



AGRARIAN UNRESTS AND MALABAR SPECIAL

POLICE: PORTRAYING THE TRANSITION

PATTERN OF MALABAR SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

Agrarian life pattern have always remained as a determining force in understanding the pulse of a society. This is very true even when one tries to understand human society right from the time of its concept. The life pattern based on agriculture represents the inner crux as well as depicts the under currents inherent in a certain society. Many great leaders and Kings of various nations lived life among agrarian community in disguise for shorter periods in order to understand about the day to day problems faced by common people who opted for agrarian related activities, and to redress the same using effective administrative measures that proved beneficial for his subjects. Mahatma Gandhi, "the father of India" , even believed that soul of our nation rests in villages where most of the population thrived on agricultural activities and its by products. In south India the condition is little more especially in the context of pre-colonial and post colonial period as it is capable enough to understand the evolutionary process of the society pertaining to a region or a series of events having a similar background and connection. This particular topic ventures to delineate the various aspects of Malabar society starting from the point before the start of a revolution to certain events that transpired in post-colonial period giving much emphasis to the participation of women in agrarian activities, protest etc. and the way same was confronted by Malabar Special Police.

Keywords :Agrarian, Caste, Feudal Lords, Malabar, Struggle

INTRODUCTION

Great historians and scholars had rightly pointed about the innate nature of Malabar society whereby each and every aspect is being determined by something related with their agrarian structure no matter whether it belongs to economical, social political or cultural paradigms. Agrarian unrest when referred in world context or Indian context of historical research always tends to relate it with some kind of reaction or retaliation against some kind of oppression meted out to the so called people from



higher strata of the society better known as the privileged class(class of elites). while revisiting history based on the struggles done by those related with agrarian sector one can clearly understand about the severity of the underlying reasons behind such outbursts as well as the impact of such struggles in the society. The failure of governmental measures in resolving agrarian problem has been widely recognized and admitted today. The land reforms and community programs meant for promoting capitalist footing in India have only succeeded in intensifying the agrarian crisis.¹This eventually, takes place as agrarian sector plays a major role in affecting society as it is unduly depending upon it for basic sustenance. Hence, it is always advisable to understand the problems related with agrarian sector to clearly analyze the problems related with society which is exactly what the nationalist leaders of Indian freedom struggle did to find solution to a long period of suppression by British regime. British always targeted the agrarian sector and land revenue settlement related with the same to control the basic crux of the society which can be called agrarian system pertaining to the society. Furthermore, it also played a major role in impacting upon the economy of India. The colonial society in Malabar as elsewhere in India was the outcome of a historical situation where both constructive and destructive forces had interacted in providing the matrix of the colonial social formation.² Thus, by and large many agrarian unrests broke out as a result of their unscrupulous exploitation meted out to the peasants and tenants related with agrarian sector. However, speaking about agrarian unrests affecting the society, the one related with peasants and tenants of Malabar region in Kerala attains a special position pertaining to movements related with Indian freedom struggle. The fragmentation of holdings was a result of the acute subdivisions that would take place among the coparcenaries landholding bodies.³ This particular, agrarian unrest that transpired in Malabar region stands out among the other in the sense of its impact upon the society, the range of out breaks in a span of say 84 years and the underlying reasons behind such a series of revolts raised against a regime within a stipulated point of time and even going further from the rebellion period.. Further it is also handy in tracing out the transition of Malabar society using the interactions or say more rightly the confrontations between MSP and the agrarian society created a history in itself which is very much useful in understanding the Malabar society as such.

