COLONIALISM, CIRCULATION AND REPRESENTATIONS: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS IN COLONIAL MALABAR (c 1800-1936)

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN HISTORY

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **Jineesh P S**, do hereby declare that the thesis entitled ***COLONIALISM, CIRCULATION AND REPRESENTATIONS: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS IN COLONIAL MALABAR (c 1800-1936)***, submitted to the University of Calicut in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History is a bona fide record of research work carried out me under the supervision of **Dr. P P Abdul Razak**, Associate Professor (Retd.), PSMO College, Tirurangadi at the Department of History, PSMO College, Tirurangadi and it has not been previously formed the basis of the award of any degree.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled ***COLONIALISM, CIRCULATION AND REPRESENTATIONS: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS IN COLONIAL MALABAR (c 1800-1936)***, submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History is a record of bona fide research carried out by **Mr. Jineesh P S**, under my supervision and guidance. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any degree before and it represents an original independent work on the part of the candidate.

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Dr. Sreevidhya Vattarambath
(Co-guide)

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JINEESH P S

CONTENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

AHR	*The Agricultural History Review*
ARS	*Annual Review of Sociology*
ASQ	*Arab Studies Quarterly*
CJE	*The Canadian Journal of Economics*
EFR	*Empire Forestry Review*
FEQ	*The Far Eastern Quarterly*
IESHR	*The Indian Economic and Social History Review*
IJAR	*The International Journal of Applied Research*
IJCHS	*International Journal of History and Cultural Studies*
IRMS	*International Review of Modern Sociology*
JAH	*Journal of Asian History*
JAS	*Journal of Asian Studies*
JCH	*Journal of Contemporary History*
JESHO	*Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JKS	*Journal of Kerala Studies*
JWH	*Journal of World History*
MAS	*Modern Asian Studies*
NAI	*National Archives of India, New Delhi*
PAOB	*Publications of the Astronomical Observatory of Belgrade*
PIHC	*Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*
RAK	Regional Archives, Kozhikode
TNSA	Tamilnadu State Archives, Egmore

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Before the formation of linguistic entity of Malayalam speaking people, Kerala was only an 'imagined state' with having three political segments called Thiruvithamcore, Kochi and Malabar. The first two were princely states and the last was under the direct rule of the British. Naturally, the experiences in Malabar in relation to Colonialism were of unique in content and character. In Malabar during the pre/early colonial period people were largely engaged in tilling as well as trading. Historiographic accounts allude the region due to its port-hinterland trade experiences. Such trade transactions were largely carried out with the help of primitive and less-developed country roads and water ways. The entry of British colonialism with its developed technical know-how and revenue extracted from Malabar stitched up the broken landscape of Malabar into a connected space.

Under British Colonialism, Malabar was nicely networked via roads, railways and waterways. In Malabar, the British had carried out the making and up-keeping of these connectivity modalities with the help of 'their revenue'. These constructions were preceded and even paralleled with the British documentation of the land of Malabar with having much importance to the specificities of landscapes[1]. The presence of the British had brought 'connectivity raj' in the region of Malabar and the then transportation networks have a social history to explain. The British had initiated the digging, widening and networking of waterways, the construction of roads,

[1] Jineesh P S, *On Reading A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, in *Ishal Paithrkam*, Issue 26, September 2021, p.97.

and also the extension of railway lines. These transportation modalities had reshaped the circulatory practices of the people. The coming of such novel modes of transportation captured the imagination of the people. Several literary texts mentioned the coming of train, and journeys to distant lands. They further re-shaped the nature of socio- political mobility in Malabar.

Geographically, Malabar was crisscrossed by rivers and rivulets, and it is linked with the Arabian Sea network. Malabar had the credit of being the place that could produce several items that were of high demand in indigenous as well as global market. Furthermore, the region had been inhabited by different religio-caste groups and their movements in the socialscape were regulated in tune with the orthodox casteist canons. There were customs and taboos that distanced the people in the social orbit. Restrictions on mobility had ignited a good number of mass mobilizations that were often linked with the region's march towards modernity.

Malabar as a region represent an ensemble of circulatory practices, that varied from the circulation of capital, technologies, people, ideas, politics so on and so forth. The circulatory forms and patterns prevalent in the pre-colonial times had undergone a subtle and substantial transformation during the colonial and the post-colonial periods. Though there was the absence of specific notices to many such movements during the pre-colonial period, certain inferences could be made on the basis of circumstantial evidence. It is surmised that the circulatory patterns during the pre-colonial times significantly changed with the coming of colonialism as it brought in new channels of mobility. The transportation networks that came into vogue in Malabar during the English rule could bring new forms of circulation. Such changes in the circulatory patterns during colonial period had ever lasting imprints on the history, society, and culture of Malabar. The roads that came into being during the colonial period became space for contestation between

the caste and non-caste people as the customs and practices forbade the latter in using them for commutation. There were instances in which the social practices were refashioned in tune with new channels of circulation. The nature of political activism of the land was also changed. The newly formed modalities of transportation became plots of literary compositions and there were many instances which delineate the circulation of people through these channels. They exemplify as the reactions of creative minds to the new forms of circulatory channels in Malabar.

Malabar, as a region, did not experience modern methods of transportation on a massive scale prior to the entry of British colonialism. The region experienced the roads, in the modern sense of the term, only with the coming of Tipu Sultan. British made some insignificant attempts in road making. They preferred to stay away from it as they could make use of the water transport which had already developed in Malabar. In their inception, the English attempted to invest their money and material in the strengthening of riverine networks for transportation in Malabar. They preferred to make improvements in the then existing canals of Malabar as it reduced the cost of transportation of goods. They understood the lucrativeness of the trade carried out through waterways in Malabar.

In the middle of the 19th century, the Europeans' interest in the spices from the Eastern world marked a resurgence and it demanded an increased export of spices from Kerala[2]. As it is known, the English East India Company was driven by the motive of enhancing trade with the Eastern world and spices were the prime items of trade. The increased demand for Malabar spices compelled the British to search for new channels for collecting them from the interiors of Malabar. They made use of the riverine networks for

[2] Nazir Raza Khan, *The Spice Route: A Historical Survey* in *The International Journal of Applied Research (IJAR)*, 4 (12), 2018, p.132.

bringing the spices from the hinterland of Malabar to the port cities. From there they were taken by the trans-marine mercantile enterprises. Along with that the British in Malabar had encountered the peasant rebellions in the 19th century. It often created occasions of political turmoil in Malabar. Such situations demanded the easy deployment of military contingents for suppressing the revolts. The circulation of spices and mercantile communities were mainly carried out through the riverine networks, which in due course of time gave way to roads and railways. The English had to stay away from their traditional policy of non-intervention in the making of circulatory networks.

Statement of the Problem (SOP)

Researches on Colonialism in Malabar have often been revolved around the theme of colonial exploitation and indigenous resistances. The study of transportation networks, with special emphasis on waterways, roads and railways, is of crucial importance and such a study in relation to Malabar has not yet been done. Along with the chronological development of these transportation networks, the social history of these modalities of connectivity with specific emphasis on circulation are being looked into. The following are problems pursued in this study.

1. What were the modes of circulation in pre/early colonial period?
2. How did waterways, roads and railways get materialized in Malabar?
3. What role did capital, both English and Indian, play in the emergence of transportation networks, especially in Railways, in Malabar?
4. What strategies English had devised to manage labour in the construction and running of railways?
5. How did English intervention in transportation sector redefined the ways of circulation?

6. How did changes in circulatory practices got represented in literary and public imagination?

7. What was the nature of politics of mobility in colonial Malabar?

Review of Literature

The first work under review is Ravi Ahuja's *Pathways of Empire: Circulation, Public Works, and Social Space in Colonial Orissa (c1780-1914),* It is a social history of roads, canals, waterways, and railways in colonial Orissa between 1780 and 1914. The author begins the work with a statement indicative to the objectives in writing such a monograph: to offer a theoretical framework to analyse how the people and products are circulated across the subcontinent and how the 'infrastructures' facilitated such movements. The second objective is to estimate major tendencies in the social history of transportation in India. To validate the present endeavour, the author initiated a historiographical critique. He noticed three major shortcomings in the existing historiography of transportation in South Asia. The first is the transportation infrastructure as the outcome of the public interest. They do "combine technocratic progressivism with methodological nationalism"[3].

The second limitation with present historiography is the conspicuous absence of accounts indicative to the pre-colonial modes and patterns of transport, which alone could quantify the changes brought by the colonial state. Ahuja is of the opinion that "India had been a *tabula rasa,* an empty space in terms of transport facilities before British rule did not merely satisfy the legitimatory need for imperial self-aggrandisement, but also a one-sided, coloured and magnified reflection of the radicality of a transport revolution

[3] Ravi Ahuja, *Pathways of Empire*: *Circulation, Public Works and Social Space in Colonial Orissa, c.1780-1914,* Orient Blackswan, Hyderabad, 2009, p.2.

that could indeed be experienced in parts of India in the 1850s[4]. The third lacuna of the historiography of transportation is the preponderance of railway in it. He urged the necessity to go beyond the 'railway centrism' in the historiography of transportation in India. In that sense the work claims be a pathbreaking as it contributes some novel insights in to the historiography of transportation in colonial India.

This work has been divided into two parts, in which the first part is devoted to postulate a theory of space as the theoretical pretext to the empirical narration. The concern of the author is to investigate the infrastructure of connectivity regimes in colonial Orissa, materialized through the roads, canals and railways. To prepare the theoretical ground to his analysis, Ahuja made use of the intellectual insights of Henry Lefebvre, Annales theorist, in relation to the notion of 'production of social space'[5]. Having drawn insights from them, Ahuja opines that the roads, railways, and other forms of infrastructure should be understood as the materialization of social relations in and of space. There is tendency to understand them as mere expression of technological knowhow and Ahuja offers a new expression of them as "the bye product of social relations". Through seven hypotheses, Ahuja could adapt the notion of social space, to explain the history of transportation in colonial Orissa[6].

Distinct from Lefebvre, Ahuja qualifies the social space as something like a historically and socially produced and reproduced one. Wherein he forbade the chances of reducing it as an unchanging and empty container, insulated itself from the developments and practices around. Social space is always hierarchical and hence it is dynamic, where the conflicts of different

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4 *Ibid.,* 5.

5 See Henry Lefebvre*, The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, Oxford-Cambridge, 1991

6 Ravi Ahuja, *Op.Cit.,* pp.25-64.

social groups with contesting interests would add dynamism to it. The coming of capitalism has reshaped the nature of relations, especially between social space and social time. The entry of capitalism had to be contextualized in relation to the growing homogeneity through levelling diversities. The root reason of this could be found in the influx of commodities and persons by transcending the barriers. It could otherwise be termed as "time-space compression"[7].

Having made Lefebvre as his theoretical mooring, Ahuja proceeds with the concept of 'circulation', which he specified as "repetitive socio-spatial practices-more specifically, transportation"[8]. To have conceptual clarity to it, he increasingly relied on David Sopher[9] and Burton Stein[10]. Ahuja then brings the recent scholarship on circulation[11] and initiate a debate. To their view circulation "implies a double movement of going forth and coming back, which can be repeated indefinitely"[12]. They add that the totality of circulatory flows and outcomes in each society would give rise to "circulatory regimes"[13]. Ahuja owes much to this intervention as he took certain seminal aspects of his theory from them, though not in ditto format. Ahuja took the term "incremental aspect of circulation"[14], but adapts it in tune with the demand of his analysis. Instead of the double movement of going forth

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7 *Ibid.,* p.65.

8 *Ibid.,*p,14.

9 David Sopher, *The Geographic Patterning of Culture in India*, in David Sopher (Ed.), *An Exploration of India: Geographical Perspectives on Society and Culture,* Cornell University Press, New York, 1980, pp.289-326.

10 Burton Stein, *Circulation and the Historical Geography of Tamil Country*, in *Journal of Asian Studies* (Henceforth it is cited as as JAS), 37, no.1, 1977, pp.7-26.

11 Claude Markovits, Jacques Pouchepadass and Sanjay Subramanyam (Eds.*), Society and Circulation: Mobile People and Itinerant Cultures of South Asia, 1750-1950*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, p.2.

12 *Ibid.,* pp.2-3.

13 *Ibid.,* pp.2-3.

14 *Ibid.,* p.3.

coming back, he uses "processual cyclicity of circulation"[15]. He is going beyond the two-dimensional flow of circulation and underlines the frequent and repetitive and hence the cyclical nature of circulation. Similarly, the term 'circulatory regime' has been used by Ahuja to indicate periodization, which is again an adapted version found in Claude Markovits and others.

Having drawn a theoretical framework to look at the infrastructure of connectivity in colonial Orissa, Ahuja proceeds to provide empirical details of the public works carried out in the region to facilitate the circulation of men and materials. The transportation initiatives in Orissa should be seen in relation to its proximity to the colonial metropolis of Calcutta. The region had witnessed various divergent circulatory flows in the forms of seasonal trade to pilgrimage. The region under discussion had its fame as the centre of salt production, various types of agricultural and forest goods etc. Similarly, there were exodus of pilgrims to Jagannath temple at Puri. The region under discussion came under British capitalism and it "constituted a crucial context of the reorganization of social space even though this region moved into the entire neither of imperial strategy nor of colonial commercial interest"[16]. Further the region has experienced the benefit of colonial railway in the form of East Coast Railway in 1900 and it had drastically reduced the time-space between Calcutta and Puri from four weeks to twelve hours. This was an instance of "time-space compression"[17]. But such instances of 'colonial benefits' could not be seen in other parts of the region.

The capital intensive new circulatory regime was the brainchild of the colonial oligarchy with the sufficient backing of British administrators and related mercantile interests. It dispossessed and distanced several traditional

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15 Ravi Ahuja*, Op.Cit.,* p.72.

16 *Ibid.,* p. 302.

17 *Ibid.,* p.303.

professionals from their primitive workplace. But at the same time the circulatory infrastructure initiatives transformed Orissa into a new circulatory regime, which gave more mobility to the weak, downtrodden and the poor. To Ahuja it led to the "production of a social space that was driven with the contradictions and, therefore, at once determined by structures of subordination of life rife with historical possibility"[18].

The work under review is a major model for the present, though it differs in many respects. The author could effectively comprehend the changes brought in the circulatory practices in colonial Orissa. The colonial regime of the British had reshaped the region, and it restructured people's mobility which did bring several changes in the region. Though the author could elaborate most of the aspects of transportation history, he missed certain significant aspects of society, as he was writing the social history of transportation in colonial Orissa. The crucial point he missed was the labour integration experienced in colonial Orissa. Since the author was claiming to write the social history of transportation in colonial Orissa, he had to include the indigenous people associated with the colonial building initiates in the form of labourers. If he had estimated the changes brought by these labour integration, certain other aspects of society could have been properly understood.

Ritika Prasad's book, *Tracks of Change: Railways and Everyday Life in Colonial India,* is all about how the people of India had negotiated themselves with the unavoidable, ever-increasing presence of railways in colonial India. Railway, being a lucrative colonial capitalist venture, became an oxymoron in the day today life of Indian. Their sense of time, space, caste, social position, social behaviour etc., came under the spell of railways. In the form of fast mode of connectivity, railway was in the forefront of redefining

[18] *Ibid.,* p. 306.

the time and space sense of Indians. The class system in Indian railway like first class, second class and third class is an indicative of the adoption of social class system. The commuters in the third class had to suffer a lot, as their mobility was largely restricted as there were not vestibules in that category of coaches. Their seats were not that much well fashioned, and the compartments were poor maintained. There were the notion of inclusion and exclusion involved. The coaches were fashioned in such a way to cater the needs of the social elites.

Another question, which the author engages is related the building of Indian railways and how did it reshape the native surroundings. A huge labour force ranging from unskilled labourers to high profile technical staff were involved in the process of making of railways. The author states that the colonial railway making brought in wide range of workers "from surveys to preparing the permanent way, as well as allied activities like brick making[19]". Railway and the developments revolving around it came to determine the everyday life of people. One significant instance is railway time. Various instruments of railway time sense like station clocks, train running schedules, railway timetables, etc., could not and did not confine their area of operation among daily commuters, but reshaped the time sense of the people at large. The author notes that such instruments became "artefacts that influenced and changed every day understanding of time, speed and mobility among the colonized population at large"[20].

Indian nationalism has its root embedded in anti-colonial resistance. The book has a take on this. It talks of how railway and the railway spaces became "lay at the heart of military control, political action, and dissent in

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19 Ritika Prasad, *Tracks of Change: Railways and Everyday Life in Colonial India*, Cambridge University Press, Delhi, 2016, p.7

20 *Ibid.,*p.8.

colonial India"[21]. Being a mammoth and widened colonial structure, railway had been subjected to public anger and political protest. There were several instances of railway sabotages, bomb attacks on railway wagons, and even the removal of rail sleepers as part of national movement. Along with that the railways itself became a lengthy platform for the leaders of the national movement to address the larger populace.

Labour and labour management, pertaining to the India's railway development, is another major issue discussed by the author. In the making of railway in colonial India, a huge labour force was involved. The labour potential of the colonized had been used effectively. By 1900, most parts of India had steam power connectivity through trains, with railway lines extended more than 25,000 miles. "The building of these railways remains a great and largely untold story of nineteenth-century India: a story of individual and collective effort, danger and quite heroism, hardship and accomplishment"[22]. The mammoth construction of Indian railway could be explained as the "a process visualized as a grand assembly of many specific work processes"[23].

To add new dimension to the railway workforce, Laura Bear made use of ethnographical insights. In her significant study of workers at Kharagpur in the colonial Eastern Railway, Laura Bear points out that the Anglo-Indians emerged as a 'railway caste'. Bear states the objective of the work is to trace the "formation of the Anglo-Indian community as a railway case and the ethnography of its present predicament"[24]. Because of their Eurasian origin,

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21 *Ibid.,*p.9.

22 Ian J Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj 1850-1900*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1995, p.1.

23 *Ibid.,*,p.1.

24 Laura Bear, *Lines of the Nation: Indian Railway Workers, Bureaucracy, and the Intimate Historical Self,* Columbia University Press, New York, 2007, p.9.

the Anglo-Indians could ensure upward mobility in the social hierarchy. It is stated that "even as late as 1923, nearly half of the Anglo-Indian community was employed by or associated with the railways as dependents of employees, and in 1932 almost 100 percent of the upper subordinate positions on the state managed railways were filled by Anglo-Indians and Europeans"[25]. But another dimension was added by Ian D Derbyshire when he interrogates the question why the Anglo-Indians were recruited as engine drivers in the Indian railways. To him, the British had distrusted Indians, and they desisted to bring Britishers due to the fear of British trade union radicalism. The British then found Anglo-Indians as a trustworthy community[26].

Manu Goswami's *Producing India: From Colonia Economy to National Space* is claimed as "the reconfiguration of colonial space as national space in the late nineteenth century represented a radical socio-epistemological break from received conceptions of historicity, space, political subjectivity, and sovereignty"[27]. Manu Goswami is looking at the transformation of India from a colonial space to national space. He defines the term 'colonial state space' as "the complex ensemble of practices, ideologies, and state projects that underpinned the restructuring of the institutional and spatiotemporal matrices of colonial power and everyday life[28]. The 'colonial state space' with its diversified instruments of government, ignited the spurring of Indian nationalism, which in due course of time paved the way for the formation of national space. Various theoretical insights are being applied in the analysis of this transformation.

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25 *Ibid.,*p.9.

26 Ian D Derbyshire, *Competition and Adaptation: The Opening of Railways in Northern India Uttar Pradesh 1860-1914*, in Roopa Srinivasan, Manish Tiwari, and Sandeep Silas (Eds.), *Our Indian Railway: Themes in India's Railway History,* Foundation Books, Delhi, 2006, p.66.

27 Manu Goswami, *Producing India: From Colonial Economy to National Space*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2004, p.7.

28 *Ibid.,* p.8.

In the metamorphosis of colonial state space to national space, several agents of British colonialism did play a crucial role and the railway being one. The author is of the view that the existing historiography has two significant problems. They do overdetermine colonial railways as the symbols of modernity or as handmaid to colonial economic exploitation. Such legacies could be assigned to the colonial and nationalist historiography. The colonial masters were of the view that "under the impact of railways deep forms of social regimentation would simply wither away"[29]. They held the social transformative nature of railways with great esteem. It is noted that "railways were understood, then, as potent caste-dissolving forces that would progressively attenuate the 'pathology of difference' that constituted the indigenous social body"[30]. For the present study, the linkage of the dissolution of caste and railway seems to be relevant.

The incorporation of Indians to the major trends around the country could be one of the significant steps in the transformation of India as a national space from colonial space. Railways proved to be one of the important channels through which people from different parts of the country travelled and interacted with others. Initially the British conceived railways primarily to facilitate the transfer of goods from one place to other. They had taken such position for the Indians had, by and large, had a strong inhibition driven by multiple factors to experience such novel ideas and facilities. But contrary to their prejudiced calculation, there was an unexpected high in commuters in trains. It has shown that "the number of annual passengers rose from 80 million in 1880 to 200 million in 1904 and to more than 500 million by 1920-21"[31]. The British conceived railways a tool to transport goods across

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29 *Ibid.,* p.106.

30 *Ibid.,* p.106.

31 *Ibid.,* p.106

India and the response from third class commuters and others were unexpected to British.

Building the Railway of the Raj 1850-1900 by Ian J Kerr is conceived as a text unraveling the lived story behind the making of Indian railways in colonial India. The thrust of the work is labour in the making of railways and how it was being managed during colonial times. A realistic analysis of the making of colonial railway in India is found here. Indian participation in the making of railway is discussed here. "The work ranged from the complex abstraction of a consulting engineer in London designing a great bridge to the demanding simplicities of a coolie moving earth in the hills of Assam"[32]. He opines that one must focus on the material condition essential to the realisation of railways. The raw materials like wood, clay etc., had been collected from India itself. The essential capital required, and heavy industrial engineering essential for making of railways like rails, locomotives, bridge girders etc., were brought from the colonial core.

To him "the general management of the construction of the railways of the Raj followed two patterns. First, there was the large-contract system. Most of the large contractors were British, but among them were also men like the successful Jamsetji Dorabji and the unfortunate Muhammad Sultan. The second pattern was the departmental system, in which the engineers of private railway companies or of the State railway lines acted as prime contractors. Both patterns persisted throughout the period, 1850 to 1900, although the large-contract system was more prevalent in the 1850s and the 1860s"[33]. Ian J Kerr provides some figures to substantiate the labour participation of Indian in the making of the railways of the Raj. To him "construction employment averaged some 180601 to 221253 persons per year from 1859 to 1900, based

32 Ian J Kerr, *Op.Cit.,* p.2.

33 *Ibid.,* p.187.

on an estimated employment of 126 to 155 persons per mile, and a construction period averaging 2.5 years per mile"[34]. It attests that the construction of railways in India was largely a labour-intensive activity.

Interestingly Ian J Kerr in his *Representation and Representations of the Railways of Colonial and Post-Colonial South Asia*, states that "railway construction and operation began in India in 1850s-the first lines were authorized in 1849 after nearly a decade of promotional activities, the first, short stretch of line opened in 1853, and by 1900 India, with nearly 24,000 route miles, had Asia's longest and the world's fourth longest rail system"[35]. The construction of railways in colonial India was undertaken in an unprecedented manner when Lord Dalhousie, became the Governor General of India (1848-56). Dalhousie calculated that the factories and firms in Britain were to be filled with the Indian raw materials and they could send back the finished products to India. To Ian J Kerr "Dalhousie emphasized that rails would encourage enterprise, multiply production, facilitate the discovery of resources, increase national wealth"[36]. He further stated that "Gandhi's views on railways are strongly expressed in Hind Swaraj, first published in 1910. Gandhi inverted every positive representation of the railways; he turned every benefit the railways typically were assumed to offer into a negative condition; indeed, he went further: railways, he said, 'propagate evil"[37].

Daniel Thorner's paper, *The Pattern of Railway Development in India*, published in *The Far Eastern Quarterly*, is an attempt to trace out the emergence of railway in colonial India and he provides a perspective from

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34 *Ibid.,* p.189-190.

35 Ian J Kerr, *Representation and Representations of the Railways of Colonial and Post-Colonial South Asia*, in *Modern Asian Studies* (Henceforth it is cited as *MAS*), Vol.37, No.2, May 2003, pp.289.

36 Ian J Kerr, *Op.Cit.,*2003, pp.299-300.

37 *Ibid.,* pp.313.

Britain about it. To him "the promoters were adventurous, determined men, sensitive to Britain's needs and to the (profitable) opportunities in India of satisfying them"[38]. They had an eye on the abundant Indian raw materials like cotton, wheat etc., and their procurement was the need of the hour as there were several factories that emerged in Britain because of the Industrial Revolution. The British authorities were also concerned about the administrative and military functions of the railway.

Britain, being the epicenter of the surges of Industrial Revolution, had an ambitious middle-class collective. The possibilities generated during and after the Industrial Revolution, had been positively used by the new rich in all walks of British life and they always had an eagerness to look at the chances for further capitalist expansion in and outside of Britain. They could see railways as the most promising and all-encompassing venture for capitalist investments. They had to evolve a strategy to bring the East India Company (EEI Co) and British government together, which alone could ensure the sufficient fund to carry out their railway development programme in India. Discussions towards this direction were initiated even during the early 1840s. Major problem that the promoters of railway had faced in the initial years was the inhibition of British capitalists to invest in this new endeavour. To gain confidence of the British capitalists and to ensure the easy flow of capital, the promoters demanded government guarantee on dividends, which was not consented then. Meanwhile, there were certain interest groups which had exerted their pressure on government. Groups like London Merchants, sellers of textiles to India, coal exporters, etc., acted as pressure groups on English East India Company and on the British government to do some help to grab funds for the making of railways.

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[38] Daniel Thorner, T*he Pattern of Railway Development in India*, in *The Far Eastern Quarterly* (Henceforth it is cited as *FEQ*) Vol.14, No.2, Feb.1955, pp.202.

Ritika Prasad's paper, *Railways and Temporality in Colonial India* stated that Bankim Chandra Chattopadhya, a noted figure among Bengal intelligentsia, had written a novel, *Indira* (1873), which picturize the story of Indira, a Bengali woman hailing from an affluent family. Indira's husband had to travel to the west when there were no railways. He had travelled all the way to Punjab, where no railways did prevail at that time. He had walked bare footedly to Punjab and Indira confidently said "if he could walk to there, he could also make money"[39]. It talks about the life during pre-railway period in India.

Arup K Chatterjee's book, *The Purveyors of Destiny: A Cultural Biography of Indian Railways,* published in 2017 underlines Karl Marx's prophetic postulations on the role the railway in India. Marx stated that "(Y)ou cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate and current wants of railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways"[40]. In this book, the author has tried to study about representations of diverse nature, from literature to films with railways as the core idea. Railways have a significant role in representations in India. The author is of the opinion that "the language of railways can be used as a tool to study the biography of India's popular culture and, even to some extent, academic culture"[41].

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[39] Ritika Prasad, *Railways and Temporality in Colonial India* in *MAS*, Vol.47, No.4, July 2013, pp.1267.

[40] Karl Marx, *The Future Results of British Rule in India*, in *New York Daily Tribune*, August 8, 1853.

[41] Arup K Chatterjee, *The Purveyors of Destiny: A Cultural Biography of Indian Railways*, Bloomsbury, New Delhi, 2017, p.41.

"The British promoted the railways to attract Indian traffic and civilize them in turn. Meanwhile, the uncivility of the latter stirred the irksomeness of European travelers. Many bourgeois Indians saw the railways as a machine to liberate themselves from the yoke of religion which previously prohibited crossing domestic borders. They sought the railways as a means of assimilation into the mythical urbane mainstreams that the British tried to forge in India. But then, there are examples of nationalist subversion carried out on the trains, such as the Kakori conspiracy-which itself was one of the innumerable cases of the use of the railways as a tool of liberation, attempted seditiously. Undoubtedly, the Indian Railways were the biggest railways-which in the broader sense includes the numerous mores of the ways in which the natives and colonials interacted with the institution-are an even bigger industry"[42].

P. Ibrahim's *The Development of Transport Facilities in Kerala: A Historical Review*, included in *Social Scientist*, in 1978 was the first serious attempt to look at the history of transportation in Kerala. The author begins the paper by looking at the inter-relationship between the emergence of transportation and economic progress. While tracing the reasons for the backwardness of establishing proper transportation modalities in Kerala, one could find certain significant historical reasons. Kerala, being an imagined landscape scattered as Travancore, Cochin and Malabar, did not have a uniform transportation system which could connect the whole region. Unlike Travancore and Cochin, the princely states ruled by the indigenous ruling houses, generally had lagged Malabar in having transportation infrastructure. Availability of cheap waterways and hostile climatic factors were the two reasons for the backwardness of Kerala in having a developed transport infrastructure. Kerala, being a landscape crisscrossed with river systems, had

[42] *Ibid.,* p.42.

a great advantage of reach out most of its parts with the help of waterways. They had been effectively used largely for trade and travel purpose. Similarly, the climatic and geographic factors were not conducive for the development of transportation ways. These two factors together pulled back the Kerala in having an extensive transport infrastructure.

The colonial Malabar was largely the 'rebel zone' as there were several anti-colonial upsurges. Most of these insurgencies were carried out by socially excluded sections. Malabar had instances of Muslims as well as Kurichya outbursts against their indigenous and colonial masters. In some cases, there were brave fighters, who might not be fitted to any of the categories stated. The earliest epitome of severe anti-coloniality from Malabar could be found in the brave deeds of Kunjali Marakars, who raised stiff resistance against the Portuguese. Under the British, consequent to their extreme exploitation and suppression, Malabar witnessed several anti-colonial upsurges. The road making in colonial Malabar was linked with the anti-British upsurges. The British had to ensure the availability of proper roads to mobilize their army. Initially, the British were least concerned with the condition of roads in Malabar. They allocated a meagre amount of Rs.30,000 for the maintenance of roads in the second quarter of 19th century and that amount too was unused during the period from 1826 to 1850 and the average expenditure on road maintenance did not exceed 1800 per annum[43].

C Balan in his paper *Resource Appropriation and Development of Transport Facilities in Kerala During the Colonial Period*, included in the *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* (PIHC) makes some novel way of looking at the development of transportation facilities under the colonial yoke. Inspired by the label of anti-coloniality, the author is trying to put blame on the British for exploitation and extraction of the indigenous resources for

[43] *Ibid.,* pp.36.

the benefit of the colonial core. To him "the history and management of transport facilities in Kerala during the last two centuries is closely associated with the resource mobilization of colonial state"[44]. In erstwhile Kerala, the British had focused on the development of a transport infrastructure, wherein the emphasis was on three modalities i.e., the commencement of artificial canal construction, the making of road and the introduction and expansion of railway.

In realizing the transport infrastructure, the author argues that "the colonial state directly and through native political set up introduced a systematic scheme of developing transport facilities in Malabar"[45]. He could identify three distinct and processual stages in the development of transport infrastructure in Kerala and they were the making of canals, roads, and railways. But a historical enquiry into the development of transportation networks in Malabar, the above postulation seems to be problematic as it could not look at the positive changes brought in by the developed transportation infrastructure. The increased freight transportation and its impact on the economic life of the region could have been referred.

One of the principal forms of connectivity modalities in Malabar was waterways and there were several artificial canals made during the British rule. Malabar, being a region largely crisscrossed with rivers, rivulets, streams, backwaters etc., and most of them are connected to the Arabian Sea. Under the colonial regime, there were certain new artificial canals made in Malabar. The notable one was being the Sultan Canal. This canal was intended to bring articles of commercial importance to the port cities like Ezhimala and Kannur. The significant water connectivity initiated under the

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44 C Balan, *Resource Appropriation and Development of Transport Facilities in Kerala During the Colonial Period,* in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress (*Henceforth it is cited as *PIHC)*, Vol.67, (2006-2007), pp.738-744

45 *Ibid.,*p.739.

British regime was the Conolly Canal or Eathur Canal, which connects Calicut and Beypore with the spicy-rich eastern hinterland. An extension of it called as Tirur Canal linked another notable port town of Ponnani.

In the construction of railways, the author is proposing it as the lucrative avenue for the British capital to invest in. To him "the railway to Beypur from Madras was aligned in such a way that it passed through commercial centres and followed Konguperuvazhi to Ponnani and then to Beypur, an outlet to Malabar timber"[46]. The extension of railway to erstwhile Malabar was for the British to exploit the commercial potential of the region. A high preponderance of the exploitative investment habit and its consequences is resonated in this statement. In that big hue and cry, the author could not see the transformative dimensions of railways in India as a whole and Malabar in particular. He is of the opinion that the Madras-Beypore "line was designed in such a way as to provide a channel for the goods of Malabar to reach Madras port for export"[47]. The northward extension of railway from Beypore could be much benefitted to the planter groups in Wynad. The railway lines to ports like Beypore, Calicut, Tellicherry, Cannanore etc., could be intended to provide infrastructure facilities to the flow of commodities.

Shibi Johnson, in his paper *Exigencies of Politics and Economy: Colonial Agenda Behind a Local Railway Line in Malabar*, in *Proceedings of Indian History Congress (PIHC)*, enumerates the history of Nilambur rail line[48]. The first segment of 66 kilometers long Nilambur-Shoranur broad gauge line with a construction cost of Rs.7,000,000 lakhs was inaugurated on 3rd February 1927. The construction of this somewhat huge line was carried out by 'South Indian Railway Company' and the work carried out during the

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46 *Ibid.,* p.741.

47 *Ibid*, p.741.

48 Shibi Johnson, *Exigencies of Politics and Economy: Colonial Agenda Behind a Local Railway Line in Malabar*, in *PIHC*, Vol.71, 2010-2011, pp.508-516.

period from 1925 to 1927. Within ten months on the commissioning of the first phase, from Shoranur to Angadippuram, the entire stretch became operational in 10 months, i.e., by October 1927. In the initial years of its operation, it was exclusively devoted for cargo transportation. One of the prime motives to integrate Nilambur to the railway network in India was the abundance of teak wood from the region. Malabar teak had a high demand during the early phase of modern period as it was largely used for ship building. It was from Bombay dockyard, teak was transported to Europe. Consequent to the intense and indiscriminate felling of teaks from Nilambur, its teak reserve was largely dwindled and the intervention of H V Conolly in 1840 had to be seen in this context. After having made a thorough study of teak reserve of Nilambur and its demand to the Europeans, he came to the assessment that annual demand of teak from Nilambur to the Bombay dockyard was 2230-cubic meters and for such a quantity, at least 2000 teak trees were needed. It would take about 60 years to get a teak tree fully grown. To meet this demand at least 670.5 sq. km. of forest land is needed[49]. It is noted that the total acreage of teak planted by the end of 1876 amounted over 3100 acres[50].

The construction of railway attains a political importance as the prime catchment areas of it were the important centres of anti-British and anti-landlord resistance since the second half of 19th century. These upsurges with the massive participation of peasants of Eranadu, alarmed the British, they made certain sincere efforts to study the reasons for these mobilizations. The culmination of these anti-state and anti-lord sentiments were found in 1921 Malabar Uprising. The rail route from Shoranur to Nilambur was distributed through Angadippuram, Melattur and Thuvvur. The important centres of 1921

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[49] William Logan, *Malabar (Vol.II),* Kerala State Gazetteers Department, Thiruvananthapuram, 2000, p.cccixv.

[50] Report of Mr. Ferguson is cited in Shibi Johnson, *Op.Cit.*, pp.508-516.

Uprisings like Manjeri, Kondotty, Malappuram, Wandur, Pandikkad, Karuvarakkund etc., could be easily connected from these rail line[51]. The Malabar Uprising must be one significant reason which forbade the British from having averted the proposed railway from Shoranur to Nilmbur. It was during the Uprising the British had gone ahead with the railway project. They sent John Izat, the Engineer-in-Chief, to draw up a scheme for the new railway on 26th October 1921. The time is very important as the proposed area of the new railway was the heart of anti-British upsurge.

None of the works reviewed above have looked at the question of capital used for the making of railway lines in South India. An analysis of the spatial practices in the early and colonial period with the help of transportation networks is conspicuous by its absence. No work cited above talk of the labour appropriation for the making of transportation infrastructure in Madras. The strengthening of transportation infrastructure in the colonies provided employment opportunities to the colonized, both in the construction as well as in the operation. It helped them to acquaint with the colonial work culture and they could introspect and redefine themselves. The strengthening of transportation networks ignited the historical imagination of the colonized. Their quest for socio-political mobility got a meaningful direction with the colonial intervention in realizing transportation networks. The present study interrogates these relevant questions, that were missed out in the scholarly engagements of the past.

Scope and Relevance

This academic exercise is to see the landscape of Malabar from the perspective of circulation. How did people, materials and ideas travelled across the region and beyond with the help of transportation networks.

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51 *Ibid.,*p. 514.

Colonialism had a pivotal role in the expansion of three modes of transportation-waterways, roads, and railways- in Malabar. Though three modalities of transportation had improved in Malabar, the impact of the expansion of railway was astonishing. It indeed refashioned the social life in Malabar in an unpredictable manner. Hence, the present enquiry mainly focused on the expansion of railways in Malabar. Various caste groups had to leave their domestic environment through these circulatory channels and such journeys shook the very basis of caste structure in Malabar. Along with colonial capital, the indigenous resources, revenues, and labour force have contributed to the making of these transportation networks. That development even caught the imagination of the writers. Hence the study is a social history of transportation networks in Malabar during the colonial period.

Source Analysis

Since the present study is primarily on the development of transportation networks in colonial Malabar, the archival materials constitute the chief sources. *Administration Report of the Madras Public Works for the Official Year 1860-61, Administration Reports of the Public Works Department : Railway Branch of The Madras Presidency for the Year 1883-84 to Administration Reports of the Public Works Department : Railway Branch of The Madras Presidency for the Year 1898 to 1899* (16 years' reports), *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government (No. Xl) Report Of The Railway Department For 1855*, *Correspondence Files of the Madras Presidency From 1859* onwards are used. *Manual Of Administration of the Madras Presidency*, The Original DPR of *Nanjangud-Tellichery Railway Project* (Tellichery-Wynad-Coorg Railway) 1924, *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government*, *General Report of the Road Department for the year 1854, Report on District Roads 1853-54, Report on District Roads 1854, Report on District Roads 1854-55, Report on District Roads 1855-56, PWD*

Report of Madras Presidency for the Year 1853, R Dis Files, Subject Wise List of Correspondence Files, Report to the Secretary of State for India-in-Council on Railways in India to the end of the year 1859 (Prepared By Juland Danvers, Secretary, Railway Department, India), *Report to the Secretary of State for India-in- Council on Railways in India for the year 1868-69* (Prepared By Juland Danvers, Government Director Of the Indian Railway Companies. Primary sources on Malabar, collected from D-Space of GIPE, Malayalam literary texts, personal diaries, autobiographies, secondary works etc., are also used.

