Later, during the governorship of William Bentick, Thomas Munro was able to convince him of the advantage of a ryotwari system of revenue administration, and it was adopted as a general system in Madras in 1805.

However the mode of settlements introduced in the villages of the presidency had different characters. They may be generally classed under four heads as (a) Permanently settled, (b) alienated rent free or for favourable assessment, (c) Rented, and (d) Ryotwari. Of these, the first three do not require description since they were not related to Malabar. In the fourth, the Ryotwari village itself there were

9. Burton Stein, Thomas Munro: The origin of the colonial state and his vision of Empire (Delhi, 1989) pp-121-24.

various sub divisions. They were, firstly, those which surveyed classified and assessed with a fixed money rent; secondly those in which the surveys and assessments of former government are maintained; thirdly, those that fields are surveyed, but settled annually with reference to a standard grain amount and price of grains. Fourthly, those are gross rented; fifthly, those that are held under division of crop between the ryots and the government, the lastly those that have not been regularly surveyed, but still are settled ryotwari. This last one was peculiar to Malabar and Canara.¹⁰ But it was a variant of ryotwari settlement,¹¹ intended for an easy collection of revenue without any regular survey.

Though the government had reinstated the landlords with an absolute proprietary right on the soil, the land revenue was collected directly from the holders of plots and not necessarily from the jenmis.¹² Actually it was a simple continuation of the system

10. Papers relating to revision of the village accounts by S. Jayaram Chetty, special Assistant, Board of Revenue for the villages of the Madras Presidency. (Madras, 1855) para 112.

11. Dharma Kumar, Cambridge Economic history of India 1757-1970- Vol.2, (Cambridge 1984) p.223

12. This was practically done only after the commissioner's period.

hitherto existed, but named as ryotwari. It did not disturb even the intermediary class between the government and the cultivating tenant to whom a share of agricultural produce had gone. But it gave a legal and procedural collection that was already in practice by the sanction of the new scheme with the appellation of the ryotwari settlement.¹³

What prompted the company government for this type of a scheme ? Theoretically it may be the ostensible idea of leaving a foreign country in the possession of its own law and custom and to endeavour rather to ameliorate than to abolish them as Thomas Munro had argued.¹⁴ But in practical reality it was a policy of expediency for an easy collection of revenue. The 'deceptive' nature of rent rolls of Malabar were the actual reason for such a novel system in Malabar. According to rent roll the number of landholders with substantial land in possession was comparatively smaller in Malabar than other district. Substantial landlords paying more than Rs. 1000 in Malabar was only 24, while their number was 210 in Tanjore, 59 in Tinnavelly, 50 in Trichinapally and 29 in Canara. Like

13. T.C. Varghese (op.cit) p.28

14. Papers relating to revision of the Village accounts (op.cit) para 124.

that when Malabar had 1,52,944 Pattadars paying below Rs.10, it was 77,231 in Salem, 87,238 in South Arcott, and 71,231 in Gudappa district. This shows that the number of revenue payees were larger in Malabar than other districts. The total number of Pattadar is estimated at 3,40,425.¹⁵

But, was the rent roll exhibiting the actual individual possession of landed wealth? The answer will be negative. The rent roll was not altogether a criterion for the wealth of the district.¹⁶ The large number of small landholders in Malabar, arises partly from the greater number being engaged in agriculture and partly from the great extent of coconut gardens, which are held in small plots, by poor pattadars as their limited homestead. Of the total 0.58 million acres of land under cultivation, only 0.08 million acres was garden cultivation and the remaining 0.50 million acres was under wet land cultivation.¹⁷ At the sametime 1/4 of the land revenue was collected from this very limited garden lands. This vividly shows

15. See table 5-5 in Page.314.

16. Papers relating to revision of the village accounts (op.cit) para 23

17. Ward and Corner, A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar (Madras 1826) p.4

that a large number of pattadars in the rent roll were the poor landholders whose names were entered therein for their limited area of homestead garden lands, and the wet lands were mostly held by substantial jenmis. Really 0.74% of the Pattdars were paying 30% of the revenue in Malabar, while 63.4% of the Pattadars were paying 20% of the revenue in 1849. So the average revenue paid by this 63.4 % of Pattadars was Rs.1.60 where as 0.74% Pattadars paid Rs.206. So the actual possession of land by substantial jenmis was very higher than the others.

Moreover, it frequently happened that the substantial jenmis hold pattha in several villages, but in the rent rolls he was exhibited as a small pattadar. In fact he was a substantial jenmi. In the same manner the lands of an undivided family though settled in the same village, are often exhibited separately, instead of in aggregate in consequence of their standing registered in different names. The country, therefore contained more substantial landlords than is to be inferred from the rent rolls. Since many of the substantial jenmis had already assigned the responsibility of paying government revenue to their tenants by stipulating it in the deeds, they signed, these tenants names also may have entered in the rent

roll as pattadars. So the number of pattadars were large, but the actual land owners were very less. According to the revenue account all these pattadars shown in the rent roll, were treated as ryots.

Shortly the land in Malabar was never evenly distributed and it was neither the reason for the adoption of a ryotwari settlement. Though the rent roll exhibited a large number of pattadars the land was concentrated in a few hands. The company officials understood that it was easy to collect revenue from these several holders by name ryotwari, and at the same time the landed jenmis and their land would be ultimately responsible for the revenue payable to the government.

Hence, the burden of land revenue fell primarily on those who were directly connected with cultivation of land -- the tenants and small landlords who cultivated their land themselves. Legally the revenue was to be realized from the landholders, in whose names land was registered. But since their ability to discharge it depended upon their ability to collect the rents from their tenants, district officials followed a policy of expediency and tried to realise the revenue from whomsoever it was easy to realize -- in some cases from the landlords in others

from tenants, and in yet others from the actual cultivators.¹⁸ Consequently all the adverse effects emerged out of price variation, over-assessment, seasonal fluctuation in production and natural calamities had to be encountered only by the actual revenue payees.

So whatsoever be the system of revenue administration pursued by the company government in Malabar, it could not achieve any of the advantage of a ryotwari system, but there existed all the disadvantages of such a system.

Under the ryotwari system of revenue, cultivation and increased production were a business of the ryot alone, and he had to pay only a stipulated rent. This not only improved the economic status of the ryot but also of the government. This general prosperity could make more proprietors and independent farmers and also could reduce the number of common labourers. Moreover, under the ryotwari system the remissions of revenue on account of various reasons could benefit the primary producers, and thereby a cordial and close relation could be maintained between

18. Thackary's Report para24 This anomaly was rectified only in 1898, when Jenmem registration was under taken.

the government and the people. More and more waste lands can be brought under cultivation, and the negligence of cultivation could be avoided. Above all the government would be interested in improving its own share of revenue by giving aids and encouragement for cultivation by the ryot, when there do not arise any intermediary parties between the government and the ryot. Unfortunately, the system of revenue administration followed in Malabar, could enjoy none of the merits.

On the other hand the disadvantages like a huge expenditure for revenue collection on account of employing a large number of revenue officials for collection and other purpose among a large number of pattadars, and a non-permanancy of a fixed revenue collection etc. were existing under this system.