BACKGROUND SCENARIO

While analyzing the history of freedom movement in India, one can vividly understand the significance of *Moplah* uprising and the subsequent formation of Malabar Special Police in the Malabar region of the then Kerala. This incident along with the formation of MSP attains a prominent place among the freedom struggle movements against British regime, since it is a clear depiction of the interplay between the forces of nationalism and communalism especially in south India. In fact, it is the interplay of these two forces which influenced the entire course of Indian freedom struggle all



throughout the history. Communalism, as the word signifies indicates the allegiance to a specific ethnic group rather than to the wide society itself, meanwhile, nationalism can be viewed in terms of high sense of patriotic feelings, principles or efforts often depicted to liberate one's nation from foreign domination or just to show its superiority among other countries. British wisely used the concept of communalism that existed in India at that point of time for their own advantage, which is exactly what transpired in Malabar region of Kerala as well. Though *Moplah* uprising is seen in the pages of history as a part of nationalist movement, close scrutiny of events that influenced the cause course and effects of the movement tends to show a different picture which is influenced by both the feelings of communalism and nationalism. It is a widely accepted fact that the rebellion of 1921 was the eighty third resurgence of people of India against cruel landlords and colonialist tendencies of British empire.⁴ In the first phase of the movement nationalists exploited the communal feelings of Muslims to start a rebellion. Towards the second phase, it went out of the hands of nationalists and turned out to be an a 'communal war' between Hindu Nairs and Mappila Muslims. This eventually prompted to form a force later came to be known as Malabar Special Police, to suppress the rebellion which again was created by exploiting Nair feelings of that region against Mappila Muslims. As a matter of fact force formulated to suppress the rebellion and bring the situation under control eventually began to commit severe atrocities against the civilian population of Malabar with a sense of vengeance. This, one can witness that all throughout the movement it is the communalism which influenced and affected the rebellion and subsequent formulation of the force rather than any other factor that influenced the entire course of Indian freedom struggle

Malabar at the time of Mysorean interlude was an area comprised of different regions coming under the rule of different Rajas. The area comprised mainly of regions lying between Palakkad and Kazargode and constituted mainly of northern states of Kerala along with coastal regions of Karnataka. To be more specific, it was made up of the former nine Taluks of Kottayam, Kurumbranadu, Calicut, Wynad, Ernad, Walluvanad, Ponnani and Palghat. It is believed that the term 'Malabar' was ascribed to this region by Al-Beruni himself. It came under Madras Presidency during British sway over this area. The region was densely populated with people from various castes mostly coming under the genre of high castes and low castes. Mappilas and Nairs were the two major caste communities that were predominant in Malabar region during the time period of Mysorean interlude. The Mysorean conquest was a turning point in the history of Malabar.⁵ It was headed over by the then de facto ruler of Mysore Haider Ali and subsequently by his son Tipu Sultan. Nairs of Malabar at that particular point enjoyed a privileged status among other castes as they adorned the posts of landlords and noblemen among the people of Malabar region. Infact, the people who came to be known as Nayars were those directly used both by the Nambuthiris and the ruling lineages as service personnel.



⁶ The concentration of land in the hands of a few by exploiting the labor force was the main characteristics of feudal system in Malabar region during Mysorean invasion. Their economy was depended on agriculture and related activities pertaining to same. Mappila Muslims on the contrary were striving to retain their social status which they once enjoyed in the coasts of Malabar. The term Mappila has been variously interpreted to mean “mother’s son” or “bridegroom”. However, it is perhaps merely a title (me, great and pillai, child) which was given to foreigners whether Musalman (ChonakaMappila) or Christian(NasraniMappila). Now the name is confined to Muslims.⁷ They are otherwise considered as the offspring of Arabs who came for trade related activities, who contracted marriage alliances with women of the native land. Infact, they can be considered as one among the foreign traders who established trade relations with Malabar region and henceforth played a pivotal role in exposing huge trade prospects possessed by this region. Thereafter, they worked for the rajas of Malabar region especially Zamorins to enhance their political power and trade relations. It seems that they have settled in these areas and lived among the natives by propagating their religion among the masses. It was such that, when Vasco da Gama arrived in Malabar region he witnessed the concentration of mappila muslims in regions such as Kodungalloor, Pallipuram, Edavanakadu (kochi) of southern malabar region Chaliyam, Kozhikode, Parappanangadi, Thirurangadi, Thanur, Paravanna, Ponnani, Veliyankode of central Malabar and Faknoor, Manglapuram, Kazargode, Pazhayangadi, Nadapuram, Valapattanam, Kannur, Dharmadam, Chemmalode, Thiruvankadu, Sreekandapuram, Edakkadu, Koyilandi, Thikodi, Karakadu of northern Malabar region.⁸ They were also given trade monopoly over certain areas of Malabar. However, their prominence in the region began to get affected with the arrival of Portuguese in 1500. Viewed in the most general perspective, the Portuguese onslaught served to intensify the Muslim’s awareness of their own identity and in consequence to increase their sense of separateness from the rest of Malayali society.⁹ Malabar was leading a comparatively happy though politically isolated life. Though Malabar area was inhabited by various castes and tribes with various positions that are being ascribed by the society, they were very much keen enough to maintain a harmonious relationship within the society. In many ways her organization was primitive, but she had evolved a system in which trade flourished, different communities lived together without friction and absolute religious toleration.¹⁰