Methodology

To do the present research both qualitative and quantitative methods are used. Qualitative methods are employed for understanding the works already done on the related topics. Quantitative method is devised to quantify various data like the capital invested for the making of Indian railways, Indian revenue as guaranteed on foreign investments, the earnings of the Madras railways, the contribution of Malabar to this revenue, the number of natives employed in various departments of Madras railway like administration, engineering, traffic and telegraph and locomotive. Data on the police force to safeguard the railway in Malabar has also been quantified. Textual reading and inter-textual analysis are used to understand the meaning of literary texts.

Justification on Temporality:

The temporality of the present pursuit is limited from 1800 to 1936. It is a narration of developments in transportation networks in Malabar in between two journeys: the first is a journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar, performed by Francis Buchanan in 1800-1801 and the second is *pattini jatha*, a *padayathra* to Madras organized under the leadership of A K Gopalan in 1936. On behest of Marquis

Wellesley, the Governor General of India during 1797-1805, Dr. Francis Buchanan MD, who was in the medical service of the English East India Company, conducted a journey to do an extensive survey of major regions in south India. He had travelled through Malabar during 1800-1801. He was asked to do investigate diversified subjects like "the state of agriculture, arts, commerce; the religion, manners and customs; the history natural and civil, and antiquities, the dominions of the Rajah of Mysore, and the countries acquired by Honourable East India Company, in the late and former wars, from Tippoo Sultan"[52]. The survey carried out by Francis Buchanan was unprecedented in many respects. His travels were intended to grab information of specific nature, which had to be accurate.

Buchanan had crossed more than 300 towns and villages scattered over different parts of south India. His understanding of the geographic details of the region is astonishing. It is noted that "the precautions he took while acquiring data makes his study even more reliable and useful"[53]. He had devised certain methodological tactics to tap the real and true information about the data he collected. He was much cautious about the reliability of information collected from the informers. A close reading of the second volume of *A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar* would reveal that the crude state of transportation infrastructure in Malabar. The roads were not at all conducive even to the use of carts. He writes about his journey on 19th December 1800: "I went about nine miles to *Angada-puram* (Angadippuram?), having crossed a fine little river, a branch of that which falls into the sea at *Panyani* (Ponnani?). The low rice-fields seem to occupy but a small proportion of the country. The roads are very

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[52] Cited in Shashi Sivaramakrishna, *Ascertaining Living Standards in Erstwhile Mysore, Southern India, from Francis Buchanan's* Journey *of 1800-1801: An Empirical Contribution to the Great Divergence Debate*, in *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient,*(Henceforth it is cited as *JESHO*) Vol.52, No.4/5 (2009), pp.701.

[53] *Ibid.,* p.701.

bad"[54]. But by 1936, when *Pattini jatha* was organized, the things were substantially changed. A K Gopalan and the follow agitators could identify Madras as a place closer than earlier, and it could be reached by walk. The development of transportation networks under the aegis of British colonialism and with the labour of the indigenous workforce, the circulatory practices got changed. In between these two journeys Malabar was networked with three modalities of transportation-waterways, roads and railways- and it redefined the spatial understanding of Malabar populace.

Organization of Chapters:

The first chapter is the Introduction. The second chapter entitled as *Locating Malabar: Land, People and Modalities of Circulation in Early Colonial Period*. The first part of the chapter is devoted to see the physiography of Malabar as it would help to understand the geographical making of this region. The geological and soil features of Malabar is analyzed to comprehend the agrarian production of the region. It is further essential to understand the soil type of the region. Both determine the settlement pattern which in turn human geography also. A discussion on the circulation in Early Colonial Period is done as it would help to fix the starting point of further analysis.

In chapter 3, *Colonialism and Circulatory Infrastructure I: Waterways and Roads*, the prominence that the coast of Malabar had enjoyed in mercantile activities are detailed. Most of the initial trade transportations were done via riverine networks. The roads were not much developed in the latter half of the 18th century. However, Buchanan offers a vivid narration of roads in Malabar. A typology of roads in Malabar as the ghat roads, the metalled road and unmettled road is also given. In the chapter 4 entitled as *Colonialism and Circulatory Infrastructure II: Railways* an attempt is made to historicise

[54] Francis Buchanan, M.D., *Journey from Madras Through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar (Vol.II),* London, 1807, p.432.

the emergence of railways. An enumeration of railway companies in India like GIPR and EIR is done here. The role of Dalhousie in the railway development in India is also engaged. In the later part of the chapter, it is attempted to see the development of railways in Madras . There were two important railway companies -the MRC and the SIR. A chronological narration of railway in Malabar is being done here. Railway extensions to Calicut and Kannur are discussed. An attempt is being made to assess the reasons for the abandonment of Nanjangud- Tellicherry railway project .

Chapter 5 entitled as *Railways in Malabar: An Epitome of Hybridity* is an attempt to see railways in Malabar as the example of collective efforts of indigenous and aliens. The idea to have railway in Malabar was mooted by the British. Their efforts to ensure the sufficient capital for it is discussed. A lengthy financial analysis of Madras railway to substantiate the lucrativeness is engaged in this chapter. Railway had provided employment opportunities to the indigenous. A substantial number of workforces was attached to the Malabar railway during and after construction. In short, railways in Malabar were made possible due to the combined efforts of the British and Indian

In Chapter 6, *Circulation and Representations: On Literary Genres and the Politics of Mobility*, it is attempted to sketch various genres of representations emerged as a reaction to or as an outcome of the new modalities of circulation. The traditional Malabari mindscape, moulded and harnessed by the caste taboos and reactionary norms began to wane. The places once felt as far off regions, now came to their proximity, thanks to the emergence of transportation networks. There were pilgrimages to Kashi and such journeys were being remembered. Moyinkutty Vaidyar wrote *Theevandichinth* to assess the local reaction to train in Malabar. Personal memoirs of the socio-political leadership are filled with the journeys they had performed. Madras, once a far-off city, now felt as a city that could be reached easily in the mindscape of people of Malabar. A K Gopalan’s decision to walk

to Madras was the outcome of this change in the mindscape of a normal Malabari. From the crude and primitive modalities of transportation, the people of Malabar could reach quite easily to Madras. This change was due to development in the transportation networks which in turn determined the circulatory practices. The last chapter sums up the major findings of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LOCATING MALABAR: LAND, PEOPLE AND EARLY COLONIAL MODALITIES OF CIRCULATION

> "On the first of November I went ten hours journey to *Kanya-uru,* which is small village without any shops, and is situated at some distance north from Noyal river"[1]

The landscape of Malabar had transcended different phases in its long journey of historical evolution and each of these made deep imprints on the distinctive identity of the region. The cartographic representations, travelogues and earliest notices on Malabar do attest the multiple ways in which that term has been used to connotate varied meanings[2]. Ever since the ancient past, Malabar was integrated to the archaic networks of mercantile activities, and it took a subtle and different turn with the coming of the British. They integrated Malabar into the global capitalist market and the then ensued administrative policies and economic measures fixed the cultural contours of Malabar. Though Europeans like the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French made Malabar as part of their empire, it took a significant turn in 1800 when Malabar was brought under the political heyday of the British. It is quite clear that despite its many historical experiences, Malabar's terrain has remained mostly unchanged. The following is an attempt to look at the geography of Malabar with special emphasis on human geography and see how it is important in the context of modern modalities of transportation networks in the region.

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[1] Francis Buchanan MD, *A Journey from Madras through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar* (Vol.2), London 1807, p.283.
[2] See Appendix 1 for Pre-British maps on Malabar.

On Physiography of Malabar

Malabar, as a geographical region, is in abundance of riverine networks which are ultimately connected to the Arabian sea. Malabar is benefitted with an extensive littoral tract, and it helped the region to interact with the alien world. Explorers with maritime interests had frequently visited the landscape and they do mention to the substantial number of rivers, rivulets, and other waterways in Malabar. There are frequent references to Malabar in the alien travelogues and in the indigenous records. The earliest indication on Malabar is found in a record of the 6th century and it is ascribed to Cosmos Indicopleustes, a Greek merchant who later became a hermit from Alexandria of Egypt. After his maiden itinerary during the reign of Justinian I (527-565), he travelled on the Indian ocean littoral including India and Sri Lanka. It is argued that the second journey conferred him the title Indicopleustes[3]. Cosmos has authored *Topographia Christiana* or *Cosmographia* and it consists of twelve books. He had visited Malabar during 522-547 AD and in his reference, he mentioned the landscape as *Male*. He underlined the commercial importance of *Male* and noted that the shore had anchored with ships from around the world.

The travellers who visited the littoral tract of Malabar, had used the reference made by Cosmos Indicopleustes with slight variations and modifications. The term *Male* could be a corrupted word for *Malai* which meant 'hill' or 'mound'. However, the term *Male* coined by Cosmos Indicopleustes did not contain the full title *Mala-bar* and the credit of it is ascribed to the Arabs. They were the first people who used *Malibar* to

[3] V N Manimanis (et.al), *Cosmos Indicopleustes and his Model of the Universum*, in *Publications of the Astronomical Observatory of Belgrade* (PAOB), Vol.94, Das.No.1, 2016, p.357.

indicate this piece of land[4]. The historical sources do attest the fact that the Arabs were the one of the earliest visitors to Malabar. They used the altered forms of *Malibar* to denote this piece of land. The credit to call this land as Malabar is assigned to Al-Biruni. The Arab travellers had used terms like *Munibar*, *Manibar, Mulaibar* etc., to denote *Malibar* or Malabar.

Europeans had used these terms with slight variations and that include *Mulaibar, Minubar, Malabaria, Milibar, Melibaria, Minubar, Melibar* etc. In that sense, it is surmised that the aliens had identified the geographical aspects of this landscape and named it on that basis. It is evident when an etymological enquiry on Malabar is conducted. It is the combination of *Malai,* a Dravidian word, meaning 'hill' or 'mound' with *barr*, a Persian or Arabic word, which means 'continent' or 'land'. Hence, Malabar could be explained as a land of hill or mound and the naming is done by identifying the geographical distinctiveness.

A discussion about the significance of geographical features in determining the historical evolution of a place is essentially preceded by the task of locating it. In the specific case of Malabar, it is not an easy job. Malabar, as it is being discussed here, is an administrative unit existed during the British colonial period. Malabar was a district under the Madras Presidency located in the South West Coast of India. But the term Malabar is used in different historical situations to indicate a landscape with varied boundaries. The Arabs, for instance, used the term Malabar to denote the region that located in between Goa and Cape Camorin. The identification of Malabar with the northern districts of Kerala is of late origin. It should be taken as a legacy of the colonial British.

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4 M T Narayanan, *Agrarian Relations in Late Medieval Malabar*, Northern Book Centre, New Delhi, 2003, p.xvi.

In 1792, the British incorporated Malabar to the Bombay Presidency and that was a crucial development in the history of the region. In 1793, Malabar was divided into South and North for administrative convenience. In 1800, Malabar was ceded to Madras Presidency. The colonial records and documents of the period, do talk of the boundaries of Malabar. Kochi in the south, South Canara in the north, Arabian Sea in the west and Coorg, Mysore and Nilgiris in the east were the boundaries of Malabar as per colonial records[5]. Scholars do ascribe Western Ghats and Arabian sea as the two natural agencies that acted as prime determinants of the distinctive culture of this part of India. They act as natural barrier to the aliens, who landed here with the intension of annexing the land. At the same time, several outsiders entered here with the help of the passes in the western ghats. Umpteen number of non-Indian traders and mariners reached the coast of Malabar by using the shores. In that sense, the Arabian sea and the Western Ghats simultaneously acted as the 'agencies of isolation and interaction'. In this specific case they played a crucial role in shaping the distinctive culture in this region. It is also interesting to note that in the naming of this land as Malabar, its proximity to Western Ghats or *Malai* might be a crucial factor.

As indicated earlier, the natural boundaries of Malabar played a significant role in shaping the history of this region. It subscribes the dictum that 'geography plays a pivotal role in determining the human life pattern in a locality'. In Malabar, the Western ghats, run parallel to the coast from the extreme north, are crucial in determining the historical destinies of Malabar. Western Ghats have several specificities that include biodiversity and geographical distinctiveness. Western Ghats are rich in terms of biodiversity

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5 See C A Innes, *Malabar Gazetteer,* Kerala State Gazetteers Department (Reprint), Thiruvananthapuram, 1997, p.1 and P J Cherian (Ed.), *William Logan's Malabar Manual* (Vol. I), Kerala State Gazetteers Department (Reprint), Thiruvananthapuram, 2000, p.1.

as it houses wide variety of flora and fauna. It is interesting to note the peaks in Western Ghats that lay in the vicinity of Malabar. It include Mukurti peak (8380 feet), Nilgiri peak (8118 feet), Gulikal hill (8096 feet), Anginda peak (7828 feet), Vavul mala (7677 feet) and Vellari mala (7677 feet). Along with that there are certain outlying hills like Pranakkod, Ananga Mala, Pandualur hill, Urot Mala and Ezhimala. Most of these hills were the houses of certain ruling houses and Ezhimala is a typical specimen of it. Apart from that most of these hills are inhabited by the tribal populations. When it comes to the irrigation part, a good number of certain rivers and rivulets originated from that hills. The hills or mounds in the Western Ghats proved to be the determining points in its history. They housed petty kingdoms, tribal hamlets, and ensured the essential water to the valleys. Significantly, the passes in the Western Ghats-Palakkad, Perambadi and Thamarassery-blessed the outsiders to enter into Malabar and shape the history and culture of it.

Similar to the Western Ghats, the Arabian Sea also played an important role in moulding the history and culture of Malabar. The Arabian Sea littoral and the life around it are integral to the history of Malabar. Likewise, Malabar is blessed with an extensive western coastal littoral. In the past the Arabian sea prevented the easy entry and exit of aliens. Historians noted that it became an 'instrument to ensure isolation of the mainland'[6]. However, barring its 'isolating mission', the littoral region of Arabian sea played the role of 'integrating agent'. There formed an Arabian sea system with the linking of rivers, backwaters and estuaries. The tidal movements in the Arabian sea fixed the inflow of water into and out of the rivers and backwaters. They, in reality, created a coastal-riverine network of connectivity and it benefitted in multiple respects. It is quite clear that the region had frequently visited by travellers and traders from distant lands. The system of sea-river connectivity ensured

[6] T K Gopala Panikkar, *Malabar and its Folk*, Asian Educational Services (Reprint), Madras, 1995, p.2.

what they had required to carry out the trans-oceanic trading activities. Similarly, there are certain noteworthy strategic locations like Ezhimala[7]. It is right to say that in Malabar, the agents of isolation were also the modes of interactions.

The study of river system in Malabar would help to fix the pre-colonial and colonial emphasis on building up a riverine networks for transportation. The river system in Malabar is one of the most notable aspects of its geography. Malabar is properly connected with rivers, backwaters and canals. The Malabar river system was notable due to its connectivity and the trade done with the help of it. The river system of Malabar ensured the easy accessibility for conveyance and made possible for cargo transportation during the pre-colonial and colonial period. To Logan, the river system in Malabar was "the easiest and cheapest and almost only means of communication in times when wheeled traffic and pack-bullock traffic was unknown"[8]. The important colonial centres in Malabar to grew up due to the connectivity made possible by the Malabar river system. Not only the British, but even the pre-British European powers like the Portuguese, the Dutch etc., could materialise their domination in the riverine region of the Kolathiris of Kannur[9]. The same is the case of French who made Mayyazhi (Mahe) as their headquarters. Thalassery, the headquarters of the British in North Malabar is also located in the littoral tract.

Rivers and rivers system of Malabar had played a pivotal role in shaping the history of this region and a detailed narration of it is essential here[10]. Nileswaram river is the northern most river flows in the British

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7 A Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala History and its Makers*, D C Books, Kottayam, 2000, p.29.

8 P.J.Cherian (Ed.), *Op.Cit.,* p.8.

9 Binu John Mailaparambil, *Lords of the Sea: The Ali Rajas of Kannur and the Political Economy of Malabar 1663-1723,* Brill, Leiden, 2012, p.44.

10 A Sreedhara Menon*, A Survey of Kerala History,* D C Books, Kottayam, 2007, p.17.

Malabar. Being a river with forty seven miles long, most of its parts remain in South Karana. The river had important place in the history of Kolathunad. The land flowed by Nileswaram river is the northern most part of the Kolathunad and it had much importance in the material production of the Kolathiris. Ezhimala river, which has the length of about thirty miles, is the next important river in Malabar. The river originates in the ghat mountains and there were several creeks to the east and north-east. These creeks made the mount peninsula into an island.

The next important river in this locality is Taliparamba river. A river with a length of forty one miles, its main branch is navigable in all seasons. It assigns commercial importance to many places in and around Taliparamba. For instance, the place Pazhayangadi might be 'old bazaar' where products of commercial importance might have reached through this river. It is an important trading centre in the pre-colonial times. The river passes Pazhayangadi and then run parallel to the sea. From there it meet the final destination, the Valapattanam river. It is noted that "a large tract of fertile garden land has been formed by the continuous action of the littoral currents damming up the mouth of this river"[11]. In that sense the fertility and connectivity of the region is ensured by the flowing of Taliparamba river.

The most important river in Malabar is Valapattanam river. It has three branches. The first branch, joins the tidal portion of the mainstream and is navigable for boats and country crafts to the Ghat mountains foothills. With a large Muslim population and a large number of mosques, the area has a significant Islamic influence. Muslims make up the majority of the region's population, which could be owing to their commercial activities. It is clear that the Muslims had been benefitted from the trans-regional exchange with Mysore and Coorg.

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[11] P J Cherian (Ed.), *Op.Cit.,* p.10.

The remaining branches of the river meet at Iritti. The lengths of those branches were stated as 32 and 28 miles. The river became of superb commercial significance both to the local ruling house and to the Europeans. It may be evidenced withinside the shape of the forts constructed with the aid of using them. Kolathiri had erected a fort in the south bank of the river Valapattanam. European influence in the making of it is evident as it is believed to be designed and executed by them. In order to protect the commercial interests of the British, they had built a fort at Madakkara, which is located west of Valapattanam. In order to execute their administration in India, the British seem to have centred their activities on forts. They had forts at their primary settlements like Calcutta, Bombay and Madras[12]. They later became presidencies and administration was done through them.

Anjarakkandy river is the next important river in the region. It emanates in the dense forest land on the western part of Wynad ghat slopes. After flowing the course of 40 miles, the river bifurcates into branches and forms the present island of Dharmadam which was earlier known as Dharmapattanam at its junction with the sea. Anjarakkandy has certain significant place in the history of British in Malabar. They had made experimental works in crop cultivation at Anjarakkandy. In order to grow of various spices, they initiated an experimental garden at Anjarakkandy. Due to its proximity to Dharmadam, the British even proposed to set up a factory there by deserting their settlement at Thalassery[13]. Kodoli river or Thalassery river is another stream that played a significant role in the political history of Malabar. This river was the boundary of the erstwhile French settlement of Mahe. Being a small stream, measuring 14 miles, this river is navigable to the locally made country crafts. Mahe river, originates from the thick forest of

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12 M S Naravane, *The Maritime and Coastal Forts of India*, APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi, 2002, p.154.

13 P J Cherian (Ed.), *Op.Cit.,* p.11.

Wynad Ghats, joins with Arabian sea at Mahe. Through this river, it is navigable to all the interior parts of North Malabar.

Kotta river is the next important river in Malabar. Etymologically it is believed that the name is originated in connection with Kunjalimarakkar's kotta (fort) at the entrance of the sea. The river originates from the Western Ghats and total length of the river is estimated as 46 miles. The river is suitable for navigable through all seasons. Various rivers and rivulets connected to the river ensured connectivity to a large tract of lands. The most important canal of the river is Badagara Canal. Made in 1843, Badagara canal is linked to the commercial town of Vadakara. Another important canal to this river is Payyoli canal, which lies south of Vadakara. At Payyoli, the Kotta river is called as Akalapuzha. Payyoli canal links Akalapuzha with the commercial town of Payyoli. There were local *angadi*-s in Payyoli, and the water transport ensured the mobility of goods from one place to other. Next to Kotta river is Elathur river and it has 32 miles length.

When a question of how geography has been used to the benefit of the people is interrogated, the best answer from Malabar is the Conolly canal. It is the most important man-made canal in Malabar. The canal was the brainchild of H V Conolly, the then collector of erstwhile Malabar and the work was finished in the year 1848. Connecting Korapuzha in the north to the Kallai river in the South, the Conolly canal has 11.4 KM length. The Canal was conceived by H V Conolly to offer an alternative route in between commercially important Korapuzha and Kallai river[14]. The British had had invested a huge amount and technical and administrative expertise to materialise the canal project. It is presumed that Conolly had a plan to further

[14] Jineesh P S, *Historical Atlas of Malabar 1800-1956*, Unpublished Report of Minor Research Project (MRP) funded by University Grants Commission (UGC), New Delhi, 2015, p.18.

extension of the project to Ponnani, but was stalled as he was killed by a group of rebels in Malabar.

Another important stream in Malabar was Kallayi river. The river has prime importance due to the timber industry that flourished in the area. The fame of Kallayi as an important timber trade centre could be ascribed to the transportation of timber by using the Kallayi river. Beypore river is one of the most notable river in Malabar. The two main branches of the river rise respectively in the Kunda mountains on the Nilgiri plateau and the other on the lower ranges of south-east Wynad[15]. The prominence of Nilambur is the due to the confluence of these two branches. The British made Nilambur as a famous teak plantation because of its connectivity to other parts. It was due to commercial prominence the British had chosen Beypore as the old terminus in the south-west line of the Madras Railway project. The flowing of these rivers in Malabar has created certain geographical formations as well. The Kadalundi river is united to the Beypore river by a creek and thus formed island of Chaliyam[16]. The Kadalundi river originates from the western slopes of the Nilgiri mountains and of the Silent Valley ranges. However, these rivers were not navigable in all seasons. In monsoon, the country boats cold navigate up to Malappuram by using these rivers. By understanding of the connectivity via these rivers, the British made some efforts to link Kadalundi river with the creeks and backwaters of the Ponnani. But the efforts to do in 1850s were ended fruitless.

Ponnani river, is treated to be the longest of all rivers, exclusively flowing in Malabar. Being a river of three tributaries, the Ponnani river's main stream is of about 156 miles long. Boat traffic is possible at Ponnani canal with the backwaters of Veliyankode. The Veliyankode and Chavakkad

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15 *Ibid.,*p.19.

16 *Ibid.,*p.19.

backwaters are of great importance in shaping the cultural life of Malabar. They played a significant role in shaping the political and social life of the region. Being the natural boundary, the Chettuvai river distinguishes the princely state of Kochi from erstwhile colonial Malabar. Similar to the rivers and river system, Malabar has a good coastline. It is opined that "the seaboard of Malabar trends north-north-west by south-south-west throughout its length of 150 miles"[17]. Classical accounts like *Periplus of Eritrean Sea*, Pliny's *Natural History*, Ptolemy's *Geographia*, ancient Tamil anthologies like *Akanaanooru*, and *Puranaanooru* talk about the ancient port cities like *Muziris, Tyndis, Barena, Nelcyinda* etc., in the littoral tract of erstwhile Kerala. Though the identification of these ports are problematic substantial researches have been done at Pattanam by considering it as Muziris[18]. Malabar had important ports like Valapattanam, Kannur, Thalassery, Mahe, Calicut and Ponnani. The Arabian sea is guarding the landscape of Malabar from the enemies and it, at the same time, provides an opportunity to interact with the world around.

The description above is intended to enumerate the network of rivers spread over Malabar. The inter-connectivity ensured through rivers is instrumental in ensuring transportation in Malabar. Most of these rivers do originate in the Western Ghats and reach at the Arabian Sea. As stated earlier, the river system consisted of rivers, lakes, natural canals and artificial canals played a crucial role in making the history of Malabar. Most of the habitation centres were located on the banks of these river system. As an instance of it, archaeologists could recover a substantial number of megalithic burial sites on

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17 C A Innes, *Op.Cit.,* p.7.

18 See P J Cherian, G V Ravi Prasad, Koushik Dutta, Dinesh Kr. Ray, V Selvakumar and K P Shajan, *Chronology of Pattanam: A Multi-Cultural Port Site on the Malabar Coast* in *Current Science*, Vol.97, No.2, 2009, pp.236-240, and Mathew Cobb, *The Chronology of Roman Trade in Indian Ocean from Augustus to Early Third Century CE* in *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, Vol.58, No.3, 2015, pp.362-418.

the banks of these rivers. The path breaking discoveries in Malabar were made under the initiative of the British[19].

William Logan mentions to the megalithic monuments at places like Banglamotta paramba and Trichambaram in north Kerala and specific megalithic assemblages including pots and iron implements discovered at these places[20]. Robert Sewell has furnished a taluk wise distribution list of iron age megalithic burials[21]. This is the only available comprehensive list of the archaeological sites of Malabar[22]. Along with the indications of human habitations during the megalithic period, there were several centres of worship on the banks of rivers. It is quite clear the river network in Malabar ensured the connectivity even to the hinterlands and by which ensured the supply of spices needed in the European market.

Geological and Soil features of Malabar

The soil types with special emphasis on the geo-morphological features Malabar had attracted the attention of European administrators and chroniclers and they even made a detailed analysis of it. It is noticed that "the

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19 A good number of colonial administrators had surveyed the megalithic monuments. For details see J Babington, *Description of the Pandoo Coollies in Malabar*, in *Transactions of the Literary Society of Bombay*, 1823, 3:324-330, Robert Sewell, *Lists of the Antiquarian Remains in the Presidency of Madras*, Vol.1, Government Press, Madras, 1882, pp.241-243.

20 P J Cherian (ed.), *Op.cit.,* pp.181-183. (See the drawings of the sepulchers in these pages)

21 Robert Sewell, Op.cit., (Vol.1), pp.241-243. Sewell cites the major centres of Megalithic culture in Malabar at places like Cherukunnu, Kalliyad, Malappattam (rock-cut cave), Karivellur, Kavvai (Dolmen and menhirs), Kuttiattur (dolmen and rock-cut cave).

22 *Ibid,p*.243.. The list of Sewell is very useful to conduct field research either for the relocation of the listed sites or for the discovery of new sites. Interestingly, most of these recently found sites are located in the adjacent or surrounding spots of the reported sites. For instance, a cluster of megaliths including umbrella stone, urn burials, and rock-cut caves are found at Karivellur region which is near to the menhir and dolmens reported by Sewell,

plains of Malabar consist of the most part of the low laterite tableland"[23]. Barring Ponnani and other coastal zones, red loam is treated to be the most important soil type. It is clear that the soil types of the region determined the nature of the subsistence. In the coastal region the alluvial deposits, inundated by the annal floods caused by the monsoon, were the mixture of river sand and silt. They are light sandy soil slightly filled with salt and are suited to coconut cultivation. If the soil type is not fit for cultivation, they engaged in some other jobs.

A close examination of the colonial records underline that most of all taluks of Malabar except, Ponnani, the chief soil type is loam[24]. As the per the statistics of Kottayam taluk, in the north Malabar, the loam constitutes 96.80 sand 2.73 and clay 1.85 percent[25]. Except Ponnani, this ratio was continued more or less the same. At Ponnani, loam constitutes 39.89, sand 51.06 and clay 4.15 percent. The loamy soils of the region are lateritic in their origin. Lateritic soil is formed through a process assisted by the natural phenomena. When the Laterites are exposed to extreme weather, rapidly disintegrates into component parts. In the laterite soil the white or yellow clay has a fertile potential and they contain iron and potash. Natural phenomenon like rain does help in spreading the laterite soil to the paddy fields. During monsoon, the laterite parts are washed down and they flow to the fields from the hills. It is quite clear that the annual rainfall ensured the fertility of the paddy fields in the surrounding areas of the hills. In Malabar, there was the intense cultivation of garden crops like coconuts, areca nuts, jack fruits and mango. Usually spices, like pepper, cardamom etc., are cultivated in the high ranges. As stated earlier, the soil types determined the prime items of cultivation and that in turn the means of livelihood of the people in the area.

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23 C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.9.

24 See P J Cherian (ed.), Op.cit.,p.52 and C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.8.

25 C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.9.

It is clear that an analysis of geographical features alone will not be enough at this point and it would further lead to geographic determinism. It is essential to look at the reciprocal relation between geographical features and human habitation. There are some places that foster the emergence of human inhabitation and it leads to settlement. At the same time, there are certain regions with hostile geographical setting and such places are generally least populated. However, in the specific case of Malabar, some other mechanisms were in force. In Malabar, the caste values and other social practices determined the nature of human inhabitation. A discussion on human geography with emphasis on settlement pattern is of crucial importance now. Similar to other parts of the later Kerala, social life in Malabar was largely regulated by the caste values. It is evident in the their habitation pattern as well. In Malabar, the caste groups that were in service to the temples had lived as clusters and they did not mingle with the people on a large scale. Those who engaged in agriculture largely lived as inter-mingled with other caste groups. That was the most important aspect of the settlement pattern in Malabar.

Human Geography and Settlement Patterns

An analysis of the human geography and settlement patterns in Malabar is worthy at this juncture as it sheds some light on the impact of circulation during the colonial period. The settlement pattern in the pre-colonial and even colonial times was determined by the caste norms and values. There were restrictions imposed on mobility, not only on the downtrodden but also on the elite Hindus as well, and in such a caste society the negation of the ‘iron curtain of caste norms’ was unimaginable. However, the expansion of transportation networks and the consequent changes in the circulatory practices remade many of these. Hence it is essential to look at the

human geography and settlement pattern to understand the changes happened later.

The settlement pattern in British Malabar had its own uniqueness in several respects. Here most of all the religious communities had formed their habitation centres. As stated at the outset of the chapter the geographical features had played a leading role in determining the settlement pattern featured by the inter-mixing of various religious and intra-religious groups[26]. In this section an attempt is made to understand the prime aspects of settlement pattern in Malabar. It is stated that "Malabar is the most densely populated districts in the Madras Presidency, the average number of inhabitants to the square mile was 481, being exceeded only in the Tanjore district and being much above the average of the Presidency as a whole[27].

In terms of density of population, the region has had territories with varied demographic concentration from least to highest. There were densely populated places like Ponnani taluk and least populated regions like Wynad. Majority of the people lived in the villages, and it retains the rural nature. Historically it is attested that "only 8 percent of the people live in towns and major portion of these are to be found in five or six large towns, which include considerable areas more strictly rural than urban in character"[28]. It is interesting to note that they mainly lived near the cultivable lands and in the vicinity of trade centres. With the exception of Brahmins in the *agraharam*-s and Saliyas in the *Theru*-s that were in the form of exclusive clusters, most of other castes and religious groups had dwelled together. In Malabar, this intermixing of castes had played a pivotal role in formulating a culture of its

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26 K S Mathew, *Society in Medieval Malabar: A Study based on Vadakkan Pattukal,* J B Books, Kottayam, 1979,p.32.

27 C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.92.

28 *Ibid.,* p.91.

own. It is argued that Malabar exhibited a mixed culture and it was primarily due to the mixed population[29].

Certain changes had happened to the demographic pattern of Malabar and some colonial documents do speak of it. There were some significant patterns were visible in the population increase and the movement of population. There were certain ups and downs in the demographic pattern of Malabar in the last quarter of the 19th century and in the initial years of the 20th century. During the decade of 1881 to 1891, the population increase was recorded to 12 percent and it short fell in the next decade, i.e., 1891 to 1901. During that period, the increase in the population growth was only 5.6 percent., i.e., 6.4 percent less than the previous decade. The reasons for the decline in population growth have remained unanswered. Factors that may usually adversely affect the population growth were absent in Malabar during the period under discussion. Unlike other regions, there was little emigration from Malabar. The chances of plague and bad weather on the population decline are also not found. It is noted that "there is little emigration from Malabar, and bad seasons and plague are negligible factors"[30]. In that sense, Malabar in the last quarter of the 19th century, did not offer a commonly found answer to the downfall of birth rate.

Like the discussion on the demographic swings that Malabar had experienced in the last quarter of the 19th century and in the initial years of 20th century, it is significant to discuss about the language of this piece of land. Malabar was not a mono-linguistic region in the strict sense of the term. Multiple languages were in vogue in Malabar during the period under discussion. "Malayalam was the language of the 94 percent. of the people"[31].

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29 M. T. Narayanan, *Op.Cit*., p.187.

30 C A Innes, *Op.cit.,* p.91.

31 *Ibid.,*p. 91.

Being a region of multi-ethnic and cultural identities, the Malabaris had used different languages. Along with Malayalam, other languages too had in currency in this strip of land. Next to Malayalam, Tamil was a language used by around 4 percent of the population. Workers and certain ethnic groups inhabited in some parts of Malabar had used Tamil as their languages. The estate coolie workers in Wynad, Goundars of Attappadi and the Pattar Brahmins of Palakkad had used Tamil as their language. It makes quite clear that large number of menial labourers, who were hailing from Tamilnadu used Tamil as their medium of interaction. The coastal regions were another area, where one could find the prevalence of many languages. "On the coast there are a few merchants who speak Arabic, Hindustani, Guzrati and Maratti"[32]. It is also an indication to the homeland of the trading communities that inhabited in coast of Malabar. Most of the indigenous traders were hailed from central, western, and northern part of India. The tribals in the high ranges of Malabar had their own dialect of Malayalam.

The human geography of Malabar is of crucial importance as it is an indicator to the total culture of Malabar. The important source for looking at the human geography is the census reports published from time to time. The Census of 1901, for instance, records that 68 percent of the people were classified as Hindus, 30 percent as Muslims and 2 percent as Christians. The Settlement Reports of various *desam*-s speak of the nature of property ownership in British Malabar. In the case of Malabar they also look at the property ownership of the people of the lower strata of the society. Generally it is considered that Malabar, like any other parts of Kerala, during the colonial period exhibited a 'museum of castes and religions'.

[32] *Ibid.,*p. 91.

The notion of purity and pollution is the important concept that regulated the social practices of people during colonial period[33]. It seems that various caste groups among Hindus had strictly followed it. Intra-caste and intra-caste pollutions were practiced. Brahmins and upper caste Hindus were claimed to be representing *thiru meni* means the 'divine' 'body'. The presence of lower caste Hindus had polluted the purity that the caste Hindus had carried with them. There are certain recognized scales of distances that one should follow to avoid pollution. It is noted that "every man considers himself as polluted by the touch of one of a lower caste; and there are castes of low in the social scale which mutually convey pollution to each other"[34]. As elsewhere, the upper stratum of the society was consisted of the elite group of the caste Hindus. They had enjoyed control over the forms of social power like temples, land, state system etc. "In ordinary conversation such expressions as Tiya-pad and a Cheruma-pad are commonly used. The distance is about 24 feet in the case of Kammalan or member of one of the artisan classes, and in the case of the aboriginal Nayadis as much as 74"[35]

The caste taboos and restrictions had further determined their circulatory practices too. Citing the experience of Edgar Thurston, it is noted that the Nayadis who were interviewed by Mr. Edgar Thurston of Madras Museum in 1901 at Shoranur, had by reason of pollution that they traditionally carried with them, to avoid walking over the long bridges which spans the Bharatha Puzha (Ponnani river) and follow a circuitous route as many miles. From this analysis it is surmised that the caste taboos and social customs had restricted the circulatory practices of the people of the lowest stratum. In some case the caste norms did prevent the caste Hindus in

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33 Susan Bayly, *Saints and Goddesses and Kings: Muslims and Christians in South Indian Society 1700-1900*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p.248.

34 C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.103.

35 *Ibid.,*p.102.

undertaking sea voyages. The restrictions imposed on Brahmins to cross seas should be seen in this context. It is argued that the British initiatives in waterways, road, and rai paved the way for further struggles in Kerala to ensure civic rights.

The instances of Vaikkom Sathyagraha and such anti-untouchability struggles should be seen in this context. Restrictions due to pollution were added to women on a large scale. Their mobility was restricted during the monthly periods and even after delivery. Pollutions were also prescribed in relation to birth and death in the house. The prime point involved in the traditional society about the notion of pollution was the control of the bodily movement. As it is understood, the caste system had played a crucial role in the sustenance of purity and pollution in the traditional society of Malabar, hence it is necessary to perceive the articulation of caste system with its complexities in Malabar.

In Malabar, as in any other society in India, the caste system was regulated through the practices of endogamous marriages and hypergamy. The caste rules regulated the composition and structure of the internal divisions of Hinduism. Specific customs and manners were added to each of these castes, and they had been practiced rigorously. It is stated that: “in Malabar, the primal race distinctions can readily be traced in the broad divisions of Brahmin, Nayar, Tiyan, artisans and the supposed aboriginal tribes; while the infinite variety of castes and subcastes well exemplifies the effect of hypergamy and the tendency to stereotype the most minute difference of custom etc.”[36].

Being the caste at the topmost stratum of society, the Brahmins controlled the most of the land resources. The generic name for the Malabar

[36] *Ibid.,* p.94.

brahmin is Namboodiri. Inside the Namboodiri caste, there were certain restrictions in engaging matrimonial relations. Not all the members of the caste were consented to involve in intra-caste marriages. Only the eldest male member of Namboodiri caste was permitted to marry from their own caste. Other male members could only engage in temporary marriages called as *sambandham* with the women of lower castes. Their designation as the as the custodians of both *dewaswam* and *bramhaswam* lands bestowed such powers to them. Further, the Nambootiri-s had obtained much social recognition by capitalizing their identity as the custodians of temple property and mirror images of the almighty. Their power was mediated through social practices.

The Namboodiris had primarily involved in priestly jobs. Though as a community they had adopted negative attitude towards the avenues offered by colonialism, there were certain stray instances of adapting to the opportunities of modernity. Some had entered governmental jobs. It is noted that: "one Namboodiri known to have accepted a clerical post in Government service; a good many are *Adhigaris* (Village headmen); and one member of the caste possesses a tile works and is partner in a Cotton-mill"[37]. Though they generally reported to have reluctant to the changes that brought in by the modernity, there are instances in which they adorned the insignia of modernity. It is clear that "the bicycle now claims several votaries among the caste and photography at least one another"[38]. The use of bicycle and interest in photography are treated as the symptoms of modern outlook.

The general perception of Namboodiri's as s composite and corporate group is often misleading. There were intra-divisions of Namboodiri's and it included *Pattar-s Embranthiri-s, Thamburakkal*-s*, Adhyan*-s, *Visishta Nambootiri*-s, *Samnya Nambutiri*-s etc. It is believed that the Pattar-s were

[37] *Ibid.,* p.105.