ALIENATION OF LAND FROM THE PEASANTRY

The fundamental idea in the Malabar land system was "protection" and "supervision" rather than "ownerhsip" in the modern sense.¹⁹ But neglecting the tradition and history, the aristocratic minority was

19. D.N. Dinaghare Agrarian conflict, Religion and Politics. The Mappila Rebellion in Malabar in the 19th and early 20th centuries, in peasant movement in India. 1920-1950 (New Delhi 1986) p.59

bestowed with power and prestige depending largely on the interpretations of the Brahmanical literature. They were made, as referred above, full owners of the lands with no restriction whatsoever in their relation with the tenants.²⁰ The company officials asserted that "Almost the whole of the land in Malabar, cultivated or uncultivated is private property and held by jenmam right which conveys full absolute property in the soil"²¹ This assertion brought even waste lands under jenmam possession and it virtually ended in the alienation of land from the actual cultivators. Earlier the waste and marshy lands, which were lying free and unoccupied were brought under cultivation by cultivating tenants and labourers, at their own interest. But once the jenmis were declared the sole owners of land, it created hurdles on the way of the actual cultivator, and there were a lot of rules, restrictions and payments for bringing such lands under cultivation. This virtually discouraged cultivation and it led to ruin of agriculture.

Moreover, these aristocratic jenmis, who owned the lands, indulged in pleasures of life and were

20. E.M.S. Namboodiripad (op.cit) p.59.

21. Thakkary's report p.3.

averse towards agrarian activities. They did not invest money in cultivation, but this work was assigned to the lower tenure holders under various tenures. But these undertenure holders were not able to invest money in agriculture on account of their poor economic status and also due to the non-permanency of their tenure and insecurity for the money they invest in the jenmis land. These lower tenure holders therefore cultivated the land with their limited ability and with their own manpower. When neither the government came forward to encourage agriculture by giving economic aid for irrigation purpose etc, it led to the ruin of agriculture. Even if any tenant was able to invest money in agriculture the threat of eviction or other extravagant demands from the jenmi discouraged him. The basic reason for the economic backwardness of Malabar in modern ages emerged out of this situation.

Another result of concentration of the cultivation land in the hands of non-cultivating jenmis was sub-infeudation, and its sequel, the rise of the Kanakkars to social and economic prominence. A substantial section of the Kanakkar held land under Kanam tenure, but refrained from cultivation. They being mostly upper caste Nairs, did not undertake cultivation but sub-leased the land on Verumpattam or

for crop-sharing. The extent of land under such lease was quite extensive. So these intermediaries were thus simultaneously a rent-receiving and rent-paying class who appropriated a lion's share of the rent from the cultivators. There were a number of money lending intermediaries also among them. They also tried to realise a good portion of the produce for their role in the agrarian society. The social and economic prominence of this intermediary Kanakkar in later years had made several changes in Malabar society.

UNSCIENTIFIC METHODS IN ASSESSMENT, SHARE DIVISION AND PRICE-CALCULATIONS

According to the existing system, the principle of assessment of the produce proved to be a difficult task. It was a method of finding how much parras of seed a particular wet land required, and the productive capacity or the multiple out-turn of the soil was calculated on the basis of its fertility. So based on these two aspects the rent of a land was fixed at a particular number of parras of seed for which a market value was also fixed by the government. Likewise on garden lands the number of trees were counted. This method was arbitrary. Since the productive capacity of the land was varying village to village and even garden to garden the actual produce of each land cannot be

fixed so easily. In Malabar the productive capacity of land varied from an average of 1:5 to 1:15, and at the largest difference from 1:3 to 1:20. Moreover the expense for cultivation also was varying at an higher difference. So these two aspects could not be taken into account by the officials without a scientific survey of the land. The consequence was large disparity in the assessment. It adversely affected none other than the poor cultivating class. It laid heavy burden of land revenue on the weaker rather than on the better-off sections.

This method of assessment gave village officials considerable discretion in fixing land revenue. Since assessments were not based on measurement of land, they could easily manipulate their accounts. Drawn predominantly from landed interests, they were inclined to under assess their own lands and those of persons who could bribe or otherwise influence them and make up the deficit by over assessing the lands of people with less or no influence. One Assistant Collector wrote in 1829, that the gardens of all Adhikaris and Menons and their relatives are shamefully undertaxed. The same remark is applicable to those belonging to opulent individuals who were able to purchase the favour of the public servants. Whilst,

on the contrary the gardens of all the poorer classes are assessed so high that these poor creatures cannot pay the public revenue out of the pattam or proprietor's net rent without the sale of some of the household furniture.²²

But proposals to correct this were neglected by the government. Under the company system of revenue, the largest share of produce went to the non-cultivating jenmis, intermediary Kanakkar, and to the government. When 4/12 of the net produce went to the cultivator, the government which had no direct or indirect role in the production process and the jenmis who did nothing for cultivation, nor for investing money shared the residue in 4.8/12 and 3.2/12 proportions respectively. Here the government share becomes more than that of the jenmi and that of the tenant. When the jenmi tried to maximise the pattam through foul and unfair methods, it automatically augmented the government share also as it was generally a portion of the pattam.

Moreover the share of a lower tenure holder was always from the only plot of land cultivated by

22. Assistant Collector to the Collector of Malabar 24 January 1829. BRP vol.1187. pp.4191-92.

himself, whereas the higher tenure holders generally had their share from more than one plot of land cultivated by many other tenants. In case of a substantial jenmi this was hundreds of times more than a tenant's share of produce, as the former had a very large area of jenmam land and it was subleased to a number of various tenure holders.

More than over-assessment and unequal assessment the disparity between prevailing market prices and the rates adopted by the government for valuation of produce in monetary terms for the purpose of revenue collection was a source of distress for the peasantry. The government share (6/10 of the pattam) was collected in cash, fixing the conversion rate on the basis of average price over the previous ten years.²³ The rate thus arrived at was invariably higher than the current price. This pressed hard the cultivator because, the revenue to the government was paid from the rent (pattam) by the cultivator himself and the remaining share for the jenmis also was paid by him. In later years some of the jenmis also insisted to get their share in cash. So the total pattam (the government's and the jenmi's share) was not sufficient

23. MDR Vol. 2313 pp.115-24

to make this payment. So in principle the revenue was 6/10 of the pattam but in practice it amounted to the whole of the rent or more. Again the seasonal fluctuations in prices also went against the wishes of the tenants. During the harvest season or when he had enough to sell, the value was quite meagre, while during the non-harvest season when he had to borrow money, and other necessities, he had to pay double. This helped none other than the money lenders at the cost of the poor agriculturists.

LANDLORD OPPRESSION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE PEASANTRY

With the newly acquired rights and powers the jenmis began to perpetrate severe and intense oppression and exploitation of the peasantry. This became a regular phenomenon in Malabar during the period of the company government, as the jenmis had been armed with the right of eviction. The tenants lived in perpetual fear of eviction that most of the ryots were chronically in debt, and the tenants were increasingly reduced to the position of verumpattakar holding land on a year to year basis and were driven out of their land to the limits of starvation.²⁴ The origin of this misery, according to Logan, was the land

24. Logan Vol. I p.583

revenue policy which enabled the jenmi to enhance rent and impose excessive renewal fees and other exactions by resorting to frequent evictions. The threat of eviction was more harmful than its actual practice as it enhanced the chances of the jenmi to exploit the tenant through melcharths (over lease), enhancement of rent, imposition of very high renewal fees, exactions of several illegal rents and feudal levies. By the actual eviction, the tenant was deprived of the right to cultivate the land which he was possessing for long since.