During the Mysorean expedition to Malabar region Nairs were enjoying a predominant position in the then society and mappila muslims were striving hard to retain their lost status in the society. Haider Ali after the invasion, took control of the area and initiated many changes in revenue settlement and agrarian policies which adversely affected the status and privileges enjoyed by the then Nair community. Being the largest land-owning class, it was the Nambuthiris who suffered most by the conquest and the consequent changes brought about by the new revenue settlement.¹¹ Nambuthiris



being the native Brahmin community of Kerala were the major landholders(janmis) among other castes of Malabar region,The introduction of land-tax affected them severely as it was a share of the pattam which the tenant used to pay the janmis and which the government claimed as rent. As a matter of fact, they kept themselves away from attending government offices initiating changes in land tenure system. Some of them even fled from that area due to the policies followed by musoreans in land tenure system. Policies such as reduction in pattam uprooting of royal houses and chieftaincies affected them the most, as it questioned the authority of Nambuthiris and other local chieftains over Malabar region .Nairs who served the purpose of government as well as defence prior to the coming of mysoreans, were rendered jobless as most of the ruling classes were suppressed and disbanded. The uprooting of the royal houses and chieftaincies ruined the prospect of employment of the Nayars, who despised all professions other than those of arms and of government service.¹²It seems that Negadi was imposed on the arable lands under Nambuthiri Brahmins, which proved unbearable for them to pay the same. Likewise, corruption and exploitation of peasants and tenants were brought to an end with measures ensuring the smooth running of new systems adopted in land revenue system. Furthermore one can witness that revenue demands were fixed in a just manner with many inams(freeholds) being reinstated in a matter of no time. Though Haider exempted temple lands from assessment ,Tipu considered it as a private property of the elite and he had them accessed to land-tax. This act of Tipu further infuriated Nambuthiris and local chieftains of Malabar as it dealt a serious blow to their selfish interests. He also monopolized pepper trade which proved highly beneficial for local cultivators consisting of people from lower strata of the society. To Buchanan survey and consequent equalization of revenue made matters “infinitely worse”, is not borne out by facts.¹³Besides, the charges of religious persecution and destruction of temples on mysorean rulers also played a major role in creating communal feelings among the castes of Malabar. However, a keen study on the subject proves that such persecutions were made because of political reasons rather than its religious counterpart. Thus, it can be stated that with the mysorean invasions and subsequent reforms on revenue settlement along with other related facts created a sense of communal feelings among the masses of Malabar. Brahmins, Nairs and other local chieftains strongly believed that they were harassed particularly because of the communal feelings possessed by Mysoreans. The changes initiated by them redressed the grievances suffered by mappilla Muslims along with other castes from the lower strata of the society. Furthermore, it played a major role in in changing the socio-political structure of the society by destroying the hegemony of Nairs, Nambuthiris and other high castes and there by elevating the once pathetic condition suffered by Mappila peasantry and other low castes.