[38] *Ibid.,*p.105.

originally from the east coast, but majority of them settled in and around Palakkad[39]. Most of the *Pattar* families were well educated and had owned large tracts of lands. They had engaged in trade and business, and they formed "a large portion of the official, legal and scholastic class"[40]. They lived in cluster like *agraharam*-s and it further provided corporate nature to their life. The *Embranthiri*-s had performed *Hiranyagarbha* and settled at Arathil, Cheruthazham, Pilathara and Chirakal in the northern parts of Malabar[41]. They originally hailed from Canara with Tulu origin.

There were disparities in terms of the material prowess of the *Pattar*-s and *Embranthiri*-s. The former as a group, except a few in the Palakkad, were large land owners and could enjoy the benefits of modern education and it contributed to their material prowess. At the same time, it was evident that the *Embranthiri*-s had confined to the priestly jobs, hence they could not attain upward mobility to the material landscape of Malabar. There were certain sub-divisions in the *Namboodiri*-s like *Thamburakkal*-s. It cannot be treated as a sub caste as there were originally two families bearing that suffix but only one was remaining. The Azhuvanchery Thamburakkal of Athavanad taluk in Ponnani taluk had enjoyed some king of a ritual authority over the Maharajas of Thiruvathamkoor and there existed a cordial relation between them.

The next group among the *Namboodiri*-s was *adhyan*-s. The most notable group of *adhyan*-s were the *Astagrihattil Adhyan*-s, believed to have the eight important *Nambootiri tarawadu*-s, in which four (Kalakkandam, Mathur, Melattur and Kulukkallur) were in British Malabar. When it comes to the traditional jobs of the *Adhyan*-s, they had performed the duties of a *tantri,*

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39 *Ibid.,*p.106.

40 *Ibid.,* p.106.

41 T K Gopala Panikkar, *Op.Cit.,* p.54.

that was to perform rituals. It does not mean that all *tantric*-s were *adhyan*-s, but *adhyan*-s had performed the duties of a tantric.

There were *Visishta Namboodiri*-s with having two groups called *Agnihotri*-s and *Bhattatiri*-s. The former was specialised in performing *yagam*-s and the latter had engaged in the study of philosophy, logic etc. The term Samanya Nambutiri was an indicator to their social position. Samanya Nambutiri-s were not permitted to perform yagas, but they studied Vedas and performed the duties of priests (*Shantikaran*). They were the lowest of the Brahmin or *Namboothiri* hierarchy and were called as 'the Nambootiri proletariat'[42]. It is misnomer to perceive *Namboothiri*-s as a homogenous caste. There were certain groups whose condition was quite pathetic. It is clear that being the custodians of the temples and their property, the elites had enjoyed a respectable status, but the social condition of the lower groups like the *Samanya Namboothiri*-s was similar to that of the outcaste Hindus. Next in the caste line, were a quasi-Brahmanical class called as *Elayath*-s. They had performed as *purohits* (priests) to the *samanta*-s and Nayars. There was also the *Mussad*-s which were the highest of the *ambalavasi*-s. The *Mussad*-s were identical with the *Akapothuval*-s (inside *pothuval*-s).

Temple was one of the chief employer. The *Ambalavasi*-s were an umbrella caste that constituted of petty temple services. Their social prowess was increased due to their proximity to the temple. It consisted of *Pushpagan*-s, *Chakkiayr*-s *Pothuval*-s, *Pisharodi*-s, *Variyar*-s, *Marar*-s etc. Their services were primarily meant for the upkeep of the temple and assets. By and large, they did not enjoy ownership neither the temple nor of its property. They were mainly involved in the menial services to the temples. Their assignments included providing flowers to the temples, cleaning the temple and its premised, maintaining accounts of the temples, performing in the temple

[42] C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.109.

theatres, the drum beating at temples etc. They etymology of *Pushpagan*-s, is interesting as it is linked to their relation to *Pushpam* or flower. They were entrusted to supply necessary flower items for the temple ceremonies. They were also named as *Poonamb*i-s, *Nambissan*-s, *Pattarunni*-s or *Unni*-s. The female members of this groups were called as *Pushpini*-s and they had officiated the *tali kettu* ceremony of the nair girls. It is quite interesting to note that womenfolk had officiated the marriage functions in that point of time. Their system of inheritance was not a fixed one, ie., in some places they had followed *makkathayam* and in some other places they adopted *marumakathayam.*

Chakkiyar-s were another group in the *Ambalavasi*-s and they engaged in the recitation of and the commentary on the passages from the *Purana*-s and *Ithihasa*-s. They performed *Chakkiyarkuthu* and the performance was exclusively done to amuse the elite castes[43]. They resorted to link the current events with that of the past and by which a good quantity of social criticism was mediated through it. Their female counterparts, the *Nangiyar*-s too had found space in the theatrical performance. It is a clear indication that the women were not discriminated against, and they enjoyed a respectable position at least among the *ambalavasi*-s. Most of the temple performances were conducted at *Koothambalam*-s and entry into there was restricted to the caste Hindus.

There was another caste group called as *Tiyattu Nambiar*-s or *Teyyattunni*-s. They performed the functions of priests in Ayyappan temples. As part of the function, they paint the image of Ayyappa on the ground and sings songs in praise of him and it was called as Teyyattam[44]. In this caste too, only the male member was permitted to marry from the caste and other were

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43 Biju Mathew, *Pilgrimage to Temple Heritage*, Ernakulam, 2013, p.346.

44 C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.110.

permitted to engage in *sambandha* relation with the nayars. All the above castes were wearing sacred thread. *Pothuval*-s were another group in the *Ambalavasi*-s and they were divided into two as *Akapothuval* and *Purampothuva*l. The *Akapothuval* performed in-temple services and the *Purampothuval* performed the services outside the temple. Along with that the former escorted the idol when it carried in procession and the latter were the drum beaters (*chenda pothuval*-s). Women in this caste were called as *Pothuvarassiar*-s or *Pothuvattimmar*-s. *Pisharodi*-s were a caste of people who did not wear *punul* or the sacred thread. Their customary duty was to provide flowers required to the temple services. It is noted that "some of them are now large landowners of considerable wealth and influence"[45].

The *Varier*-s were entrusted to the brooming of the temple precincts. Their houses called *Variyam* and the womenfolk were called *Varassiar*-s. It is noted that this group was "perhaps the most progressive among the *Ambalavasi*-s, some of the members having received western education and entered the learned professions"[46]. It is interesting to note that despite the caste taboos and restrictions, the members of this caste had shown the vigour to go beyond the restrictive caste norms and made use of the chances of cultural expansion ushered with the coming of colonial education. They generally followed *marumakathazham*, but they had a marriage practice namely *kudivekkal* by which the wife is adopted as a member of the family and her children also belongs to that family.

The *Marar*-s and *Marayar*-s were of two groups: *Chenda-Marar*-s and *Marayar*-s. The Chenda-Marars had engaged in the beating of drums in the temples. Whereas the *Marayar*-s had involved in the shaving of Brahmins and Nayars during funeral rites. The caste groups included in the umbrella caste of

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45 *Ibid.,*p.111.

46 *Ibid.,* p.113.

Ambalavasi-s had enjoyed considerably a respected social position and it was primarily due to their affiliation with temples. Arguments have been proposed that they had enjoyed control over large tracts of lands received in lieu of their services to the local rulers[47].

Samanta-s came next in the social structure and they were adorned the ruling groups. They were the ruling aristocracy in Malabar and they belonged to various castes in north and south of Malabar. It states that: "*Samantha*-n is the generic name the group of castes forming the aristocracy of Malabar and it includes the following divisions: *Nambiyar, Unnitiri, Adiyodi*, all belonging to North Malabar; and *Nedungadi*, *Vallodi, Eradi* and *Tirumulpad,* all belonging to South Malabar"[48]. There were also Nair-s with the title of *Nambiyar*-s and *Adiyodi*-s. "*Nedungadi, Vallodi and Eradi* are territorial names applied to the *Samantha*-s indigenous to Ernad, Walluvanad and Nedunganad respectively"[49]. If one would expand it further, the *Eradi*-s were the caste to which the Zamorins of Calicut had belonged to. Similarly, Valluvanad Raja was a Vallodi. The ladies of the *Samantha*-s were called as *Koilammah*-s.

The Nairs constituted the middle class in the Hindu society and they were largely venerated in the society[50]. The Nayars were the traditional militia, which engaged in military activities during war and devoted themselves in agriculture in time of peace. Nearly all Nayars were concentrated in agriculture, and the upper sub-castes were soldiers in the service of the local Rajas and all of these were 'caste Hindus'[51]. It is stated

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47 K N Ganesh, *Polity and Society in Medieval Kerala: Some Preliminary Considerations* in K K N Kurup (Ed.), *New Dimensions in South Indian History*, Association for Peasant Studies, Calicut University, 1996, p.110.

48 *Ibid.,* p.113.

49 *Ibid.,* p.113.

50 Eric J Miller, *Caste and Territory in Malabar*, in *American Anthropologist*, Volume 56, Issue 3, October 2009, p.411.

51 *Ibid.,* p.411.

that “in origin the Nayars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and, as conquerors, assumed the position of the governing and landowning class; and in the ethnological sense the term may be used to include the *Samanthan* and *Kshattriya* castes”[52].

A narration of the social position that the Nayars had acquired through education is found in colonial documentations. “The Nayars as a class are the best educated and most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brahmans, who are not strictly a Malayalam class); and are intellectually the equals of the Brahmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government service, and the caste has supplied many of the leading men of the learned professions”[53]. The Nayars had established mastery over Kalaripayattu and it determined their social position. In due course of time, their social position was elevated to a professional class and a land-owning community.

There were certain specificities added to the life and activity of the Nayars. They had followed *Marumakkathazham* and Nayar women had engaged in *Sambandham* with men of equal status or above. There too some differences had prevailed among the Southern Nayars and that of Northern Nayars. The North Malabar Nayar women could not maintain *sambandham* with South Malabar Nayar and the crossing of Korapuzha was prohibited. Pollution of fifteen years was prescribed for crossing the Korapuzha, which was the dividing line[54]. In South Malabar there was a class called as Kiriyattil Nayar, which seems to the corruption of a Sanskrit word *Griham* which means home. Though most of the Kiriyattil had used Nayar as suffixes, some of them preferred to add Panikkar, Kurup and Nambiar to their names. In this

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52 C A Innes, *Op.cit.,*p.114.

53 *Ibid.,*p.114.

54 *Ibid.,*p.115.

first two had involved in the profession of arms and had run kalaries. Sudra Nayars are the last section of Nayars found in South Malabar. They were the attendants and retainers of the Nambutiris. “Every Nambutiri woman must always be accompanied when out of doors by a maidservant or *dasi,* who should belong to the Shudra Nayar class”.[55]

There were certain caste groups, specialized in trade and related activities. They included *Taragan*-s, *Ravaries* etc. *Taragan*-s were a caste of traders, that word literally means broker, who got incorporated to the Nayar caste. They were originally hailed from Travancore, were settled in Palghat and Walluvanad. The *Taragan*-s of Angadippuram and the surrounding areas were immigrants from Travancore. They were believed to be the descendants of high caste Nayars of Ettuveettil Pillais[56]. Ravaris or *Vyabhari*-s were the one who found in the north Malabar, and they had involved in trading endeavours. “They were usually identified with *Taragan*-s but their social position is somewhat lower than that of the *Taragan*-s”[57]. These sub-castes had regulated the trading life of Malabar and they might have utilized the connectivity modalities in traditional Malabar. The addition of these sub-castes to the Nayars made them as a caste of different professionals.

Some other castes had conferred the status of Nayar as they had performed certain duties related to the construction of temples. The typical instance was the case of *Chembotti*-s. *Chembukotti*-s or *Chembotti*-s were the copper workers, and their traditional service was roofing of the *sri kovil* or the inner shrine of the temple with that metal. Because of their service in temple, this caste in due course of time raised in the social scale and are not regarded

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55 *Ibid.,*p.117.

56 *Ibid.,*pp.117-118.

57 *Ibid.,*p.118.

as a polluting caste[58]. In different parts of north Malabar there were certain other castes that enjoyed the status in parity with the Nayars. Chakkingal Nayars or *Vaniyan*-s were the oil pressers and they sub-divided as Veluthath and Karuthath. "Attikurissi Nayars or *Chittigan*-s were the one who performed certain purificatory ceremonies in connection with the funerals and so forth for *Namboodiri*-s, *Ambalavasi*-s and Nayars. Some of them were barbers"[59]. Kulangara Nayars were the one who performed puja in temples of Bhagavathi, Ayyappan, Sasthav, Vettakorumakan etc. They performed the purificatory ceremonies of Taragans. It is quite clear that the purificatory ceremonies were of much importance in the social life of Kerala. There were certain communities who got entrusted to do the task of performing purificatory ritual. It is interesting to imagine a situation where nobody did perform the purificatory ceremonies, and what would have been happened?

A group of four polluting castes who were together called as low caste Nayars as they performed some services to the Nayars. They were *Veluthedan*-s, *Vilakkataravan*-s, *Kadupattan*-s and *Chaliya*-s. *Veluthedan*-s (those who make white) or *Vannattan*-s were washermen and they engaged in the washing of clothes. *Vilakkataravan*-s were the barbers of the elites, *Kadupattan*-s who have the title of *Ezhuthacchan*-s or 'writing master' as their occupation being that of school masters or tutors and *Chaliya*-s or *Theruvan*-s (hut or street dwellers) were the weavers"[60]. Another group was that of the *Yogi Gurukkal*-s. It is noted that the "*Yogi gurukkal*-s as a caste had performed *Sakti pooja* in their own houses, to which no one from outside caste is allowed attend"[61]. They also performed *Sakti pooja* to the Nayars.

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58 *Ibid.,*p.120.

59 *Ibid.,*p.121

60 *Ibid.,p. 121.*

61 *Ibid.,*p. 123.

In the caste hierarchy, the *Thiyya*-s or *Ezhava*-s constituted the next one. In Palakkad they were called as *Izhuvan*-s and Thiyyans in other parts of the district. Though many of them were labourers, some engaged in tenant cultivation. William Logan made a linguistic exercise to trace the etymology of Thiyya-s or Ezhava-s. To him "tiyar might be a corrupted form of *dwiper*, which means islanders and Ezhavar might be from *Simhalar* or *sihalar* or *cingalese*"[62]. He was hinting that *Thiyya*-s might have come from Sri Lanka. Significantly it is argued that "there seems little doubt that the *Izhuvan*-s and *Thiyyan*-s are racially the same, though the two communities now disclaim connection"[63]. It is interesting to look at the differences of these two castes. "Tiyans follow *marumakkathayam* in the north and *makkathayam* in the south, except in a few parts of Ponnani where fraternal polyandry is practiced. *Izhuvan*-s on the other hand follow *makathayam* and are monogamous, and among them it is very usual for a man to marry his father's sister's daughter. Izhuvans and Tiyans did not intermarry, and it is opposed custom for Tiyans of North Malabar to marry Tiyan woman of the south, one reason against such a practice being no doubt the difficulties that would ensue in questions of inheritance owing to the different family systems followed by the two communities"[64].

The traditional occupation of the *Thiyyan*-s was the planting and tapping of coconut and they claim for they had been brought in. But later they became agriculturists, traders, shopkeepers, private servants, and clerks etc. The upward mobility of *Thiyyan*-s in the social hierarchy happened by the end of the 18th century. It is stated that "they further improved their position by the services which they had rendered to the Company. These good relations have been maintained; and the *Thiyyan*-s are a most progressive community,

62 P J Cherian , *Op.Cit.,*p.110.

63 C A Innes, *Op.Cit.,*p.124.

64 *Ibid.,*pp.124-125.

especially in North Malabar. Many of them have rose to the higher posts in the Government service, and many are vakils"[65]. Along with the *Thiyyan*-s and *Ezhavan*-s, there were *Tandan*-s, that was a section of *Thiyyan*-s found in South Malabar, especially in Ernad and Walluvanad taluks. Similarly, *Emboran* was the title given to *Thiyyan*-s who performed priestly functions.

The fishing communities like the *Mukkuva*-s and *Mukayar*-s or *Mogayar*-s were next in the caste hierarchy. *Mukkuva*-s followed *marumakkathayam* in the north and *makkathayam* in the south. Along with fishing, they had involved in the *chunam* making and *manchal* bearing. In the extreme south, they were called as *Arayan*-s. *Mukayar*-s or *Mogayan*-s were another caste who had also involved in fishing. But there was a difference: "the *Mogayan*-s are properly river fishers, and the *Mukkuvan*-s were the sea-fishers; but the distinction does not seem to hold good in fact"[66]. In the caste hierarchy, the *Mukkuvan*-s were below the *Thiyyan*-s and artisan classes. Because of education, some of the members of this community rose the position of sub-magistrates and sub-registrar[67]. *Valluvan*-s were the small inferior caste of fishermen and boatmen.

In the population of Malabar, there were certain artisan castes. In the caste hierarchy, the artisan castes had enjoyed the social status similar to that of the Thiyyas. The artisans largely performed services adjunct to agriculture. *Kammalan*-s was the common name assigned to the artisan class. They were divided into five sub-sections: *Thattan*-s or goldsmiths, *Perinkollan*-s or blacksmiths, *Musarie*-s or braziers, *Asarie*-s or Carpenters and *Chembotti*-s or Coppersmiths. They owe their origin to the face of Viswakarma. There were

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[65] *Ibid,* p.125.

[66] *Ibid,* p.126.

[67] Rajendran Edathumkara, Jineesh P S and T K Soman, *Munnettam: Uralungal Labour Contract Co-Operative Societyude Vijayagadha* (Mal.), ULCCS, Madappally, 2013,pp.32-34.

certain other artisan castes. *Kancharan*-s found in North Malabar were manufacturers of brass vessels. *Kalkotti*-s or *Kallan*-s were stone masons. *Kundaton*-s in Calicut taluk were chunam makers. Similarly, *Vettan*-s or *Vettuvan*-s who were once salt makers, now masons, earth workers, or quarry men[68]. There were also *Paravan*-s who were an inferior class who had involved in chunam making. Their women acted as midwives. They are together called as *Parakurup*-s and formed a single community with the *Kollakurup*-s[69].

When it comes to the cultural level of people in Malabar, it is clear that, by and large, they gave much importance to religious rituals and ceremonies. Naturally, the service of *Kanisan*-s or astrologers, was indispensable on every auspicious occasions. It is noted: "the chief duty of the *Kanisan* is the casting of horoscopes, and the choosing of lucky days for the celebration of marriages and other social ceremonies; he also supplies *yanthrams* or charms, consisting of a mystic arrangement of letters written on thin metal plates, which are placed on cylindrical silver cases and worn on a string round the waist"[70]. In that sense they adorned a respectable position in the Malabar society. They might have enjoyed a ritualistic authority on the common people of Malabar. Like the *Kanisan*-s, the *Velan*-s too had some ritualistic role in the society. Though a caste of umbrella and basket makers, the *Velan*-s had performed certain acts of sorcery. It is stated that: "Velan's art is mainly that of a sorcerer; small pox is cured by the muttering of *mantram*-s or mystic invocations to Kali; devils are driven out by invoking karinkutti"[71]. In South Malabar, there is an inferior sub-division of the caste who act as

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68 C A Innes, *Op.Cit*., p. 129.

69 *Ibid.,*p.129.

70 *Ibid.,*p.129-130.

71 *Ibid.,* p.130.

Velicchappad-s or oracles of Bhagavati and inferior deities"[72]. Hence it is clear that specific social tasks were assigned to caste groups.

Being a society grounded on the notions of purity and pollution, it was quite natural that the castes that were specialized in performing purificatory rituals ceremonies were of some importance. *Mannan*-s in the south and *Vannan*-s in the north were a caste of washermen. Their "services are indispensable to the higher castes in certain purificatory ceremonies when they have to present clean clothes"[73]. Another caste of related importance was *Pana*-s. "The Panans, who are also in some places called Malayans, are primarily musicians, exorcists, and devil dancers; but basket and umbrella making are also their traditional occupations"[74].

Their women are midwives; and one of the duties of the men is to convey news of births and deaths occurring in a Thiyya household to the relations. Astrologers, traditional physicians and launderers were 'upper polluting castes'[75]. Below them were the depressed castes, who form about fifteen percent of the Hindu population. They formed the primary producing class as they worked in the field. Despite their work, they were denied of rights to use public roads and temples. They were 'polluting' castes.

There were certain tribes in hills and forests, and they were the 'hill tribes' in the strict sense of the term. It is noted that "it is extremely difficult to determine their relative positions, or to investigate their sub-divisions or customs, since they were entirely illiterate, while the more intelligent among them are apt to draw on their imagination and borrow from the manners of

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72 *Ibid.,* p.130.

73 *Ibid.,*p.130.

74 *Ibid.,*p.131.

75 Eric J Miller, *Op.cit*,p.411.

their superiors. They fall outside the caste system of Malabar"[76]. *Cheruman*-s and *Pulayar*-s were the representatives of the agrestic serfs. There were reported to be 39 divisions in this caste groups. The Malabar *parayan*-s were the low-class basket makers and agricultural labourers[77]. They were notorious as the sorcerers and practiced black magic. They were also known for *odi vidya. Nayadi*-s were one of the most downtrodden castes in Malabar. "They live mostly by begging, and as they convey distance pollution to all castes, they were accustomed to lay out their clothes on the roadside, and to retire themselves some way off and shout aloud for charity"[78].

The *Paniyan*-s and *Kurumban*-s are the most numerous of the jungle tribes. They were chief agricultural coolies. *Kuricchiyan*-s were the jungle tribe of Punam cultivators and hunters found in the Wynad and slopes of the ghats north of Calicut. "They act as oracles during the great festival at Kottiyur; the performer becomes inspired after sitting for some time gazing into the vessel containing gingelly oil and holding in his hand a curious-shaped wand of gold about a foot and a half long, and hollow"[79]. Like *Kuricchiyar*s, the *Karimbalan*s were *punam* cultivators, hewers of wood and collectors of wild pepper[80]. *Malakkar*s also called as *Malamuttanmar* and *Malapanikkar* are comparatively superior tribe of jungle cultivators found in the Calicut and Ernad hills[81]. It is also noted that *Vettuvan*s of Chirakkal taluk are low caste jungle cultivators and basket makers. *Mavilon*-s were a small tribe in Chirakkal taluk[82]. Apart from that, there were certain foreign castes

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76 C A Innes, *Op.Cit.,* p.133.

77 *Ibid.,*p.134.

78 *Ibid.,*p.134.

79 *Ibid.,*p.137.

80 *Ibid.,*p.137.

81 *Ibid.,*p.137.

82 *Ibid.,*p.138.

also. That include Tamil and Canarese *Chetti*-s, *Goundan*-s, *Kaikolan*-s or Tamil Weavers, the *Vellalan*-s or Tamil cultivators. They were mainly found in Palakkad, Walluvanad and Wynad taluks.

In the pre-colonial and even during the initial years of colonialism, the settlement pattern of the Hindus in Malabar, was largely centred on the temples. It has been explained in conjunction with the emergence and proliferation of caste identities[83]. It was alluded that most of the caste groups sprang up with having temples as the nucleus. It is evident that temple administrators and castes very close to them were the backbone of societal life in Malabar. Their settlement centres normally found in the vicinity of temples. They did not and could not mingle with the people who performed 'non-scriptural' professions. The servitude classes of the temples were normally respected in the society.

Apart from the different caste groups of Hindus, semitic people like Jews, Christians and Muslims too had their space in the landscape of Malabar. There is evidence to indicate that Christianity before the end of the second century and nearly a hundred years before the supposed labours of Thomas the Manichaean (circa 277AD)[84]. "According to a widely held Keralite tradition, the beginning of Christianity on the Malabar coast was marked by the arrival of St. Thomas the apostle in Kodungallur (Anglicized as Cranganore) in or around 52 CE"[85]. They mainly engaged in agriculture, trade, and fishing activities. Apart from them, Jews were also there in Malabar. It is referred that "a colony of the scattered and afflicted people had

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83 Rajan Gurukkal, *Proliferation and Consolidation of the Temple Centered Social Hierarchy in the Cera Period*, in *Journal of Kerala Studies (JKS)*. Vol.VI, Sept-Dec, 1979, pp.333-346.

84 William Wilson Hunter, *The Indian Empire: Its Peoples, History and Products*, Trubner and Company Ltd., London, 1886, p.234.

85 Corinne G Dempsey, *Kerala Christian Sainthood: Collisions of Culture and Worldview in South India*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2001, p.5.

been settled on the coast of Malabar, particularly at the town of Cochin from the time immemorial… There are two distinct classes of this interesting nation, the one called the Jerusalem or White Jews, the other, the ancient or the Black Jews"[86]. They mainly settled in Kochi and one settlement could be found at Ezhimala. "According to the Jewish legends a colony of the Jews was established on Malabar coast following the destruction of Jerusalem in 78 AD. We have concrete epigraphic evidence of Jewish settlements called 'Ancuvannam' in Kollam city by the middle of the 9th century. At Hili (Matayi) there are remnants of Jewish settlements like *Judakkaulam, Judarmanna* etc"[87]. The presence of these semitic sects added a heterogeneity to the settlement pattern in Malabar.

Muslims too were added to this stock. Though "the actual date of the introduction of Islam to Kerala cannot be ascertained", a powerful Muslim community was present across the coast of Kerala immediately after the formation of Islam. It is noted that Kasargod, Mount Eli (Ezhimala), Sreekandapuram, Cannanore (Kannur), Dharmadam, Panthalayani Kollam, Calicut, Chaliyam, Parappanangadi, Tanur, Tirurangadi, Ponnani, Kodungallur, Cochin, Quilon as powerful Muslim settlements in the coast of Kerala in 1498 AD[88]. It is evident that most of the Muslim settlements in the 15th century Kerala could be found in the Malabar coast. The benevolence extended by the Samuthiri, the ruler of Kozhikode, had a significant role in the expansion of Islam on the Malabar coast. "The Zamorin induced them by special concessions to visit the new town and settle there. They were not only given freedom to convert the people to their faith, they were also given the

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86 William Wilson Hunter, *Op.Cit*., p.464.

87 V Kunhali, *Advent of Islam in Kerala: Special Features* in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress (PIHC)*, Vol.36, 1975, p.326.

88 Stephen Frederic Dale, Islamic Society on the South Asian Frontier: The Mappilas of Malabar 1498-1922, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1980, p.25.

monopoly of import and export trade[89]". Apart from that due to caste prescriptions, the free mobility of Hindus was restricted. Trans-marine voyages were taboos to them. Further their social interactions were regulated with the notion of purity and pollution. Such restrictions on mobility were not relevant to the semitic people, especially to the Muslims. Hence, they actively involved in mercantile activities and made wealth out of it. The vacuum of a mercantile community created by the caste-based restrictions on Hindus was filled by these semitic sects, especially the Muslims.

It is also significant to note that there was another world, rather a parallel universe, where the 'polluting castes' had inhabited. They were denied of rights for worship, travel on common roads etc. Even their presence or sight could and did pollute the caste Hindus. They were not included in the temple documents or any other scriptures. They were, in a sense, people beyond the scriptures or documents. They tilled the field and worked so hard. Despite their primary producing class identity, they were subjected to the exploitation of the caste Hindus. Social tensions were the norms of the period and the British had to take over such a society. They were, primarily, a mercantile collective, who thought of making use of the condition of Malabar for their enrichment. The chaotic and complex social condition in Malabar could not facilitate them in that end. The British had devised methodologies for conquering and taming the wild minds of Malabar. They had documented and measured the land. For that matter they had studied of the land and people of Malabar.

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89 K V Krishna Iyer, *The Zamorins of Calicut*, University of Calicut, Thenhipalam, 1999, p.54.

Ealy Colonial Modalities of Circulation

The incorporation of Malabar to the British imperial circuits, had a restructuring effect on the modalities of circulation. The influx of English capital, their strategies for labour management, construction of transportation networks like waterways, roads, and railways for circulation emerged as the impacts of coloniality in Malabar. However, to understand the magnitude of changes that the British had brought in the circulatory practices of Malabar, it is essential to engage a proper and historical sketching of the early colonial ways of transportation. The term 'early colonial' is interchangeably used with 'early British' to indicate initial phase of British domination in Malabar. It is a transition phase, during which period, the English East India Company's trade domination expanded across Malabar and they began to enter the realm of politics. It is clear that In Malabar waterways provided the cheapest and easiest mode of transporting men and material during early British period. Roads, in the present sense of the term, were, practically absent in Malabar during early British period. As it is known nothing is born out of emptiness. Like any other invention or institution or practice, the emergence of connectivity infrastructure is closely linked to the societal needs and such an observation is relevant in the case of early British Malabar.

Malabar during the early British period, had semi-closed village economy whose economic and social aspirations were fixed by the limited needs. It is important to look at the attitude of the ruling houses in Malabar to the circulation and the infrastructure that could facilitate it. The traditional forms and relations of production did not warrant an extensive travelling. They never felt circulation to other parts as essential since they had a self-sufficient village economy. It could provide the essential foodstuffs required for survival. There were social taboos that put restrictions on mobility. Trans-marine movements of top stratum in the caste hierarchy were also restricted.

The laity too could not travel as they wished. The social restrictions imposed on them obstructed their mobility.

The circulatory patterns and habits during the early British period were largely determined by the local needs and expectations. They produced whatever they required within the vicinity of their own household. Their dependence on products from outside for subsistence was minimal. In some rare instances, they depend on the imports from other parts of the world, that too were largely inflow of luxury items. The periodic fairs and festivals provided them opportunities to acquaint with the items they require and even sold out their own products too. Along with that their mindscape was confined to the immediate surroundings and never thought of the happenings in the far-off regions. Their destinations were so close, which could be achieved by peddling or even by rowing.

Malabar in the early British period had practiced a crude economic order, where primitive agriculture, and least developed industrial structure had prevailed. However, they could make use of the demands for spices, timber, textile, ivory, sandalwood etc., in the western markets and redefine their agrarian and mercantile strategies accordingly. During the early British period and after, Malabar had mainly focused on carrying out trade with Persian Gulf, China, Africa so on and so forth. The place of Malabar in modern history is marked when the Portuguese explorer Gama landed and a new sea route was discovered. As noted, "in the year 1498, just ten months and two days after leaving the port of Lisbon, Vasco da Gama landed on the coast of Malabar at Calicut or more properly Kale Khoda, "City of the Black Goddess"[90].

[90] Anna Harriette Leonowens, *Life and Travel in India: Being Recollections of a Journey Before the Days of Railroads,* Porter & Coates, Philadelphia,1884, p.14.

The trans-marine trade was carried away via ports that are distributed over the littoral tracts of Malabar. To ensure the availability of trade items in the ports, there emerged a powerful riverine network which could connect the hinterland with ports. The rivers that are networked across Malabar provided interminable water transportation through the length and breadth of the region. The rivers in Malabar like Bharatapuzha, which is also called as *Nila* or Ponnani puzha, Kuntipuzha, Chandragiri Puzha, Korapuzha, Kuttiadi river, Chandragiri puzha etc., have formed the arteries of trade. Along with the circulation of materials, the riverine networks carried away people from one place to other. Being the principal port in Malabar, there were trading groups from places like China, Sumata, Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Maghrib etc.

There were some instances, in which the European mercantile collectives had engaged in tussle for ascertaining supremacy over Chettuvai as it stood at the mouth of an extensive river system. The conflict between the English at Thalassery and the French at Mahe on the Arabia Sea littoral tract is famous in the history of Malabar. The riverine networks were the most important circulatory channels in the early British period. It is not accidental that most of the trading centres, prior to the British in Malabar, were on the banks of rivers and it is due to the importance they had in the early English circulatory pattern. Ship building and timber trade were the essential related development of riverine mode of circulation. As riverine circulation constitutes the chief modality during the pre-British period, it is essential to have a glance on the ship building strategies adopted in the costal tract of Malabar.

Boat making and ship building were concentrated on the banks of Malabar and the important ones being at Chaliyam, Badagara, Koyilandy,

Thalassery and Valapattanam[91]. Malabar had produced various types of vessels like *uru,* or *pathemari,* cargo boats, fishing boats, plank-built boats, dug outs (*thoni*), rafts etc., There were instances in which the Merchants of Arabic origin and of Kutch in Gujrat had bought ships from Calicut. In it, the dug-out or *thoni* had been used to reach into the interiors of Malabar and items of trade were brought to the port towns to trade with the far-off regions. The timber types available in Malabar were used for making the vessels. There were *asari*-s specialized in the construction of such vessels. Like that there were certain communities, specialized in the trading activities like *pardesis* and making of vessels, had sprang up in the littoral tract of Malabar as a related development of riverine connectivity. *Thalassery Rekhakal,* being a compilation of 1429 documents in vogue in Malabar during 1796 and 1804, contains certain refences indicative of the riverine transportation of goods. Two letters in the months of April and May 1797, contain refences to riverine trade of paddy and chilly carried with the help of *vanchi* in Malabar and the involvement of Chovvakkaran Moosa in it[92].

Interestingly, "at the very beginning of the Eastern trade, when Constantinople was attracting to itself all the commerce of the East, Calicut was visited by vessels from Asia minor, Egypt and Arabia"[93]. The early British circulations were largely for commercial purposes. As noted "it was so well known to the Arabians that in the seventeenth century, a fanatical sect of Mohammedans named *Moplah*-s immigrated to Calicut, and entered with great success into the commercial life of the city, and occupy in it, even to this day, a most important place, carrying on a very profitable trade between

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91 B Arunachalam, *Indian Boat Designs and Forms*, Maritime History Society, Mumbai, 2009, p.16.

92 Dr. Joseph Skariah, *Thalasseri Rekhakal* (Mal.), Sahithya Pravarthaka Co-operative Society Ltd., Kottayam, 2017, (Letter Nos. 340 G & H and 341 G & H- pp.53-54.

93 Anna Harriette Leonowens, *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

Calicut, and entered with great success into the commercial life of the city, and occupy in it, even to this day, a most important place, carrying on a very profitable trade between Calicut, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and various parts of India, its chief exports being rice, coconut, ginger, cardamoms, and sandal- and teak wood"[94].

In Malabar, Calicut had the fame of being the foremost important port city, from where the high-volume trade had been carried out and it is being further attested by many contemporary references. "But we are forgetting the promised trip, during which it is proposed to notice towns and villages of interest, commencing with Calicut, the capital of Malabar, and one of the principal seaports of the Presidency…All that can be seen from the ships at anchorage are the lighthouse and the pier, the whole of the reminder of the town being entirely among palm-groves"[95]. As a merchant city, Calicut could attract ships from elsewhere. It seems that the circulatory practices during the early British times were largely meant for transporting goods to and from Malabar. During the early British period, riverine networks were the main channels through which the men and materials were circulated.

Though Calicut port could involve in exhaustive mercantile activities, the city, and the port there had some limitations. Due to the fame of Calicut and the urge for Indian products, the Westerners, Arabs, Chinese, Africans etc., had swarmed into the city and they might have forgot the inconveniences at the city. Durate Barbosa, a Portuguese traveler who was in India between 1500 and 1516, noted that Calicut had the fame of being the prime exporter of coconut. To him: "the country produces this though covered with palm trees higher than the highest cypresses: these trees have clean smooth stems

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94 *Ibid.,* p.15.

95 Somerset Playne, *Southern India: Its History, People, Commerce and Industrial Resources*, The Foreign and Colonial Compiling and Publishing Company, London, 1914-15, p.503.

without any branch, only a tuft of leaves at the top amongst which grows a large fruit which they call *tenga*: by this they make profit, and it is a great article of trade, for each year more than four hundred ships are laden with it for many parts"[96]. In the 16th century, the prime item of trade and export from Calicut was coconut which in due course of time changed.

Though many sources do attest the prevalence of a brisk port city at Calicut, certain contemporary references doubted the presence of a port there. An interesting reference on Calicut, on the absence of a port, could be found here. "Steamers lie in the roadstead about 2 miles from the shore-as there is no harbour, but nevertheless a very large quantity of merchandise passed through the port"[97]. From this reference it can be inferred that though brisk trade was carried through the port at Calicut, but with very limited conveniences. This passenger could not find any systematic mechanism to maintain the port navigable to ships to carry away and to bring in the materials to and from Calicut.

Similarly, the traveler proceeds further by mentioning certain specificalities of this land, that would be relevant to the present enquiry: "Before proceeding to the north, it would be well to notice now a few places of interest lying to the south. Six miles from Calicut the traveler will see from the carriage window the town and the seaport of Beypore, which, prior to the opening of railway, had flourishing shipbuilding works, iron foundries, and a canvas factory"[98]. From the above reference, it could be inferred that they were moving in a vehicle, and it was later attested that they were inside the train. The mentioning of 'carriage window' is an indicative of it. The prevalence of water transport has been validated here. "A few miles farther to

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96 Durate Barbosa, *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century,* The Hakluyt Society, London, 1865, p.154.

97 Somerset Playne, *Op.Cit*., p.504.

98 *Ibid.,* p.504.

the south one sees the Kadalundi river, which has a course of about 75 miles, and is navigable for small boats for a considerable distance at certain seasons for the year"[99]. It is again indicative to the importance that the riverine transportation that the region had embraced during early colonial times.

Together with Calicut, Beypore also attracted the attention. Some indications on the transport could be inferred from the references to Beypore: "Beypur, near the mouth of the Beypur river, 6 m S, of Calicut, was formerly the Terminus of the Madras Railway on the West coast, and passengers had to cross a wide estuary by boat and then travel by road to Calicut"[100]. The reference is a clear indication to the absence of a proper road mechanism to cater the needs of people who depended on railway. Being the centre of timber trade, Beypore has attracted wide attention. Timber had high demand in the European markets were brought into Beypore via river networks. As noted, there are references to timber trade, centred at Beypore. "The teak grown on the ghats to the E. is floated down to Beypur for exportation"[101]. Likewise, "the lofty range of mountains called Wanootumally, separating this district from Wynaad and Ernaad contains large quantities of teak and other timber, and also bamboos, which are floated down the rivers to Calicut and Beypore during the rains"[102]. It shows, how the timber was being brought to the shores for exportation.

Along with the circulation of material, another aspect of circulatory practice was pilgrimage. Malabar, being a region thickly populated by Muslims, it is natural that they went for Mecca to perform Hajj. During early

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[99] *Ibid.,* p.504.

[100] *Murrays Handbook: A Hand Book for Travellers in India and Ceylon,* John Murray, London, 1892, pp.360-361.

[101] *Ibid.,* pp.360-362.

[102] *Report on the Medical Topography and Statistics of the Provinces of Malabar and Canara*, Published by Order of Government, London, 1844, p.27.

British times, trade and commerce were the most important modality that connected Malabar to the world around. Mappilas of Malabar, being the community specialized in trade had possessed a cosmopolitan outlook. It is opined that the Mappilas of Malabar represent the mix of trade and religion[103]. They were exposed to the nuances of the international world and its etiquettes. Further the religious principles they were adhered to, provided them a perspective of internationalism. The performance of Hajj is mandatory to their religious belief. The circulation for Hajj further gave them acquaintance with internationalism. Some interesting references to Hajj pilgrimage could be found here: "Quilandi was at one time a flourishing port, and the place of embarkation and landing of pilgrims proceeding to or arriving from Mecca. The principal feature of interest at present time is an exceedingly fine old mosque, which was founded in the year 1779"[104]. The port at Panthalayani Kollam near Koyilandy and the Paroppalli had some importance in Hajj and related circulatory practices during early British times in Malabar.