When rise in prices led to the demand for land by the middle of 19th century this became quite common an affair and tenants were evicted easily on any flimsy grounds. "Inability to give rent in time, inadequacy of customary presents, improper public obeisance or even a slip of tongue during conversation" were sufficient reason for eviction of a tenant from his cultivated land²⁵. Such eviction usually took place even from ancestral lands, just when the trees began to bear, or before reaping the standing crops. Lands of poor widows and orphans also were not devoid of from such practices. To send a petition of complaint

25. K.N. Panikkar (ed.) Peasant Protests and Revolts in Malabar (New Delhi 1990) p.X

against the jenmi, or refusal to give up the jenmam title to other lands, or objection for cutting bearing trees etc. were considered a sheer disrespect to the jenmi, and he resorted to the process of eviction of such tenants even after due payment of renewal fees.

Neither judicial nor civil apparatus of the government was directed to give relief to the peasant from these oppressive measures. On the other hand it facilitated the jenmi to make the exploitation more intensive and systematic. Actually, with the establishment of British law courts, it became easier for the jenmi to enhance the renewal fees and rent by a simple threat of legal eviction if he refuses to pay.²⁶ So the right of eviction bestowed upon the jenmis was a big blow to the poor tenants, as it helped the jenmi to exact rack-rents.

Eviction was almost unheard during the pre-colonial period. They came to vogue with the development of a market in kanam land and power conferred on the landlords by the revenue and judicial policies of the British. It is generally viewed that evictions were hardly existing in the first half of the 19th century. There are two reasons for such a view.

26. Powel, p.181; Logan, Vol.I pp.588-724.

Firstly in this initial stage evictions did not make serious effect as there was enough availability of land, making the landlord not able to bargain, and the tenants could go seeking for fresh lands. So eviction was not a serious matter for the tenants in this early stage. Secondly the data available in this respect were usually judicial, and they do not indicate the actual eviction, as in most cases the jenmis were able to eject tenants without resorting to the process of law. The reasons for this were that the tenants were unable to produce any receipt or other documents for the payment of his rent to the jenmi, as there was no system of such issuance, and to demand such a receipt itself was a reason for his ejection. Without any evidence the tenant was not able to sue in law court, where he could not expect justice. So the tenants were clearly at the mercy of landlords. The rules and regulations of the British court were too intricate and inaccessible for the poor tenants to approach. The financial incapacity and lack of judicial evidence found the tenant helpless to defend his right in these courts. Above all, the poor low caste tenants did not expect justice from the Munsif who mostly belonged to the upper caste land owning families of Malabar.²⁷

27. RMSC. p.58

The number of eviction, however, was considerably larger in later years. Hike in prices, increase in population, decline of handicraft industries, ruin of trade and commerce, and their reflection in export and a consequent unemployment had led more people to agriculture. So the over-accomodaiton of the people in agricultural field made demand for land. This occasioned the jenmi for bargining of his land and when the judiciary also was in his favour the process of eviction increased considerably. The earliest available data of eviction shows that an average 1,140 cases yearly were filed during the period 1842-52.²⁸

These suits of eviction in courts were mostly between landowning jenmis and the non-cultivating Kanakkars.²⁹ The latter being equally powerful in financial ability and knowledge of court procedures and also influential Nairs, could resist the efforts of the jenmis. The unfortunate result of this also was

28. Correspondance regarding the Relation of landlord and tenants in Malabar 1852-56 p.8

29. Eviction suits by Hindus against Muslims were 232, Hindus against Hindus 680, and Muslims against Hindus 73 and Muslims against Muslims 155, according to the yearly average cited in Ibid. This indicates the highest number of suits were Hindus against Hindus.

competition to appropriate the largest share from the peasant surplus.

'Melcharth' was another device adopted by the jenmis against his tenant to maximise rent or to expel him. It is an over-lease given by the jenmi to a third party superseding the existing kanam right of tenant or kanakkaran, before the expiry of the stipulated period of the lease or 12 years. Often melcharth was used as a cover, by granting them to close relative, for instituting legal proceedings against tenants. The interior motive of this was to enhance rent. But this was, comparatively later originated as a device when the eviction was increasingly contested by the kanakkaran or tenant. However, this was one of the instruments of oppression the landlord adopted against his under tenure holders, making use of the power and rights bestowed by the company government.

'Polichezhuthu' or renewal of kanam deed was another device that the jenmi used as a method of oppression demanding additional dues from his tenants. Usually the polichezhuthu was done only at the end of 12 years or on the death of either the jenmi or the lease holder. Earlier the amount of renewal fee exacted by the jenmi at the time of polichezhuthu was 10% of the kanappanam in favour of the original holder

and 20% in case of a new incumbent. But later this amount was increased abundantly upto more than the kanappanam and the jenmi also demanded gifts on these occasions. So each renewal became a greater burden than the original lease.

Shortly, the practical permanency of kanam tenure and the tenant's free power of transfer of his interest in the holding was lost now.

Above all, the landlords revived the exaction of feudal dues as usual, even though the government had forbade it in theory. So under the guise of extra payments, fines, gifts, demands of produce, etc. the tenant had to contribute many illegal dues to the jenmi's confer and convenience. Thus, the company rule exalted one of the co-proprietor, (the jenmis) and pushed the others to the wall and subjected to all types of exploitation by the former to the misery of large majority of agricultural population of Malabar.

FEUDAL RELICS CONTINUED

In the very beginning of the company government in Malabar, it had prohibited the feudal leveis to the rajas and chieftains. This was of course a positive step. But the primary motive for this must be viewed from a perspective of the company

government's attitude towards other feudal customs of the traditional society.

The policy of the company government in matters of customs and traditions of its foreign dominions was non-intervention, as it would be fatal to the system of the foreign country. But this was a policy of expediency, as it was adopted only where and when it did not go against its interest. In case of slavery and several native customs of inhuman nature, this non-intervention policy was continued for several decades and in certain cases for ever. T.H. Babar was of the opinion that when the British came, instead of improving the condition of the agrestic slaves, they made it worse³⁰. The revenue and land policy impoverished the condition of the slaves much more than that was before.³¹ Several such customs of feudalistic nature were continued during the company's period with more enthusiasm, but the government never intervined.

But in the year 1793 itself it prohibited all the feudal levies by law. This was nothing but for undoing all the obstacles on the way of an increased revenue to

30. T.H. Baber Appendix to Report from Select committee Vol.IV (Public) 1832 p.424

31. Major Walker Report on Slavery 1841 p.127

the company. But it retained the feudal privileges of desavails where they were not contrary to its monetary and political interest.³²

But even after its prohibition most of the feudal levies continued to exist and it was a great source of distress and annoyance for the cultivating tenants throughout the period of company government. In later years when the landlord-tenant rift began to be pronounced this type of levies became more exploitative as otherwise the tenant could be evicted by the jenmi.