MALABAR UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

Malabar region was a bone of contention between native rulers as well as among the foreigners right from the time immemorial due to its geographical location, climate favoring trade activities, pepper trade etc. Moors were the first among the foreigners who discovered the great prospects of Malabar region on trade related activities. As a matter of fact they excelled in trade, especially in pepper trade which was wisely utilized by the rulers who ruled over the various parts of this region from time to time. Many foreigners arrived here and established trade contacts with the then rulers of Malabar. Prominent among them being Moors, Portuguese, Dutch and English. All others except English were not able to establish a foothold here as unstable political conditions and hunger for more power among the native rulers never offered a favorable atmosphere for such an establishment. In fact, Ralph Fitch was the first Englishman to set his foot on the shores of Malabar. However, it only came under their full control by 1792 as a part of Sreerangapattam treaty concluded with Tipu Sultan. This particular treaty ended the third Anglo-Mysore war between English and Tipu. Under the terms of the treaty, Mysore ceded about one-half of its territories to the other signatories. The Peshwa acquired territory up to the Tungabhadra River, the Nizam was awarded land from the Krishna to the Penner River, and the forts of Cuddapah and Gandikota on the south bank of the Penner.¹⁴ The East India Company received a large portion of Mysore's Malabar Coast territories between the Kingdom of Travancore and the Kali River, and the Baramahal and Dindigul districts. Mysore granted the rajah of Coorg his independence, although Coorg effectively became a company dependency. Tipu Sultan, unable to pay an indemnity of 330 lakhs of rupees, was required to surrender two of his three sons as hostages of war. According to the provisions of Sreerangapattam treaty, the whole of Malabar were not ceded to the British, Wayanad which was the north eastern region of Malabar was not included in the provisions of the treaty.¹⁵ The final decision regarding the issue was resolved in 1798 when British accepted the suzerainty of Tipu sultan over this region. Anyway, after fourth Anglo-Mysore and the subsequent death of Tipu, it again came under the control of British. Thus, by early 1800 whole of the coveted Malabar region came under the control of British and they pensioned the native rulers of the area to enjoy a complete supremacy over the region under consideration. This rule continued up to 1947 particularly characterized by various changes initiated British in the field of land tenure system. During the one century of British rule in Malabar only the Brahmins and Nayers seem to have been benefited, whose caste prejudice was responsible for keeping down other communities in the scale of progress.¹⁶ Their policies pertaining to political and economic spheres targeted the exploitation of low castes with the help of high castes based janmam-kkanammaryada. The most distinctive land tenures in Malabar were janmam and kanam.¹⁷ According to this system janmam holder otherwise known as janmi was the absolute owner of his holding and was therefore free to take a big share of the produce



of the soil. Moreover, these janmam rights of a janmi was also recognized by then British administrators who exercised their control over this region. More documents related with *janmam* rights were mostly deciphered from Nambuthiri documents of 17th century. The land revenue policy adopted by the company tended to upset the traditional land relations, as it brought about fundamental changes in the nature of existing land rights.¹⁸ The British policy drained Mappilas of the position which they enjoyed under the Mysoreans in Malabar. The laws thus formulated by them were directed to destroy the privileges of Mappilas along with other low castes. British and land lords followed a policy of revenge against mappilamuslims as they sided with Mysoreans during the time of Mysorean occupation in Malabar region. They used local chieftains as the land revenue agents in their own territories to inflict more enslavement to mappila peasantry. Traditional form of land control which existed there prior to the interlude of Mysoreans were once again reinstated to inflict more pressure upon the peasant class to initiate exploitation of the same.