Apart from the circulatory movements in trade, sight-seeing in Malabar too had attracted travellers from outside India, especially from Britain. Route to India is clearly mentioned as from England via Port Said, and through Suez Canal to Aden, Galle and Bombay[105]. In 1892, Messer's. Thomas Cook & Son has recommended some circular tours, in it, Calicut in the Malabar coast, had included a tour for 61 days[106]. Another route was Bombay, Ratnagiri, Marmagoa harbour, Karwar, Honawar, Mangalore, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahe, Calicut, Beypur, Narakkal, Cochin and Tutucorin. The coasting

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103 M N Pearson, *Pilgrimage to Mecca: The Indian Experience (1600-1800)*, Markus Wlener Publishing Inc., Princeton, 1995, p.56.

104 Somerset Playne*, Op.Cit.,* p.505.

105 *Murrays Handbook: A Hand Book for Travellers in India and Ceylon,* John Murray, London, 1892, p. xx

106 *Ibid.,* p. xix

steamer was their mode of conveyance[107]. Interestingly, there were tours to routes like from Colombo to Calicut, Calicut to Bombay etc[108]. Some inferences on the absence of road conveyance could be inferred. In the 'Introductory Information' of *Murrays Handbook: A Hand Book for Travellers in India and Ceylon*, it is stated that "stationmasters are particularly civil and obliging, and, as a rule, are most useful to travellers in providing ponies, conveyances, or accommodations at out of the way stations, if notice is given them beforehand"[109]. The interesting part is that the tourists preferred to ride ponies and that is an indicator the condition of roads. If the roads were in good condition, they would have been provided with horse carts or any other wheeled carriages that could run on roads.

As stated at the outset, the early British period naturally connected riverine network of transportation provided the channels of circulation, both of men and material. The British had landed in such situation and the immediate task before them was to ensure proper and effective integration of the rivers, rivulets, and streams of Malabar. The English had further resorted to ensure the interlinkage of these streams and hope it could provide effective and ease mechanism for circulation of men and material. It is not coincidental that the British made their first intervention in waterways. Malabar, being a region crisscrossed with waterways, an interlinkage of them was of crucial need. Hence it was natural that the British in Malabar, had initially focused on the development of water mode of transport. At the outset of their heyday in Malabar, the English had to ensure the availability of stuffs required for western market and for that, they resorted to strengthen then then existing modality of connectivity, i.e., waterways.

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107 *Ibid.,* p. xiv.

108 *Ibid.,* p. xiv.

109 *Ibid.,* p. xv.

The circulation of men and material in early British Malabar was largely carried through the waterways and inland transportation had limited possibilities. Roads in the modern sense were limited in number. For inland circulation, they mainly depended on *nattupathakal.* There were itinerant merchants who used to carry items of local use and they had peddled through the then prevailing circulatory channels, which in due course of time emerged as strong circuits of movements. Barring crude roads for the military campaigns of Tipu Sultan, no such roads were there in Malabar during early British period. Bullock carts were a form of transport prevailed in Malabar during pre-British period. Carts drawn by horses, meant for the use of elite, were believed to be there in Malabar during early British period. Along with that palanquins were also there. It is interesting to note that "conveyances, such as carriages, palanquins &c. must likewise be protected by cadjan covers from the rain, which would otherwise penetrate them"[110]. From the reference it could be inferred that the palanquins were one of the conveyance mechanisms prevailed then.

At the outset of their rule in Malabar, the British made efforts to strengthen road networks in Malabar. They had to ensure the smooth inland circulation and it could be possible, only if there are man-made roads. It is worthy to cite the condition of roads in Calicut in the last decade of the first half of 19th century. It states: "there are several good roads, which afford safe and easy communication for all kinds of land carriage; and there being but little surf on this part of the coast, small craft can traffic with facility. The ports and passes are however nearly all shut from 1st June to the end of August, during the prevalence of south west monsoon"[111]. In some other instances, there were the clubbing of both riverine and inland transportation.

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110 *Report on the Medical Topography and Statistics of the Provinces of Malabar and Canara*, Published by order of Government, London, 1844, p.5.

111 *Ibid.,* pp.26-27.

Some more details on journey from Calicut to eastward interiors is a strong instance of it: “Travellers proceeding to visit Neilgherries from Calicut, by Koondah pass may proceed to visit the Arriacode by water, (the distance being a few miles less than the road, via Majerry-Vandore,) from whence the top of the pass by the new road, is distance about 27 miles; but as yet the only bungalow on this line of road is one in bad repair, at the top of the pass”[112]. The Mysore heyday on Malabar got transferred to the English via Treaty of Seringapatam in 1792, and it also bequeathed the crude roads in Malabar to the English, and they had worked on it.

To conclude, Malabar during the early British presents as an ‘ethnographical museum’, where the social interactions were strictly regulated on caste norms. The notion of purity and pollution was rigorously practiced. The caste itself was not a homogenous one as intra-caste and inter-caste interactions were largely restricted. The condition of the downtrodden was quite pathetic. Mobility was restricted even to the members of the elite castes. Sea voyages were forbidden to the Namboothiris. In such a situation, the conducting of trade via sea was not possible for the Hindus and that vacuum was utilized by the Muslims and other semitic sects. During early colonial times, the prime mode of conveyance was riverine networks, and the British made some initial intervention in interlinking the rivers.

[112] *Ibid.,* p.27.

CHAPTER 3

COLONIALISM AND CIRCULATORY INFRASTRUCTURE I: WATERWAYS AND ROADS

> "We paid a visit to a young gentleman of the Madras service, in our palanquins, and took an early dinner with the judge, previous to our embarkation. It was intended that, we should have taken an evening ride to Mahe, which is only five miles to the southwards of this, and has a beautiful county and fine roads between it and Tellicherry"[1].

Similar to other region in India, the 18th century could make its deep imprints in the history of Malabar also. As historians argued several socio-economic changes occurred in the 18th century period had brought some significant political developments as well. Malabar in the 18th century witnessed some noteworthy developments that had determined the future course history of the region. The expansion of British trading activities through the various treaties signed with the indigenous rulers constituted a crucial development of the period. The treaties that the British signed with the indigenous rulers in 17th and early 18th centuries turned the balance of trade from Malabar in favour of the British[2].

They understood that the trade monopolistic activities alone could not be sufficient to exert their imperial domination on Malabar and conspired to ascertain the political domination of this region. To the British, the Mysorean campaign for territorial expansion was just like a blessing in disguise. The Treaty of Srirangapatanam, signed by Mysore with the British on 18th March

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1 *Voyage from Bombay to Madras and Calcutta*, in *The Oriental Herald*,Vol.22, No.67-July, 1829, p.306.

2 See Appendix 2 for maps showing rivers, canals and road maps in Malabar.

1792, ensured the transfer of Malabar to the British. Now the British could assert their supremacy over the regions from Kavvai river in the North to Chetwai in the South and the entire region consisted of 63 taluks. The establishment of British sway over Malabar was their long cherished need as they felt that it could meet their aspiration to become the monopolistic supplier of Malabar spices to the European world. They anticipated of reaping the harvest of westerly trade from Malabar. The British role in the expansion of circulatory infrastructure in Malabar, especially in the development of waterways and roads, should be viewed in the backdrop of British trade with Malabar.

EEIC in Malabar: The Quest for Circulatory Channels

In the last decades of the 18th century, the English East India Company (EEIC) in Malabar was guided by the principle of 'state for the sake of trade'. This term could be explained as the establishment of state control for easing the process of procuring, processing and transporting of items from Malabar. In the initial years the British could collect the spices from Malabar quite easily, but later they encountered some obstacles in it. The Treaty of Srirangapattanam was the realisation of their need to grab a space in the political landscape of Malabar. The Treaty contains specific provisions to prevent the indigenous rulers in taking their own decisions and it encourages them to be dependent on the British for their trade affairs. Even in the realm of politics, they could not shed away the British sway. They could not take even political decision independent of the British intervention.

The political subjection of the indigenous rulers of Malabar was devised as a strategy of the British to ensure the abundant availability of spices for the European market. The British made the indigenous rulers of Malabar as their political subjects and it prevented them from delivering any political direction that might hinder the inflow of spices to the colonial needs.

Put it differently, the British devised a strategy to avert any influence of the indigenous rulers upon the spice producers of the region. They wanted to ensure the uninterrupted cultivation of the spices, at least in Malabar. They did not want the indigenous rulers to be havocs in pepper production.

In Malabar the British made some specific arrangements for the procurement of spices. They understood the limitations in the centralised procurement of spices and pepper, and for that they made separate treaties with the petty rulers in Malabar. This historical task on behalf of the British was performed by the Joint Commissioners. As it is known in the initial years of colonial rule on Malabar, the region was placed under the Bombay Presidency. In his capacity as the Governor of Bombay Presidency, General Abercrombie, sent Alexander Dow and William Gamul Farmer as Joint Commissioners. Their mission was to enter into treaties with the indigenous rulers and to get their assurance in the supply of spices to the British. They made individual treaties with the indigenous rulers of Malabar.

An analysis of the activities done by the Joint Commissioners in Malabar would underline how important their role in the initial years of colonial rule. They had performed two tasks: one was to ensure money supply to the emerging colonial yoke in Malabar and two was to ensure the uninterrupted supply of spices to the British. To the first end, they leased out even their political rights on Malabar and generated revenue out of it. For instance, they made a settlement with the Samutiri of Kozhikode and it could ensure them an amount of Rs.4,17,366[3]. Similarly, they leased out Palakkad to

[3] Diary 18, August 1792, BCD, Cited in K K N Kurup, *History of Tellicherry Factory,* Calicut University, 1985, pp.219.

Itta Punga Achan, a younger member of the royal family, for a net amount of Rs.80,000/-[4].

Equally at par with the money supply to the British in Malabar in the initial years, they further made settlements with the indigenous elites to procure the spices at a price fixed by the British. For instance, the Chirkkal Raja had committed to supply the whole pepper in his region to the British at the rate of Rs.100 as fixed by the British. They devised certain tactics to ensure the uninterrupted supply of pepper and other spices of high European demand. Though the collection of tax dues was done as cash the British preferred to collect dues to them as kinds, as they expected to meet their demand for Indian spices. There were instances in which the British had persuaded the local chieftains and rajas to pay their dues or tributes in sandalwood, pepper and cardamom. While discussing the British ascendancy in Malabar, there has been a undue emphasis on spice trade and the management of spices' availability in the region[5]. But it is clear that the British were driven by the urge to bring this part of western coast under their control for obtaining political gains. Spice trade from Malabar was crucial to the British as it brought the wealth and glory to them.

As trade and commercial initiatives constituted the principal driving forces of the British domination of Malabar, it is essential to look at the management of trading in the initial years of colonial domination. At the outset of their imperial heyday in Malabar, the British had focused in the management of trade with the East. The English East India Company had monopolistic control of trade between the East and Europe. In the

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4 William Logan, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and other Papers of Importance relating to the British affairs in Malabar,* Madras, 1951, No.XI, p.153.

5 For more information see M N Pearson, *Spices in the Indian Ocean World,* Routledge, New York, 1996, and John Keay, *The Spice Route- A History*, University of California Press, California, 2020,

management of trade inside India, they had permitted the British private individuals to control it. But in the 19th century, new tendencies were evident in the trade and commercial arena. The Company, by side-lining the private British involvement in the Indian trade, began to take the lead in the commercial activities. It was possible for them to do so, due to the increased financial capability it had achieved by then. The Company and its activities were driven by the ultimate motive of grabbing more and more items that were of high demand in the West. They felt that the capture of political control should be reflected in easing the inflow of spices and other items of trade importance. The domination of the British in the initial years was centred on the coastal region. But the products for the European markets were abundant in the interiors. Since, Malabar has already connected via water ways, they urged further steps to use them effectively for the circulation of materials of commercial value.

Contextualising Waterways in Colonial Malabar

The establishment of Company rule in the trading arena of Malabar necessitated some fundamental changes in the management spices. The procurement of spices came into the hands of the Company and they then thought of the transportation modalities of the spices and other items of commercial importance from Malabar. Waterways in India may broadly be categorised as navigable rivers, navigable canals and coastal navigation[6]. Fortunately Malabar is benefitted with all these categories of navigation. When it comes to the English intervention in waterways, initially, they were in favour of using the then existing channels of commodity transportation. Motivated by the urge to maximise profit by means of reducing operational expense, the Company thought of using the waterways of Malabar for it. They

[6] William Earnest Weld, *India's Demand for Transportation,* Columbia University, New York, 1920, p.53

did not want to dwindle their profit by involving in 'unwanted investments' in transportation sector of Malabar. The 'well connected landscape' of Malabar via waterways was an ideal channel for the Company to carry out their trading activities.

At the inception of their rule, they could go ahead without much difficulty. But with the expansion of spice trade from Malabar, they realised something should be done to improve, even, the waterways as well. To make the rivers, rivulets, and backwaters of Malabar, conducive to spice trade, the Company had gone for dredging the rivers and other channels. Having learnt that the deposits of mud, stone etc., in the rivers had created issues for free navigation, they made provisions for clearing it. Unwanted mud and stone deposits were removed at places like Ponnani, Valapattanam and Ponnani. Dredging was done at ports like Ponnani and Beypore and it made possible for the big ships to reach at the shores to do loading and unloading.

In the second half of the 19th century, the Company authorities had initiated some measures for extending the water connectivity further into the interiors of Malabar. The authorities at Madras Presidency office had given timely instructions to their subordinates in Malabar to carry out the further extension of waterways. The colonial authorities in Malabar had received specific orders from the Madras Presidency to investigate and report on the further extension of water transport in Malabar. They instructed to do a survey of water transport from Beypore to Karkur[7]. Following this Captain J Bean had led a survey and his conclusion was crucial in the development of water transport in Malabar. To him, the navigation from Beypore to Areacode would be difficult in all seasons.

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7 *G O No. 1073 Dated 10th June, 1861 of the Madras Presidency*, in *PWD Consultations*, RAK

Following the survey of Captain J Bean, the authorities at Madras Presidency had reconsidered the project of expanding water transport in the interiors of Malabar. Due to the abundance of rocky jungle stream, the expansion of waterways was not advisable. In the very next year they intimated that such a project cannot be taken up as it was difficult to execute. The authorities at Madras Presidency were not in position to continue with the project[8]. They further gave orders to use the tolls collected at ferries for the expansion water transport in Malabar. It shows the ambivalence of the British in carrying out the development of water transport in the initial years of their operation. They were not in much favour of utilizing the British revenues for expanding the connectivity.

On the other hand the authorities at Madras Presidency had an eye on the accumulated amount collected as tolls at different ferries in Malabar. They were of the view that the development of the waterways in Malabar could be done at the cost of the revenue generated out of the tolls itself. The region had collected a huge amount as tolls from the ferries. During the period from 1832 to 1852 the total toll collected through ferries all across Malabar was Rs. 7,02,416/-out of it only Rs. 3,11,664/- was spent for the betterment of water transport in Malabar[9]. Though Court of Directors had frequently reminded the Company authorities to spend the entire amount for the improvement of the water transport facilities, nothing was done by them.

The Company authorities were of the view that the water transportation does not need much improvement and the remaining money could be used for the betterment of other transportation activities in Malabar. In one instance, concerns were raised on the use of revenue from ferry for the development of

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8 *G O No. 356 dated 4th March 1862 of the Madras Presidency*, in *PWD Consultations*, RAK

9 *Report of Public Works Department of Madras Presidency for the Year 1851-52,* Madras, 1852, p.161, RAK.

other modes of transports. They worried the ferry receipts may be extinguished if that revue is used for constructing roads or bridges[10]. The statistics on Malabar trade in the first half of the 19th century further underline the capability of water transport. The British could make substantial profit with the help of the then existing water transport infrastructure in Malabar.

The official statistics available with the colonial rule in Malabar underlines that the balance of trade in the first half of the 19th century was in favour of the region. The value of imports and exports from Malabar was Rs. 17,63,426/- in 1804 and it rose substantially to Rs. 62,48,412/- in 1836-37[11]. Within a period of thirty years, the value of imports and exports from Malabar rose to more than three times. The colonial authorities realised that the trade with Malabar was crucial to the sustenance of colonial heyday. They further realised that such a huge value in trade could be achieved with the help of the existing transportation infrastructure. They did not feel the need of improving water transportation in Malabar.

However, some discussions were there in the interiors of the colonial state with regard to the river management in Malabar. The huge profit that the Company had achieved with the help of the existing water transportation infrastructure could be doubled, if necessary provisions were made on the expansion of the coverage area of it. The British made slight advancements on the conditions of rivers and backwaters in Malabar. It had its effect on the trading activities of the region. The colonial river management of the British suggested to initiate some measures to interlink the canals with rivers in Malabar. They came up with a specific plan called as West Coast Canal

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10 *Extract Minutes of Consultation No.398 Dated 5th April. 1855* in *The Circular Orders of the Board of Revenue for the Year 1856*, John Maskell, Madras, 1857, p.33, TNSA, Egmore.

11 P Clemenston, *A Report on Revenue and other Matters Connected with Malabar,* Dated 31st December 1839, Calicut, 1914, p.13.

(WCC). The plan was to have a set of artificial canals that could create a river network by linking with the rivers. The proposed West Coast Canal (WCC) was conceived as water transport infrastructure network linking the erstwhile British Malabar, native states of Kochi and Thiruvithamkur. It involves the support and management of colonial as well as native states. It was evidenced in the initial works of the project. As stated at the outset, the territory in between Kavvai in the north and Chetwai in the south was handed over to the British, as part of the provisions of the Treaty of Srirangapatanam.

Being the special commissioner of Malabar, Mr. Graeme, had prepared a detailed report on 'slavery in Malabar coast'[12]. He proposed the idea of linking the region from Kavvai to Chetwai via water transport network. In order to materialise that plan, Lt. Proby was appointed. As a preliminary, he conducted an extensive survey covering such a long distance. His plan further included the linkage of rivers of Malabar with special emphasis on connecting the market centres in the district. He proposed to link coastal markets like Valapattanam, Kannur, Thalassery, Vadakara, Calicut, Beypore, Tanur, Ponnani and Chavakkad. The colonial authorities at Madras accorded their ascent to the project[13]. Such a positive gesture came from the Presidency authorities as they thought of tapping the mercantile potential of the water connected markets in the Malabar coast.

The British had prepared specific plan for the execution of the project. They made four sections in Malabar as part of the West Coast Canal and two sections in the indigenous state of Kochi. The first section was from Kavvai to Azhikkal that passes through Ezhimala, Mattul and Valapattanam river. The second section, was from Vadakara to Kadalundi. It consisted of three canals:

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12 J Buckingham (ed.), *The Parliamentary Review and Family Magazine,* Vol.II, London, 1833, p.446.

13 *G O No. 417, 33-37 dated 4-3-1857, of the Madras Presidency* in *PWD Consultations*, RAK.

Vadakara canal that links Vadakara with Murad river, Elathur-Kallai canal that links Payyoli, Calicut and Feroke through the Kotta, Agalapuzha and Korapuzha and finally Chaliyar-Kadalundi canal that links Kallai, Beypore and Chaliyar rivers. The third section is Kadalundi-Tirur canal and it passes through Kadalundi and Pooraparamba rivers. The fourth section is from Tirur to Ponnani. It touches important places in and around Ponnani. The prime objective of the proposed project was to integrate the whole of Malabar and to tap the commercial potential of the region in favour of the British[14].

In the development of waterways in Malabar, the British had devoted much of their effort and money for the upliftment of Ponnani and Chettuvai. They completed the linking of both these two prime trade centres via canals for tapping their trade fortunes. They even resorted to allocate an amount of Rs. 14500/- in 1854-55 for the construction of Ponnani-Chavakkad canal[15]. On the basis of technical advice, and to ease the process of integration, a new dam was built at Chettuvai in 1853 under the leadership of Captain Selby. Similarly a new channel was cut from Sholingur tank to Ponnani at a cost of Rs.9985/-[16]. The linking of Ponnani and Chettuvai was crucial for the British to maximise their trade gains as they were two prime gateways of Malabar trade.

Chettuvai, on the other hand, was the central point, was an entrepot, onward journey to the West. The colonial authorities thought that the linking would further enhance the volume of trade from Malabar and it would make the balance of trade in favour of the Company. The result of this canal construction was as expected by the British. William Robinson, the acting

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14 P Narasimha Iyyangar, *Inland Water ways in the Madras Presidency,* Madras, 1936. Details of the Western Coast Canal could be found in this book.

15 *Extract from the Minutes of Consultations, Dated 8 April, 1857*, in *G O No.656-4 Dated 8-4-1857 of the Madras Presidency* in *P W D Consultations*, RAK.

16 William, *Malabar* (Vol.1), Madras, 1887, pp.80-83.

Collector of Malabar, reported to the Chief Engineer that the more than 8000 boats were in the canal[17]. The construction of this canal, enhanced the commercial potential of the region and it is evidenced in the increased water traffic in the canal.

Col. Henry Valentine Conolly and Water Management in Malabar

A close examination of the process would reveal that the British had faced several practical difficulties in the implementation of the West Coast Canal and the intervention of some officials had speed up the process. The reign of Col. Henry Valentine Conolly proved to be a turning point in the history of the development of waterways in Malabar. His farsightedness in water management is evident in the construction of Elathur-Kallai reach of WCC which is popularly called as Conolly canal. The reach from Elathur to Kallai of the WCC was the brainchild of H V Conolly. Having posted in Malabar in 1840, Conolly thought of speeding up the process of canal construction as he understood, it would bring much fortunes not only of trade but of administrative to the region. The detailed project report was submitted to the Madras government in 1845 and within one year they had accorded administrative sanction to the project. Within two years the work was commissioned.

The construction of this reach of WCC was of great importance as it would integrate two important rivers, Korapuzha and Kallai puzha. It was proposed to connect Vadakara and Payyoli, two important trade centres of that times. It was further proposed to integrate the canal with Agalapuzha also. The canal covering more than 16 KMs in length and it runs through the Calicut city by connecting Korapuzha and Kallai rivers. The canal touches

[17] *Letter from W Robinson, Acting Collector, Malabar to Col. C E Faber CE, dated 17 August 1857, No. 4104,* in *G O No. 1966,83, dated 20-1-1857, PWD Consultations*, RAK.

places like Edakkad, Eranhikkal, Karamparamba, Eranhipalam, Puthyara, Muriyad and Mankave. These places were well established local exchange centres and played a pivotal role in collecting the local commercial products for the European market. Though the work of the Canal was commenced in 1845, its extension was stalled consequent to the assassination of Conolly. In 1860, the project was further extended when the canal was connected to Vadakara by the Payyoli to make Vadakara canal. It is evident that William Robinson had taken the initiative of completing the construction by understanding the instrumentality of the project in the administration and trade of Malabar.

The British had undertaken the extension of waterways all across Malabar. William Robinson seems to be a forgotten figure in the history of the waterways in Malabar. Certain references of his activities are found in the Gazetteer of Nilgiris[18]. In 1855, the Tanur- Kootayi canal which links Tanur and Venjolly backwater was completed. On allocating an amount of Rs. 5020/-, they could complete the extension up to Keeranellur, a shore near Parappanangadi[19]. Similarly, Robinson thought of linking Pooraparamba to Kadalundy and Beypore via water means and in pursuance of his desire, in 1857-58 an amount of Rs. 19920/- was allotted for the construction of Pooraparamba canal. It was a significant achievement in the history of waterways in colonial Malabar.

The district administration had taken special care in the development of riverine networks and for that a substantial allocation was made on the construction of waterways in Malabar. The canal construction was an area where the British had shown some pioneering works. Their managerial skills

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[18] W Francis, *The Madras District Gazetteers: Nilgiris*, Logos Press, New Delhi, 1908 (Reprint 1984),p.371.

[19] *Report on Important Public Works for 1854*, Madras, 1856, p.28, TNSA Egmore.

and technical knowhow had contributed much to the development of waterways in Malabar. Further a substantial amount of capital had been spent on the development of canals in Malabar. It is noted that during 1856-57 to 1873-74 the amount spent on canal construction in Malabar was Rs.32800/- and it was only Rs.19167/- during the period from 1851 to 1855[20]. The administrators in Madras were of the view that the potential of Malabar in waterways had not been fully utilized for want of better management and resources.

The Court of Directors had appointed a commission for enquiring the problems of public work activities across Madras and in their report a special section was devoted to Malabar. Contrary to the works did, the Report of the Commission made negative remarks on the construction activities done in Malabar. They were of the view that Malabar, being a landscape crisscrossed by streams, had enormous potential of developing its waterways in a proper manner. However, it could not be done due to several reasons. They recommended to limit governmental intervention in road construction only. The development of waterways had been handed over to the British private individuals[21]. It might be due to the mounting pressure of the British capitalists on the colonial state with the intention to tap the revenue generated out of the waterways in Malabar. They had the plan to extract the tariff potential of the ferries in Malabar. The administrative and strategic motives of the British state clubbed with profit mongering British capitalists resulted in the expansion of canals and other irrigation works in Malabar.

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[20] *Statistics of Malabar, 1873-74*, Madras, 1874, p. 17, RAK and *Report on Important Public Works for 1851*, Madras, 1854, p.71, RAK.

[21] *First Report of the Madras Public Works Commissioners,* Madras, 1852,p.43, TNSA Egmore

Connectivity Nodes under Siege: Malabar Rebellion of 1921.

When it comes to the discussion on the impact of canals and irrigation works undertaken by the British in Malabar, they may be categorised broadly into administrative and commercial. The expansion of canals and other related developments in Malabar could be seen an strong instance of colonial governmentality. The colonial British state had created multiple forms of governance to reach out every nook and corner of Malabar. They understood the significance of extensive connectivity through water, since Malabar already had a rich hydraulic linkage. The land of Malabar was criss-crossed via several rivers and rivulets and the people of the land had already been largely depended on it.

The British in Malabar explored the riverine transport and they devised plans to maximise water connectivity in the region. They explored the riverine transport of the region and what they could do was simply integrate the streams of Malabar through their technical knowhow and managerial skills. They had done it effectively in Malabar and the canals initiated by them could be seen as the typical instances of that initiatives. During the days of Malabar Rebellion of 1921, the rebels had targeted the nodes of connectivity on a strategic line. They had targeted the bridges, built across the rivers, as the channels through which the armies were mobilised. Put it differently, the rebels had identified bridges, the infrastructural initiatives of the British, as the channels through which troops had been deployed to suppress their mobilizations. There were several instances in which they had destroyed numerous bridges built across Malabar, especially in its southern parts. For instance, on 16th October 1921, the two bridges on the Angadippuram road, just outside Manarghat, were broken[22]. Similarly, "two bridges at Ariyur were

[22] R H Hitchcock, *Peasant Revolt in Malabar: A History of the Malabar Rebellion*, Usha Publications, New Delhi, 1983,p.69.

broken anew"[23]. There was another instance in which the Kakkathodu bridge between Pandikkad and Wandur was badly broken for the second time on this date, i.e., 17th October 1921"[24].

The frequent destruction of the bridges had created a problematic situation to the British and they had devised two-sided strategy to overcome that situation. Firstly, they rebuilt the damaged bridges on a war-footing and special arrangements were made for that. Secondly, they made use of the rivers and water channels for the movements of the troops[25]. A significant instance in the first strategy could be found here: "A request, sent to Kottakkal Kovilagam to have the bridge repaired at Puthur on the Tirur-Malappuram Road, and given to Achambat Kunhali Kutti Haji to have the Parappanangadi-Tirurangadi road cleared which was badly blocked, was complied with"[26]. Similarly, "On 5th September 1921, they marched to Vadapuram (6 miles), then part of the column went to Nilambur (2 miles) and part to Mambad one mile where they learnt that the Valluvangad bridge repaired on the 2nd had been dismantled again. In the first 6 miles several broken culverts had to be repaired and felled trees cleared"[27]. The British made certain specific contingents to do the repairing works of the damaged bridges. "A party of Sappers was sent on 8th September 1921 to repair the bridge"[28]. Sappers were one of the contingents to do the repairing works of the wrecked bridges in Malabar. Miners were another group entrusted the restoration works of the destroyed bridges in Malabar. It is stated that "the Sappers and Miners, and the 64th Pioneers were working on the roads and bridges throughout the

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23 *Ibid.,*p.69.

24 *Ibid.,*p.73.

25 Mozhikunnath Brahmadathan Namboothiripad, *Khilafath Smaranakal* (Mal.), Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikode, 1965 (Reprint 2022), pp.21-22.

26 R H Hitchcock, *Op.Cit.,*p.63.

27 *Ibid.,* p.63.

28 *Ibid.,*p.64.

area"[29]. Since the repairing of the destroyed bridges were of high importance, they made some specific arrangements for it.

Secondly, the British in Malabar had to divert their troop movement via rivers and water channels. It was done primarily of two reasons. One was to enter the interiors of south Malabar, where the rebellion, was in full swing and secondly, to overcome the difficult situation created by the destruction of bridges by the rebels. As a part of colonial governmentality, the British had used the riverine transport in the region for the conveyance of military personnel. As stated earlier, Malabar was nicely connected via waterways. It is clear that much before the emergence of colonialism on the shores, the indigenous or regional ruling houses, and non-British European powers had made use of the waterways of Malabar for the transportation of troops. To follow the footsteps of their pioneers, the British too thought of 'taming' the rebels of Malabar by deploying the troops through the well-knit Malabar. The canals that were integrated and newly constructed by the British could provide means for the movement of troops to the interior parts of Malabar. There were several instances in which the troops were deployed through waterways.

It is also interesting to note that the British had realised the importance of inland water navigation for the troop movements in Malabar than that of the land routes[30]. They preferred it due to destruction of bridges by the rebels. It was relevant as many of the roads were destroyed or obstructed by the rebels. The troop deployments had significant role in the suppression of rebellious mobilisations in Malabar. It is also significant to note that the

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29 *Ibid.,*p.73.

30 *Routes in Madras Presidency 1879*, Quarter Master General's Office, Madras, 1879, p. 510.

indigenous people had developed their own strategy to counter the anti-rebel mobilisations of the colonial state.

It is noted that "two platoons of Leinsters then came from Calicut by boat to relive the Dorsets"[31]. In another instance, On 28th October 1921, two companies of the Malabar Special Police, 'A' company under Mr. Tottenham and 'B' under Mr. Colebrook marched up the river from Calicut. It was till then the trouble at Areekod was purely local and the demonstration march through Areekod might suffice to restore order along the river while the 3/70th which had been ordered to Areekod would deal with the situation there, but the first day the baggage boat was fired on"[32]. Thus, the waterways in Malabar, during the Rebellion of 1921, became an unusual battle ground. The rebels identified the riverine networks established by the British as the channels through which the colonial state had resorted to put down the popular upsurge. The destruction of transportation channels was a part of the rebels' strategy. However, the colonial state could suppress the rebels by using the waterways in Malabar.

Roads in Colonial Malabar

In every society, people do need channels for interacting with each other in their vicinity and far off regions. Human beings always eager to move around for satisfying many of their needs. As it is well-known, the discovery of wheels proved to be of pivotal importance in human history. "The wheel is probably the most important mechanical invention of all time"[33]. The pristine pioneers reported to have used crude models of wheel for moving weight from one place to other. They had placed runners under heavy load, and it

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31 R H Hitchcock, *Op.Cit.*,p.66.

32 *Ibid.,* p. 78.

33 J S Rao, *History of Rotating Machinery Dynamics: History of Mechanism and Machine Science 20*, Springer, Netherlands, 2011, p.2.

gave birth to the invention of sledge. The use of wheel in transportation was another remarkable achievement in human history. "The first use of wheel for transportation was probably on Mesopotamian chariots in 3200 BC"[34]. In due course of time mechanized vehicles began to be used and modifications were there in the wheels as well. The newly invented wheels required properly made and fashioned roads.

Roads in history constitutes an important point of discussion. "By the modern use of the term road is meant a way which is provided with a smooth and hard surface and easy grades, with permanent bridges over the streams and which possesses adequate drainage"[35] Roads are always alluded as the channels though which a society walks to the shores of modernity out of its crude modes of connectivity. One cannot confine roads merely as the channels of communication and interaction, instead, they do bring light to the grim pages of history. In that sense, roads are the modes that bring civility and progressiveness, and at the same time they are also the outcome of insightful administration focused on comprehensive development. The Classical Romans were the epitome of mastery in road making in the ancient world and the British had reported to have continued that tradition[36]. As they experienced and championed the Industrial Revolution, roads were the essential necessity and consequence of the English industrial urge[37]. There were Turnpike Trusts in England, who had the responsibility of maintaining principal roads by collecting tolls[38]. The felt necessity of the British to have

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34 *Ibid.,* p.2.

35 William Earnest Weld, *Op.Cit.*, p.58.

36 Aditya Ramesh and Vidhya Raveendranathan, *Infrastructure and Public Works in Colonial India: Towards a Conceptual History,* in *History Compass*, Vol.18, Issue.6, 2020, pp.1-10.

37 J. Chartres, *Road Transport and Economic Growth in the Eighteenth Century*, in Feinstein A Digby and D Jenkins (Eds.), *New Directions in Economic and Social History*, Palgrave, London, 1992, p.51.

38 *Ibid.,*p.53.

developed roads necessitated to implement turnpike system, where the commuters in a road are supposed to pay an amount for using the road. It is like toll road and word originates from the old practice of placing pikes or barriers across the road that could be turned to block the passage until the toll was paid. In the 18th century the English had adopted this system and "no less than 452 separate Turnpike Acts were passed by the Parliament during the 14 years between 1760 and 1774"[39]. To meet the financial stringency the British had devised a strategy to impose user free mechanism both on waterways and roads.

The British people, being the champions of 'new road making mission', had brought the idea of strengthening the road network to all places they colonized. Malabar was not an exception to this. As it is known, Malabar was integrated to the colonial yoke of Britain as an aftermath of the Anglo-Mysore wars. Malabar, as a region, had experienced the rule and might of several alien ruling houses even before the rise of British. Europeans had eyed on Malabar as a richest coast, and they had the eagerness to monopolize the trade transactions from there. Though the Europeans had traded spices and other items of importance from Malabar, none of them could make significant advancements in the development of connectivity channels like roads. They had engaged in trans-marine trading activities and spices from Malabar's hinterland were fetched by using the riverine channels. It was the British, who contributed much to the making of Malabar as a landscape intersected with a network of roads.

At this juncture, a question automatically comes to the fore: why there was an absence or shortage of road connectivity in Malabar in the pre-British period? When the British came here, there were practically no roads in

[39] Adam W Kirkaldy and Alfred Dudley Evans, *The History and Economics of Transport*, Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd., London, 1920, p.17.

Malabar. Though Malabar had the fame of being the centre of transmarine trade, roads had no place in the trade infrastructure. Malabar had a different story to offer on the role of roads in the expansion of trade. As it is known, road connectivity is the prerequisite for trade related activities, but Malabar could achieve all its fame without it. When it comes to causative factors for the absence or limited use of roads in Malabar, there are political and topographic and reasons.

Barring a brief spell under the Mysore sultans, Malabar did not experience the benefits of political consolidation. There were several minor ruling houses called as *swarupam*-s and chiefdoms in Malabar in the pre-British period. The absence of powerful, centralized, and resourceful state in Malabar was the prime reason for the backwardness in road construction. The resources generated across Malabar were fragmented and distributed in many hands. It prevented the possibility of a unified state and road making also. By and large the control of trade in Malabar was in the hands of certain specific communities. They had maintained a friendly relation with the local rulers. They had a reciprocal relation. The trading groups did not feel the necessity of well-made roads and hence no such initiatives were made.

Topographically, Malabar has certain specificities that created handicaps in the making of roads during the pre-British period. Malabar is crisscrossed by rivers and that made the making roads as a difficult task. Bridges had to be constructed across the rivers for the transportation via land and the traditional technology did not have the potential to meet that challenge. Further the connectivity anticipated through the roads were already achieved through the river network in Malabar. The rivers could bring the items of trade from the hinterlands of Malabar to the commercial centres. These channels were acted as the modes of people's interaction. In that sense, Malabar did not feel the necessity of roads in the pre-British period. A

significant change happened during the Mysorean occupation as they made some interventions in road making in Malabar.

An enquiry into the precedents of systematic road making in Malabar, historians often do consider Tipu Sultan as the starting point. He had the credit of constructing a network of roads in the region[40]. He made roads exclusively for transporting artillery, and such roads were alluded as 'gun roads'[41]. The colonial reporters had appreciated the beginnings made by Tipu Sultan. In the initial years of colonial yoke in Malabar, the 'English surveyors' exaggerated the region as well networked via roads than other regions in India. To them "Malabar was intersected by better roads perhaps than any other province of India"[42]. They consider the disused 'gun roads' of Tipu Sultan were of prime importance during the evaluation of roads in Malabar[43]. But it is apparent that the British made some notable steps to rework on the 'gun roads in Malabar. In 1796, the Company had assigned a Captain Lieutenant of Engineers for reporting the present state of 'gun roads'.

But one must investigate in which circumstance, the colonial surveyors had made such misleading statement as the itinerant voyager of the early decades of the 19th century offers grime side of the story[44]. Francis Buchanan had engaged a journey through the regional states of Mysore, Canara and Malabar from Madras. The journey was done in 1800 and 1801 and the volumes were brought out in 1807. The volumes of Buchanan, especially the second one, describes about of Malabar and the life there in the late 18th and

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40 Vikhar Ahmed Syeed, *Tipu in Malabar* in *Frontline,* January 05, 2018.

41 R D Palsokar, *Tipu Sultan*, Poona, 1969, p.113.

42 Innes and Evans, *MalabarGazetteer,* Kerala Gazetteers *Department, Thirvananthapuram, 1997,,* p.62.

43 C K Kareem, *Kerala Under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan*, Kerala History Association, Thiruvananthapuram., 1973, p.159.

44 Francis Buchanan, *A Journey From Madras Through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar* (Vol.2), 1807, pp.156.

early 19th centuries. Along with other descriptions, Buchanan talks of the condition of connectivity modes in Malabar. In his narration, one could find the deplorable condition of roads in Malabar, and he ascribes the neglection of local rulers as the prime reason for it.

The indigenous rulers who had under the spell of traditional and primitive social value systems could not think of societal interactions that could be materialized through these roads. Further, they could never visualize the revolutionary impact of trade and commerce on the political economy of Malabar. While detailing his journey, Buchanan gives some information about the ways he had crossed. It is stated that "the woods through which we passed today are very fine; but the declivities are rather steeper, the roads are worse, and the country is more rocky"[45]. The condition of roads was worse. Or one would say, that were not roads. While recording the details of his journey on 7th December 1800, Buchanan had stated that "we went a short stay at Shelacary (present day Chelakkara?). The road leads through a most beautiful country"[46]. An important reference to road could be found here.