CORRUPTION AND COERCION

The company's English servants took advantage of their position to make quick fortunes through illegal and unequal trade and forcible collection of bribes and 'gifts' from the natives. So the evils inherent in the administration of a country by a basically commercial company began to emerge in the form of corruption. Soon corruption became rife in the ranks of the revenue staff, who made a common cause with the landlords tampered with deeds and contracts so

32. KKN Kurup 'Modern Kerala' Studies in Social and Agrarian Relations (Delhi 1989) p.23.

as to best serve the landlords interests and by such means also made their own fortunes".³³

The modus operandi of the revenue exactions also occasioned for corruptive practices for the revenue officials that large amounts collected from the poor cultivators were kept and enjoyed by them as unaccounted money. T.H. Baber writes, "they exacted from the inhabitants several thousands rupees on their private account under the head of Cartakally (feat and play money).... The inhabitants who contribute to the demands of the revenue officers knew they would be annoyed a thousand ways if they dared to prefer complaints"³⁴. Sheristadars and parbutties started seizing and selling the property and personal effects of the revenue defaulters, even when it was not absolutely necessary. Coercive process for collection of revenue was so inhuman that many of them had to sell their household things and even their land to pay their obligations. Instances of fines were frequent and physical harassment was not uncommon. The result was the emergence of a rebellion among those who had to undergo this type of practices.

33. D.N. Dhanaghere, Peasant Movement in India 1920-50 p.61

34. Thomas H. Baber to the chief secretary to govt. on 30th March 1812.

Provisions for fraud and deceit were possible by the landed rich also. In Madras Presidency the company government had undertaken several minor irrigation projects at the expense of the native economy. But such activities were seldom introduced in Malabar. But it provided encouragement to invest private capital in digging wells. Such wells were classed as 'old' and 'new' and for the new ones reductions of revenue was allowed. This gave opportunity for the richer section of jenmis to classify their wells, mostly old or sometimes not even existing, as new, to get the reduction. So the government concession went to the wrong hands.

Since there were no strict procedural formalities for land registration in the name of its owners, and also at the time of its transfer to another person, with a correct specification of revenue for each portion of land transferred, there were occasions for false representations in revenue accounts. The laxity on the part of the revenue officials and the existence of provisions for those who tried to falsify accounts could do it easily. It was a practice among the landed class to transfer a portion of their land to another person, with a light assessment of revenue or sometimes without any revenue on it. So the total

revenue of the estate remained on the rest of the land. This was done with two purpose. Such transaction could fetch a high value for that land which was sold without revenue on it. And the remaining land he could complain as being over-assessed, and try to get reduction. This type of fraud was possible for the substantial landholders. This was reported to be one of the reasons for certain lands being over assessed. Several such opportunities of fraud was inherent in the company system of government.

RUIN OF AGRICULTURE AND NATIVE ECONOMY

The land tenure system prevailed in Malabar over years was quite unfavourable for development of agriculture. With the introduction of company's revenue system, it not only dead locked all developments, but it became ruinous for agriculture.

Once the company had acquired interest in the revenue of the province, they were invariably drawn deeper and deeper into the minutest of India. But the company government conveniently neglected the basic duties of a responsible government. It neither encouraged agriculture nor invested money to promote agriculture. When a systematic collection of revenue was followed, it never tried to invest any share of it

for the economic well being of the country. Instead it used Indian revenue to remit at home and to make capital for trade. If at all a share of revenue was invested for the improvement of agriculture and other industries, it would have been providing a logn standing revenue for the company without ruining the agriculture. Instead, the company government was killing the goose for availing golden eggs easily.

The rich fertile land of Malabar was least exploited for agricultural production, by any of the latest method of cultivation. The jenmis who had enough capital to invest in agriculture retrained from any such activities of cultivation. As already noted, the Malabar peasants who were not rich enough to invest in agriucture found his fields left uncultivated in repeated intervels. In the new tenurial situation, (which is explained in detail before) the tenant felt that he will be evicted from his own improvements after a contractual period of lease. In this situation the kanakkaran or tenant could not show any interest for an higher improvement of the soil, even at his own or by his family's own man power, as he was liable for redumtion, repaying the amount he advanced and he may not be able to enjoy the bearing fruits of his work. Such an agrarian system would not be condusive for a

prosperous agricultural life. So agriculture was in a dormant stage and to this a heavy burden of land and other extra revenues were imposed by the government. Monopoly in certain rich articles also had the same effect of ruining the native agriculture and other economic sources.

State monopoly in tobacco, timber and salt and the taxes on spiritous liquors, toddy extractors etc struck hard on the habits and mores of the people. The inability of the people to purchase these necessary articles of the company's price created much hardships for the people. From the company's point of view these were commendable things and the Board of revenue paid handsome tribute to Mr. Warden for their introduction. But on the otherside while the salt monopoly perished the native manufacture of the article and resulted in unemployment of a number of people, the tobacco monopoly created a tendency of its smuggling by the natives and also economic loss. The monopoly in Timber not only occasioned a loss of timber trade to the native merchants but it paved way for the ruin of native ship and other vessel building industry. It also had a far reaching consequence of deforestation on account of the indiscriminate cutting of valuable woods of Malabar forest to serve the requirements of British

ship building and for royal household furniture. To estimate the number of people affected badly by the introduction of monopolies is not easy to estimate. According to H.S Graeme, 6,348 manufacturers had gone out of business as a consequence of the introduction of tobacco monopoly and the monopoly of salt had affected nearly 6000 proprietors of salt pans.³⁵ The actual number of loss of employment will be far higher than this, if an estimate of the workers engaged in these business also are accounted.

Again, every ordinary man in Malabar had an obligation of paying certain additional taxes, for his house, shop, cattle, working tool, etc. By the middle of 19th century this additional tax alone had amounted to 25% of the land revenue, and 15% of the total tax. This augmented the hardships of the revenue payee much harder.

When the agriculture began to perish it was reflected in the export trade also. This stagnation in export trade again brought stress and strain to the natives. Moreover, the very limited native manufacture of coir and cotton also came to an end on account of

35. H.S. Graeme to the Board of Revenue 31 Aug. 1820
BRP.1 Aug.1822 Vol.921 p.7258.

the company' import of foreign goods. This al
brought economic loss side by side the above problems.

MALABAR REBELLIONS -A PRODUCT OF REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

To qualify or disqualify the reasons like fanaticism, Islamic ideology, ignorance etc. of the Mappila revolters for their uprisings in 19th century is not at all a business here in this work. They may or may not be factors to contribute as reasons. But all those who studied these uprisings could not rule out the basic truth that there was an economic interpretation for this. This economic interpretation emerges, from the revenue administration and its consequent re-arrangements in the land relations of the native system by the company.

One thing is clear that the agricultural population, either farmers or agricultural labourers, had become 'wretchedly poor' Even Messers H.V. Conolly and T.L. Strange had recognised the poverty and destitution of the Mappila peasants even though they had recognised fanaticism as a reason. For Mr. Logan "the Mappila outrages was an organisation designed to counteract the overwhelming influence, of the jenmis in the exercise of the novel powers of ouster and of rent

raising conferred upon them."³⁶ What prompted the Mappila to become martyre was not his urge to serve religion by acting against a non-believers rather the decision was forced up on him by the realities of his material existance.³⁷ Distitution, oppression and exactions of the Hindu landlords have been the causes of these outbreaks, as it was reported to Mr.Strange during his enquiry³⁸. Conard Wood also gives an essentially economic interpretation treating religion only as a means of mobilization.³⁹

The unfortunate situation was that a major section of Malabar population could not react against their grievances and oppressive actions of the landlords on account of their peculiar social status. By their socio-economic and religious inlfuences the Jenmis could bring any recalcitrant Hindu tenant to submission through social sanctions excommunication and denial of ritually important village services. They

36. William Logan Report of Malabar Special commission para 280

37. K N Panikkar (ed) Peasant protests and revolts in Malabar P.XII.

38. C M O I. pp. 268-73

39. Conard Wood The Mappila outbreaks. A Discussion contribution. Journal of Asian Studies XXXVI Feb. 1977 pp.391-9

were relectant even to record their complaint as they had before their eyes the fear of caste censure fines and excommunication.⁴⁰ When neither traditional intellectuals nor any religious or social platform gave the Hindu peasantry any encouragement for demanding their basic rights, this was amply available to the Mappila peasantry. Veliyankod Ummer Qasi, one of the Mappila intellectuals lived during this period (1757-1852) was a man of national and social outlook. He vehemently criticised the government's revenue policy and asked the people not to pay revenue⁴¹. Whatever be the other reasons, the economic impoverishment and oppression of landlords and the governemnt officials may have prompted the agricultural Mappila population to rise in arms against the oppressors.