The new taxation policy followed by them created many problems among the masses, which eventually culminated in a series of outbreak among the peasant class from 1800 -1921. Disturbances related with the same first emerged in Walluvanadu and spread to the neighboring areas of Ernad. There was massive discontent among the Muslims as British along with landlords tried to completely curb the right of peasants and exploit them incessantly. The Mappila outbreaks that transpired just after that were the expression of a feeling of futility and despair. Revolt of Pazhassi Raja and Kurichyas can be considered as a part of these outbreaks against the yoke of British regime. Starting from 1821 there were almost 51 outbreaks related with the same. Thus this event can also be viewed from the perspective of communal reasons playing a major part in rebellion as here one can witness unjustifiable exploitation being done to mappila peasants and other low castes with a sense of selfish agenda behind such acts of suppression. There were single incidents that happened in these rebellion prone areas in the year 1817 which involved British and Tipu Sultan. The nationalist movement and the working class movement together had contributed to an effective anti-imperialist struggle.¹⁹ Yet another one happened in 1849 characterized by two outbreaks. Subsequently in these outbreaks Three Nayers and a Nambuthiri Brahmin were killed the temple of the Manjeri Karnopad Raja was sacked and two companies of Sepoy troops were routed by fifteen Mappila assailants. However it got suppressed in September 4 where a massacre of 65 mappila youths occurred as a procedure or plan to suppress it. Kottayam outbreak of 1852 is yet another one pertaining to series of outbreaks in Malabar region. Pukurkutti Moiliaris associated with this particular outbreak. Furthermore, Manjeri Athan and Kunji Koya were in all probability discussing an outbreak during the devotion period of Ramadan. However, the major outbreak which happened in 1884 was influenced by Mambram Tannals in the second half of the nineteenth century. Outbreak that happened in 1873 also depicted the same



scenario as it was also influenced by the ideology and guidance of *Tannals*.²⁰ The year 1854 saw a major setback to the series of rebellions as British adopted various punitive measures to try to end the attacks. The entire course was marked by the influence of Khilafat movement can be considered as a major factor inspiring the course of rebellion as well as the subsequent formulation of MSP. It started as an emotion in support of Turkey and its ruler. Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali were the pioneers of this movement in India. The course of the movement once again thrived on the communal feelings of one group that is Muslims against British due to the ill treatment meted out to the ruler of their religion in Turkey. Here also one can witness that it is the communal feelings that is playing a primordial part rather than nationalistic one. In Malabar, Mappilas formed the majority of population and when such a communal emotion was fostered by events that took place in the global perspective nationalist leaders tactfully used such feelings to generate anti-British feelings among the masses. This particular strategy in the initial stages found success as Mappila Muslims were more inclined towards their religion. Many nationalist leaders both in Malabar as well as India tried to turn Mappilas against British using this communal feeling as a weapon. Even Gandhi supported this endeavor as he saw it as a golden opportunity to unite both Muslims and Hindus at a regional level. All throughout the pre-independent era one can witness the British adopting 'divide and rule'²¹ policy to establish their control over India. They used this strategy not only against the native rulers of India but also against the communities as well. They were very much keen enough to see to it that Muslims and Hindus of India should not be united at any cost possible. Hence, in the national level, they always favored Muslim demands and adopted a pacifying nature towards them. At the mean time they were very much successful in creating that rift of separation between them. However, in Malabar region the condition was different as they had to encounter a ruler of Muslim faith and then they had to suppress those who regionally supported him. To accomplish this very purpose they sought the help of Nambuthiris, and other local chieftains who were mostly from Hindu religion. Naturally, Mappilas turned against them. So, one can understand that it is in Malabar, that the usual strategy adopted by British went in a reverse manner for British due to influence of socio-political conditions prevalent at that point of time. This coupled with communal feelings initiated by local leaders and Khilafat completely turned the situation unfavorable for British. Khilafat meetings headed by educated classes of Malabar region also played a major role in initiating communal-nationalist feelings among the masses to turn against the British to fight for their rights as well as for their religion. Gandhi and other nationalist leaders directly and directly supported it to gain mass support for the ongoing freedom struggle in India. Non-cooperation was formally begun on August 1, 1920 and on the 18th of that month, Gandhi and Shaukat Ali visited Calicut to bring the message of non-cooperation and the Khilafat to the people of Malabar. In his speech before a crowd of 20,000, Gandhi proclaimed that 'the