In another instance, Buchanan makes a specific reference on the condition of roads in the vicinity of Shelacary. The Raja had the eagerness to meet Buchanan and for that he made some temporary roads, which were visible to all. Buchanan describes what he could experience in the region: "The Raja made tolerable roads thorough the hilly parts of the country all the way we have come and made for our accommodation they had been repaired."[47] It shows the eagerness that the local rulers had made in the making of roads in the region. However, he blamed the local ruler for not preparing the roads for trade and commerce. "In fact, the roads have been

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45 *Ibid.,*p.345.

46 *Ibid.,*p.389. Emphasis is added by the present researcher.

47 *Ibid.,* p.390.

made from ostentation alone, and not from any rational view of facilitating commerce or social intercourse"[48]. It also underlines the primacy that the entire English had assigned to trade.

Buchanan blamed the local rulers for not understanding possibilities of commercial and social interactions that could be materialized through the roads. But the local rulers might not have considered roads as the essential channels for social and commercial interactions. The problem was with the perspective of Buchanan, who had the narrow European experience with transportation modalities. He could not perceive the traditional ways of social and commercial interactions prevalent in non-European societies. In Malabar, the river networks were the channels that brought the commercially important products from the hinterland to the coastal markets. They further acted as the modes through which social interactions had taken place.

The English bequeathed Malabar as a land with limited road connectivity. The primary objective of British in India was to tap the commercial potential of this land for the benefit of them. England in the post-Industrial Revolution period was characterized by the abundance of mechanized production which demanded raw materials as well as markets for the finished goods. They considered Malabar as a place which could supply the spices and other items of European importance. Kerala had the fame of being the supplier of spices even during the ancient Roman period onwards[49]. The Malabar coast had experienced visitors from different parts of the world. The Arabs, being one of the prominent trading communities, had anchored the coast of Malabar for trading purpose. A close examination of trade mechanism

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[48] *Ibid.,* p.390.

[49] Dick Wittaker, *Conjunctures and Conjectures: Kerala and Roman Trade* in *Journal of Asian History* (JAS), Vol.43. No.1, 2009, pp.1-18.

during the pre-British period would reveal that they had relied on riverine network for the transportation of goods.

The arrival of British in Malabar coast had heralded a new era not only in the commercial history, but also in the transportation history of the region. Malabar in the late18th century was like a place where no significant development had occurred in the field of road construction. But that too was the general condition of South India as a whole. The British did not make notable intervention in road making in Malabar. It is stated that south Indian roads were "unbridged, imperfectly drained, and out of repair for years, that there were roads no longer"[50]. It presents the dilapidated condition of roads in South India, in general, and Malabar in particular. In the initial years of their presence in Malabar, the British did not make substantial progress in the construction of roads. There were many factors that impeded road construction in Malabar in the initial years of British rule.

As it is known, Malabar was handed over to the British as per the provisions of the Treaty of Srirangapatanam. Politically, the British received Malabar as a unified administrative terrain. The British had encountered much political disturbances in the initial year of their rule in Malabar. The agrarian unrest and consequent political turmoil in the southern part of Malabar, did not create much havoc to the British. They had initial inhibition in undertaking the road construction activities in Malabar. There were several factors prevented the British from initiating road making in Malabar. Capital was the necessary pre-requisite for any kind of construction. Though the British had collected taxes from the indigenous people of Malabar, initially they did not utilize the capital created out of it for the construction on roads or any other connectivity modalities. They identified certain other areas for the

[50] C. V. Ramachandran, *East India Company and South Indian Economy*, New Era Publications, Madras, 1980, p. 24

lucrative investment of capital in Malabar. Initially, the British rarely attempted in road making or road repairing in Malabar.

But the corrective force came from the echelons of the colonial state itself. Col. Dow urged the necessity to maintain roads in good condition as it was essential for the proper administration of Malabar. He called upon to use the labour potential of the locals to materialize roads in the region. Col. Dow suggested to use the tolls collected from the bullock-carts as a method to overcome the shortage of enough funds for roads[51]. Improvement of communication came in the agenda of the colonial state in the early decades of the 19th century. Board of Revenue of the East India Company had taken serious steps to overcome this crisis[52]. To them the District Collectors, being the principal officers in the district, should take the proper study of roads in their jurisdiction and urgent measures to be adopted to improve the standard of that roads. Surplus ferry fund could be used for the strengthening of communication channels in Malabar[53].

The initial inhibition of British in road making gave way to intervention in road construction, as it was necessary for the deployment of military. It is noted that in the Madras Presidency the newly made military lines were used for connecting the military arsenals and military cantonments[54]. The British had used their money and effort for constructing a line to Wynad and it was done in the pretext of Pazhassiraja's campaigns. However, the road construction efforts in Malabar were largely neglected by

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51 Col. Dow, cited in William Logan, *Op.cit.,* 1887, p.62.

52 John Keay, *The Honourable Company: A History of the English East India Company*, HarperCollins Publishers, London, 1993, pp.356-357

53 Challa Ramachandran, *East India Company and South Indian Economy*, New Era Publications, Madras, 1980, p. 124.

54 *First Report of the Commissioners appointed to enquire into and report upon the system of superintending and executing Public Works in the Madras Presidency*, December, Madras, 1852, p.3, RAK.

the British. They did not make even an enquiry into the beneficial use of different lines not only in Malabar, but across India[55].

The apathetic attitude of the British towards road construction became waned as it was essential for troop movement. They considered the unhampered movement of the troops was to be ensured at any cost as it would adversely affect their performance in countering political unrest across Malabar. From their revenue the British did not make much allocation for road construction. When the British faced the necessity to ensure the free flow of commerce and the easy mobility of troops, they forced to show some interest in road construction in Malabar. They were also motivated to establish political sway over Malabar by distancing out the 'disturbances' of the rebellious communities in this region and it could be achieved only with the help of the military.

As it is already stated the rebels of Malabar had targeted the riverine channels as they had been used by the British to curb the rebellions in the southern part of the district. Since the mobilization of military through the rivers were obstructed by the rebels, the colonial state began to show much attention in the development of roads in Malabar. The agrarian outbreaks of the Mappilas of southern Malabar and their attack on the water channels, compelled the British to think of developing alternative paths for the deployment of military. As the first step, they resorted to clear out the obstructions in the dilapidated roads like Kalikavu-Sissipara road ghat road. This road was in high use earlier but was abandoned later. New roads were proposed in areas like Pandalur, Anakkayam, Perinthalmana etc[56].

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55 O P Jaggi, *History of Science, Technology and Medicine in India*, Atam Ram Sons, New Delhi, 1984, p. 58.

56 *General Report of the Board of Revenue to the Honourable Governor General in Council*, Madras, 1860, p.6, TNSA, Egmore.

As it is known, the southern part of Malabar, had frequented with the rebels of the agrarian folk in the second half of the 19th century and it had positive impact in the expansion of road making in the region. Road from Malappuram to Pandikkad was proposed to ease the process of army deployment. Fawcett, being the Superintendent of the Police of Malabar, had proposed more roads in Eranad taluk alone. He urged the authorities to initiate the construction of at least 500 miles of roads in Eranad alone and the suggested extension was only 177 miles[57]. Consequently, new roads like Pandikkad-Karuvarakkund, Melattur-Kalikavu etc., were opened.

British made specific administrative arrangements in Madras, of which Malabar was a part, to keep the entire Presidency under their control. They made extensive administrative mechanism to ensure the proper administration. In each Presidency they had set up revenue, judicial, military, and various other departments to keep the region under administrative control. In the specific case of Madras, there was the Board of Revenue, through which the Department of Revenue had functioned. It was constituted on 20th June 1786[58]. The Board of Revenue had played a pivotal role in the implementation of governmental policies in Madras and in Malabar too. It was the prime agency to carry road construction Malabar, but in some occasions, they too could not cope up with multiple compulsions. It is stated that though "the attempt to form good roads be impracticable, a great deal could be done to make roads better than they now are"[59].

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57 *G O No. 1567 Dated 3rd September, 1896 and the letter of Fawcett was attached to it*,RAK.

58 C D Maclean, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency* (Vol.1), Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1987, pp.147-148.

59 *Proceedings of Board of Revenue of Madras Presidency*, 7th December 1813, TNSA, Egmore.

In due course of time the colonial administrators made their own mechanism to strengthen the road making endeavours in Malabar. They devised some sections, including army men, to involve in the road construction process. However, most of them lacked technical skills that are essential in road making. What they possessed was their physical skills only and due to their inexperience, causalities were quite common. 'Corps of Pioneers', attached to the army, was one of the chief road-making organizations in Malabar. The responsibility to maintain the roads made by the 'Corps of Pioneers' came into the shoulders of military board. But they too lacked any technical expertise or knowledge[60].

In terms of financial outlay, the experimental interventions of the British in road making were proved to be loss to them. Hence the Court of Directors took a decision to stop it. They preferred to hand over the responsibility of roads to the district Collectors. To transcend the shortcomings of the 'Corps of Pioneers', a new wing, 'Sappers and Miners', was formed in 1831. Engineers were included in this new group to redress the absence of technically qualified persons. But still the problems persist. The colonial state was ready to address the problems as it hampered their commercial prospects. Lord Tweedale, the then Governor, came forward with a new remedial formula where he opined to strengthen the district roads.

Following that a separate department was constituted under the Superintendent of Roads, and it had the responsibility to do the maintenance of roads in the district. But due to the limited allotment, they could not do anything substantially in the initial years of its existence. However, in due course of time, because of the changing attitude of the British administration, the allotment for the functioning of the Department have increased. In 1830,

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60 A Sarada Raju, *Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency 1800-1850*, Madras University Economics Series-5, University of Madras, Madras, 1941, p.216.

the amount allotted for roads in the Malabar was a meagre amount of Rs.3150/- and within thirty years it rose to Rs. 23,705/- and in 1865 it was Rs.490,027/-[61].

Though the Road Department was constituted for giving additional emphasis on development of roads in Malabar, nothing significant was turned up positively. Consequently, a committee was formed to study the functioning of it and asked them to submit further recommendations. Then the newly formed seven-member committee came up with afresh recommendations, that could end the anathema of the colonial state and to speed up the process of road making in Malabar. They urged the need to create a network of roads across Malabar by linking all *Cusabah*-s and ghat roads[62]. It further recommended to make new ghat roads, if necessary. The committee recommendations could be taken as the reflection of changing attitude of the colonial state regarding the roads in Malabar as it had taken a proactive stance in it. Upon the recommendations of the Committee, a new Public Works Department (PWD) was formed in 1856 and it marked a significant change in the British attitude.

One must seriously investigate the reasons behind the attitudinal change of the British in road construction in Malabar. The second half of the 19th century marked 'a century of experiences' ushered by the Industrial Revolution. Within a century, remarkable achievements were made in the British industrial developments, and it gave new avenues to the British capitalists to grow up. It in turn automatically, generated a demand for new and developed modalities of transportation for ensuring free mobility for raw

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61 See *First Report of Madras Public Works Commissioners for the year 1851*, Madras, 1852, Appendix 2, pp.366-367, TNSA, Egmore and also *Statistics of Malabar, 1869-70*, Madras 1870, p.170, RAK.

62 *Selections from the Records of Government, Collective Memorandum of Public Works in Madras Presidency*, Madras, 1854, p.10, RAK.

materials and finished goods. The then existing networks of roads in Malabar was not conducive to the increasing demands of the British capitalists.

The English East India Company, being the brainchild of the emerging British capitalists, was always eager to safeguard the capitalistic interests. By the second half of the 19th century, the British capitalists had to ensure the easy flow of raw materials and products[63]. The planters too came up with the request to expediate the process of road construction. For instance, Messrs. Leckie & Co., of Bombay who have extensive coffee plantations in Wynad sought the speedy construction of road through the Thamarassery pass[64]. The British capitalists urged the necessity to upgrade the standard of the connectivity nodes in Malabar. In that historical context, the Company had to sunder their 'non-interventionism' in road making in Malabar. The creation of PWD had speed up this process. To meet the paucity of funds, certain new decisions were taken and the remarkable one being the Local Fund Act of 1871. This act contained provisions to use the whole amount of toll and 2/3 of the cess for upgrading roads in Malabar[65].

New Administrative Mechanism

Despite the initial inhibition, the colonial administrators have taken the construction of roads in Malabar quite seriously and it is visible in the changes they made in the administrative mechanism. They devised a new operational mechanism to construct and maintain roads in Malabar. There were some mechanisms prior to the formation of Public Works Department in 1858. In Madras, of which Malabar was a part, there were Maramut Department of Board of Revenue, the Engineering Department of the Military

63 John Keay, *Op.Cit.*, 1993, p.335.

64 *Proceedings No. 1678 dated 11th July 1859 of the Secretary, Public Works Department, Madras Government, in the Correspondence File 705-145 R,* RAK.

65 *British Parliament: House of Commons-Report from the Committees 1874, (Vol. III)-East India Finance,* London, 1874, p.511, NAI, New Delhi.

Boards and the Trunk Road Department[66]. Though each of these departments had looked after the construction and maintenance of roads in the Presidency, the Maramut Department was of some additional importance. It had to maintain the bridges and roads which were neither under any other departments.

As stated earlier, the setting up of a Public Works Department (PWD) was significant in the history of road making in Malabar. The PWD had three executive branches like Buildings and Roads Division, Irrigation Division and Railways Division. Each of these Division was placed under a Chief Engineer and the senior most Chief Engineer was in charge of Roads and Bridges. He was also the Secretary to the Government[67]. At the District level, there was District Engineer who extended his support to the district Collector[68]. The authority that decided the works to be carried out in the district was the Collector and such works were executed by the District Engineer. The absence of specific laws on the power demarcation of the District Collector and District Engineer often attracted their mutual conflicts and such unwanted developments, on some occasions, pulled down the progress of road construction in Malabar. Some arrangements were made at the district level to avert the chances for concentration of power in the hands of the District Collector. It shows the alertness that the British had in the development of transportation networks in Malabar. In comparison with their intervention in linking the streams of Malabar, the British had shown more interest in road development.

66 C D Maclean, *Op.Cit.,* .373.

67 *Ibid.,* p.367.

68 *Ibid.,*p.336.

Typology of Roads in Malabar

To ensure the effective administration of roads, the British classified the roads in Malabar into three as the ghat roads, the trunk roads and intra-district roads that included district roads, coastal roads, local fund roads etc. Such classification is done on the basis of the nature landscape it passed through and distance they cover. The geography of the land had a significant role in fixing the nature of roads in this region. The region had hill ranges, slopes, muddy regions and littoral plains and it automatically determined the nature of roads there. It is stated that "the ghaut road is one connecting places and stations on hills and mountains with one another and with adjacent low plains"[69]. The ghat road construction project had served the colonial purpose of integrating the spicy rich high ranges to the mainland. In that sense it was a dream come true to them. It further brought the high ranges under the spell of colonial capital and the future emergence of plantations could be seen as an extension of it.

The making of ghat roads involves complex and length process. The first step is to identify the foot and head of the ghat. Once it is done, the next challenge was to locate the point to cross the river and streams. The final task is to figure out a suitable place to change from one valley to the another. High quantity of precision and engineering skills were required to perform this duty and it underlines the importance that the British had given to the construction of ghat roads in Malabar. It has rightly been pointed out that "engineering practice in these cases resembles similar works in the highlands of Scotland and Wales, and on the Alpine passes of Southern Europe"[70]. It underlines the importance that the British had given to the construction of roads in India.

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69 *Ibid.,* p.376.

70 *Ibid.,* , p.376.

They had further utilized their technological upper hand and managerial skills in the making of ghat roads in Malabar.

The British had mainly used this ghat roads for the transportation of articles with and from Nilgiri plateau. In the early years of the 19th century, they were worried of the plight of ghat roads in Malabar as they feared the adverse impact of it on trade fortunes. They decided to investigate and inform about the condition of ghat roads and in one such report, John Wye stated the plight of that roads. He made special reference to ghat paths at places like Mannarkkad, Attapady etc., and the worst condition of that roads had adversely affected the free transportation of goods. He understood the potential of trade between coastline and high ranges and the proper maintenance of that ghat roads would be of great importance and help in carrying out the trading activities[71]. Interestingly, in 1848, H V Conolly, being the Collector of Malabar, had reported the need to improve the condition of ghat roads in the region like Thamarassery, Kuttiady, Perambadi etc[72].

Thamarassery pass road was one of the important ghat roads that the British had initiated in Malabar. The British planters had extensive investments in Wynad and parts of Mysore. "The Tamracheri ghat road-one of Tipu's military roads-leading from Calicut through South Wynad to Mysore, was the line judiciously selected by Colonel the Honourable Arthur Wellesley (afterwards Duke of Wellington) as commander of the forces for the operations against the rebellious Palassi raja"[73]. Apart from that there was pressure from them to find out a land route to the western coast, to transport

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71 John Wye*, A Report on the Southern Division of Malabar*, dated 4th February 1801, pp.3-4, RAK.

72 Innes and Evans, *Op.Ci*t., p.269.

73 William Logan*, Op.cit.,* 1887,p.65.

the products via ships from the Calicut port[74]. When it comes to Thamarassery pass, there a mythical reference on Karinthandan, whose eternal remembrance was a chain tree at Lakkidi[75]. The story expands like this: "There was a time when the British had faced some difficulties in transporting spices from Wynad to Beypore and they painstakingly tried to find out a route but failed. Having heard from the local men about Karinthandan, an enlightened tribal youth, the British flocked to see him and sought his help"[76]. The tribal youth happily responded to the British request, and he helped them to complete project. The British rewarded Karinthandan with bullet through his chest. "Having learnt of the treachery of the British, the 'dissatisfied soul' of Karinthandan began to roam around and create disturbances to passengers and vehicles. Finally his spirit was tamed and enchained in a tree. People began to worship this *'changala maram'* or chain tree"[77].

What is the significance of this mythical reference? Does it any way keep justice to the historical past? In the construction of public works like roads, railways etc., the British had extensively used the labour potential of the local people including several professional groups. In the construction of Nanjangud- Tellicherry rail project it was anticipated to use "few hill-tribes which can be induced to do jungle cutting are quite good at it"[78]. After using the labour potential of the indigenous tribals, they might have killed by the

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74 *Proceedings No.1678 Dated 11th July 1859 of the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, Madras Government* in *Correspondence File 705/145 R,* RAK.

75 *Abhilash Babu, Karinthandan's Laughter will accompany you to across Wayanad Ghats,* in *https://www.onmanorama.com/travel/kerala/2019/03/19/karinthandan-urban-legend-myth-wayanad-ghats-kerala.html*

76 Dr. Bava K Palukunnu, *Karinthandan: Mythum Yadharthyavum* (Mal.), in *Chandrika Daily*, Kozhikode Edition, October 25, 2021.

77 *Bobins Abraham, On this Tree in Kerala, the Spirit of a Tribal Man Killed by British is believed to be Enchained,* in *https://www.indiatimes.com/news/india/kerala-chain-tree-wayanad-karinthandan-spirit-607228.html*

78 *Nanjangud-Tellicherry Railway Survey: Report and Estimates,* Madras, 1924, p.18, RAK.

British. Such an instance might be crystalized into social psyche and formed the Karinthandan myth.

The British gave special consideration to the Thamarassery ghat road and it is noted that "the Ghats to Wynaad are in good order, as are generally the roads"[79]. They wanted to extract the potential of Wayanad and for that it should be connected to the coast in a convenient manner[80]. The British made special arrangements for the speedy construction of Thamarassery pass road. Certain special officers were appointed to liaison and oversee the work. "The Government approved the proposed employment of a special officer on the Tambaracherry Ghat in re-examining the trace and superintending operations at that place. Captain Kennedy of the Sappers has been recommended for this duty, and the Government concurring in this recommendation are pleased to direct that, during the period for which that Officer may be thus engaged, he should be granted an allowance of Rupees 100 per mensem from the sanctioned estimate[81]. They ensured the timely periodical repair works of the Thamarassery ghat road. The new road at Thamarassery ghat was constructed between 1860 and 1870 by Madras Sappers and Miners[82].

Perambadi ghat is an important pass in the trunk road number 4. "The *Perambadi* ghat road leading from Tellichery and Cannanore through Coorg to Srirangapatam and Mysore"[83]. "The construction of the road from Cannanore to Coorg by way of Perambadi ghat, which was sanctioned in 1848

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79 *Letter Dated 16th March 1854 From H V Conolly, the Collector of Malabar to Captain J H Bell, Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Department of Public Works, Fort St. George,* in *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government- Report on District Roads for the 1853-54 (S/175)* Printed by Henry Texter at the Hindu Press, Madras, 1855, p.76, RAK.

80 O K Johnny, *Wayanad Rekhakal* (Mal.), Grassroots, Kozhikode, 2007, pp.100-110.

81 *Proceedings of the Secretary Government, Public Works Department-Revenue-No.2832 Dated 26th November 1862, (R/159),* RAK

82 C A Innes and F B Evans, *Op.Cit.,* p.271.

83 William Logan, *Op.cit.,* 1887, p.65.

and completed three years later, was the chief benefit conferred on Malabar by the road department created in 1845 for the maintenance of trunk roads int eh presidency"[84]. This ghat was an important channel through which the products from the east and the west were circulated. It is noted that "through this ghat sandalwood and pepper and grain and chillies and pulses and latterly, coffee were brought to the coast and return loads, chiefly of salt, were taken back"[85]. The colonial state had given much importance to the maintenance of the road, and it is evident in the conveniences made for the timely maintenance of Perambadi ghat. In the year 1854 a substantial amount was allotted for the maintenance of Perambadi ghat road. It is noted that "for metalling and draining certain portions of the Ghaut and road Rs.11,024-10-11/- was allotted"[86]. Thus, the connectivity with Mysore was ensured.

Periya ghat is another important ghat that connects Malabar to Mysore. "The *Periah* ghat road from Tellicherry and Cannanore through North Wynad to Mysore"[87]. The British had conceived this route as an alternative one for troops from the western coast to Mysore. British made timely and needy allotment for the maintenance of this ghat road. In 1862, for instance, Rs. 4,000/- was allotted for the maintenance of this ghat road.[88]. But later the prospects of this ghat was decreased due to the changes in the agricultural habits and for the coming of new roads. "The failure of coffee in North

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84 C A Innes and F B Evans, *Op.cit.*, p.270.

85 William Logan, *Op.cit.,* 1887, p.65.

86 *Selections from the Record of the Madras Government- No.VI- Report of the Road Department for the year 1854 (S/173*), Fort St. George Gazette Press, Madras, 1854, p.8, RAK.

87 William Logan, *Op.cit.,* 1887, p.65.

88 *Proceedings of the Secretary Government, Public Works Department-Revenue-No.2832 Dated 26th November 1862, (R/159),* RAK.

Wynaad has diminished the importance of the Periya ghat up with a new and easier road has been traced"[89].

Kuttiady ghat road was another ghat road in Malabar. "The Kuttyadi ghat road, leading from the head of the navigable rivers of the Kotta river into north Wyand, which at first was made, and afterwards maintained, chiefly for military purposes, in connection with Palassi Raja's rebellion"[90]. The idea of such a ghat road came into prominence during the rebellion of Pazhassiraja. As he made the dense forests of Wayanad as his hideouts, the British had to find out an inroad into that. Initially, the traffic of this ghat road was by means of pack-bullocks and coolies. Due to the strategic importance of this ghat road, the British gave funds for the renovation works. In 1863, an amount of Rs. 4,000/- was allotted for the maintenance[91]. They further made provisions for the monitoring of the works at Kuttiady ghat road. It is noted that "Cotiaddy (present day Kuttyadi) placed under the charge of Captain Syme"[92].

After the ghat roads, the second category of roads called as the trunk roads. The term 'trunk road' is used in Britain to indicate a major road that serves as a primary route for long distance travel and the movement of goods. It generally refers to the road that links important cities. In Malabar during the initial years of British domination, there were two trunk roads. The trunk road number 4 is from the frontier of Mysore to Kannur and trunk road number 5 is from Vaniyambadi to Ponnani. These two trunk roads were constructed to ensure connectivity to the north and south boundaries. In 1920 certain other roads too designated as trunk roads.

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89 C A Innes and F B Evans, *Op.Cit.,* p.271.

90 William Logan, *Op.cit.,* 1887, p.65.

91 *Proceedings of the Secretary Government, Public Works Department-Revenue-No.2832 Dated 26th November 1862, (R/159),* RAK.

92 *Ibid.*

Trunk road 4, from the Mysore Frontier, via Perambady Ghat to Kannur and it has the length of 68 miles. In 1854, certain steps were taken to strengthen the trunk road number 4 and allotments were made by the colonial authorities for it. Based on the plan and estimates prepared by Captain Ludlow, Civil Engineer of the 7th Division, allocations were made. "For the construction of two small bridges near Codolly (present day Koodali?) Rs. 2,109/-was allotted"[93]. The construction of a bridge over Iritty river was most needed in the trunk road number 4 and for that too, a sum of amount was allocated. It is noted that "for building a tress bridge across the Oorettee Todu (present day Iritty todu?) near the foot of the ghat an amount of Rs.1,395/- was allotted"[94]. In 1855, special consideration was given to the trunk road number 4 and a sum of Rs.14,529-12-10/- was allotted for the maintenance"[95]. Further, it is interesting to note that "in the year 1854-55 annual estimates for the repair of roads has increased as follows: Trunk Road 4: From Mysore frontier to Cannanore. It increased from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 per mile"[96].

Trunk road 5 is from near "Vaniembaddy (present day Vaniyambadi in Tamilnadu) on the Trunk Road No.1 to Ponany (present day Ponnani) on the Western Coast, 279 miles"[97]. Since the British gave importance to the goods transportation between Coimbatore and Ponnani, special care was given to

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93 *Selections from the Record of the Madras Government- No.VI- Report of the Road Department for the year 1854 (S/173*), Fort St. George Gazette Press, Madras, 1854, p.8, RAK.

94 *Ibid.*

95 *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government- Vol. XIII, Report on District Roads for the 1854-55 (S/177)* Printed at the Male Asylum Press, Madras, 1855, p.7, RAK.

96 *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government- Vol. XIII, Report on District Roads for the 1854-55 (S/177)* Printed at the Male Asylum Press, Madras, 1855, p.39, RAK.

97 *Selections from the Record of the Madras Government- No.VI- Report of the Road Department for the year 1854 (S/173*), Fort St. George Gazette Press, Madras, 1854, p.9, RAK.

this road. They made provisions for timely maintenance of the road. It is noted that "the works provided for in Estimate (H) or Rupees 12,328-13-0 for improvements between Waliaur (present day Walayar) to Ponany (present day Ponnani) 70 miles, have nearly all been completed, and the expenditure to the 30th of April has been Rupees 11,233-0-2"[98]. It is interesting to note that in the year 1854-55 the annual estimates for the repair of roads have increased as follows: Trunk Road 5: From Waliaur to Ponany. It increased from Rs. 30 to Rs. 100 per mile"[99].

There was interesting discussion held on the condition of Trunk Road number 5 between Mr. Knox and Mr. Collect, Sub Collectors of Malabar. H V Conolly quoting Mr. Knox writes the following: "The principal of these roads, viz., that leading from Coimbatore to Ponany is, I am glad to say, in good order now. Mr. Knox, the Sub Collector writes as follows on the 3d ultimo: "It is satisfactory to be able to state that this Trunk Road No, 5 is in excellent condition considering the peculiarity severe trial it is exposed to, from the increasing number of carts whose wheels cut as plough, against the action of which the best jelly procurable offers little assistance. A system of constant attention to small repairs is being introduced... a gentle man's carriage might be safely and speedily drive from Walliaur (present day Walayar?) to Ponany (present day Ponnani) in dry weather"[100].

However, Thomas Clark, the Collector of Malabar differs with his predecessor on the condition of roads in the Trunk Road Number 5. He notices: "Mr. Collect, the Sub Collector, differs with Mr. Knox his

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98 *Ibid.*

99 *Ibid.*

100 *Letter Dated 16th March 1854 from H V Conolly, the Collector of Malabar to Captain J H Bell, Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Department of Public Works, Fort St. George,* in *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government- Report on District Roads for the 1853-54 (S/175),* Printed by Henry Texter at the Hindu Press, Madras, 1855, p.75, RAK.

predecessor, as to the "goodness of Trunk Road No. 5, as more than an ordinary, slow, traffic road, faculty and incomplete in construction and consequently very inadequately maintained, and the funds that would be only sufficient for legitimate repair have for years have been really chiefly expanded in creating a road"[101]. Mr. Collect also states that, "having now driven over a great part of it I should say that two horses would find it a very difficult experiment with a four wheeled carriage, as I have discovered it is, in many parts not an easy one with two horses and only two wheels"[102]**.** The exact reason for such difference of opinion between two colonial officers is unknown, but it is clear that a substantial amount was spent to ensure the standard of the Trunk Road Number 5. It is evident that "the estimate of Rupees (7190) Seven thousand one hundred and ninety is sanctioned out of the one lac fund"[103]. "The Madras-Ponany Trunk Road have been greatly improved"[104]. In 1920, the following roads were designated as trunk roads and Government consented to provide grants for their maintenance-the Madras-Calicut Road (94 miles) Gudalur-Calicut Road (40 miles) and Gudalur-Vythiri road (19 miles)[105].

Intra-district roads in Malabar were chiefly managed by the Public Works Department, district boards, municipalities etc. To get a picture of the intra-district roads in Malabar in the last decades of the 18th century, the Minutes of Colonel Dow, prepared in 1796, is of great use. Malabar, during

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101 *Letter from T Clark Esq., Collector of Malabar to Colonel C E Faber, Chief Engineer dated 25th April 1856, No.167,* in *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government-Vol. XLVII- Report on District Roads for the 1855-56 (S/176)* Printed by Saravuppa Chetty at the Hindu Press, Madras, 1857, p.209, RAK.

102 *Ibid.*

103 *Proceedings of Secretary to Government, Public Works Department the Madras Government. No.2054 dated 27thAugust 1859 in the Correspondence File (706),* RAK.

104 *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government- No. XXX- Report of the District Roads for the year 1854 (S/174),* Printed by Henry Texter at the Hindu Press, Madras, 1856, p.7, RAK.

105 C A Innes and F B Evans, *Op.Cit.,* p.271.

the period, could not provide traces of wheeled carriages and it is evidenced in the condition of roads. During that time, roads were narrow, rarely better than the footpaths. In constructing roads in Malabar, Col. Dow directed to follow the routes selected by Tipu Sultan as "his routes are in general well-chosen and lead through almost every part of the province"[106]. Calicut to Thamarassery, Malappuram to Thamarassery, Calicut to Feroke, From Feroke to Walayar through Tirurangadi and Pattambi, from Beypore river to Kodungallur via Tanur, Ponnani, Veliyancode, Chavakkad and Chettuvai, from Tanur to Palakkad through Puthiyangadi, Tirunavai, Omallur, Thrithala and Lakkidikotta. From Feroke to Angadippuram, From Feroke to Nilambur etc., are the major routes covered by Tipu's Gun roads. The intra-district road development of the British was largely centred on the Tipu's pattern.

In Malabar, the coast road from Tanur to Kannur constitute a major district road. It had a feeder line from Thrithala to Tanur. The condition of that road reported to be fine and fair[107]. Such a road was meant to collect the coastal products and to bring the products of the hills to shore, so as to transship them to the western market. H V Conolly planned for further improvement of the road. It is noted that "I am improving it between Tirtalla and Tanoor and between Calicut and Budaghery (present day Vadakara?) by additional metalling"[108]. Along with the coastal road, they had great concern over the standard of the roads in high ranges and timely maintenance works were done in a diligent manner. In 1854, they greatly improved the road from Perambady Ghat road to Tellicherry as it was essential to ensure traffic

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106 Cited in William Logan, *Op.Cit., 1887,* p. 62.

107 *Letter Dated 16th March 1854 From H V Conolly, the Collector of Malabar to Captain J H Bell, Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Department of Public Works, Fort St.George, in Selections from the Records of the Madras Government- Report on District Roads for the 1853-54 (S/175)* Printed by Henry Texter at the Hindu Press, Madras, 1855, p.76, RAK.

108 *Ibid.*

between the coast and Mysore[109]. Special arrangements were made to see the maintenance of the roads is done in prompt manner. "The road from Tanoor (present day Tanur) to Poodiangady (present day Puthiyangadi) is in fair order, so also in the road from Tanoor and Pooraparamba"[110]. Along with maintenance, they also resorted to construct new roads in rare occasions. "The road from Tellicherry to Cannanore as well as the drains and bridges thereon are in good condition…the road from Cannanore to Belliapatam is in good order. ..The work on the new line of road from Tellicherry to Coottiporum (present day Kuttippuram?) is in rapid progress[111].

British were eager to procure the products of Malabar as they were of high demand in the European markets and proper connectivity nodes should be there to materialize it. Along with that the deployment of military was of prime concern to the British in waning their traditional apathy to road construction. One of the major resistances that the British had encountered in Malabar in the initial years was from Kerala Varma Pazhassiraja. Being a local chieftain, with the ambitions to grab more powers and privileges, Pazhassiraja was a 'disturbance' to the British. He had some disagreements with the British over the tax authority in Malabar then he challenged the colonial masters[112]. Though Pazhassiraja had started his resistance as a

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109 *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government- No.XXX- Report of the District Roads for the year 1854 (S/174),* Printed by Henry Texter at the Hindu Press, Madras, 1856, p.7, RAK

110 *Letter from T Clark Esq., Collector of Malabar to Colonel C E Faber, Chief Engineer dated 25th April 1856, No.167, in Selections from the Records of the Madras Government-Vol.XLVII- Report on District Roads for the 1855-56 (S/176)* Printed by Saravuppa Chetty at the Hindu Press, Madras, 1857, p.210, RAK.

111 *Ibid.*

112 Margret Franz, *From Contact to Conquest: Transition to British Rule in Malabar, 1790-1805*, Oxford University Press, (OUP), New Delhi, 2003, pp.8-9.

reaction of the emerging chieftain for want of power, it assumed a popular nature when people from different walks of life had joined in it[113].

The Pazhassi resistance soon spread in north Malabar and the major centres of it were Kuttiadi, Kottayam, Manantheri, Manathana, Pazhassi, Vengat, Wynad etc. Since the rebels had concentrated their activities both in the land and hilly areas of north Malabar, the colonial authorities had to undertake a thorough preparation in curbing the mass upheaval. The tactics that Pazhassiraja had devised were beyond the calculations of the British. Their troop movements were hampered. The British could not move their army thorough the mud roads in North Malabar and they had engaged the construction of paths for military movement literally on war footing. Important roads constructed during this period include Koothuparamba-Panur, Panur-Parakkadavu, Panur-Peringalam and Kannoth-Koothuparamba etc[114]. Most of these constructions were taken place in north Malabar.

Significant advances were made in connecting Thalassery to Koothuparamba, Srikantapuram to Payyavur, Irikkur to Payyavur and Kannur to Taliparamb as part of the anti-Pazhassi campaigns. Along with that they had built a good number of minor roads leading to places like Chavasseri, Pazhassi and Shivapuram. The army mobilizations and the emergence of the road infrastructure to support it, had some far-reaching consequences in the trade history of Malabar. Scholars who elaborated the trans-oceanic mercantile encounters in the Malabar coast had not given much of their attention to the passes in the eastern part[115]. The Pazhassri resistance had

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113 K K N Kurup, *Pazhassi Samarangal* (Mal.), Kerala Bhasha Institute, Thiruvananthapuram, 1980, pp.25-27.

114 Lts. Ward and Conner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, Madras, 1826,p.28.

115 See Pius Malekandathil, *Winds of Change and Links of Continuity: A Study on the Merchant Groups of Kerala and the Channels of their Trade, 1000-1800*, in *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient (JESHO),* Vol.50, No.2/3, *Spatial and Temporal Continuities of Merchant Networks in South Asia and Indian Ocean*, 2007,

brought the forgotten mountain passes like Permabadi, Periya and Thamarassery into the attention of the British. They had initiated the proper use of these passes.

In the management of roads, the British had made certain specific arrangements. Public Works Department, District boards and municipalities had taken lead in the management of roads. Such planned actions resulted in the expansion of road network in Malabar. "There were about two thousand miles of roads in 1931, of which about 1,525 were maintained by local boards, 200 by municipal roads and 100 by the Public Work Department. In 1920, the following roads were designated as trunk roads and Government undertook to provide grants for their maintenance-the Madra- Calicut road (94 miles) Gudalur-Calicut road (40 miles) and Gudalur-Vythiri road (19 miles)"[116]. With the expansion of railway networks in Malabar, the importance of roads began to dwindle. It is noted that "with the few exceptions the roads are not, as they should be, mere feeders to the railway"[117].

Apart from the above typology, roads in Malabar were broadly divided into metalled and unmetalled, depending on the construction of roads. Barring the construction of bridges, the road making in Malabar was somewhat an easy process. Once the route was fixed, it was easy for the executioners to go ahead with the project. In the making of metalled roads in Malabar it is generally observed that "a metalled road in the country is different from the metalled road of a town"[118]. This difference could primarily be in the width of the roads both in towns and in the country side. For instance, in the town the

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pp.259-286 and John W Parry, *The Story of Spices*, in *Economic Botany*, Vol.9, No.2, 1955, pp.190-2017.

116 C A Innes and F B Evans, *Op.Cit.,* p.271.

117 *Ibid.,* p.270.

118 C D Maclean, *Op.Cit.,* p.376.

width of metalled road was 15 feet to 24 feet and of which 12 feet were uniformly metalled. But the condition in the village was different. The 12 feet metalling of the roads in the villages could not be done as the "drivers of the bullock cart are to maintain the same wheel track as those formed by previous traffic"[119]. As the custom of the land did not permit to widen the metalled part of the road, the authorities thought of averting the loss of money and material. Hence, they confined the width of metalled roads in the country side of Malabar.

The making of metalled roads in Malabar involved a lengthy procedure. Once the site is fixed the engineers or the technical staff proceed to make provisions for the minor drainages. On completion of it, estimates for the light embankments were sought and then fix the material for covering the roads that was suited the locality. In Madras Presidency, metalling was done by using various materials. "Granite, limestone, sandstone, *kunker* (a peculiar formation of oolitic limestone), *moorum* (rock in course of disintegration), and laterite"[120] were the commonly used metaling objects. Sand was used as the blindage of the metaling. Gravel was spread like an overcoat. In the construction of metalled roads, the British had done Four Coating Method (FCM). Once the earth bed was prepared for the reception of the metal, the next procedure was the setting of a metal coating with three inches' thickness. It was spread and consolidated with help of a stone rollers or through tampering. The same was repeated to add the second, third and fourth coatings. Gravel or sand was frequently used as the blindage on the surface of the metal. To consolidate the metal, they had used stone and steel rollers.