40. William Logan Report of Malabar Sepcial Commission.
para.17

41. C.N. Ahmed Moulavi and Abdul Kareem K.K. Mahataya Mappila Sahithya Parambaryam (mal.)(Calicut 1979)
p.128

Appendix A

DATA OF REVENUE ACCOUNTS, 1792-1858

Below are given the statistical accounts of revenue collection under various heads by the company government in Malabar for the years from 1792 to 1858. The accounts are collected from a number of sources like revenue accounts, reports and other statements of revenue officials. In respect of a few years the detailed accounts are not available as they are either left blank or illegible in the original records, or sometimes those available ones are mutually contradictory. In such cases either the most accurate ones are included with remarks or left blank, or an average for five years is given. Since the amounts given in the original accounts are either in Star pagodas, or in Rupees or in other such current coins, and also the value of these coins had undergone changes at various occasions, a correct conversion of all these accounts into Rupees is certainly a difficult task.

Likewise, when the revenue accounts for certain years provide the actual collection of revenue for each year, certain other ones provide the actual jumma or the assessment of revenue for each year. So the net and gross revenue also is not clear from the accounts. This difference in accounts also create much

confusion and it is not easily possible for a comparison with other years. However, maximum accuracy is observed in presenting these accounts, comparing all the available sources.

On account of these difficulties, the accounts are furnished to the maximum possible in the original, and wherever it is indispensable, a conversion rate or a comparison, whichever is required is given. So these data will serve as an immediate source of reference for the treatment of the above mentioned aspects. The Roman numbers given in footnote provide not only the source of reference, but certain essential details in respect of the accounts.

Revenue demand and collection for Fusly 1202 (1793) to Fusly 1210 (1810)¹

Year	Demand in Rupees	Collection in Rupees
a) Fusly 1202	9,25,141-12-00	7,61,668-08-00
" 1203	18,16,927-15-08	14,88,439-02-04
" 1204	13,34,502-01-09	12,37,563-11-03
" 1205	13,73,327-01-00	12,39,784----04
" 1206	14,08,834-04-03	13,48,021-13-09
" 1207	14,43,843-06-08	13,07,359-10-07
" 1208	15,66,418-14-04	14,00,084-06-02
" 1209	16,26,603-06-00	15,66,939-08-02
" 1210	17,79,398-05-03	16,70,405-02---

Revenue for F 1211 to F 1216 in Rupees^{II}

Year	Land Jumma	Land Rev. Collection	Farm & Licenses
F1211	20,83,130-10-07	19,99,882-04-05	78,134-11-08
F1212	18,03,350-14-03	15,69,225-01-09	57,456---10
F1213	18,70,732-07-07	17,58,719-10-05	64,688-04-07
F1214	18,79,536-07-08	18,32,914-15-11	77,341-04-01
F1215	18,91,137-06-08	17,74,716-13-00	83,321-12-00
F1216	17,87,082-01-10	17,48,001-03-01	1,25,704-10---
<hr/>			
Year		Sea Custom	Total
F1211		1,90,084-04---	22,67,801-04-01
F1212		1,87,273-10-03	18,13,954-12-10
F1213		2,05,981-12-05	20,29,388-11-05
F1214		1,86,570-01-11	20,96,826-04-11
F1215		1,21,307-10-01	20,29,290-07-08
F1216		1,57,625-06-06	20,31,337-03-07

I. Revenue Collection during the commissioners' was varied from taluk to taluk and even village to village.

II. In 1802 Major Macleod raised the revenue very considerably. The jumma and collection of this year was far more than any year in the first two decades of the company administration. Later the assessment for 1804 was regulated to the

Revenue for F.1217 (1808) and F.1218 (1809) in Rupees^{III}

Branches of Revenue	Fusly 1217	Fusly 1218
Land Jumma	18,06,258-06-06	17,16,170-10-00
Land Rev.coll	17,81,258-04-05	17,12,960-03-04
Salt monopoly	73,500-00-00	84,000-00-00 ^{IV}
Tobacco monopoly	-----	1,92,500-00-00
Abkary	-----	60,535-15-05
Farms & Licenses	2,01,529-04-09	43,850-09-11
Sayer	-----	29,339-02-08
Sea custom	1,77,589-11-02	1,49,017-06-09
Total	22,33,877-04-04	22,72,203-06-01

commissioner's assessment as proclaimed by Mr. Rickards. But, the collection made within the year as seen in the general report was considerably higher than the jumma calculated for that year. Besides the arrears of the previous years for St. pagodas 56749 also was collected in the same year. General Report Vol.10, 5th Oct. 1804, Para. 477-78.

III. The details furnished by the Board of Revenue to the home government gives a different account. This account gives the amount in original Star Pagodas. According to these accounts the Revenue collection for the year 1804 was Star Pagodas 608385-15-67. If one Star Pagoda is treated equal to 3 1/2 rupees the amount will be Rs.2129348. The account in the report of Mr. Clementson shows it Rs. 2029388. So the difference for Rs.1,00,000, is untraceable. The following years also this difference can be seen.

IV. In 1806 salt and tobacco monopoly were introduced, but the collection of revenue from these heads

Revenue for F.1219 to F.1222 In Star Pagodas^V

Branches of Rev.	F.1219	F.1220	F.1221	F.1222
Land Rev.	4,90,249-34-08	4,88,906-42-30	4,88,624-31-40	4,87,538-24-10
Licenses (Net)	84,034-42-14	85,539-37-77	93,274-31-12	95,613-29-21
Sayer/Custom	46,188-08-30	57,659-04-43	13,653-15-01	16,142-09-55
Extra Rev.	443-36-57	1,248-05-33	1,144-15-29	813-03-39
Salt (Net)	38,956-23-67	46,972-05-31 ^{VI}	43,456-21-06	32,402-19-68
Total	6,59,873-10-16	6,80,325-05-54	6,40,153-24-08	6,32,509-41-39

were seen separate only in 1808 and 1809 respectively. In 1809 certain new heads like sayer and Abkary were given separate, and the collection for this year had increased the collection of Mr. Macleod in 1802. Clementson's Report pp. 9-12.

V. The statements in the reports of the Collector for these years are contradictory in many respects. Letter from Thomas Warden, to the government. 31st December 1811 General Report Vol.18; para.366. The amount given here is deducted from other statements related to the revenue of the year.

VI. In 1811 the increase in salt revenue was very high (gross 72,269 st.p) on account of its monopoly. The reason for this was the country salt manufacture had failed in the year throughout the province and the district became entirely dependent on government supply. General Report Vol.18, 10th Oct. 1812 para. 379.