Imperial Government have knowingly flouted religious sentiments dearly cherished by the 70 millions Mussalmans. . If the Mussalmans of India non-cooperation to Government in order to secure justice on the Khilafat, it is the duty of every Hindu to cooperate with their Moslem brethren.²² Among the meetings that were held in Malabar, Manjeri Conference held on April 28th , 1920 also played a major role in influencing the locals especially Mappila Muslims to fight for their nation against foreign/alien domination. Though events such as impact of World War upon the society as well as the nationalistic feelings also played a major role in initiating the rebellion of 1921, through a keen study one can witness the influence of communal element in the whole process either directly or indirectly. Later in the course of the rebellion also one can witness the agrarian elements playing a major role as majority of the agrarian community belonged to mappilas and they were the ones who spearheaded the rebellious activities against the British. Even though it does contain many atrocities done against the common people or civilians it stood for a national cause especially when it was initiated by political leaders supplanted by the ideology of injustice done to them by feudal lords and authoritarian figures with the help of British. Thus a rebellion that stood for a noble cause to oust the British from Malabar region became a communal war between Hindus and Muslims and in the latter stages it transgressed into an all out fight between the forces of MSP and mappilas of Malabar who were mostly from the agrarian background.

WOMEN AND AGRARIAN UNRESTS: MAJOR ROLE PLAYED IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOCIETY IN MALABAR

As stated earlier, women had to undergo serious troubles even during the time period of agrarian unrests as well as during the inception or onslaught of Malabar rebellion. In fact, they were the ones who were man-handled, raped and slaughtered ruthlessly during the rebellion, both by the Mappila Muslims as well as by the armies of MSP (Malabar Special Police). Ever since then, the condition of women has changed. They surpassed their difficulties and contributed much to the enhancement in the agrarian sector. Food sovereignty is a feminist issue. Food production, harmonious social relations and balance with nature is the fabric of life that is entwined with and embodied in women. The onset of patriarchy, a structural system of domination more pronounced in capitalist relations.²³ Women participation in major peasant struggles was very important, especially in those resolving the issue of food shortages, which was however led by Karshakasangham (1934). This however forced the government to bring about new techniques and measures to tackle the situation. A most important mode of developing the village system and utilising it more fully for the benefit of the people is to enlarge the power of the village headman. In Madras the Commission has had before them strong evidence that the powers of the headman in disposing of petty criminal cases may safely be enlarged to some extent.²⁴ Likewise in the latter years also they continued their struggle with



massive women participation again Karippiyamma, Kunjamma etc, championed the cause of this movement the injustice meted out to them in the agrarian sector. One such struggle was initiated in the year 1941 in palayi when a landlord named Aayala Valappil Kunji Krishnan did not allow to harvest crop along with men. Women protested against this very injustice and attracted the attention of people towards this particular event. Similarly in 1942 another event took place in Udinoor. Here, they protested by collecting sickles from neighbouring areas, they then hoarded the same sickles in the paddy field. Under the leaders like Lakshmi and Parvathy, they reaped the crop, threshed it and brought to their respective homes.

Timiri strikes and protests of women (1941 and 1948) is very important since many women had to undergo trial due to protest related activities. In this strike the leader of Karshaka Sangham, Unniyadan Narayanan Nair also got arrested. Even after this they had to face stiff resistance pertaining to the involvement of women in harvest related activities. However, they somehow managed to go with their strike under the able leadership of Nangayikutty. One of the largest harvesting struggle was that which transpired in Puliyanoor (1944), thousands of women participated in this very struggle. The movement got started under the leadership of M.G. Kamat, K.A. Keraleeyan, A.V. Kunjambu etc. They inspired the women to fight for their rights against janmis like Thazhakat Devaswom, who owned most of the land in the concerned area. Here, also police came to obstruct the struggle, however became unsuccessful in doing so, due to resistance offered by the women. Yet another struggle that deserves our special attention is that of the Eleri harvest where they have to face the resistance from Veluthedankelu Nair whose land they reaped without his permission, as an act of protest. Besides, adopting paddy harvesting as a mark of protest they also resorted to paddy grabbing, that is to capture paddy forcibly from land lord. In this manner they captured land from Kajirapallil Sam, Kunnathillam, Elaneermadam, Kundalayar, Kuniyan, Karivellu etc. As a result mass arrest took place in 1948. Men along with women came into the field to directly encounter the MSP force. To release the prisoners and do their desired bidding in the same matter. Paddy grabbing protest in Karivellur and Erikkulam created a violent scene as the landlords tried to resist them by using cunningness and force. The land in these places were taken forcibly by using massive support from the peasants and with effective leadership provided to them by a group of