The unmetalled ones constitute the wide and extensive networks of roads spanning across Malabar. The geographical specificity of Malabar

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119 *Ibid.,* p.376.

120 *Ibid.,* p.376.

characterized by different soil types and undulated terrain made the condition favourable for such roads. Or rather the chances for having metalled roads in Malabar were of minimal. The execution of unmetalled roads in Malabar was comparatively an easy job as it could be done with minimum expenses and limited human labour. The process of making unmetalled roads in Malabar was somewhat easier. In this category the roads of clay and sand were of good in number. It is stated that: "sand and clay in proper proportions make always a fair road for moderate traffic"[121].

A discussion on the cost allotted and used for the making of roads in Malabar attracts the attention of historians. The British along with their mastery over technology and labour managerial skills could make significant advances in road making in Malabar. Apart form that the availability of capital at their disposal made this process an easy one. It was only in the last decades of the 19th century Local Fund Boards entered the scene and till then the British had directly involved in the making of roads in Malabar. Since then, they began to allot funds for the construction and maintenance of roads from their own revenue which was generated mainly through the land-cess. There were 30 Local Fund engineering circles in the Madras presidency in 1882-83. The total length of roads at their disposal was 21,019 miles and the total expenditure incurred on roads was Rupees 28,52,083, which came around 47 percent of the whole Local Fund expenditure[122]. It underlines that the road construction, and its maintenance became a concern of the colonial administrators at least in the last quarter of the 19th century.

There were specific reasons for the British to emphasis more on connectivity works in the high ranges of Malabar, especially with Wayanad. The motives were primarily driven by the commercial aspirations of the

121 *Ibid.,* .377.

122 *Ibid.,* p.377.

British. The colonial planters in Nilgiris and Wynad had focused on the cultivating commercially important products. Along with that there was a high expectation on the gold reserve in the Wayanad region. The British were eager to encourage the emerging avenues of gold-mining enterprises in the high ranges of Malabar[123]. Such commercially significant endeavours prompted the British government to pay special attention to the road development in Malabar. There were plans to upgrade the unmetalled roads and village roads into metalled roads. They had appointed a special Public Works Officer to liaison upgradation of connectivity nodes between the Malabar coast and the Nilgiri plateau. The initial task bestowed upon him was to conduct the surveys and further necessary estimations required to enhance the standard of roads with the purpose of using them even during the heavy monsoons[124]. Along with the decisions of the colonial state, the Wayanad Planters' Association had put significant pressure on the strengthening of road connectivity.

Related to road development in Malabar, the steps taken by the British to construct bridges were also of prime importance while looking at the expansion of connectivity networks in this region. The British had made their initial intervention of riverine transport as Malabar was well connected via water transport modalities. They engaged in the making and expansion of canals and ferries and such steps gave them a chance to tap the commercial potential of the region. But in due course of time, their attention got diverted to road making and, in that venture, they had to harness the rivers of Malabar. A topographical understanding of Malabar would help to realise that the region is crisscrossed by rivers, streams, and rivulets. The initial task before the British was to construct road bridges across these water bodies. The British engineering mastery helped them to overcome this challenge and the

[123] *Ibid,* p.377.

[124] *Ibid.,* , p.380.

colonial administration made special measures for the construction of road bridges in Malabar.

The British intervention in road bridge making in Malabar was done in tune with the soil types prevailed there. In the making of bridges, they rarely resorted to piling and in place of it, well foundations were commonly adopted[125]. They made enough care for the bridges' floor, and it was done in consideration with the heavy monsoon and consequent water flow through the rivers. "The flooring, which may be of brick in mortar or of stone flags or boulders, is protected in front and rear by retaining or curtain walls"[126]. The following are the notable road bridges in Malabar: "Coodakadavoo iron bridge on the Tellicherry road, of twenty-six spans of 21 feet each; cost Rs.61, 230. Caroompoya bridge on the road from Calicut to Wynaud by Carcoor ghaut, of four spans of 60 feet each; cost Rs.54,600. Culpauty bridge, 1 mile south of Palghaut Railway station on Great Western Road from Madras to Calicut, four spans of 64 feet each: cost Rs. 30,493"[127].

To conclude, the British intervention in the rivers and land routes of Malabar was proved to be of pivotal in determining the circulatory practices of the people of the realm. A close examination of the canal construction and road making activities that the British had undertaken in Malabar would prove that they were driven by multiple motives. In the first phase of their presence in Malabar, the British were motivated by mercantile motives. They had to procure more and more spices and commercially important materials that were of high demand in European markets. Hence, their intervention in construction activities were for ensuring the availability of spices and they had collected it from the hinterland through the riverine networks.

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125 *Ibid.,* pp.381-382.

126 *Ibid.,* p.382.

127 *Ibid.,* p.382.

In the second phase, the British began to give more importance to the construction of road networks in Malabar. Initially, they had done the repairing works of the 'gun roads' bequeathed from Tipu Sultan. Their dependency in riverine modalities of connectivity had prevented the English in undertaking fresh road construction activities in Malabar. They did make use of the existing country roads and *nattupathakal* for the transportation of men and material. But they had to shed away their inhibition in road making in the second half of the 19th century. That was done primarily of two reasons: one was to bring the commodities, previously commuted through the riverine channels, and the other was to ensure the easy deployment of army to the rebel areas in Malabar.

The third stage in the development of connectivity networks began with the establishment of the British sway over Malabar. The British officials had been frequently reminded of the necessity of expanding the road networks across Malabar as it would expedite the movement of troops and trade items. The commercial interest groups like the Chamber of Commerce and association of planters had further pressurized the British to take up the construction of roads in Malabar. The colonial and capitalist interests had proved to be of pivotal importance in fixing the future course of road development in Malabar. Consequently, the British had to shed away their relatively non-initiative attitude in road making of Malabar. Instead of simply repairing the then existing country roads and crude cartways, the British had to commence certain structural changes in road making characterized by the preparation of detailed project report and systematic construction of roads with the help of funds available. They urged the authorities to allot more funds for the expansion of road networks in Malabar.

CHAPTER 4

COLONIALISM AND CIRCULATORY INFRASTRUCTURE II: RAILWAYS

> "Railways may do for India, what dynasties have never done - what the genius of Akbar the Magnificent could not effect by government, nor the cruelty of Tipu Sahib by violence-they make India a nation"[1]

While discussing the arrival of railway in Malabar, it is essential to look at the historical context that gave birth to this new modality of transportation. It was a wonder to transform steam power for locomotion, and it could bring several unanticipated changes in the mobility of people. The earliest known use of steam power could be traced back to 1698, the year in which Thomas Savery invented a device named 'engine'. It was primarily a pump, functioned with the help of steam power. It helped miners to draw water from the flooded mines and hence it came to be called as 'miners' friend'. The applicability of it for mechanical purpose came into vogue in the 18th century. In the late 18th century, the Industrial Revolution unleased the demand for a new energy source, hence James Watt resorted to do some improvisations on the then existing machine which worked with steam power[1]. In 1769, he patented a new type of steam engine and it came to be called as the Watt's Steam Engine and it powered factories and transportation during and after Industrial Revolution.

As an aftermath of Industrial Revolution, raw materials and goods had to be transported in an unprecedented manner- both in quantity and in speed.

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1 William Wilson Hunter, *The Marques of Dalhousie*, London, Clarendon, 1890,p.15.

Invention of a new mechanism was the need of the hour. The newly discovered source of power was steam and some inventions were there to aid the miners and factories as well. The 'revolutionary effect' of steam was underlined since then, and it soon spread to railway too. Further, the last decade in the first half of the 19th century, England was just entering on the period known as 'railway mania'[2]. The British firmly believed that, they had the mission of expanding railway to their colonies including India.

The inaugural train was in between the towns of Stockton and Darlington in north east England[3]. It was called Stockton and Darlington Railway or abbreviated as SDR. On 27th September 1825, the first passenger train ran on the Stockton and Darlington railway and George Stephenson had the credit of being its designer. Travelled at a speed of about of 15 miles per hour, this first train consisted of several carriages pulled by a steam locomotive. It marks that the English had shown the way of railway travelling to the world and their imperial heyday proved to be pivotal in expanding railway networks to the places, that were connected to the British empire.

India, being an important colony, was one of the first places that the English had heralded the expansion of railway. It could be exemplified from the statement that they had made: "iron and steel has civilized mankind, let's give India, the benefit of that discovery"[4]. The emergence of railways in India had an intricate link with techno-historical aspect of imperialism. The English had been in the forefront of bringing technological advancements to India,

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2 William Earnest Weld, *India's Demand for Transportation*, Columbia University, New York, 1920,p.63.

3 Mark Kozak-Holland and Chris Procter, *Managing Transformation Projects: Tracing Lessons from the Industrial to the Digital Revolution,* Palgrave Macmillan, Switzerland AG, 2020, Pp.27-28.

4 *Pamphlet addressed to the Secretary of State for India, 1853, Home Correspondence 'B', copies of letters sent, 1849-1879, L/PWD/2/68, OICC,* Cited in Aparajita Mukhopadhyay, *Imperial Technology and Native Agency: A Social History of Railways in Colonial India, 1850-1920*, Routledge, 2018,p.2.

though many of them were for the purpose of ensuring the effectiveness of colonial governmentality and capital extraction. The impact of railways on India has been studied and hence it is identified as one of the 'big technologies' that the English had brought in India[5]. Railways were the technological intervention that the English had brought in India and it substantially reshaped the destiny of the land. Some have viewed the coming of railways in India as a blessing to the emerging food production sector as this could make possible for the transportation of wheat easily and subsequent rise in its price[6]. While looking at the factors for the introduction of railways in India, there were multiple causes of economic, political and militaristic leanings.

As it is known, the British were driven by various motives for initiating railway activities in India. It could broadly be divided as economic and political. Economically, as it is known that the expansion of the imperial designs of the British were to satisfy the emerging *nouveau riche* in the British society and they were in a position to influence, even the policies of the royal household. The foundation of the English East India Company (EEIC) was the epitome of that newly emerged spirit. In due course of time, especially in the post-Industrial Revolution society, one could witness two processes: the emergence of factory system and the appearance of capitalist class. Out of these two, which came first is like the 'chicken or the egg conundrum'. The two processes-the emergence of factory system and new capitalist middle class in England- had intertwined, hence the initial occurrence of either was unpredictable. Both had contributed to the imperial heyday of Britain. The factory system unleased an unprecedented surge for the raw material and markets for finished goods. The emergence of capitalist

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5 David Arnold. (2013). *Everyday Technology: Machines and the Making of India's Modernity*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, , p.150.

6 William Earnest Weld, *Op.Cit.,*, p.5.

middle class ensured the finance required to carry out the imperial initiates like the mercantile companies, infrastructural ventures etc.

Consequent to the rampant industrialisation that England had witnessed in the second half of the 19th century, the nature of trade with India had redesigned. Until then the prime items of merchandise were largely, luxury goods and spices. The Industrial Revolution and the associated developments reshaped the mercantile interests of England. The factories that sprang up in different parts of England demanded the uninterrupted inflow of raw materials from the places elsewhere and to have markets for the finished products[7]. The powerful middle class began to dominate the internal politics and commercial aspirations of England. They began to play 'entrepreneurial role in bringing out economic changes that led to capitalist development[8]. The English capitalist class had played a catalytic role in the expansion of mercantile activities in the colonies. It had manifested in the development of infrastructural initiatives in the colonies and railway was one among them. Such endeavours had played two roles simultaneously, first as the lucrative avenues for the newly emerged English capitalist class and second as the channels through which the raw materials and finished products had circulated to and from colonies. The railways in colonial India is an epitome of that spirit. The British thought of and did make use of their technological advancement for their capitalist expansion.

Historicising the Emergence of Railways

Along with economic motives, the political ambitions of the English in India, too were necessitated the commencement of railways. Throughout their

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7 M A.James Stephenson, *Principles and Practices of Commerce*, I Pitman and Sons Ltd., London, 1924, p.3.

8 Bryan S Turner, *The Middle Classes and Entrepreneurship in Capitalist Development* in *Arab Studies Quarterly,* Spring 1979, Vol. 1, No.2 (Spring 1979) p.114.

official spell, the English had to deal with divergent sections of Indians and it demanded high amount of political will and expertise. The initial implementation of railways in colonial India, was done during the tenure of Lord Dalhousie. His vision of railways was to create a network of lines by integrating administratively important places in India for delivering effective governance at the easiest manner. Along with that the British had to 'harness the rebellious populace' in India. To make it possible the easy mobility of military had to be ensured. It is aptly stated that "by railway investment in India, the government had to reduce military expenditure, through quicker military transport and better internal administration"[9]. The emergence of railways in colonial India should be placed in this historical context.

The British capitalists had a desire to expand their activities to India via new modes of investment and fortunately the railways proved to be a prominent one. It is rightly argued that most of the initial costs of India's railways were financed by British investors. Indian investors contributed about one per cent of the total although there were no direct impediments to their participation[10]. Further the British had devised some methodology for managing the finances required for the making of railways in India "It seems to have been understood from the beginning that the capital would have to be raised in England, and that the construction and management of the railways would have to be carried out by the private companies"[11]. It makes clear that the English capitalists and the state had taken the lead of providing finances to the Indian railway as they might have calculated the lucrativeness and future of railways in India, due to the extensive nature of the land. Further, to

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9 Isher Judge Ahluwalia, *Industrial Growth in India: Stagnation Since the Mid-Sixties*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1985,p.80.

10 A K Banerji, *Aspects of Indo-British Economic Relations-1856-1898*, Oxford University Press, Bombay, 1982, p.56.

11 William Earnest Weld, *Op.Cit.*, p.63.

manage the making and operations of railways in India they suggested to have companies constituted on capitalist lines.

It is clear that India, being an important colony of the British, was the next destination to 'confer the benefits' of railway. To materialise their ambition to find out new ways of investment, the British capitalists had acted through the railway promoters. After preparing a detailed and comprehensive plan, they pressurised the English East India Company to initiate the construction of railways in India. Ten years before the official commencement of railway operations in India, George Thomas Clark, the then Chief Engineer of Bombay, had proposed a railway line connecting Bombay to Thane in 1843[12]. The proposal for a Bombay-centric railway had invited criticism from some corners of the British administration in India. Some have come up with a proposal of railways to Bengal and not to Bombay. That led to a 'tussle between Bengal and Bombay'.

To bring the tide in favour of Bombay certain civic interventions were made. On 13th July 1844 to put pressure on the English administrators, a public meeting was convened at Bombay. Civic concerns were expressed by the business communities and residents of important cities like Bombay was not uncommon[13]. Finally the English East India Company too favoured Bombay. Then the developments came in tune with the demands of the Bombay citizens. The plan prepared by George Thomas Clark got the approval of Company authorities. Following that a committee under the headship of Henry Conybeare, the Municipal Engineer to Bombay's Board of

[12] J N Sahni, *Indian Railways: One Hundred Years, 1853-1953*, Manohar, New Delhi, 2021, pp.2-6.

[13] R J F Sullivan, *One Hundred Years of Bombay: History of Bombay Chamber of Commerce 1836-1936*, Bombay, 1937, pp.4-5.

Conservancy from 1849 to 1853, had investigated about the feasibility of the project and finally it got the nod of the authorities[14].

To materialise the project, the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company was formed with the great British inventor George Stephenson as one director. But still they faced certain hardships in materialising the project and decided to work out a mechanism to get the proposal done. To that end, an influential committee was formed and it worked in association with the London Committee[15]. Somehow they could succeed in the proper execution of the project. The success of it, gave an impetus to the furtherance of railway initiatives in India during colonial times. It gave birth to a host of companies like the Great Indian Peninsular Railway (GIPR), the East Indian Railway Company (EIRC), the Madras Railway Company (MRC), South Indian Railway Company (SIRC) and Central India Railway Company (CIRC).

Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company (GIPR)

GIPR was in the forefront of materialising railways in India. The first railway line India was between Bombay to Thane, a 34 kilometres long line, was initiated by the GIPR. It was evident that Bombay, being the principal trade city in colonial India, was at the nucleus of the railway discussions among the English bureaucrats. In 1841, Mac Donald Stephenson prepared a proposal for a military line. Along with Calcutta, the English East India Company was also thinking of another easy access to India and that could be possible through Bombay due to its landscape. The English business community in Bombay put pressure on the authorities for arriving at a

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14 Marian Dossal, *Henry Conybeare and the Politics of Centrelised Water Supply in mid-Nineteenth Century Bombay*, in *IESHR,* 25(1), 1988, p.83.

15 Clarens Baldwin Davis, Kennath E Wilburn and Ronald Robinson (eds.), *Railway Imperialism,* Greenwood Press, London, 1991, p.159.

positive decision on the new line and that resulted in the preparation of the first proposal for railways in India in 1843[16].

To make GIPR as an important railway venture for western India, the plan and work carried out under the leadership of a great promoter John Chapman were of great help. Chapman was neither the first nor the only promoter of railways for India[17]. Along with Chapman a substantial number of local officials, commercial men and few wealthy Indians too had tirelessly worked for a new railway company and they set up the Provisional Committee of the Bombay Great Eastern Railway in July 1844. The proposals prepared by John Chapman in consultation with the Committee were sent to the consideration of English East India Company in the name of GIPR. However, the English East India Company was not much interested in the proposal for Great Indian Railway Company.

Despite the discouragement from the English East India Company, John Chapman had continued his initiatives for a railway company centred at Bombay. Due to his intervention, John Stuart Wortley, a politician hailing from Conservative party and member of House of Commons from Bute constituency, had consented to be the Chairman of the proposed railway company. The first official meeting of the new company was held on 10th May 1845 and board consisting of John Stuart Wortley and W P Hamilton as Deputy Chairman. There formed a Board of Directors consisted of twenty members. Along with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, eight members were persons who held senior military or civil positions in India, next six

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16 K K Saxena, *Indian Railways: Problems and Prospects- A Study in the Management and Working of Indian Railways*, Vora and Company Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay, 1962, pp.90-94.

17 Ian J Kerr, *John Chapman and the Promotion of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway 1842-1850* in Ralf Roth and Guntur Dinhobl (eds.), *Across the Borders: Financing the World's Railways in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2008, p.231-232.

were prominent British merchants and bankers, and remaining four were major promoters of railways in Britain and Europe. The composition of the Board was a clear indicator about what the Company planned to do in India in the days to come. Meanwhile, in March 1845, the nomenclature of the Company, suggested earlier by John Chapman as Great Indian Railway Company, was changed to Great Indian Peninsular Railway.

Contrary to the its initial inhibition, the authorities of English East India Company had extended their benevolence to the budding railway companies and GIPR was the first beneficiary. Such a move was made on behest of the powerful English capitalist class. The Court of Directors of the English East India Company got a strict direction from Lord Hardinge, the Governor General of India during 1844 to 1848, to confer concessions to private capitalists who invested in Indian railway companies. To give credibility to the initial works of GIPR, Robert Stephenson, son of 'father of Railways' George Stephenson, was made as the first consulting engineer. Under his guidance a survey of a new line was conducted from Calcutta to Delhi via Mirzapur and the survey was finished in 1846. The GIPR was officially incorporated by an Act of the British Parliament on 1st August, 1849[18]. When a discussion on the prospective plans were initiated, it was suggested to engage an experimental line to connect Bombay with Berar[19]. The final contracts for building the new line was signed on 17th August, 1849 and it took lead in the making of first railway line in India.

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[18] Rita P Bambri, *Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company and its Contractors (1853-1871),* in *PIHC*, 2012, Vol.73, p.880.

[19] Laxman D Sathya, *British Imperial Railways in Nineteenth Century South Asia* in *Economic and Political Weekly (EPW),* Nov. 22-28, 2008, Vol. 43, No.47 (No.22-28, 2008), pp.69-77.

East Indian Railway Company (EIRC)

The mastermind behind the EIRC was Roland Macdonald Stephenson and he thought of having a line between Calcutta and Delhi[20]. He was desperate due to the discouraging attitude of the English East India Company in materialising the line between Calcutta and Delhi, then he proceeded to the Government of Bengal and its response was overwhelming. He sought the backing from London as well and he succeeded in it. To raise fund for the new venture, he contacted prominent East Indian Commercial Houses like, Crawford, Fletcher, Calvin and Company etc., and they too have responded positively. It gave a final shape to the Company and it came to be known as East Indian Railway Company with Sir. George Larpent as the Chairman [21]. The final form of the Company was made in May 1845 with a capital outlay of £40,00,000.

The first line they proposed to carry out was an experimental one to bring coal from Raniganj to Calcutta and it was materialised in August 1854 [22]. "The East Indian Railway Company (EIR) undertook to build and operate a line running a few dozen miles north from Calcutta. The EIR hoped eventually to extend this line to the coal mines, 100 miles northwest of Calcutta and subsequently to the well populated and fertile Ganges Valley"[23]. It is a strong indicator of how railway ventures in India were fast moving by grabbing more and more projects and profits too. Having understood the

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20 Rowland MacDonald Stephenson, *Railways: An Introductory Sketch with Suggestions with Reference to Their extension to British Colonies* (Part I), John Weale, Architectural Library, London, 1850, pp.94-95.

21 Horace Bell, *Railway Policy in India*, Rivington and Company, London, 1894,p.64.

22 *Report of F W Simms, Consultant Engineer to the Government of India, on the Proposal for Constructing a Railway Line from Calcutta to Diamond Harbour. Home Department, Legislative Branch, No.17, Dated 13 February 1847*, NAI, New Delhi, p.16.

23 Daniel Thorner, *The Pattern of Railway Development in India*, in *The Far Eastern Quarterly* (Henceforth it is cited as *FEQ*), February 1955, p.204

lucrative nature of railway investments in India, several new such companies began to spring up and they offered a stiff competition to the EIR. In terms of the geographic distribution, the Great Western Bengal Railway Company (GWBR) and Northern and Eastern Railway Company of Bengal (NERCB).

The Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway Company (BB&CIRC)

The Bombay Baroda and Central India Railway Company (BB&CIRC) was formed in 1852 and the major work they conceived and carried out was from Bombay to the erstwhile Baroda State and it was cherished in 1864[24]. It had a further proposal to construct a link from Bombay to Surat, Baroda, Neemuch in present day Madhya Pradesh and to Agra. But GIPR too had their catchment area at Bombay and the regions nearby, where there was a competition between both. Because of the opposition from GIPR, the BB &CIRC could commence their route from Surat only. Hence, a contract was made in 1855 to construct a line from Surat to Ahmedabad via Baroda.

The Bengal Nagpur Railway (BNR)

The public demand for additional convenient railway lines and the pressure for more profitable railway enterprises compelled to seek the possibilities for further railway companies in India. There were some rare instances in which the British had responded to the grave issues like famines that the Indians had faced. There emerged a host of new railway companies in this backdrop and the spurting of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway Company should be seen in this context. India had experienced one of the severe famines in its history during 1876 to 1878 that took the lives of 8.2 million people[25]. The crisis developed after a crop failure in the Deccan Plateau that

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[24] Madhumita Bandhopadhyay, *Recruiting Labour: Experience of BB&CI Railway (1852-1869)*, in *PIHC,* 2012, Vol.73, p.872.

[25] Peter Grey, *Famine and Land in Ireland and India, 1845-1880: James Caird and the Political Economy of Hunger* in *The Historical Journal*, March 2006, Vol. 49, No.1,

affected the South and South-western India, including the British Presidencies of Bombay and Madras. The famine commission that studied of the reasons for the Great Famine of 1876 to 1878 recommended for the rapid expansion of railways and it would ensure easy availability of food stuffs in the famine prone regions[26]. Having made use of the financial stringency of the British state, the English capitalists initiated rail companies like the Southern Mahratta (1882), the Indian Midland (1885) and the Bengal Nagpur (1887). The Bengal Nagpur Railway (BNR) was formed for the purpose of developing a Howrah-Bombay instead of Calcutta- Bombay via Allahabad, that was already there.

Locating Dalhousie in the Railway Development of India

James Andrew Broun-Ramsay, who was popularly alluded as Lord Dalhousie was the Governor General of India during 1848 to 1856 and the period witnessed a major expansion of railway networks. He had shown the farsightedness to identify railway, along with uniform postage and electric telegraph as the 'great three engines of social development' in India[27]. He identified the potential of railways to facilitate trade, commerce and administration. He perceived the instrumentality of railway in connecting the different and vast regions in India. His fame and glory lie in the introduction of comprehensive for buildings railways in India. The English East India Company compiled a series of Acts related to railways known as 'Dalhousie's Resolution on Railways' and they formed the basis of future railway

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p.194. See also Romesh Dutt, *Indian Famines: Their Causes and Prevention,* P S King & Sons, Westminster, 1901.

26 Hareet Kumar Meena, *Railways and Famines in British India*, in *Silpakorn University of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts,* Vol.16 (1), 2016, pp.1-18.

27 Such a reference is made in the final minutes of Lord Dalhousie in March 1856, on the eve of his departure from India, found in *Parliament Papers* (House of Commons) 1856, Vol.45, 245, p.16, para 24. Cited in Suresh Chandra Ghosh, *The Utilitarianism of Dalhousie and the Material Improvement of India*, in *MAS*, 1978, Vol.12, No.1, p. 97.

development in India. Dalhousie's Resolution on Railways' was a compilation of documents related to the all-round development and maintenance of railway system in India. In that sense 'he brought the Indian railway into correct track'. His plan of action was quite wide and comprehensive. It included the adoption of English standard of construction, operation and maintenance of railway lines, introduction of uniform gauge system and the establishment of railway board to oversee railway development in India.

Lord Dalhousie has rightly been regarded as the 'father and architect of Indian Railway system as he unleased the drive to bring railway system in India[28]. After assuming the office of the Governor General of India in 1848, he directed Frederick Walter Simms to proceed from Bombay to Madras to engage a feasibility study on railways in India. On the basis of the study, Lord Dalhousie came to the presumption that the railway is a crucial mode of transportation, intended to connect different regions and facilitating the circulation of people and ideas.

In the first half of the 19th century, there were discussions in the administrative circle of the colonial state to commence passenger lines. "G Clark, Chief Engineer of Government of Bombay, during his visit to Bhandup in 1843, conceived the scheme of a railway line connecting Bombay to Thane, Kalyan and the Thull and Bhor Ghat inclines"[29].The first railway line for passenger traffic was conceived from Bombay to Thane and the contracts were signed for the construction of the line. To undertake the project, Lord Dalhousie had sought the help of John Fowler, who experienced as the engineer of various railways like London Metropolitan Railway, the Forth Railway Bridge in Scotland and the Victoria Bridge in Montreal, Canada. The

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[28] O S Nock, *Railways of Asia and the Far East*, Allied Publishers, Bangalore, 1978, p.16.

[29] *Public Works Department (henceforth cited as PWD) Railways, 1844, Vol. 1,* Compilation Number 728, Letter dated February 27, 1844, p.27, and letter no. 3260 of 1844, TNSA, Egmore.

maiden trial run was made on 18th November 1852 with the Directors of the Company were on board. Some of their friends too were in the train and they travelled the distance of 21 miles, from Bombay to Thane, within 45 minutes.

The formal inauguration of the first railway for passenger traffic was done around 3.35 pm on 16th April 1853, when a train with 14 railway carriages and 400 guests left Bori Bunder near Bombay for Thane with 21 gun salute. It was hauled by three steam locomotives named Sahib, Sindh and Sultan. The destination station was Thane and it was about 21 miles away from Bori Bunder. Amid much excitement and celebration, the train made its way along the newly constructed railway line, traversing through the picturesque landscape. The journey included stops along the route, allowing the passengers to board and alight the train. The successful inauguration of Bombay-Thane railway line paved the way for the expansion of railways across India, connecting various regions. Furthermore, it marked the beginning of a transformative journey that would see the railway network grow extensively.

Railway in Madras Presidency

Since the scope of present study is limited to Malabar, it is essential to see the railway development in the Madras Presidency. The annals of railway history in India, usually begins with the commencement of railway from Bombay to Thane and the remarkable role played by Lord Dalhousie has been exaggeratedly addressed in all the literature on railway development. However, Madras of which Malabar was a part, had a different tale to offer. The first experimental railway line in India was laid in 1836, near Chintadripet near Madras and it was called as Red Hills Rail Road. It was not intended for the traffic of humans, but minerals and rocks. References to that railway experiment could be found in *The Conservative* and *The Asiatic*

Journal[30]. Technically speaking the first rail line was Red Hill Rail Road, but it was not for passenger traffic and to that direction some rail companies began to sprang up following the model of such endeavours in North and Western India.

The Madras Railway Company (MRC)

The Madras Railway Company was established in 1845 and was granted a charter by the English East India Company to build and operate a railway line between Madras and Arcot. The Company was formed with the primary objective of providing better transportation infrastructure for growing trade and commerce in the region. The proposals for the formation of a railway company in Madras was initially mooted by A P Cotton in 1836. The commencement of railway and the wide enthusiasm it created in England, prompted Cotton to go for a railway line connecting Madras to Bombay, two presidencies under British rule. Though the Company technically came into being in 1845, it could not gain much concessions from the authorities, and it led to the dissolvement of it. The Madras Railway Company had faced the absence of proper financial support and the success stories of GIPR and EIR motivated the promoters of MRC to came up with fresh proposals.

The promoters of MRC understood that the basis of GIPR's success was the of 5% guarantee system that they had been adopted then and MRC too wished to follow the suit. Similar to the Bombay Presidency, the general public too was quite eager to experiment with railway. The business groups and the social elites of Bombay were in favour of expanding railway networks. To put pressure on the materialisation of MRC, there was a public meeting in Bombay on 29th May 1849. The promoters of the MRC had agreed

[30] For further details please see *https://madrasmusings.com/Vol%2024%20No%2017/the-red-hills-railway.html*

https://www.irfca.org/docs/history/india-first-railways.html

to take up railway projects in Madras, if proper financial support had been extended. The concerns with regard to the financial requirements were addressed by the English East India Company and Government of Madras and they guaranteed return of 4% of the capital. The promoters of the Company regained their confidence and finally registered the MRC on 26th July 1852.

As the Court of Directors had extended their backing, the MRC had gone with the objective of constructing a line from Madras to Arcot, which was then called as Walajah Road. Within twelve of years of its existence, the MRC could cherish that dream and it was a turning point in the history of railway in south India. The British were already thought of having a line to the south-westerly direction, that could turn the tide of merchandise in their favour[31]. The MRC's undertaking consists of two main lines: the first main line commences from Madras stretches across the peninsula towards south-westerly direction and it reaches Beypore and it had 406 miles in length. The terminating point of the rail in the western coast was fixed as Beypore[32]. This first line had branches from Jolarpet to Bangalore with a distance of 87 miles and from Pothanur to Mettupalayam[33]. The second main line leaves the first main line at Arakkonam and runs north-westerly direction and at Raichur, it links to the Great Indian Peninsular Railway[34]. Along with that it had a branch from Goontacul to Bellary with a distance of 32 miles. Altogether the railway system in Madras consisted of 861miles[35].

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31 *Railways in India: Their Present State and Prospects,* W H Allen and Co., London,1855, p.39.

32 Juland Danvers, *Report to the Secretary of State for India in Council on Railways in India to the end of the year 1859,* For Majesty's Stationary Office, London, 1860,p.14.

33 C D MacLean, *Maclean's Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency (Vol.1)*, Asian Educational Service, New Delhi, 1987, p.426, RAK.

34 *Ibid.,* p.426.

35 *Ibid.,* p.426.

There are some instances that could help to draw conclusions on the motives behind the construction of railway in Madras. To furnish assistance to military was the a major objective of the English in the initial days of the MRC and it is evident in the construction and nature of rail wagons. For instance, the ambulance train, attached to the Madras presidency and its layout is a clear indicator. The ambulance train had a two first-class carriages, then a break van, which was followed by thirteen third class carriages. Along with that there were three carriages that are fitted to provide a dining, cooking and storing[36]. Carriage was allotted for the carrying of postal items and officers. With regard to the fuels used in the locomotives, in Madras, it is stated that, instead of coal, patent fuel in used[37]. On the other hand, coal was used in other railways like GIPR, EIR, BB&CIR[38]. In some other cases like Oudh and Rohilkhand railway, Sindh, Punjab and Delhi railways, wood had been used[39]. An examination of the profile of the employees of the Madras Railway is also interesting. In 1883—84, there were 10,782 employees on open line of which 197 were Europeans, 878 East Indians, and 9707 natives[40]. Madras Railway was a venture of the English to transform the entire landscape of Madras of which Malabar was, of course, a part and that region too had benefitted from it.

The South Indian Railway Company (SIR)

The South Indian Railway Company was the second important railway company worked in the Madras Presidency. In the beginning it was headquartered at Nagapatam and later shifted to Trichinopoly. The SIR's

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36 *Ibid.,* p.426.

37 *Ibid.,* p.427.

38 N Benjamin, *Fuels for Railway Locomotives in Colonial India*, in *PIHC* 2014, Vol.75, Platinum Jubilee, p. 653.

39 *Ibid.,* p. 653.

40 C D MacLean, *Op.Cit.*, p.427.

undertakings consisted of a main line from Madras to Tutucorin with a length of 444 miles and a network of branch lines that included from Tanjore to Nagapatam (48 miles), from Trichinopoly to Erode (87 miles) and from Maniyauchy to Tirunelveli (18 miles)[41]. The significant part of the SIR was its link with the French owned Pondicherry. It was a branch that went from Villupuram to Pondicherry. The railway system of the SIR had 654 miles[42].

When it comes to the gauge of the rail lines in SIR, the line from Nagapatam to Erode was Indian broad gauge of 5 feet 6 inches. It was not applicable to the entire rail network under SIR. The extensions to Madras and Tuticorin were decided to be on Indian narrow gauge of 3 feet $3^{3}/_{8}$ inches. With regard to the fuel used in the SIR, some references could be found: "Coal and wood are burnt for locomotive purposes on the main line South of Trichnopoly and on the Tinnevelly and Erode branches; on all other parts coal alone is used"[43]. Similar to MRC, postal services had depended on SIR to transport the items and specially fitted carriages had been used for. In 1883-84 on the open line 7,208 employees, of whom 76 were Europeans, 349 East Indians, and 6,783 natives[44]. The law and order inside the train and the station premises had been maintained by the police force deployed under the directions of the Government. Later on, a specific arrangement of the Volunteer corps was also started to support the police. Arrangements were also made to provide medical assistance throughout the jurisdiction of the SIR.

A description of the chronological development of SIR is relevant in this context. Nagapatam, being the headquarter of SIR, was the beginning

41 *Ibid.,* pp.428-429.

42 *Ibid.,* p.429.

43 *Ibid.,* p.430.

44 *Ibid.,* p.430.

point of construction and a line from there to Erode was commenced in May 1859. The work was initiated by the Great Southern of India Railway Company, one of the predecessor of SRI, and was completed in December 1867. Similar to it, the line from Araconum to Conjeeveram was done by another precursor, Indian Tramway Company and the work was commenced in March 1864 and was completed in May 1865. It was on 1st July 1864, both Great Southern of India Railway Company and Indian Tramway Company merged to form SIR[45]. In January 1878, the line from Trichinopoly to Tuticorin was completed and in December 1879, the northern extension from Tanjore to Madras was completed. The remarkable achievement of SIR was the opening of Pondicherry branch and it was fully operational in July 1883. It shows that within a short span of time, the SIR could create a better network of railways in the south-western part of Madras.

Expansion of Railways and Indigenous: The Case of Madras

A brief narration of initial construction of railways in Madras sounds befitting in this context. On 9th June, 1853, the construction of Madras railway was officially commenced. Being the first section of the line, the one from Madras to Arcot, was opened for traffic on 9th June 1856. One of the important extensions of railways in Madras was the one to Malabar coast as the region was famous for seaborne trade. Along with the management of colonial army in Madras, railways had been used for bringing trade and commerce closer. The south-west line had its origin point in Madras and it was extended to Beypore. This project was mentioned in high sounding manner in the colonial documents[46] This line was opened on 12th May 1862. Another significant development in the chronological history of Madras railway was the inauguration of the Bangalore branch, which was done on 1st

45 Foot note no.14 in C D MacLean, *Op.Cit.,* p.430.

46 Juland Danvers, *Op.Cit.*, p.26.

August, 1864 and that to Mettupalayam was done on 31st August, 1873. Another important line under Madras Railway was the one from Araconum to Raichur and in that line, the section to Nagary was inaugurated on 4th March 1861. The final commissioning of the line was done on 15th March 1871. It shows that the Madras railway could make substantial progress in the initial years of its existence. Despite their initial inhibition, the authorities had extended enormous human resources and material for the railway expansion in the Madras Presidency.

The analysis of the earnings and passengers who availed the emerging Madras Railway would be a strong point to underline the progress it had made in the initial years of its existence. A close analysis of the amount received over ten years of time from 1871 to 1880 certain trends are visible[47]. The passenger traffic and goods transportation were two heads of earnings that the Madras Railway could collect their revenue. An analysis of earnings within a period of ten years from 1871 to 1880 would underline that in 1871 the amount received via passenger transportation was Rs. 22,12,922/- In 1875, there was progressive increase and it rose to Rs. 24,65,993/- Though some more progress could make in 1878 when it reached to Rs. 27,82,517/-it dwindled to Rs. 25,45, 839/- in 1880. A comparative analysis of it with the goods traffic, some other tendencies would come to limelight. In 1871, the income received by means of goods traffic was Rs. 57,88,094/- and rose up to Rs. 58,87,570/- The beneficiaries of railway system in Madras were largely the inhabitants of the land and only secondary importance was assigned to the movement of freight. It was contrary to the calculation of the authorities of MRC.

47 C D MacLean, *Op.Cit.,* p.428.

Further an analysis of the profile of passengers from 1871 to 1880 would also be an indicator of the impact of railway[48]. Generally speaking the railway had benefitted all sections of people in the Madras Presidency. In 1871, the total number of passengers who had availed the Madras Railway was 18,89,241 that comprised of 1,35,655 passengers in first class and 1,72,752 commuters in the second class. Substantial number of common people too had used the railways in the initial days itself. It is evident in the number of passengers in third and fourth classes. It is noted that 14,79,175 and 1,01,659 passengers had used in third and fourth classes respectively. Within ten years' time, total number of passengers got increased and it touched 20,57,680. The split up of the total is 1,44,662, 1,11,770 and 18,01,248 with first, second and third classes respectively.

The income generated as railway fares during 1871 to 1880 offers another point of discussion and it is a strong indicator to underline how much profitable was the railway initiatives in India to the English capitalists[49]. The total receipts in 1871 via rail fare was Rs. 22,63,486/- and the major portion of it was contributed by the commuters in the third class. Their contribution was Rs. 1,879,396/- and second class gave a revenue of Rs. 115,925/- The first class passengers could make Rs. 10,711/- as their share to the total revenue.