Revenue for F.1223 to F.1225 in Star Pagodas ^{VII}

Branches of Rev.	F.1223	F.1224	F.1225
Land Revenue			
(Net)	4,87,296-18-53	4,87,673-40-78	4,69,909-09-30
(Gross)	-----	-----	4,87,719-16-46
Sayer	17,010-20-76	18,826-04-67	19,148-22-47
Salt			
(Net)	33,952-30-70	35,969-38-02	-----
(Gross)	57,359-00-64	59,580-13-54	67,295-37-66
Abkary	19,481-44-09	21,009-13-26	21,856-07-78
Farms & Licenses	9,457-03-13	14,999-32-60	-----
(Gross)	12,431-24-03	15,260-00-29	15,910-44-09
Tobacco (Net)	83,688-03-59	51,916-20-9	-----
(Gross)	1,26,084-18-74	1,16,694-33-78	92,337-21-44
Extra	534-39-70	575-15-51	713-40-34
Hill Farm	-----	-----	598-33-22
Gold Dust	-----	-----	632-32-29
Cardamom Farm	-----	-----	6,156-25-57
Total (Net)	6,51,421-26-39	6,30,970-30-53	6,87,173-03-68
(Gross)	7,20,198-32-29	7,19,625-32-63	-----

VII. General Report Vol.27, 6th July 1817, para 731, 746. In another statement the sundry small farm etc. is given only 8,522-42-61 St.P. The difference is for 7,388-01-28. The same difference is seen in the total amount also.

Revenue for F. 1226 in Star Pagodas and Rupees^{VIII}

Branches	F.1226	
	St. Pag	Rupees
Land Revenue	4,87,267-20-38	17,05,436-01-06
Salt	52,508-40-45	1,83,781-02-06
Sayer	18,572-44-08	65,005-06-11
Abkary	20,701-19-25	72,455-00-01
Sundry Small Farm & Licenses	9,867-03-15	
Gold Dust	632-32-29	
Hill Farm	584-31-54	56,105-11-06
Cardamom Farm	4,945-32-11	
Tobacco	79,700-02-66	2,78,950-03-06
Extra	588-44-44	2,061-07-05
Total	6,75,370-01-15	23,63,795-01-05

VIII. General Report Vol.27 3 January 1820 para 1331.
 The Collector Mr. Vaughan began to use rupees in the revenue accounts instead of pagodas. Since this period it is given in rupees (1 star pagoda = 3.5 rupees).

Revenue for F.1227, 1228 and 1229 in rupees

Branches	F.1227	F.1228 ^{IX}	F.1229 ^X
Land Revenue	17,03,728-01-06	17,04,633-12-06	17,04,647-09-07
Salt	2,16,743-05-01	1,70,334-09-02	1,81,767-08-10
Sayer	70,326-05-07	72,156-05-04	77,321-00-05
Abkary	62,133-10-01	60,856-13-10	68,584-12-09
Sundry small Farm & Licenses	55,706-12-11	37,335-01-10	37,762-03-03
Tobacco	2,87,458-04-02	2,79,895-05-09	3,18,697-07-11
Extra Revenue	2,963-10-05	2,744-02-08	2,819-08-07
Stamp	-----	-----	39,553-11-01
Total	23,99,060-01-09	23,27,956-03-01	24,31,152-14-05

IX. A considerable decrease was seen in all branches of revenue in F.1228 and the arrear for the year was Rs.2,43,537-10-09. The on going enquiry of Mr. Graeme was the reason attributed by the Collector for this decrease.

X. General Report Vol.29, 4th January 1821.

Revenue for F.1230, 1231, 1232 in rupees

Branches	F.1230	F.1231	F.1232
Land Revenue	16,81,731-02-09	16,81,557-06-08	16,83,206-01-05
Salt	2,21,653-15-03	1,78,400-12-09	1,70,427-05-05
Sayer	85,615-14-02	92,598-05-00	79,730-10-05
Abkary	73,734-08-03	72,431-03-04	72,027-06-11
Sundry small Farm & Licenses	38,698-14-03	55,893-15-04	57,876-07-02
Moturpha ^{XI}	23,658-00-04	23,657-12-05	24,859-12-01
Tobacco	3,60,785-02-08	3,69,716-10-06	3,78,149-15-09
Stamp Revenue	41,921-08-00	42,692-13-02	44,274-10-00
Extra	2,791-02-09	5,674-14-07	1,656-09-05
Total	25,30,596-04-05	25,22,625-13-09	25,12,208-14-07

XI. In F.1230 there was a new branch of revenue namely moturpha. General Report Vol.31, 2nd January 1823. para 1027.

Revenue for F.1233 and F.1234 in Rupees^{XII}

Brances		F.1233	F.1234
Land Revenue	Rice land	11,18,171-03-10	11,12,425-15-11
	Dry land	24,868-10-07	25,448-02-03
	Garden land	4,29,691-03-01	4,16,700-03-01
	Cochin	4,760-13-03	6,310-07-00
	XIII Housetax	90,135-11-08	84,926-03-07
	Pepper	-----	36,311-07-10
	Beebi of Cannanore	15,000-00-11	15,000-00-11
----- Total		16,82,627-11-04	16,97,122-08-07

Sea custom		2,01,004-09-00	2,63,348-08-09
Stamp		56,838-01---	59,199-08-00
Salt		1,85,722-03-08	1,80,922-03-08
Tobacco		94,616-15-05	4,10,169----11
Abkary		62,911-09-11	61,111-00-00
Farm & Licenses		52,153-01-01	57,528-08-05
Moturpha		22,201-00-02	21,670-08-03
Sayer		98,723-05-11	1,03,225-06-06

Grand Total		24,56,799-----	27,58,512-----

XII. The Board of Revenue commented about the report submitted by the Collector for the year as being "errors and too comprehensive to get the real accounts. The tremendous increase in tobacco revenue for F.1234 is unaccountable. Clementsons' Report pp.10-12.

XIII. The house-tax formed a part of the land Jumma in Malabar while in other districts under the head of moturpha. Therefore the Board desired for a uniformity in the accounts in all the provinces. General Report Vol.36, 2nd January 1826, para 1179. Clementsons' Report pp.10-12. The accounts available for the year (F.1234) is highly contradictory. One of the sources gives the total revenue for the year at Rs.28,09,793.

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Revenue for F.1235 and F.1236 in rupees^{XIV}

Branches	F.1235	F.1236
Land Revenue		
Rice land	11,12,656-09-07	11,12,966-11-11
Dry land	26,322-10-07	28,246-01-07
Garden land	4,16,952-09-02	4,17,073-07-06
Cochin	8,705-05-02	8,956-14-10
Cannanore	15,000-00-11	15,000-00-11
Total	15,79,637-03-07	15,82,243-04-09
Salt (gross)	1,83,042-09-06	1,74,323-14-02
Abkary	69,877-11-07	69,203-12-09
Sundry Small Farm & Licenses	62,473-14-00	57,752-01-11
Custom (Land)	85,871-09-09	92,405-06-00
Custom (Sea)	2,74,406-15-01	2,35,774-15-05
Tobacco (gross)	3,85,264-09-11	4,05,305-03-08
Vissabandy & Moturpha (gross)	1,08,671-13-06	1,12,463-01-03
Stamp	-----	56,934-05-02
Grand Total	27,49,241-----	27,86,405-16-13

XIV. General Report Vol.41, para 1052. The Collector reporting on the revenue accounts of the year said: "no satisfactory information can be procured from the taluk officers". On account of this type of irregularities there was a huge amount of Rs.1,06,986-03-06 laying irricoverable while the year shows a large collection in comparison to the former years. In F.1236 though the Collector recommended for a permanant removal of an amount of balance Rs.11,939 as it was found irrecoverable on account of various natural reasons the Board of Revenue declined the proposal saying that it "will lead to abuse of the land being kept uncultivated". General Report Vol. 44, para 620.