women namely, Unnangamma, V.V. Mani, Paattiyamma, M.V. Parvathi, K. Devayani, Lakshmi etc. This was followed by serious casualties being caused to them by the then Malabar Special Police, who looted the entire village, molested the women and were gang raped even by the assistants of landlords. Grass Cutting Struggle better known as Pullupari Samaram of 1946 was initiated by peasant workers of kandakkai. This came forth as a protest against the restriction set forth by Karakkatidam Nayanar, that abstained or withdrawn peasants from taking grass from his land area for thatching the roofs of



their respective homes.²⁵Peasants violated his restriction and forcibly took grass from his land.Landlord filed a case against them, with Malabar SpecialPolice.They once again attacked peasants causing carnage and loss of life and property.Women who got involved in this struggle were Cheeyayi, M.V.Devaki, P.K.Kunjakk, P.K.Lekshmi, Sridevi , Thambaietc.AmongKunjakamma led a procession of women against the landlord's house on January 22nd 1947.This procession which created much concern in the minds of people later came to be known as Kalamkettu.The women expressed their anger towards the landlord by carrying the destroyed household particles. Subsequently Kunjakkamma was arrested on February 18, 1947This time also police force and other authority figures stood with landlords. Likewise, Kalamkettu took place in in Vayakkara where grass cutting predominantly took place fromEchilampara.Yet another incident that took place in the same frame work was from UdumandAalai in Kasargode district. Here certain women like santha, PullaikodeChirutha etc. led procession to magistrate's court owing to the atrocities conducted by landlords via MSP. Furthermore, processions were also led to Congress President's house that experienced mass resentment from the part of women.

Irikkur is yet another major place affected by such agrarian unrests.Here the labourers asked for cultivation process to be changed from kuttikanam to Punam form of cultivation., which however was rejected by the land lords.²⁶Struggle against the same became violent when policealso got involved in it.Moreover, one can also witness the mass participation of women in karshakasanghom and organizations like that.Cheriyamma and Janaki Teacher were the two of the most prominent figures among them, who had to undergo many hardships and sufferings for standing up for themselves and more particularly a general cause. Kavumbayi was one of the major regions were karshakasangham worked with a better footing.(paddy grabbing , details : A C Kannan Nair's Diary) TH struggle of Tholvirakusamaram is one of those places where women directly got involved against the injustice meted out to them, that is , restriction of even collecting the firewood and fodder from a certain place coming under the jurisdiction of a janmi. The struggle was initiated on November 15th of 1946.The area under question was handed over to Joseph Kottukappalli, who was a planter by profession..They went for this struggle by singing a song inspired by the consideration for their basic rights.The leadership in here was provided over by KutoorPatiyamma.The women from the nearby places also participated in the same struggle and raised their voice against the injustice thus meted out.They even published pamphlets against janmis The atrocities of MSP against women and concerned leaders was very rude,As a matter of fact they looted houses, properties were destroyed, women were assaulted , sexually used and killed.In the vicinity of such atrocities Eleri proved to be much more safe than other regions.Despite all the cruel attacks they stood up for their cause by secretly attending the meeting, earning their livelihood by seeking part-time job and by doing risky jobs to sustain their family as



well as to stand for a particular cause. Neeliyanveetilcheriya was the major victim of brutalities so far conducted by MSP against the women flock of peasant population of Malabar region. Besides, Mahila Sanghams also provided ample support to the on-going struggles when World War

came out by causing many problems to the public. During this time period they spread the ideas of Karshaka Sangham through series of meetings, processions and cultural programmes