It is evident that 0.47%, 5.12%, 83.03% and 11.37% were the share of first, second, third and fourth or cooly classes respectively to the entire revenue of railway via fares in 1871. It underlines that the commuters in the third and fourth classes had contributed the lion's share of railway revenue. When it comes to 1880 the total revenue via fare rose to Rs. 39,52,723/- it included Rs. 10,970/, Rs. 34,566/-, and Rs. 39,07,187/- respectively of first,

48 *Ibid.,* p.428.

49 *Ibid.*p.428.

second and third classes. The first class had 0.28%, second with 0.87% and third class with 98.85% of the total revenue of the railway through fare. It makes clear that most of the commuters had availed facilities in the third class.

Railways in Malabar: Riding the Iron Horse

The development of railways in Malabar, could be traced back to the second half of the 19th century. Malabar, being a part of the erstwhile Madras Presidency could experience the expansion of railways even in the colonial times and it had reshaped the circulatory practices. The proposals to link Malabar and western coast with Madras, the headquarters of the Presidency, had been mooted even in the initial days itself. The first rail line in Malabar was opened on 12th march 1861 between Tirur and Beypore (Chaliyam) and it was 19 miles in length[50]. The commencement of railway was overwhelming and there was wide enthusiasm among the people of Malabar[51].

On 1st May 1861, the Beypore-Tirur line was extended to Kuttippuram and by 23rd of September 1861, the same had been extended to Pattambi. The next important extension was from Pattambi to Podanur with 65 miles and was inaugurated on 14th April 1862. Most of these extensions were south and south eastwards of Feroke. On 2nd January 1888, the Kadalundi to Calicut extension was commissioned. Within a period of a twenty seven years, the headquarters of the railway was shifted to Calicut and it was a turning point in the expansion of railways in the northern part of Malabar. Another route with completed construction was the one from Olavakkod to Palakkad with a

50 P J Cherian (Ed.), *William Logan's Malabar Manual*, Kerala Gazetteers Department, Thiruvananthapuram, 2000, p.66.

51 Robin T Varghese, *Keralathinte Railway, Innale, Innu, Nale* (Mal.), Kesari Memorial Journalists Trust, Thiruvananthapuram, 2022, p. 25.

length of 3 miles and that work was inaugurated on 2nd January 1888[52]. At the time of the compilation of William Logan's *Malabar*, the total length of the line within in the district was ninety-nine miles[53]. Till then the major stations in Malabar were the following: Calicut, Kallayi, Feroke, Kadalundi, Parappanangadi, Tanur, Tirur, Edakolam, Kuttippuram, Pallippuram, Pattambi, Cheruvannur (Shoranore), Ottappalam, Lakkidi, Mankarai, Parali, Olavakkot, Palghat, Olavakkkot, Palghat, Kanyikod and Valliyar[54].

One of the motives of railway expansion to Malabar was to make use of increased European demand for the eastern spices in the 19th century. To collect spices, the British entrepreneurs, specialised in spices trade, had to explore the interiors of Malabar. For doing this, they depended on the riverine networks that distributed across Malabar. From there it had shifted to the warehouses in the port cities and then they were transported to the west. Along with that, there were pressures from the indigenous mercantile communities to begin railway in Malabar. Planters' collectives and business groups in Mysore too had pressurised the English to start railways in the western coast.

The socio-political atmosphere of Malabar too necessitated the English to take steps to expediate military movements. In the 19th century Malabar witnessed certain sporadic rebellious engagements with the British, especially in the form of tribal and peasant uprisings. The strategies that the rebels had devised in Malabar were enough to challenge the very authority and military prowess of the British. They felt the need of an effective and speedy mechanism to ensure the availability of military in Malabar. Hence the English authorities at Madras suggested the extension of railway to Malabar

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52 P J Cherian (Ed.), *Op.Cit.*, p.66.

53 *Ibid.,* pp.66-67.

54 See Appendix 3 : Map showing the expansion of Railway in Madras.

as the panacea to avert rebellious atmosphere and to restore an environment of peace. That would also ease the circulation of mercantile transaction in and out of Malabar.

The authorities in Madras could not set aside the potential of Malabar, that lies in the western coast of the Presidency, while fixing the proposals for railway development. It was to feed the mercantile and strategic plans of the British in Malabar. The Company officials had underlined the importance of having a railway line in the western coast and there is ample evidence for it. On 19th June 1856, T T Pears, the Consulting Engineer for Railways, wrote a letter to Mr.T Pycroft Esq, the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort St. George by underlining the necessity of a railway line in the western coast. It reads: "at the close of the preceding year (1854) the Railway Company hand in their employment 13 engineers, including the Chief Engineer, and the whole of the line between Madras and the south-western Coast had been taken in hand with the exception of that portion which lies between Salem and Coimbatore"[55]. Malabar too had witnessed the commencement of railway construction works simultaneously with other important places in the Madras Presidency. It is noted that the railway activities in Malabar (6-12 sections) were commenced on 24th December 1855. Similarly, the railway activities in Malabar (15-20 sections) were commenced on 21st December 1855[56].

Though it was decided to bring the western coast into the railway scheme of Madras Presidency in the very beginning, there were serious discussions on fixing the terminus in the western coast. Some have opined to extend it to Ponnani as it would cater the mercantile aspirations of the powerful business interests. At the same time some others had proposed

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55 *Selections from the Records of the Madras Government (No. XL): Report of the Railway Department for 1855* (S/168), St. George Gazette Press, 1857, p. 3, RAK.

56 *Ibid.,* p. 3.

Kochi as headquarter of the south-western terminus. However, by the time Calicut emerged as the powerful port city, hence some of them preferred it as the end point. But finally, Beypore was chosen as the northern most point of railway in the south-western coast. On 23rd May 1855, George B Bruce, Esq., the Chief Engineer of Madras Railway wrote a letter to Major T A Jenkins, the agent of the Madras Railway Company, and in it he firmly stated Beypore as the headquarter of the western terminus of the proposed railway line[57]. They preferred Beypore as it could provide greatest commercial advantage with the least engineering difficulty. Physiographical reasons were also there in the selection of Beypore as it is "on the south bank of the river, near the point where the ferry boat at present runs"[58]. Further "the river at Beypoor is broad and of considerable depth, and it does not appear visible, at present, to carry the railway across it"[59]

Proximity to Calicut, was another reason considered by the Company authorities while fixing Beypore as the headquarters of the Western Terminus. It is stated that "Beypoor is six miles south of Calicut, and there is water communication, susceptible of great improvement, already existing between the two towns"[60]. T T Pears, the Consulting Engineer for Railways in the Madras Presidency, had firmly stated that Beypore "lies within easy reach of Calicut-well up in the Malabar district and in the direction of Cannanore that there is harbor for small coasting vessels- that it is a place of easy access for ship's boats- and that the anchorage without is excellent"[61]. He further ends up the report by stating that: "I would recommend the selection of this spot as the Terminus to the approval of Government; and would suggest that the

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57 *Ibid.,* p. 347.

58 *Ibid.,* p. 348.

59 *Ibid.,* p. 348,

60 *Ibid.,* p. 348.

61 *Ibid.,* p. 348

Collector Malabar be authorized to make over the ground required"[62]. Based on the reports of the Chief Engineer and the Consulting Engineer, the Chief Secretary on behalf of the Government accorded sanction to the selection of Beypore for the site of the Railway Terminus on the Western Coast. Mr. T Pycroft, being the Chief Secretary, further authorized the Collector of Malabar to take the necessary steps for making over to the Railway Company the quantity of land required for the purpose[63]. Hence the long debate and quest for an apt space for railway terminus of the western coast was ended with Beypore as the destination point.

Iron Rode to the City of Tolerance: On Calicut-Extension

However, soon the promoters of the MRC realized that Calicut as more apt than Beypore on multiple grounds and frequent demands were there to shift western terminus to the former. It is noted that the "extension of the South-West Line of the Madras Railway to Calicut- The substitution of Calicut for Beypore as the Western terminus of the Madras Railway, which has long been pressed for, was sanctioned in August 1884"[64]. In 1884-1885, detailed project for the shifting the headquarter to Calicut had been discussed and it labelled as 'Calicut extension' in the colonial documents. The extension was to cover a distance of 9 miles, "crossing its course the backwater, the Beypore river and the Kallai river"[65].

Calicut extension was the most awaited one as it was desired by the Company as well as the Malabar administration, hence specific arrangements were made to meet the expenses incurred due to the extension. "The total cost

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62 *Ibid.,* p. 349.

63 *Ibid.,* p. 349.

64 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1885, p.5, RAK.

65 *Ibid.,* p.5.

estimated for the project was Rs.12,53,802/- of which the Local Fund Board of Malabar and the Municipal Commissioners of Calicut will contribute Rs.1,35,000/- in consideration of the bridges over the Beypore and Kallai rivers being made available for ordinary traffic"[66]. The District Board of Malabar allotted an amount of Rs. 28,000/- for the construction of bridges at Beypore and Kallai[67]. Further the Government was ready to bear the expenses required for the land. Madras Railway Company was consented to bear the remaining expenses. It was decided that once the extension work was over the Beypore station would be abandoned.

The construction of railways, somehow, witnessed the circulation of technology to India. Geographically, India is a nation crisscrossed by the extensive riverine networks and bridges had to be built for stitching up the land to ensure the plying of trains. The traditional and crude indigenous technologies that India had possessed were not enough to meet the challenges offered by the laying of railway lines. Hence, technology had to be transferred from Britain, especially while making bridges. The construction of iron-girder bridges for railways offered one such instance. "Bridges that were pre-produced in British factories to the last rivet, transported via recently opened Suez Canal to modernized colonial ports via steam ships and there onwards to the interiors of India by rail, where they were assembled to span her mighty and previously uncontrollable rivers"[68].

This technology transfer and the whole enterprise of railway making in India, as elsewhere in the world, was a modality devised by the colonial

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66 *Ibid.,* p.5.

67 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886, p.6, RAK.

68 Mike Chrimes, *Civil Engineering 1839-1889: A Photographic History*, Stound, Budding, 1991, pp.119-121.

master to ensure integration of all forms. “Railways derived their symbolic power not solely from their massive materiality and technological novelty but, even more importantly, from their ability to transform the everyday experiences of millions: communications development remoulded the geographical as well as social topography of the colony according to the extractive interests of the colonizers, brought about higher levels of socio-economic, political and cultural integration”[69]. Thus, colonial technology arrived in India for the construction of railway could produce many results than anticipated.

The construction of bridges as part of the railway expansion to Calicut could produce similar experiences. The work of Calicut extension was delayed mainly due to the difficulties they had faced in the construction of bridges across the river. Extensive human labour and technical expertise were needed to execute such massive construction works. With the help of human labour and traditional technology, they could complete the earth work and most of the small bridges. “The key to the opening of the line in the bridge of six 130 feet spans over the Beypore river, where cylinder sinking is being done at night by the aid of the electric light”[70]. Till then technology that involves the use of cylinder sinking was unknown to Malabar. Further, the use of electric light in construction was not common. It is further noted that : “this bridge presents the unusual problems in this Presidency of launching the cylinders in, and of erecting the girders over, 40 feet depth of water”[71]. Thus the technology in circulation from Britain could somehow make slight

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69 Ravi Ahuja, ‘*The Bridge Builders’: Some Notes on Railways, Pilgrimage and the British ‘Civilizing Mission’ in Colonial India*, in Harald Fischer-Tine and Michael Mann (eds.), *Colonialism as Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India,* Anthem Press, London, 2004, p. 96.

70 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), *Op.Cit.,*p.6.

71 *Ibid.,* p.6.

progress in the process of bridge construction and also the execution of Calicut extension.

The wait was over and the "Calicut extension was opened for public traffic on 2nd January 1888"[72]. Though there was the use of British technologies for the execution of public works, still the construction of Kallai and Feroke bridges were stalled, and alternative mechanism were made to ensure the circulation of passengers. Here "the passengers were transshipped at Feroke bridge, and the train crossed at Kallai bridge on diversion"[73]. With the opening of Calicut terminus, some changes were made on the working status of stations and lines. Certain new and trial stations were opened. Kadalundi, Feroke and Kallai[74] were the new stations and Pallippuram between Pattambi and Kuttippuram was the new trial station[75]. It shows that the Calicut extension brought certain changes in the nature of railways in the north Malabar.

The long-pending construction of Feroke bridge in the Calicut extension was completed and opened for public transport. The formal inauguration of the bridge was on 5th March 1888, yet the work of Kallayi bridge was in progress. Though on completion of Calicut extension, Feroke railway station was abandoned, some related arrangements had to be finished. It is noted that "the transfer from the abandoned Beypore buildings of the roofs for the covered way of the passenger station, and for the engine shed, carriage shed, and fuel shed, but these are well in hand"[76]. As it is known, the

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72 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-88*(A/1276), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888, p.4, RAK.

73 *Ibid.,* p.4.

74 *Ibid.,* p.8.

75 *Ibid.,*p.9.

76 *Ibid.,* p.9.

transfer of western terminus to Calicut was to also smoothen the mercantile activities. Kallai, being the chief timber emporium could provide legitimacy to this transfer. Some specific arrangements were made for this: "the dock in Kallai for floating timber was in progress"[77]. It is an indicator that how important timber was to the English.

To the Madras railway, the opening of Calicut extension was a great achievement. With the opening of Calicut extension, the length of rail line from Madras to Beypore was 406 miles and now it has got increased to 413 $^{1}/_{2}$ miles. As it is known the delay in the construction of two bridges- Feroke and Kallai- had created some operational havocs, but they managed it well with alternative mechanisms. Though Feroke bridge was opened for traffic, it was not fully operational. It is noted that "the Feroke bridge of six 130-feet spans was opened for rail traffic on 5th March and for road traffic on 16th July 1888"[78].

However, in the construction of Kallai bridge, the engineering department of the Madras Railway Company still had some problems, and its work could not be proceeded as anticipated. "The Kallai bridge of three 130 feet spans, resting on iron cylinders 12 feet in diameter, carried to depth in No.1 pier of 53 feet, and in No. 2 pier of 62 feet below the bed of the river, resting on clay, is all but completed. The three girders have been erected on the banks of the river, and the centre one has been rolled into its position over the two piers; the others are ready to be moved. It is possible that the bridge will be finished in May next"[79]. The wait was over and the Kallai bridge was

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77 *Ibid.,* p.9.

78 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.5, RAK.

79 *Ibid.,* p.4.

opened for traffic in May 1889 and that marked the completion of Calicut extension[80].

Despite all these impediments, the opening of Calicut extension was much awaited and excited, and the authorities were ready to open new trains in the route. "From 1st September 1888, an additional mixed train was run with satisfactory results between Tirur and Calicut"[81]. Mixed trains were the one who carried both freight and passengers. Unlike specialized trains that exclusively transport either passengers or freight, a mixed train combines both types of transportation within a single train composition. Along with changes in the nature of trains, certain station and lines were abandoned. "At Beypore, the old station buildings have been demolished, and the portion of the line between that station and Kadalundi is being taken up"[82]. Further, there were discussions on the surrounding lands of the abandoned Feroke station. Initially it was suggested to hand over the land to the forest department to look after the plantation there, but finally decided to make the space as cholera camp in case of emergency[83]. It shows that Malabar was a cholera prone region and they planned to rehabilitate in case of emergency.

It is interesting to look at process for resource collection for Calicut extension project. Along with the financial allocation from the Company various other agencies too had taken part in it. During 1887-88, an amount of Rs. 7,86,709/- was utilized for the Calicut extension of which Rs.67,673/- was the Revenue contribution and Rs. 56,000/- as the contribution by Malabar

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80 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1880-90* (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.8, RAK.

81 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), *Op.Cit*., p.3.

82 *Ibid.,* p.5.

83 *Proceedings No.223 Dated 15th January 1890, of the Board of Revenue (Land Revenue) Government of Madras*, RAK.

District Board[84]. References further underline the pivotal role of District Board in the realisation of the Calicut extension. In 1888-1889 Calicut-Beypore extension had an expenditure of Rs. 4,48,325/- and the principal capital inflow for the extension was Rs.28,500/- and it was the contribution from District Board of Malabar, specifically for the Feroke and Kallai bridges on Calicut extension. It shows that how much crucial was the Calicut extension to all in Malabar. During 1889-90 an amount of Rs.32,649/- had been utilized for Calicut extension project[85].

To Further North: Railways to Kannur

In the initial years of fixing the location of western terminus of the Madras railway, a powerful group stood in favour of Kochi as there was a developed port that could help to carry out extensive trans-marine trade. However, by estimating the lucrative mercantile activities in the Malabar coast and due to the chances for further development in the north wards of Kozhikode, the authorities were in favour of potential expansion of railways in the littoral space of Malabar. Within a short period of time, after the opening of Calicut extension, the authorities realised the profitable aspect of railway in the western coast, hence deliberations had been started on further extension from Calicut. As a prelude to the operations, "a preliminary reconnaissance of the country between Calicut and Tellicherry, a distance of $43^{1}/_{2}$ miles has been made with a view to the proposed extension of the Madras Railway"[86].

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84 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-88*(A/1276), *Op.Cit.,* p.9.

85 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1880-90* (A/1278), *Op.Cit.,* p.16.

86 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1893-94* (A/1282), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1894, p.5, RAK.

The MRC had already conducted a detailed survey of the proposed line with suggestion on the line to be laid and it was pending with the Government for approval. As stated, "Mr. Gale has applied for a concession to construct these lines on the standard gauge. The Madras Railway has already made surveys and the project before the Government of India"[87]. The extension from Calicut to Kannur had been frequently pursued and its results were visible. By 1893-94 a detailed survey of Calicut-Kannur extension was done and measured as 59 miles in length. "The survey for the railway has been completed and the plans and estimates for Rs. 90,70, 611 or Rs. 1, 53, 739 per mile have been forwarded to the Government of India with strong recommendation for immediate construction"[88].

Meanwhile some changes had happened on the northern most end of extension as Valapattanam was fixed instead of Kannur[89]. "In October 1897, a revision of the alignment and the extension of the survey to a further distance of $4^1/_2$ miles to Baliapatam was undertaken at the instance of the Consulting Engineer"[90]. Then automatically a question comes to the fore is why Valapatanam was chosen as the new end point of the railway expansion? The Company had the plan of extending the railway further to Valapattanam to tap the timber potential of the locality. The region already had a rich legacy in timber trade especially with the British in the early decade of the 19th century and some local middle men like Covakkaran Mussa, had been acted as middle men[91]. The English might have thought of the riverine connectivity of that

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87 *Ibid.,* p.5.

88 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1896-97* (A/1285), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1897, p.5, RAK.

89 Valapattanam was called as Baliapatam in colonial archival records.

90 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1896-97* (A/1285), *Op.Cit*., p.6.

91 See Michael Mann, *Timber Trade on Malabar Coast, c.1780-1840*, in *Environment and History*,7,No.4, November 2001, p.412 and M P Mujeebu Rehman, *Merchants,*

region, especially via Valapatanam river and if the station was nearby, they could be easily transported to the destination. Both the English traders and the local middle men had largely benefitted from the timber trade, and they put pressure on the authorities to go ahead with the project.

The colonial officials had gone ahead with the technical works required for the extension. It is seen that to do the detailed surveying of the proposed railway, the colonial surveyors had faced several problems and the important one being the absence of published maps. Further, they could not reach into final decision on the gauge to be laid in this extension. Along with that the things were not proceeded as expected. There were some ambiguities on the execution of railway extension from Calicut to Kannur and it is evident in the prolonged delay in sanctioning the project. In 1897-1898, sanction was accorded to the partial commencement of construction. As stated, "This extension of the Madras Railway Co's system is still under survey, but permission has been accorded for construction work to begin on the first 26 miles out of the 62 which lie between Calicut and the proposed terminus at Baliapatam. The gauge of this extension is at present unsettled"[92]. Some significant breakthroughs on the Calicut-Kannur extension were made in 1898-1899. Instead of the earlier sanctioned 26 miles, now the construction was undergoing in 59.75 miles[93]. Due to the change in alignment, the proposed distance to Kannur was reduced to $55^1/_2$ miles from the previously calculated 59 miles. To this $4^1/_2$ miles from Kannur to Valapatanam was added. "Sanction was received, in January 1898, to commence construction

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Colonialism and Indigenous Capital: Chovvakkaran Moosa and the English East India Company, in *Advances in Arts and Ideas*, Vol.3, Nos.1&2, 2007, pp.130-131.

92 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1897-98* (A/1286), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1898, p.5, RAK.

93 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1899, p.4, RAK.

on the first 26 miles out of Calicut, and in February 1899 to commence construction from mile 26 to Baliapatam, to such an extent as was possible without prejudice to the gauge question which was still an open one"[94]. The question of gauge was not finally decided as there were opinions on making it as standard gauge or as broad gauge. "On the 24th March 1899 intimation was received from the Government of India of their decision that the line should be constructed on the broad gauge as economically as possible with a view to conversion hereafter"[95].

Construction till 26th miles from Calicut had already begun and the major earth work and minor bridge too were finished. At the end of it, there was Murat river and the construction of a bridge was a task to them. It is noted that "while earthwork and minor bridges on the first 26th miles are well in hand, and work on one major bridge has been commenced"[96]. The Murat river which joins with the Arabian sea and there formed an estuary, and the work was stuck up with the movements of it. Though the construction of small bridges were done easily, the making of big bridges was a challenge to them. "Steady progress has been made with the minor bridges on the first ten miles which are mostly up to the bottom of bed-stone level. Preparations are being made for well-sinking at Korapaya bridge"[97]. It shows that the construction of big bridges was a challenge to the English. They had the similar experience while constructing bridges at Feroke and Kallai and to tackle the situation some technological tactics were applied. Significantly, the data on the finances involved in the making of Calicut-Kannur extension is available. "Capital expenditure of Calicut-Cannanore extension is £8812, and it was equal to 1,37,549 (Indian rupees). Interest on Capital subscribed for the

94 *Ibid.,* p.5.

95 *Ibid.,* p.5.

96 *Ibid.,* p.5.

97 *Ibid.,* p.20.

Calicut-Cannanore extension £100,000 @ $2^1/_2$ per cent is 38,553/-" [98]. It underlines that how much capital was allotted for bringing up railway development in Malabar.

To the Farther North: Railway Beyond Malabar

In 1898-1899, the preliminary works of railway extension from Valapatanam to Mangalore had commenced and the same was included under the head of 'Lines under survey or projected'[99]. The Valapatanam-Mangalore line was conceived as standard gauge with 90 miles distance and Madras Railway Company had gone with the further steps to materialize the project. "An application has been made by the Madras Railway Company for sanction to make a survey of a line from Baliapatam, the present terminus of the Calicut-Cannanore branch to Mangalore, a distance of 90 miles"[100]. The extension to Mangalore was primarily driven by the mercantile aspirations of the English. They could tap the spices, produced in abundance in the eastern parts of Mangalore. Further, it was anticipated that the tobacco reaped there could be transported with the help of railways[101]. The major stations in between Valapatanam to Mangalore are Payyannur, Thrikaripur, Nileshwar, Kanhangad, Bekkal, Kasargod and Mangalore. Most of the stations in between Valapatanam to Mangalore were inaugurated in between 1901 and 1907. With the completion of Valapatanam -Mangalore extension, the Madras Railway Company had reached a new and much improved condition. It opened unlimited possibilities to the English capitalists to reap the harvest of spices' production in the adjacent areas in between Valapatanam and Mangalore.

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98 *Ibid.,* p.28.

99 *Ibid.,* p.7.

100 *Ibid.,* p.7.

101 S R N Badri Rao, *Road Rail Transport,* Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, 1941, Pp.215-216

Search for More: On Palakkad Extension

A rail line to Palakkad was a long awaited as it was a gateway to the western coast, and it would give the English an access to the littoral tracts. The English was searching for the possibilities of a rail connectivity to there and the significant development was the inclusion of Palakkad-Dindigul line as a proposed line during 1883-1884[102]. It is suggested that a survey between Dindigul and Palakkad would be made after the completion of Vellore-Villupuram survey[103]. During 1884-1885, the survey of extension of South Indian Railway from Dindigul to Palakkad with 104 miles was underway and it was hoped that "this would provide a shorter route for West Coast products to the southern districts and connect with Railways, the important collecting centre, Pollachi"[104]. There was certain progress to the project during 1885-86 and it is described under the head 'provincial surveys'[105]. This line would connect Palakkad in the Madras Railway to Dindigul in the South Indian Railway. It is proposed that "the length of the line will be about 107 miles via Dharapuram or 100 miles via Palani"[106]. It shows that by 1885-86, the Palakkad railway extension got a clear picture, and they were waiting for sanction from authorities.

In 1886-87, the Secretary of State accorded sanction to the construction of a branch from Palghat station to the town and the work was then commenced. This was a part of the proposed Palakkad extension project and

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102 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1884, p.2, RAK.

103 *Ibid.,* p.5.

104 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), *Op.Cit.,* p.6.

105 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), *Op.Cit*., p.6.

106 *Ibid.,* p.6.

that beginning was a significant development. "The line will be $2^1/_2$ miles in length and it estimated to cost Rs.1,49,314, the station building at Palghat being in the first instance of a temporary character"[107]. In 1887-88, the expenditure incurred for the project was Rs. 1,23,908/-[108]. Finally "Palghat branch was opened on 2nd January 1888 and the total length is $2^1/_2$ miles"[109]. The inauguration of Palakkad extension was a great achievement of railway development in Malabar.

Towards South: Railways Beyond Malabar

Being the gateway to Malabar from the eastern coast, Palakkad, constituted the nucleus of southward expansion of railways. The south of Malabar, had been largely neglected in the railway expansion project in the initial years. However, it began to change in the last decade of the 19th century. In 1891-92, a survey for a line from Palakkad to Kurapatnam via Thrissur was surveyed and decided to meet the expenses from the provincial revenues[110]. The survey operations of the proposed line was finished in December 1891. With regard to the specificities of the line, it is stated that "the length of the extension is $60^3/_4$ miles and includes a tunnel of nearly $2^1/_2$ miles long through the Western Ghats"[111]. In 1892-93, some reconsiderations on the proposals were made, especially on the financial feasibility. "The estimate for a standard gauge line by one of these routes amounts to Rs.

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107 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.6, RAK.

108 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), *Op.Cit*., p.8.

109 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), *Op.Cit.,* p.8.

110 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1891-92* (A/1280), Printed by , the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1892, p.6, RAK.

111 *Ibid.,* p.6.

1,10,23,812, or Rs. 1,81,491 per mile and includes the cost of tunnel of $2^1/_2$ miles long. The alternative route costs Rs. 90,16,338, or Rs.1,48,441 per mile and includes $^3/_4$ mile in length"[112]. The financial analysis of two routes were seriously examined and the authorities could not reach into a final word and the decision was kept in abeyance. However, they were totally in favour of a new line connecting Kochi with Madras railway as it would be profitable in terms of mercantile prospects.

Parallelly, Madras Railway Company came forward with a proposal to do the surveying of Shoranur to Thrissur. The survey of this new project was to connect Shoranur in the South West line to the point on the Thrissur Road. Earlier, in 1879, the survey of line from Pattambi to Thrissur was already finished. It shows that areas beyond the south of Malabar was getting certain attention from the Madras Railway. Along with the initiative from the Madras Railway Company, the Raja had also shown some interest in the railway development as it would financially benefit to the princely state of Kochi.

The Raja of Kochi had expressed the consent to bear the expense required for the Shoranur-Kochi branch and it offers a new model in the railway development. It offers a new instance in which, the local ruling houses, along with British owned companies, began to intervene in the railway development. Discussion to fix the final location of the project was initiated in February 1898 and Rs.50,00,000/- was estimated to meet the line in metre gauge[113]. Based on the invitation from the Raja of Kochi, a survey team from Madras Railway Company had employed in the task of fixing the location of the line. The work of the first 30 miles was to be commenced

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[112] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1892-93* (A/1281), Printed by , the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1893, p.6, RAK.

[113] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1897-98* (A/1286), *Op.Cit*., p.6.

during 1898-99 with the financial outlay of Rs. 50,00,000/, provided by the Raja of Kochi[114]. The work was assigned to the Madras Railway Company and the funds would be granted by the Kochi Durbar.

Aborted in the Colonial Womb: Nanjangud- Tellicherry Rail Project

The colonial aspirations to expand the circulatory networks via railways in Malabar reached another remarkable point in the early decades of the 20th century. The northward expansion of Madras railway to Mangalore was to ensure the flow of commercially valued agricultural products made in the south-west parts of Mysore. They further came up with a new plan of linking Nanjangud, in Mysore, to Tellicherry, in Malabar, with branches to Wynad. The survey of new railway line from Nanjangud to Tellicherry was done in accordance with the order passed by the Railway Board and it published as notification No.823-P, dated 29th August 1923 in the Gazette of India[115]. The direction was to conduct a detailed survey of railway from Nanjangud on the Mysore Railway via Bavali and Mananthavadi to Tellicherry on the South Indian Railway with branches (a) from Bavali into Coorg and (b) from Mananthavadi to Meppadi in Malabar. It was directed to search the possibility of extending from Tellicherry to Mananthavadi only, to Bavali or to Tholpatti (all in north Wynad) and whether a branch to Meppadi and one into Coorg[116].

The initial part of the report is devoted to specifying the geography of the regions through which the proposed railway was passing. The catchment area of the proposed railway consisted of coastal plains to the foothills of Western Ghats. The principal rivers which affected the railway are the two

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114 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), Op.Cit., p.5.

115 *Nanjangud-Tellicherry Railway Survey: Tellicherry-Wynaad-Coorg Railway, Report and Estimates*, (R/307) 1924, p.1, RAK,

116 *Ibid.,* p.1.

main branches which united to form the Kabani River and Lakshmantirtha and its tributaries. The rivers were known for the floods during the monsoon seasons[117]. The flood-nature of the rivers upon which the railway was going to be constructed is highlighted in the report for taking necessary caution during the construction of the railway.

The beginning points of the project could be traced back to the petitions that the colonial administrators at Madras had received from two mercantile collectives, i.e.., the Tellicherry Chamber of Commerce and Coorg Planters' Associations. Initially, the Madras government had expressed unwillingness to take up the project as it could not attract private capital. But they could not hold the project indefinitely as the pressure from those planters and chamber of commerce was mounting. Hence a detailed survey of a line to connect Coorg with Tellicherry was sanctioned in 1899 in the shape of Government of India PWD No.1857-R.C., Dated 4th October and the Madras G O No.1304-R dated 11th November of that year[118]. In these orders it was directed to do a survey for a railway line in narrow gauge (i.e., 2'6"- two feet six inches-762 mm) and Mr. Groves was appointed as the Engineer-in Chief of these surveys[119].

This survey is largely depended on Mr. Richard's Mysore and West Coast Railway reports where he spoke of South Coorg and Wynad Railway. In the report of Mr. Richard, he stood in favour of railway line through Mananthavady and it should be constructed to Coorg and Wynad and to feed Tellicherry and in the West Coast generally[120]. Mr. Richard's reconnaissance of 1916-1917 embraced a main line from Nanjangud to Tellicherry and

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117 *Ibid.,* p.2.

118 *Ibid.,* p.3.

119 *Ibid.,* p.3.

120 *Ibid.,* p.3.

branches northwards into Coorg and southward to South Wynad. Subsequently a preliminary survey by the South Indian Railway from Shoranur and Nilambur up the Nadghani (Nadukani) ghat to the Wynaad and Manantoddy with a branch from the latter place to Tellicherry, also covered much of the ground which has now been surveyed in detail[121]. The surveyors were asked to seek the probability of two routes: Tellicherry-Mysore Road via Periya and the other via what is known as *smuggler's pass* and Kottiyur valley. On comparison they concluded that Smuggler's pass route was advisable due to various positive sides. It was slightly shorter, and it had much better traffic prospects. Further it has less rise and fall. It does not have steep counter-grade as compared to Periya route[122].

Extensive arrangements were made to conduct the survey. The survey was carried out by a team consisted of three divisions: Division I, Division II and Division III. Each had finished the survey in of specific regions. Each team had to complete the survey broadly in two areas like selected line and alternative line. In selected areas they bifurcated the survey into preliminary and location. In the alternative route, they survey was to look at the preliminary one[123]. It shows that the survey for the proposed railway was carried out in a most professional manner. A good number of officials and workers might have employed in carrying out the survey. The entire team altogether carried the survey of 131.3 miles in preliminary in selected lines, 114 miles in location survey in preliminary and 41 miles in alternative route. Along with that around 62 miles of preliminary and 56 miles of location survey was also done in Mysore territory as part of the Mysore-Wynad project. The whole survey exercise took almost 7 months to complete. The hardships that the survey team had faced is evidenced here. "Considering the

[121] *Ibid.,* p.3.

[122] *Ibid.,* p.4.

[123] *Ibid.,* p.5.

great difficult of the work on ghat, density of the jungle, labour problems and sickness prevalent among the staff, these figures, which represent all but 21/4 miles per working day, must be considered as very creditable to officers, surveyors and men alike"[124].

The principal objective of this new railway line was to tap the commercially important agrarian products of Coorg and the Wynad to the regional and trans-oceanic markets. Railway on a global scale transformed the agricultural economies[125]. The products of those regions were planned to be brought down to the coastal regions of Malabar, (a) for local consumption in that region and (b) in the case of tea coffee, timber for export from some port of the coast[126]. It is inferred that the primary concern of the project is to ensure the availability of food grains in the comparatively less fertile coastal region. Since, Malabar had frequented with famines during the period from 1918 to 1943, the British were thought to make a use of it in favour of their capitalistic designs. Further they had a commercial interest to integrate the regions of Coorg and Wynand to capitalism, which was in vogue. They had plans to use the rice trade in the Malabar for expanding the English capital. The areas which stand in need of rice from Coorg, to the greatest extent, are ranged along the coast from Cannanore southwards to the limits of Malabar in that direction, and the ports from which timber, tea and coffee are or can be shipped are Mangalore, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Calicut and Cochin[127].

Survey raises some questions on the impact of new railway line on the revenue of Mangalore railway station, the place from where the rice to

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124 *Ibid.,* p.5.

125 Christian Wolmer, *Blood, Iron and Gold: How the Railways Transformed the World*, Atlantic Books, London, 2009, p.261.

126 *Nanjangud-Tellicherry Railway Survey: Tellicherry-Wynaad-Coorg Railway, Report and Estimates*, (R/307) 1924, p.8.

127 *Ibid*.p.8.

Malabar had transported. The survey concludes that it would be an initial disadvantage to Mangalore. They also thought of an alternative route, connecting South Coorg, Mananthavadi, Meppadi, the Nadghani ghat and Nilambur to Calicut. But it will take 190 miles of which 130 will be in the hills and further it was expensive. On the other hand, a line from South Coorg, down the Perambadi ghat to the Tellicherry, such as Mr. Groves surveyed in 1899-1900 would have only 47 miles in difficult country and total more than 85 miles of new line to be constructed, even if the terminus is situated at Ramtirtha to tap the best paddy and forest area in South Coorg[128]. Similarly, if there is a new railway without connecting Wynad, the place enriched with timber, tea and other natural resources would not have been properly used.

For this reason, the Government of India have considered it preferable to make use of the portion of line which would in any case be necessary from Virajpet south-eastwards and to continue through the Wynad in order to reach the west coast, and incidentally provide in Bavali on the Wynaad-Mysore frontier, a very favourable jumping place from which a convenient and cheap connection can in future be made with the Mysore Railways and the city of Mysore itself[129]. Certain serious discussion had been taken place in the echelons of the Madras state about the direction of the proposed route. It is further stated that "this is a longer route than via the Peraimbadi ghat, but it should be remembered that from the centre of gravity of the South Coorg granary' and from the most valuable forests, it is only 20 miles farther to Tellicherry via Mananthavady in the Wynaad, than via Virajpet and Periambadi. There is however the necessity of the South Wynaad branch is the whole Wynaad is to be properly surveyed"[130].

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128 *Ibid.,* p.8.

129 *Ibid.,* p.8.

130 *Ibid.,* p.9.

The British administration concluded that this railway would benefit both the mercantile designs of the British as well as the crave for grains that the whole of Malabar had experienced several times in its history. Further it would integrate the landscape of Mysore, especially the southern part of erstwhile Canara to the western coast and it would ensure the unhindered mobility of good and services. Further the survey preferred Tellicherry in exporting commercially important products. “In fact, timber, tea and coffee can, if anything, be more easily shipped from Tellicherry than from Calicut, as though both are open roadsteads, Tellicherry is slightly more sheltered than Calicut, and can sometimes be used in the monsoon when Calicut cannot[131]. The surveyors unambiguously recommended that the “a line connecting Coorg with Tellicherry is what is required, and also that if this can be accomplished by tapping the Wynaad *en route* without seriously prejudicing the financial prospects of the line, a route via Manantoddy should be selected in preference to one direct via Periambadi[132].

Some interesting suggestions were made on the labour required for the construction of the project. Most of the skilled and practically all the unskilled labour required for construction will have to be imported. Very good labour is to be had in South Malabar, however, in the form of the Mappilas (Moplahs), and it is probable that the bulk of the work will be done by them. A few masons and carpenters and very good blacksmiths are available locally and the few hill tribes which can be induced to do jungle-cutting are quite good at it[133]. Most of the colonial archival records on railway consulted for the present pursuit, did not contain specific reference to the labour profile for the construction. However, from the above reference, it is surmised that local professional groups had largely been integrated to the making process of

131 *Ibid.,* p.9.

132 *Ibid.,* p.9.

133 *Ibid.,* p.18.

railways in Malabar. Further, even the labour power of the tribal population too was to be tapped for the making of the railways. Though the British conflicted with the Mappilas, they had faith in the labour potential of the Mappilas of South Malabar. The period of the survey is also interesting. It was done immediately after the end of Malabar Rebellion. In that context the procurement of Mappila labour from the rebel prone regions of South Malabar deserves special mention.

The colonial state, though it had faced the wrath of the Mappila rebels, they still wanted to depend on the labour potential of the Mappilas for the new railway. Further, the British still preferred to integrate the Mappilas to the colonial state. It is noted that "railway construction in India involved the directed effort of numerous hands involved in many and diverse activities"[134]. In the making of colonial railway in India, the British had made use of the labour potential of the indigenous people, especially the one who were branded as 'criminal castes. Mappilas of Malabar were one such groups, who were labelled as 'jungle Mappilas' in the colonial records as part of criminalizing them. It is argued that "the classification of Muslims as Jungle Mappilas and the construction of their criminality as part of the British strategy to gain control of the region, as the Mappila resistance was the major hurdle to extend colonial rule in Malabar"[135]. The labour potential of the Mappilas had extensively been used in the making of railways.