Revenue for F.1237, 1238 and 1239 in Rupees^{XV}

Branches	F.1237	F.1238	F.1239
Land Revenue	15,84,276-07-04	15,92,487-14-11	16,09,431-09-11
Tobacco	4,74,959-14-11	4,92,744-08-05	4,94,435-05-05
Salt	1,80,353-15-01	2,36,624-11-02	2,68,709-10-03
Sayer	89,489-02-07	91,793-07-06	1,24,532-12-00
Sea Custom	2,57,921-00-06	2,61,629-14-11	2,30,669-02-08
Abkary	71,413-11-07	71,876-88-04	70,216-00-06
Sundry Small Farm & Licenses	66,045-04-11	78,159-14-11	89,746-02-10
Stamp	60,195-15-09	51,374-10-04	47,568-12-10
Moturpha	1,15,106-14-03	1,14,282-07-09	1,17,880-15-02
Total	28,99,761-22-11	29,90,973-17-15	30,53,189-22-19

XV. The actual collection for F.1237 and F.1238 were Rs.28,63,590-05-00 and Rs.29,76,422-02-03 respectively. In F.1239 a general increase was seen in almost all branches of revenue. In this year Nilgiri, which yielded Rs.2,307-12-02 of revenue, was transferred to Malabar district. General Report, vol.46, 47 para 620-Vol. 48 para 478.

Revenue for F.1240, 1241, 1242 in Rupees^{XVI}

Branches	F.1240	F.1241	F.1242
Land Rev. Jumma	15,33,617-03-04	15,87,577-03-02	15,81,580-01-05
" " Colln.	13,49,853-12-07	13,35,816-12-10	15,54,466-15-06
Salt	2,17,174-03-08	2,48,355-06-07	2,49,880-09-10
Tobacco	4,29,746-15---	4,40,368----03	4,55,755-10---
Abkary	66,351-01-01	62,341-04-08	66,204-07-09
Parm & Licenses	45,561-05-03	61,415-03-10	59,952-10---
Moturpha	99,568----06	93,208----10	1,12,611-10-05
Sayer	1,27,182-01-04	1,28,903-09-11	1,26,506-06-05
Sea custom	2,58,929-07-11	2,27,170-10-09	1,79,333-15-08
Stamp	47,476-10---	49,412-08-02	46,645-11---
Total Collection	26,41,843-09-04	26,46,991-09---	28,51,358----02

XVI. In F.1240 and 1241, there was a general decrease in revenue collection. In land revenue alone in F.1240 Rs.1,28,826-15-02 was less than the former year. This was almost same in the next year also. The reasons attributed to this fall in revenue was the unfavourable season and the low price of grain. But a sudden increase in revenue was seen in the next year, collecting almost full of the jumma. General Report Vol.50, para 677.

Revenue for F.1243, 1244, 1245 In Rupees

Branches	F.1243	F.1244	F.1245
Land Rev. Jumma	16,02,166-07-01	16,04,121-10-03	16,13,314-13-09
" " Colln.	15,84,087-10-03	16,00,398-08-06	16,07,459-09-02
Salt	2,85,731-13-09	2,76,007-15-06	2,99,935-13-02
Tobacco	4,43,288-06-03	4,47,122-03-09	4,87,964-11-02
Abkary	63,099-01---	64,621-02-01	63,547-15-08
Farm & Licenses	54,813-09---	56,379-09-02	58,457-04---
*Moturpha	1,11,226-12-08	1,10,540-13-05	1,10,465-05---
Sayer	1,26,925-04-04	1,14,803-09-08	1,23,931-11---
Sea custom	1,82,375-15-11	2,27,688-06-08	2,08,682-14-11
Stamp	48,019-08-04	50,956-11-01	53,897-13-03
Total Collection	28,99,618-01-06	29,48,513-15-10	30,14,343-01-04

Revenue for F.1246 and F.1247 in Rupees

Branches	F.1246	F.1247
Land Revenue Jumma	16,11,884-03---	16,22,883-02-02
" " Collection	16,05,913---07	16,11,658-05-09
Salt	2,79,222-13-09	3,42,141-03-05
Tobacco	5,06,277-15-06	5,21,075-12-04
Abkary	59,429-09-10	58,125-15-07
Farms & Licenses	58,797-06-01	45,106-08-07
Moturpha	1,11,387-11-07	1,10,782-13-11
Sayer	1,33,384-10-08	1,18,437-08-02
Sea custom	2,85,895-11-02	2,62,114-11-02
Stamp	52,117-06-02	48,886-01-01
Total	30,92,426-05-04	31,18,329-----

Average revenue collection in the branches Land Revenue, Salt Monopoly and Tobacco Monopoly for years F.1247-1262 (1838 to 1853) in Rupees^{XVII}

Year	Branches	Amount Rs.
1839-1843	Land Revenue Jumma	16,41,455
	" " Collection	16,40,098
	Salt monopoly	3,40,121
	Tobacco monopoly	5,34,006
1844-1848	Land Revenue Jumma	16,45,418
	" " Collection	16,40,992
	Salt monopoly	3,42,680
	Tobacco	5,59,423
1849-1853	Land Revenue Jumma	16,22,206
	" " Collection	16,37,574
	Salt monopoly	3,35,870
	Tobacco	4,88,270

XVII. The accounts of revenue for these years are not available seperately and clearly. Since the available ones are contradictory, an average for these years only could be given. Here the total revenue also is not included, but certain important branches only. However the general trend was that every year revenue increased considerably.

Revenue for F.1262, 1263 and 1264 in Rupees^{XVIII}

Years	F.1262	F.1263	F.1264
Land Revenue	16,47,867	16,09,486	17,00,680
Extra Revenue	9,52,755	7,18,165	6,94,579
Total	26,00,622	23,27,651	23,95,259

Revenue for F.1265, 1266 and 1267 in Rupees

Years	F.1265	F.1266	F.1267
Land Revenue	16,79,639	-----	17,31,015
Extra Revenue	7,96,899	-----	9,71,221
Total	24,76,538	25,92,697	27,02,236

Since these accounts are compiled from various government printed sources they cannot be treated as infalliable, and authentic. Mistakes are several in those accounts used as source material and the amounts are varying in different accounts.

XVIII. The accounts for these years seems to be not complete, having certain items not included, otherwise such a great difference of amount would not have occurred. Revenue rolls for F.1263 No.17 in Report on the settlement of the land revenue of Madras Presidency Funds 1263.