The major effect of such struggles are that they became aware of their rights and stood firmly to support them. They had shown their capacity to lead a struggle by undergoing any hardships meted out to them by using an already biased punitive force named MSP. Another important effect of the resistance is that women became more exposed to the day to day events and similar movements regarding their rights. Moreover, they also played an instrumental role in attracting public towards the problem encountered by them as such. It helped to sustain their livelihood in a certain manner free from all clutches of servitude. These movements proved to be an arena where the role of women of an individual as well as a part of collective society was questioned adequately. The so far existing shackles of a patrilineal society was shattered and it even influenced many legislations in support of their demands in the later years. They now became the equal eligible candidate for land along with their male counterparts. Finally, the whole world began to head ears to unending cry for justice and equality in the society. The conditions of production, availability and market prices of foodgrains that prevailed in India in general, and Bengal and Malabar in particular, during the immediately preceding years of the 1943 famines appeared to be by and large similar.²⁷ This was actually a humble beginning of a small endeavor that is yet influencing and transforming the whole society and their by moulding it for a better future.

It is all about Malabar, and its agrarian background and the way it affected the on-going events which were mostly political in nature, though it does have impact upon other areas as well. Initially, one can evidently state that Malabar was a society highly influenced by agrarian related activities and a society highly depended on agriculture for their subsistence. Hence, any changes affecting them initially affects the various spheres related with society. This change, however was set forth by a drastic change in political and administrative powers controlling the region. It was such that the area initially came under the sway of Tipu Sultan and subsequently under the reign of British, as an end result of Sreerangapattanam treaty.²⁸ This change of powers along with the policies adopted by them in controlling revenue system, bifurcated the entire society into two, namely those supporting British such as Nairs, Brahmins (feudal lords) etc.; and those who opposed British and their revenue policies such as mappilas, crux of peasantry and other low caste people of Malabar region. The discontent



finally led to a series of agrarian unrests from 1790s to early 1900s. These unrests though not successful as envisioned, initiated.

CONCLUSION

Malabar and pre-rebellion period depicts a situation that portrayed a series of events mostly centered around agrarian relations and the ruling elite. The chemistry of their relationship changed from time to time owing to the differing or changing administration under varying administrative figures. In fact the rudimentary of MSP better known as Malabar Special Police was even formed to contain such big and small outbursts or protests from the part of agrarian mappila community along with other low castes. The book entitled "Against the Lord and State" rightly points out to this fact and tries to portray the entire rebellion and its precedents in terms of the changes that went on between the relation of lord and his laborers. As one assess the entire events with a sense of continuity it is pretty much clear to trace out the evolutionary pattern of the society and the way the ruling elite behaved towards them using MSP as a tool. Srinivasa Raghavaiyengar was the earliest to attempt an analysis of the economic crisis of 1830's and to coin the term "agricultural depression" for this period.²⁹ Here it is also assessed that most of the time injustice was meted out to them with serious damage happening to the agrarian sector. Furthermore one can also witness the stiff resistance made by the women of agrarian sections of Malabar upholding the demand for certain genuine needs and demanding justice in this respect. In this part, that is the later stages of collision between the vested interests of landlords and the majority of agrarian peasantry, Malabar Special Police could not side with the real justice and act independently in favor of the common people. Thus, Malabar through a century of evolution even after the rebellion or procuring independence couldn't redress the grievance of agrarian sector as a whole and the force that were supposed to preserve their rights in this respect failed to do so abruptly resulting in partiality of justice and ultimate ruin of agrarian sector

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20. *Tannalssignifying the Muslim religious leaders in Malabar region to whom every true Musalmman owed his obedience without a second thought or dispute to their orders.*
21. *Divide and Rule policy is the infamous policy followed by the British in their colonies, especially in India where they played one inhabitant against the other based on their conflicting interests and expanded their unchallenging control all throughout the country.British captured the whole of India by successfully implementing this strategy especially on Kings, local chieftains and on various communal feelings influencing people.*
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25. Interview with one of the inhabitants residing in this region dated 28-11-2017.
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27. M.Raghavan,*State Failure And Human Miseries : A Study With Special Focus on Famines in British Malabar*New Delhi,2016,p.257.
28. *Sreerangapattanam Treaty* is a treaty made between Tipu Sultan and the British where the former ceded his conquered territories to the British, especially his control over the major portions of Malabar region.
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