Appendix - B

COMMISSIONERS, SUPERVISORS AND PRINCIPLE COLLECTOR

FROM 1792 TO 1858

Name	Designation	From	To	Remarks
W.G. Farmer Major Alexander Dow William Page J. Duncan Charles Boddam	Commissioners from Bombay and Bengal	18.03.1792	11.10.1793	Each of the members held the post at various periods
W.G. Farmer	Supervisor	18.03.1793	25.02.1794	
James Stevens	"	25.02.1794	24.12.1794	
A.W. Handley	"	24.12.1794	17.05.1795	
T. Wilkinson Colonel A. Dow A.W. Handley Robert Rickards James Rivett Richard Torin John Spencer J. Hartley J. Smee Joshua Uthoff	Commissioners for executing the office of supervisor and chief magistrate	18.05.1796		Each of the members held the post at various periods

Joshua Watson			
Major A. Walker			30.09.1801
Major Macleod	Principal Collector	Oct. 1801	March 1803
Robert Rickards	"	March 1803	Mar. 1804
Thomas Warden	"	March 1804	Dec. 1816
James Vaughan	"	Dec. 1816	Jan. 1826
William Sheffield	"	Jan. 1826	Feb. 1831
A.F. Hudleston	"	Feb. 1831	Aug. 1832
F.F. Clemenston	"	Aug. 1832	Feb. 1839
W.E. Underwood	"	Feb. 1839	Oct. 1839
E.P. Thompson	"	Nov. 1839	Feb. 1840
H.W. Conolly	"	Feb. 1840	Sept. 1855
T. Clark	"	Sept. 1855	Oct. 1856
W. Robinson	"	Oct. 1856	May 1858

Appendix - C

BRANCHES OF REVENUE UNDER THE COMPANY GOVERNMENT

1. Land Revenue	since 1792
2. Sea Custom	" 1801
3. Farm & Licensus	" 1801
4. Sayer	" 1805
5. Salt monopoly	" 1807
6. Tobacco monopoly	" 1808
7. Abkary	" 1808
8. Stamp	" 1809
9. Mohterpha	" 1820

Appendix - D

REVENUE DIVISIONS IN MALABAR IN 1855

1. Taluks	16
2. Villages (a) Ryotwari	431
(b) Zamindari*	1
3. Hamelts	2603
4. Total Puttahs	1,85,371

* The only Zamindari vilalge was that of the Bibee of Cannanore with 8 hamelts.

Appendix - E

RENT ROLL OF MALABAR DISTRICT

No.	Payment of Rent in Rs.	Number of Puttahs
1.	Above 1000	24
2.	Between 1000-750	16
3.	" 750-500	66
4.	" 500-250	357
5.	" 250-100	1963
6.	" 100-50	4264
7.	" 50-10	25737
8.	Below 10	152944
Total		185371
Average of Puttaha		Rs.8 A.12 P.11

Source: Report on the settlement of Land Revenue of Madras Presidency 1853-54. Appendix No.7

Appendix - F

GLOSSARY

- Abkary. Revenue from duties levied on liquor products
- Adhikari. One who holds a superior office in a village
- Amsham. A revenue division of districts like village
- Attuveppu. A division of garden land based on its fertility by Mr.M.S. Graeme (P.274)
- Brahmaswam. Endowments of land for Brahmin priest
- Canicapilla. Writer of accounts
- Canterai pagoda. A currency
- Cheri. Ancient social unit in Kerala (P.223)
- Chirakkal land. Lands of Kings and rulers
- Cherujanmakkar. The skilled workers like carpenters, goldsmith etc. of ancient Kerala society who have a share in the produce
- Conogoes. Revenue officer (registrar) during the commissioners' period (P.167)
- Dewaswam. Temple property
- Dewan. Revenue officer to help the supervisor and superintendents (P.167)
- Dwijanmakar. High caste Brahmin and other sacred-thread wearing Hindus
- Fanam. Coin used in Malabar
- Gramam. Ancient social unit in Malabar (P.223)
- Hinduvi paymaish. Revenue accounts written by Maratha Karnams in 1806-10(P.231)
- Hobli. A Mysorean administrative unit
- Hoons. A currency equal to 3 1/2 rupees

Jagir. A royal endowment of an area of landed territory as a privilege for collecting revenue therein.

Jenmam (Jenmakar). One of the rights of enjoying proprietorship in land for life time in ancient Malabar and later the sole ownership of land under the company government. Hence jenmakar

Jenmi payamaish. Warden's revenue assessment in consultation with Jenmi's in 1805.

Jumabandy. Revenue

Kanam (Kanakkaran). Right of supervision or one of the proprietors of landed property. Hence kanakkaran.

Karaima. Right to manage temple property

Karriakkars. Revenue servants (managers) employed in collection work (P.166)

Karaveppu. Same as Attuveppu (P.274)

Kolkar. Revenue officials employed to help the Parabuttis (P.196)

Koyiladikarikal. Members of a socio-political organisation in Malabar with right and responsibilities on temple affairs.

Kuzhikkanam Right enjoyed on a land newly brought under cultivation

Kutywashy. 10% of revenue collected to meet the expenses of officials (P.197)

Malikhana. An allowance to the native rulers by the company government from the revenue collection.

Melkanam. Leasing the kanam right to a third party when there already exists one kanakkaran. (P.106)

Menon. Revenue collection officer

Michavaram. The balance of rent paid by kanakkaran to jenmi after realising the interest of the amount he advanced from the pattam (P.100).

Muthurpha (Mohterpha). Taxes levied on trade and profession

Nad. A revenue division or a term for a country.

Naduvali. Revenue and political headman in a nadu,

Nattukuttam. An ancient socio-political organisation in Malabar.

Nirattipperu. Right on land acquired by sale on water contact (P.95)

Nirmuthal. Pledging of the remaining share of the jenmi even after otti, ottikkumpurameyulla kanam etc.

Otti. One of the land tenures by which whole the share of the jenmi will be absorbed by the interest of the kanakkaran's advance (P.105)

Ottikkum purameyulla kanam. Same as Nirmuthal

Pattam. Rent, share of the produce after meeting the expences and the cultiator's share, usually 2/3 of the net produce.

Pagoda land. Temple land

Parbuttis. Revenue officers in desam

Protekars. Revenue servants employed for collection purpose (P.166)

Purushantharam. A portion of the landed property claimed by the ruler from the heirs of a dead Mappila.

Puttah. The revenue contact as entered in the rent roll with tenant, jenmi etc.

Ryot (Ryotwari). One who pays land revenue direct to the government. In Malabar either jenmi, or farmer, or tenant, or labourer, or intermediary kanakkaran. Hence the system ryotwari.

Sayer. Revenue from a variety of sources as customs, transit duty, licences, fees etc.

Six hundreds. A Nair guild in medieval Kerala

Sheristadar. Head native revenue officer

Star pagoda. A currency in Malabar

Sultany chukram. A term used in Cochin for Hoons
(P.141)

Tahasil (Tahsildar). A revenue division in Malabar with
a number of villages. Hence its head Tahasildar.

Tara. An ancient Malabar social unit (P.223)

Towkery/Thukkari. A revenue division of Tipu Sulthan

Tulla - Panam. House tax under Mysore government.

Ur-kuttam. An ancient socio-political organisation in
Kerala like Uralasamithi

Uralasamithi. Same as above

Uraima/Uralar. Right of Uralasamithi members over
temple property. Hence Uralar.

Vechumaral. Mutual exchange of the rights of
uraima/Karaima in temple property.

Verumpattam. To hold land on simple lease for a short
term, usually for one year.

Vilachal-meni-pattam. Mr. Rickards' Revenue assessment
in 1804.

Note: The meanings given herein against each word is not
the actual definitions, but an explanation more to
suit the reference in the thesis.

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