When it comes to the financial part of the new railway, Based on Traffic Officer's Report, the whole line would ern Rs.19, 75,678/- per year and the estimated working cost of Rs.11,56,500/- or approximately 58% of the

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134 Ian J Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj 1850-1900*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1995, p.3.

135 Santhosh Abraham, *Constructing the "Extraordinary Criminals": Mappila Muslims and Legal Encounters in Early British Colonial Malabar*, in *Journal of World History (Henceforth it is cited as JWH),* Vol.25, No.2/3, June/September 2014, p.384.

gross earnings. The total estimate to the whole project was Rs.144,13,983/- or Rs.114.14 lakhs. The report says that this would be the amount required to construct railway, if it is done at the earliest. To reduce the expenses of the construction, they proposed to obtain second hand materials like rails and bride girders from Madras and Southern Maratha railway. The report further stated that when the new railway is materialized, it would substantially reduce the huge amount required to do the maintenance of the roads like Virajpeta-Ammati and Gonikoppaal-Kutta. The report reiterates great expectations like the flourishment of trade from Tellicherry, tea trade form Wynad, and to improve the living standard of the people in Wynaad and Kottayam taluks.

The proposed railway from Nanjangud to Tellicherry was meant to tap the products of Coorg region and to ensure markets to them both inside the country and outside. It had plan to ensure the supply of essential stuffs to the Malabar coast. The British thought to integrate Wynad to their colonial scheme as the region had some gold deposits. The collectives of planters and entrepreneurs had acted as the pressure groups to speed up the process of implementing the project. But it could not be accomplished, and the project was dropped without citing any valid reasons. An understanding of international economy in the 1920s may shed some light on the reasons for the withdrawal of the project. The Great Depression began in 1929, continued till 1939 had a devastating effect on the capitalist countries in then world. The symptoms of the crisis were visible in the early 1920s and Britain had faced a severe financial crisis in its history. There were strict directives to bring the financial reserve in their favour. It was instructed to suspend all the projects that were not profitable. The monetary tightening became a part of the new policy of capitalist countries including Britain[136]. Britain witnessed a sharp decline of economic activity which adversely affected their economic

[136] Barry Eichengreen, *Viewpoint: Understanding the Great Depression,* in *The Canadian Journal of Economics* (Henceforth it is cited as *CJE*) Vol.37, No. 1,p.5.

progress. It was further directed to reduce unwanted expenses and maintain a revenue reserve in favour of them[137]. Naturally, the Nanjangud- Tellicherry rail Project was dropped as it was not financially viable.

Railways to the Teak Plantations: The Nilambur Case

As stated elsewhere the motives of initiating railways in Malabar were commercial too. The English had to ensure the easy collection and transportation of the commercial crops of Malabar to the markets elsewhere, especially to Britain, and to make maximum profits out of it. Along with spices, the English traders had focused on timber trade from Malabar. The forests in Malabar had offered good quality timber to the English. During the post-Industrial Revolution period, there was a sudden and sharp increase in navigation due to high volume trans-marine trading activities. Ship building required hard timber, stronger than oak, and that quest led the English to procure, teak from south-east Asia, including countries like Burma (Myanmar), India etc.

The English had experimented silviculture, the cultivation of forest trees as a strategy after 1840 to cope up with timber shortage in India[138]. They even resorted to involve in ship building in India by making use of the timber available here. Apart from that, they had shipped timber from India in high quantity. "The total tonnage of English merchant ships increased about four-fold during the period between 1788 and 1860 (from 1,27,800 tons in 1788 to 4,937,000 tons in 1860)"[139]. To tap the timber resources of Malabar a timber syndicate was established in 1766 under the initiative of Mr. Machnochie of

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137 H W Richardson, *The Economic Significance of the Depression in Britai*n, in *Journal of Contemporary History* (Henceforth it is cited as *JCH*), Vol. 4, No,4, 1969,pp.3-19.

138 V M Ravi Kumar, *Green Colonialism and Forest Policies in South India, 1800-1900*, in *Global Environment,* Vol. 3, No.5, 2010, p.109.

139 Shibi Johnson, *Exigencies of Politics and Economy: Colonial Agenda Behind a Local Railway Line in Malabar*, in *PIHC,* Vol.71, 2010-2011, p.510.

the medical service[140]. Timber trade from Malabar was much lucrative and it is evident in the extensive arrangement and communities and groups involved in it. As timber was sent to the Bombay dockyard, contractors based in Bombay and Malabar like Bayon Chacooty, Chovakkaran Moosa, Nusserwanji Jamshedji, Shapurji Callabhoy, Nusserwanji Jamshedji, Dadabhoy Rustomji etc., were involved in it. Some commercial private firms called as European Agency Houses like Alexander Adamson, Forbes and Company, Bruce Fawcett and Company etc., had led the dealings in timber trade[141].

Having understood the indiscriminate felling of teak would soon lead acute shortage, the farsighted English, resorted to bring up a teak plantation at Nilambur. By engaging a need-supply analysis of teak from Malabar, H V Conolly concluded that the annual demand of Malabar teak at Bombay dockyard would be about 2,230 cubic metres, and for such a quantity of teak at least 2,000 teak trees were needed, and it would take 60 years to get a teak tree fully grown. Conolly recommended that at least 670.5 sq.km forest land was to be bought[142]. They made use of the service of local people in the elaboration of plantation activities at Nilambur. “From 1843 to 1860 Chatoo Menon, a local official, managed the Nilambur plantations, planting more than a million teak plants on 1200 acres of land”[143].

The English had taken certain steps to maintain the steady and prompt supply of teak from Nilambur. Further the quality class of Nilambur

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140 B Ribbentrop, *Forestry in British India*, Calcutta, 1900, p.51.

141 Louiza Rodrigues, *Commercialisation of Forests, Timber Extraction and Deforestation of Malabar: Early Nineteenth Century,* in *PIHC,* Vol. 73, 2012, p.811.

142 William Logan, *Malabar* (Vol. II), Asian Education Services, New Delhi, 1985, p. cccixv.

143 See R S Brown, *Revised Working Plan for Nilambur Valley,* Government Press, Madras, 1929, pp.59-60, and H Morgan, *Forestry in South India*, Higgin Bothems, Madras, 1884, p.9.

plantations was accepted as standard[144]. In 1867, Hugh Cleghorn, the first conserver of forests in Malabar suggested the Forest Department in Madras to expand plantations at Nilambur and also ten miles away at Nellicottah[145]. They made serious and planned attempts to expand teak plantations in and around Nilambur and as a result the total acreage increased to 3100 acres in 1876. The English had made the South Malabar Forest Division as Nilambur Division and that covered an area of 81,031.30 acres or about 127 square miles[146]. Similarly, the Nilambur Division had brought huge profits to the English through the selling of timber, especially teak. Naturally, they resorted to make enough connectivity infrastructure to facilitate the management of plantation and also the speedy transportation of timber from Nilambur. They made roads, bridges, check posts, and even residential bungalows etc.

In the early decades of the 20th century, internationally the demand for teak has increased as new ship building companies sprang up in Germany, USA, and UK. The increased demand for teak necessitated more effective modalities for the transportation and Nilambur railway project should be analysed in this context. It is noted that "the Nilambur railway represents, the second wave of railway making in in Kerala where attempts were made to expand rail network towards plantations and forests[147]. The coming of a rail line between Kochi and Shoranur, opened the possibility of direct timber transport from Nilambur to major port cities in India then. The Forest Working Plan for a decade of 1919 to 1927 detailed extensive plan for timber transport from Nilambur to Bangalore, Mysore, Kolar Gold Fields,

144 R Smeathers and H Tordoff, *The Utilization of Teak Thinnings from Plantations in Trinidad*, in *Empire Forestry Review*, (Henceforth it is cited as EFR), Vol.26, No.1, 1947, p..79.61

145 Brett M Bennett, *The Origins of Timber Plantations in India,* in *The Agricultural History Review* (Henceforth it is cited as *AHR*) Vol.62, No.1, 2014, p.106.

146 Shibi Johnson*, Op.Cit.,* p.512.

147 C Balan, *Resource Appropriation and Development of Transport Facilities in Kerala During Colonial Period*, in *PIHC*, Vol 67, 2006-2007, p.741.

Nanjangud, Coorg etc. To achieve this end, a new broad-gauge line was proposed from Nilambur to Shoranur with 66 kms and Mr. Hall took the contract at a cost of Rs. 70,000,00/-. The first reach in this line, Shoranur-Angadippuram section was commissioned in February 1927. It was further extended to Nilambur road in October 1927. Thus, the Shoranur- Nilambur, primarily meant to ensure the transport of timber from teak plantations in Nilambur was another remarkable addition to the railway network in Malabar.

To conclude, it is clear that the integration of Malabar to the British imperial scheme in 1792 was significant in multiple respects. This region had its role in sustaining the imperial ambitions of Britain. Malabar assisted Britain to strengthen its essentials in the imperial race in the 19th and 20th centuries. Malabar as a region could benefit from their link with the British imperial heyday. Exactly after 70 years of its integration to British empire, Malabar had experienced a slow but subtle transformation, a 'silent railway revolution' from May 1862 onwards. Malabar as a region did not hear about railway until the commencement of Tirur-Beypore line in 1862. Within next 70 years or so, the region had undergone a thorough transformation. Rail network became wide and extensive in Malabar by the end of 1920s and that transformation was not a gift bequeathed by the British to their subjects in Malabar. The local populace of Malabar had their own role in the making of railways.

CHAPTER 5

RAILWAYS IN MALABAR: AN EPITOME OF HYBRIDITY

> "Hybridity intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity but to represent the unpredictability of its presence"[1].

Malabar as a region became laboratory where the British had experimented with several technological advancements, that they made in the aftermath of Industrial Revolution. Within less than seventy years from 1861 to 1927, the landscape of Malabar experienced the most dynamic mode of modern times-railways-and it restructured the very nature of social interactions in the region. Being a part of Madras, railway development in Malabar was an epitome of indigenous making of a revolution and it had multiple dimensions. Railway cannot be minimised as a capitalist export to a periphery. The people of Malabar too contributed in the making of it. Railway offered employment avenues to the local people and it helped them progressively climb the social ladder[2].

Capitalism and Development of Railways: The Malabar Story

Railways in India was not a mere innocent colonial experiment to extend the benefits of steam power, that they had invented to the colonies they owned. Instead, it was the outcome of the urge for profit that the newly emerged capitalists had practiced in Britain. The post-Industrial Revolution

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1 Homi K Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, New York, 1994, p.163

2 See Appendix 5 for important archival documents on transportation development in Malabar.

period in Britain had opened up several new possibilities for further capitalist expansion and the railway was one among them. The British capitalists had eyed on the extensive resources that were distributed over the colonies. Capitalism does possess the capacity to transform even an iota of impossibility into an ocean of possibilities. Steam power was a tool they had possessed to capture the world through steam engines, steam ships and even steam locomotives. Further, railway could be simply a huge machine plying on an iron rode was made possible by the intervention of capitalism. It is clear that railways in India, as in other parts of the world, was made possible by the capitalist urge. The data and the analysis follow is an attempt to estimate the instrumentality of British capitalism in the making of railways in Malabar.

The first train did run in India on 16th April 1853 and before the completion of its golden jubilee, a substantial progress could be made on the expansion of railways in India. As noted "by 1900 over 24000 miles of tracks had been laid"[3]. Such a mammoth progress could be possible due to the inflow of capital in India as Indian railways were a prestigious project that the British capital had conceived and implemented. The laying of rail lines in colonial India had been with intense interest and enthusiasm since the major part of the finances required was furnished by the British capitalists. As stated "there were on an average of 1405 miles under construction every year until the end of the century"[4]. "Some 150 million pounds sterling was invested in Indian railways by the end of 19th century"[5]. No such huge single investment

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3 Daniel R Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century*, New York, 1981, p.184.

4 Ian J Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj: 1850-1900,* Oxford University Press, 1995, Delhi, p.187.

5 Laxman D Satya, *British Imperial Railways in Nineteenth Century South Asia*, in *Economic and Political Weekly* (Henceforth it is cited as *EPW),* Vol.43, No.47, Nov.22-28, 2008, p.69.

was made by the British empire. These investments were made by the British capitalists.

To the investments made on railways in India, the Government of India became the guarantor. In British India "private companies would build and operate their respective lines in different regions of the subcontinent with a guaranteed 5 per cent return on their stockholders' investments assured by the Indian revenues of the empire"[6]. The scheme of investment was, if the railway performs poor, or is in loss, the return was guaranteed by the Indian government and to meet such contingencies, special arrangements were made. "Fifty million pounds sterling was set aside by the colonial state to meet the guarantee irrespective of the company is losses"[7]. In case of loss, a portion from Indian revenue could be utilised to meet the situation. In Madras, a substantial amount from Indian revenue had utilised to meet the loss of the British capitalists.

To ensure the sufficient funds for the Indian railways, the British government implemented the guarantee system, but that had been viewed sceptically by some scholars. It is argued that "the guarantee system contributed substantially to the drain of funds from the subcontinent"[8]. In the management of finances, the Government had taken certain usual steps as they expected to strengthen rail networks in India. Railway was not just a modality of transportation in India. The impact of railways on Indian psyche in the succeeding days were totally unimaginable. Further railway could develop a system of their own and by and large it is an autonomous mechanism. It would argue that railways were a state within the Indian state with its own law, executive and even judicial system. The year 1924 marked some special importance in the history of railway as it commenced a separate

6 *Ibid.,* p.69.

7 Daniel R Headrick, *Op.Cit.,* pp.184-186.

8 Laxman D Satya, *Op.Cit.*, p.70.

budget for railways. In the case of Malabar, as it was a part of Madras Presidency and railway, some special arrangements were made to manage the finances required for the expansion of railways.

Management of Finances

The management of finances of the Madras Railway Company offers some interesting inferences. Till 1884-1885, the Madras Railway Company could manage their finances mainly by using stock and debentures. There were four ways by which Madras Railway Company collected the required funds: consolidated stock at 5% guaranteed interest, consolidated stock at $4^{3}/_{4}$% guaranteed interest, Debenture stock at $4^{1}/_{2}$ % guaranteed interest and Debenture bonds at $3^{1}/_{2}$ % guaranteed interest[9]. The amount collected were £3,030,819, £179,559, £425,000 and £720,000 respectively. The total accumulated capital was £4,416,406 [10]. Out of these the major head that contributed the finances of the Madras Railway Company was the consolidated stock at 5% guaranteed interest and it underlines the measures that the Company had taken in the railway projects in the Presidency. Further, they were confident of the financial feasibility of the ongoing rail project as it expected to bring high returns to the capital investors.

However, in 1885-1886, more funds were required as new extension projects began to take up and the new situation compelled the Madras Railway Company to come up with fresh ways to accumulate capital required for the railway development. Unlike earlier, further ways were sought to ensure the inflow of more capital required for the expansion of railway networks. Now they had six heads to accumulate the required capital: Subscribed capital at 5% guaranteed interest, Subscribed capital at $4^{3}/_{4}$%

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9 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1885, p.24,RAK.

10 *Ibid.,* p.24.

guaranteed interest, Subscribed capital at 4 1/2% guaranteed interest, Debentures at 4 % guaranteed interest and Debenture at 3 1/2 % guaranteed interest and Capital bearing no interest[11]. The amount collected were £8,757,670, £999,960, £500,000, £102,200, £297,800 and £12,014 respectively. The total capital collected then was £10,669,644 [12].

As railway expansion in the Presidency was underway, the Company felt the necessity for raising more funds in 1890-91 and it could be done by availing more loans. In addition to the existing heads of resource mobilisation, a new one was added and now they had seven heads to accumulate the required capital: Subscribed capital at 5% guaranteed interest, Subscribed capital at 4 3/4% guaranteed interest, Subscribed capital at 4 1/2% guaranteed interest, Debentures at 4 % guaranteed interest and Debentures at 3 1/2 % guaranteed interest, Debenture at 3 1/4 % guaranteed interest and Capital bearing no interest[13]. The amount collected were £8,757,670, £999,960, £500,000, £102,200, £237,800, £260,000 and £12,014 respectively. The total capital collected then was £10,869,644[14]. Additional fund of £200,000 was added to the capital and it was essential to ensure the uninterrupted expansion of railways. Due to the increased volume of finances required and expenses made, some significant changes were made in the accounting practices of the Company in the year 1893-94. Instead of the previous ways of enumerating the receipts and payments, the heads that made both income and expenditure with details are added.

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11 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-8*6 (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886, p.12,RAK.

12 *Ibid.,* p.12.

13 *Ibid.,* p.12.

14 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1891, p.17, RAK.

Contrary to 1894-1895, the expenses of the Madras Railway Company has increased as they were new extension and new projects they had to take up. To meet the increased expenses, they devised novel methods to mobilise the required fund. In Malabar, Calicut-Tellicherry-Kannur extension was surveyed. A preliminary reconnaissance of the proposed line was made and it also required huge investment. In 1895-1896, certain increase was visible in the expenditure heads. Further the Company had to give more interest than the preceding assessment year. It was in the year that the survey of Calicut-Kannur with an extend of 59 miles was completed. The estimated expense of the project was Rs. 90,70, 611 or Rs. 1, 53, 739 per mile.

In 1896-97, there was sharp increase in the subscribed capital than the previous year. It shows the Company needed more investment for the further expansion of railway in the Presidency. Similarly, there was a slight reduction in the interest charges. Significant to the railway expansion in Malabar, some data on the finances involved in the construction of railway lines from Calicut to Cannanore are available and they are being found under the sub-section 'Capital Transactions'. The data available were at the close of 1898.: "Capital expenditure- Lines in course of construction: Calicut-Cannanore extension. £8812 it was equal to Rs.1,37,549. Interest on Capital subscribed for the Calicut-Cannanore extension £100,000 @$2^1/_2$ per cent is 38,553/-"[15]. It underlines that the extension from Calicut to Kannur was taken so prestigiously by the Madras Railway Company as it would give access to the timber and spices in the region.

Railway in Malabar: An Epitome of Hybridization

As stated at the outset of this section, the railway development in India and in Madras too were primarily conceived as capitalist project. A huge

[15] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1899, p.28,RAK.

quantity of colonial capital was pumped into India to materialise the railway. Often the role of Indian revenue to pay off the guarantee to the colonial capital was either neglected or exaggerated. An attempt is made here to see how much Indian revenue had been used for making the railways by analysing the performance of railways in financial indicators like income and expenditure, profit and loss. In the year 1883-84, "the total expenditure up to 31st December 1883 was Rs. 11,17, 22,588/- (£10,241,237). The total capital expenditure including the stores was up to the same date was Rs.11,40,25, 234/- (£10,452, 313)…The net profits of the year under review were Rs.25,26,549/- (£231,600)"[16]. The net profits fell short of the guarantee by £292,000.[17] It underlines that the railway development was not loss to the British Capitalists, though, there was loss, it was repaid by using Indian revenue worth £292,000. In the case of Malabar, a substantial amount was spent during 1883-1884. "During 1883 Rs. 11,254/- was spent on renewing with iron sleepers between Palghat and Beypore"[18].

During 1884-85, more investments were made. "The Capital of the Company stood as £10,669,644/- at end of 1884"[19]. It was is an indicator of how much capital had been accumulated for the railway development in the Madras presidency and the expenditure would be a further underline of their involvement in the development of circulatory networks in Malabar. Total expenditure at the end of 1884 was £10,478,050/- and the balance was £191,594/-[20]. The expenses were mainly in three heads: On the way of works,

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16 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1884, p.10, RAK.

17 *Ibid.,* p.10.

18 *Ibid.,* p.15.

19 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1885, p.11,RAK.

20 *Ibid.,* p.12.

On rolling stock and On stores and suspense. Out of these £3,569,808 was spent under the head 'On the way of works', £580,166 was spent under the head 'On rolling stock' and £210,078 was the expense under 'On stores and suspense'[21]. With regard to Malabar the "net capital outlay during the year was Rs.2,06,377"[22]. In addition to that an amount of Rs. 55,573/- has been sanctioned for strengthening the Palar bridge and the process to commence the work was underway[23]. During 1884-85, the net profit was £269.105, which was equal to Rs.29,35,686/-, giving a dividend at the rate of 2.52% on the paid up capital which, fell short of the guarantee by £252,886[24].

The total capital of the Company for the year 1885-1886 was £10,669,644 and expenditure was £10,545,960 and balance was £123,684[25]. The expenses were mainly in three heads: 'On the way of works', 'On rolling stock' and 'On stores and suspense'. Out of these £9,045,554 was spent under the head 'On the way of works', £1,240,249 was spent under the head 'On rolling stock' and £260,157 was the expense under 'On stores and suspense'[26]. The net profit of the year 1885-1886 was £300,590 which was equal to Rs.32,79,168. The dividend was 2.85% of the total capital outlay, which fell short of the guarantee by £221,302[27] and that guarantee was met from the Indian revenue.

The net capital outlay for the year 1885 was Rs.2,79,795/-[28]. At the end of 1886, the total capital of the Company was £10,669,644, total expenditure

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21 *Ibid.,* , p.24.

22 *Ibid.,* p.7.

23 *Ibid.,* p.7.

24 *Ibid.,* , p.11.

25 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), *Op.Cit.,* p.12.

26 *Ibid.,* p.12.

27 *Ibid.,* p.13.

28 *Ibid.,* p.8.

was £10,648,646/- and the balance was £20,998[29]. The expenses were mainly in three heads: 'On the way of works', 'On rolling stock' and 'On stores and suspense'. Out of these £9,112,204 was spent under the head 'On the way of works', £1,247,960 was spent under the head 'On rolling stock' and £288,482 was the expense under 'On stores and suspense'[30]. In the year 1886-87, the net profit was £296.014, which was equal to Rs.32,29,244/-. It gave a divided at the rate of 2.78% on the capital outlay. It was fell short of the guarantee by £226,378/-[31] and it marked an additional £5.076 on Indian revenue than the previous year.

The total capital on the line up to the end of December 1887 was £10,669,644, total expenditure was £10,471,124 and the balance was £198,520[32]. The expenses were mainly in three heads: 'On the way of works', 'On rolling stock' and 'On stores and suspense'. Out of these £8,973,747 was spent under the head 'On the way of works', £1,270,844 was spent under the head 'On rolling stock' and £226,533 was the expense under 'On stores and suspense'[33]. The net profits of the year under review were £264,002 that was equal to Rs.28,80,028/-. The Company could give a dividend at rate of 2.58% on the capital outlay and falling short of the guarantee by £256,329[34] and an additional £29,951 was to be charged on Indian revenue.

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29 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-8*7 (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.13, RAK.

30 *Ibid.,* p.13.

31 *Ibid.,* p.13.

32 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-8*8 (A/1276), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888, p.13, RAK.

33 *Ibid.,* p.13.

34 *Ibid.,* p.13.

The total capital of the Company was £10,669,644, total expenditure was £10,589708 and the balance was £79,936[35]. The expenses were mainly in three heads: 'On the way of works', 'On rolling stock' and 'On stores and suspense'. Out of these £90,89,466 was spent under the head 'On the way of works', £12,75,601 was spent under the head 'On rolling stock' and £2,24,641 was the expense under 'On stores and suspense'[36]. The net profit of the year 1888-89 was £322,818 that was equal to Rs.35,21,645/- and it was decided to give the divided at the rate of 3.11% per annum on the capital. This was falling short of the guarantee by £199,575/-[37]. Though the making of Indian railway was the brainchild of the colonial capital, the resources from India, truly made out of Indian labour but collected and managed by the colonial administration, made it possible that the railway as a reality. By 31st December 1888 the guaranteed interest from the formation of the Company was amounted to £13,899,352 and net profits for the period was £6,347,750[38]. The balance of £7,551,602 was met from the revenues of India[39].

The total capital of the Company was £10,669,644, total expenditure was £10,665,853 and the balance was £3791. The expenses were mainly in three heads: On the way of works, On rolling stock and On stores and suspense. Out of these £9,169459 was spent under the head 'On the way of works', £1,305,916 was spent under the head 'On rolling stock' and £190,478 was the expense under 'On stores and suspense'[40]. It is evident that the major

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35 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-8*9 (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.15, RAK.

36 *Ibid.,* p.15.

37 *Ibid.,* p.16.

38 *Ibid.,* p.16.

39 *Ibid.,* p.16.

40 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889*-90 (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.16,RAK.

head that drained the capital in railway was the construction of new lines in the Presidency. This further shows the volume of capital that had been used in the creation of an extensive rail line. Further, substantial amount had been spent for running the railways. Both these underlines the high volume of capital, that the English had diverted into the development of railways in India. The net profits for the year 1889-90 was £342,689 that was equal to Rs. 37,38,421[41]. The divided was at the rate of 3.21% per annum on the capital outlay and it was falling short of guarantee by £179,554[42].

The total capital of the Company was £10,869,644, total expenditure was £10,815,403 and the balance was £54,241[43]. The expenses were mainly in three heads: 'On the way of works', 'On rolling stock' and 'On stores and suspense'. Out of these £9,200,534 was spent under the head 'On the way of works', £1,335,729 was spent under the head 'On rolling stock' and £279,140 was the expense under 'On stores and suspense'[44]. The net profits of the year 1890-91 was £414,469 that was equal to Rs.45,21,480/-. The divided was at the rate of 3.83% per annum of the capital outlay. It falls of the guarantee by £114,229[45]. The shortage of guarantee had substantially reduced than the previous year, where it was £179,554[46]. It shows that the guaranteed interest had substantially reduced over a period of time.

The forgone analysis on performance of Madras Railway was not comprehensive as it is done for the first decade of its existence only. The exercise is meant to analyse the financial performance of the Madras railways.

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41 *Ibid.,* p.16.

42 *Ibid.,* p.16.

43 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1899-91* (A/1279), *Op.Cit.,* p.17.

44 *Ibid.,* p.17.

45 *Ibid.,* p.18.

46 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889*-90 (A/1278), *Op.Cit.,* p.16.

It would underline the basic reason for initiating the mega project of bringing the circulatory rail networks across the Madras Presidency. Huge capital inflow was required in the herculean project of constructing railways in India. The colonial state could assure the sufficient capital by the guarantee system and the deficit were met from the Indian revenue. Some historians, who often adorned Marxian or neo-Marxian paraphernalia, still could not escape from the nationalist reductionisms[47]. Along with British capital, Indian revenue too had been used to pay the guarantee on that capital and in that sense, in the making of Indian railway too.

In 1883-84, it was decided to give dividend at the rate of 2.2% on the capital expenditure and the net profits fell short of the guarantee by £292,000.[48] When it comes to 1884-85, the dividend was decided at the rate of 2.52% of the paid-up capital and the net profit fell short of the guarantee by £252,886[49]. In 1885-1886, the dividend at the rate of 2.85% on the total capital outlay was fixed and it fell short of the guarantee by £221,302[50]. In 1886-87, the dividend at the rate of 2.78% of the capital outlay was fixed. It was fall short of the guarantee by £226,378/[51]. In the year 1887-88 dividend at the rate of 2.58% of the capital outlay was fixed. It was falling short of the guarantee by £256,329[52].In 1888-89 the dividend at the rate of 3.11% per annum on the capital outlay was fixed. This was falling short of the guarantee

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47 See Bipan Chandra, *Nationalism and Colonialism in Modern India*, Orient Black swan, New Delhi, 1981, p.205, and Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture and Political Economy*, Routledge, London, 1998.

48 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), *Op.Cit.,* p.10.

49 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), *Op.Cit*.,p.11.

50 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), *Op.Cit*., p.13.

51 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-8*7 (A/1275), *Op.Cit*., p.13.

52 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-8*8 (A/1276), *Op.Cit.,* p.13.

by £199,575/-[53]. In the year 1889-90, the dividend at the rate of 3.21% per annum on the capital outlay was fixed. It was falling short of guarantee by £179,554[54]. In 1890-91, the dividend at the rate of 3.83% per annum on the capital outlay was fixed and it falls of the guarantee by £114,229[55]. It makes quite clear that the deficit was met from the Indian revenue and that too was the outcome of the labour of Indians. In that sense, along with colonial capital, the fruits of the Indian labour too had contributed to the making of Indian railway.

Table 5.1

Indian Revenue as Guarantee to Colonial Capital

Year	Guarantee met from Indian Revenue
1883-84	£292,000
1884-85	£252,886
1885-86	£221,302
1886-87	£226,378
1887-88	£256,329
1888-89	£199,575
1889-90	£179,554
1890-91	£114,229

Though the colonial management of finances could sooth the complicated procedure of capital accumulation, Indians, their resources, labour, energy too had a pivotal role in the making of railway in Madras. The inflow of colonial capital alone could not make the railway as a reality in Malabar. Huge sums of money had been given as guarantee to the British

[53] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), *Op.Cit.,* p.16.

[54] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889-*90 (A/1278), *Op.Cit*., p.16.

[55] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), *Op.Cit*., p.18.

capital invested. Further, the railway circulatory networks in Malabar made possible due to the labour of local people. They had worked in the management of railways in Malabar. Hence it would argue that that railways in colonial Malabar made possible as a result of hybridization, where the colonial capital merged with Indian revenue and British management fused with Indian manpower.

Railways in Malabar: On Financial Viability

Malabar had generously contributed to the financial feasibility of Madras railways and it is visible in the tables below.

Table 5.2

Passengers Between Madukarai and Beypore (1881-1883)

Between	1881	1882	1883
Madukarai and Beypore	484,797	511,537	523,112

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1884, p.12, RAK.

Table 5.3

Passengers Between Madukarai and Beypore (1883-1887)

Between	1883	1884	1885	1886	1887
Madukarai and Beypore	523,526	617,454	657,116	696,904	810,922

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), Printed by The Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888, p.16, RAK.

Table 5.4

Passengers Between Madukarai and Beypore (1884-1888)

Between	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888
Madukarai and Beypore	617,454	657,116	696,904	810,922	1,130,913

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the, Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.18, RAK.

Table 5.5

Passengers Between Madukarai and Calicut (1885-1889)

Between	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889
Madukarai and Calcut	657,116	696,904	810,922	1,130,913	1,246,088

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), Printed by the, Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.20, RAK.

Table 5.6

Passengers Between Madukarai and Calicut (1889-1890)

Between	1889	1890
Madukarai and Calicut	1, 246,088	1,131,136

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by The Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.20, RAK.

The number of passengers commuted between Madukarai and Beypore in 1883 was 5,23,526. Beypore, being the centre of western terminus had a pivotal position in the railway history of Madras. The tables above clearly indicate that a steady progress was there in the number of passengers who used railway facility. In 1889 the total number of passengers in between Madukarai and Calicut was 1,246,088 and that was substantially a good number. In 1890, the number of passengers declined to 1,131,136 and it might be due to restrictions on travel imposed in the light of some contagious diseases. It is argued that Malabar had an unquestionable role in generating a good revenue to the Madras railway.

Railways in Malabar, being a project conceived and implemented under the auspices of British capitalism, was always depended on the earnings it could make. The net revenue that the Madras Railway Company could generate is a strong indicator on its financial viability. The net revenue is calculated by deducting the operational expenditure from the gross earnings and the Madras railway could make substantial progress in achieving it. In

1879 the net revenue was Rs. 20,75,170/-. Within ten years it rose to Rs. 37,38,421/-. The passenger profile gives some indications to whom the railways in Madras stand for. In Madras railway, as any other parts of India, the Indians generally travelled in third class. The passengers in the third class and their contribution to the revenue of Madras railway were much ahead of other two classes. The following analysis is meant to substantiate it.

Table 5.7

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC) -1879-83

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1879	66,26,486	45,51,316	20,75,170
1880	61,62,546	42,05,409	19,57,137
1881	63,11,313	42,35,456	20,75,857
1882	69,18,571	43,47,729	25,70,842
1883	66,31,909	41,05,360	25,26,549

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1884, p.10, RAK.

Table 5.8

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC) -1880-84

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1880	61,62,546	42,05,409	19,57,137
1881	63,11,313	42,35,456	20,75,857
1882	69,18,571	43,47,729	25,70,842
1883	66,31,909	41,05,360	25,26,549
1884	71,41,317	42,05,631	29,35,686

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1885, p.12, RAK.

Table 5.9

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC) -1881-85

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1881	63,11,313	42,35,456	20,75,857
1882	69,18,571	43,47,729	25,70,842
1883	66,31,909	41,05,360	25,26,549
1884	71,41,317	42,05,631	29,35,686
1885	76,57,993	43,78,825	32,79,168

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886, p.13, RAK.

Table 5.10

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC)-1882-86

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1882	69,18,571	43,47,729	25,70,842
1883	66,31,909	41,05,360	25,26,549
1884	71,41,317	42,05,631	29,35,686
1885	76,57,993	43,78,825	32,79,168
1886	79,66,098	47,36,954	32,29,244

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.14, RAK.

Table 5.11

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC)-1883-1887

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1883	66,31,909	41,05,360	25,26,549
1884	71,41,317	42,05,631	29,35,686
1885	76,57,993	43,78,825	32,79,168
1886	79,66,098	47,36,954	32,29,244
1887	81,72,535	52,92,507	28,80,028

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), Printed by the, Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888, p.14, RAK.

Table 5.12

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC)-1884-1888

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1884	71,41,317	42,05,631	29,35,686
1885	76,57,993	43,78,825	32,79,168
1886	79,66,098	47,36,954	32,29,244
1887	81,72,535	52,92,507	28,80,028
1888	85,31,054	50,09,409	35,21,645

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.16, RAK.

Some observations were made on the expansion in the number of miles in railway lines: "The average number of miles open during the year under review was 839 against 830 in the preceding year, the increase being due to the extensions of the line from Palghat(now called Olavakotu) to Palghat town, and from Kadalundi to Calicut on the Western Coast, which were opened, the former, for all descriptions of the traffic, and the latter, for passenger traffic only, on 2nd January 1888. The Feroke bridge was completed on 5th March 1888, when the Calicut extension was made available for goods traffic. The line from Kadalundi to Beypore was closed on the same date"[56]. These expansion in the rail circulatory network, contributed to the increase in the number of passengers and earnings as well.

[56] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), *Op.Cit*.,p.16.

Table 5.13

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC)-1885-1889

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1885	76,57,993	43,78,825	32,79,168
1886	79,66,098	47,36,954	32,29,244
1887	81,72,535	52,92,507	28,80,028
1888	85,31,054	50,09,409	35,21,645
1889	91,10,895	53,72,474	37,38,421

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.17, RAK.

Table 5.14

Number of Passengers (Exclusive of Troops and Police)

Carried in Each Year (1881-1885)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1881	11,956	33,502	4,178,289	4,223,747
1882	12,172	33,081	4,235,860	4,281,113
1883	12,068	32,907	4,345,480	4,390,455
1884	13,962	33,564	5,082,836	5,129,852
1885	11,924	31,323	5,438,024	5,481,271

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886, p.14, RAK.

Table 5.15

Receipts from Each Class (1881-1885)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1881	1,59,012	1,12,977	18,95,850	21,67,839
1882	1,64,275	1,17,250	19,77,448	22,58,973
1883	1,55,035	1,12,808	19,72,199	22,40,042
1884	1,64,228	1,14,889	21,05,992	23,85,109
1885	1,59,729	1,18,605	22,60,292	25,38,626

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886, p.14, RAK.

Table 5.16

Percentages of Numbers and Receipts (1881-1885)

Year	Numbers			Receipts		
	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
1881	0.28	0.79	98.93	7.34	5.21	87.45
1882	0.29	0.77	98.94	7.27	5.19	87.54
1883	0.27	0.75	98.98	6.92	5.04	88.04
1884	0.27	0.65	99.08	6.88	4.82	88.30
1885	0.22	0.57	99.21	6.29	4.67	89.04

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886, p.14, RAK

Table 5.17

Number of Passengers (Exclusive of Troops and Police)

Carried in Each Year (1882-1886)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1882	12,172	33,081	4,235,860	4,281,113
1883	12,068	32,907	4,345,480	4,390,455
1884	13,962	33,564	5,082,836	5,129,852
1885	11,924	31,323	5,438,024	5,481,271
1886	13,025	33,177	6,216,897	6,263,099

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.14, RAK.

Table 5.18

Receipts from Each Class (1882-1886)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1882	1,64,275	1,17,250	19,77,448	22,58,973
1883	1,55,035	1,12,808	19,72,199	22,40,042
1884	1,64,228	1,14,889	21,05,992	23,85,109
1885	1,59,729	1,18,605	22,60,292	25,38,626
1886	1,62,475	1,21,018	23,44,190	26,27,683

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.15, RAK.

Table 5.19

Percentages of Numbers and Receipts (1882-1886)

Year	Numbers			Receipts		
	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
1882	0.29	0.77	98.94	7.27	5.19	87.54
1883	0.27	0.75	98.98	6.92	5.04	88.04
1884	0.27	0.65	99.08	6.88	4.82	88.30
1885	0.22	0.57	99.21	6.29	4.67	89.04
1886	0.21	0.53	99.26	6.18	4.61	89.21

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.15, RAK.

Table 5.20

Number of Passengers (Exclusive of Troops and Police)

Carried in Each Year (1883-1887)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1883	12,068	32,907	4,345,480	4,390,455
1884	13,962	33,564	5,082,836	5,129,852
1885	11,924	31,323	5,438,024	5,481,271
1886	13,025	33,177	6,216,897	6,263,099
1887	12,082	33,173	6,915,779	6,961,034

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888, p.15, RAK.

Table 5.21

Receipts from Each Class (1883-1887)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1883	1,55,035	1,12,808	19,72,199	22,40,042
1884	1,64,228	1,14,889	21,05,992	23,85,109
1885	1,59,729	1,18,605	22,60,292	25,38,626
1886	1,62,475	1,21,018	23,44,190	26,27,683
1887	1,65, 686	1,24,132	23,81,993	26,71,811

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888, p.15, RAK.

Table 5.22

Percentages of Numbers and Receipts-1883-1887

Year	Numbers			Receipts		
	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
1883	0.27	0.75	98.98	6.92	5.04	88.04
1884	0.27	0.65	99.08	6.88	4.82	88.30
1885	0.22	0.57	99.21	6.29	4.67	89.04
1886	0.21	0.53	99.26	6.18	4.61	89.21
1887	0.17	0.48	99.35	6.20	4.65	89.15

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888, p.15, RAK.

Table 5.23

Number of Passengers (Exclusive of Troops and Police)

Carried in Each Year (1884-1888)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1884	13,962	33,564	5,082,836	5,129,852
1885	11,924	31,323	5,438,024	5,481,271
1886	13,025	33,177	6,216,897	6,263,099
1887	12,082	33,173	6,915,779	6,961,034
1888	12,524	39,280	76,70,895	7,722,699

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.17, RAK.

Table 5.24

Receipts from Each Class (1884-1889)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1884	1,64,228	1,14,889	21,05,992	23,85,109
1885	1,59,729	1,18,605	22,60,292	25,38,626
1886	1,62,475	1,21,018	23,44,190	26,27,683
1887	1,65, 686	1,24,132	23,81,993	26,71,811
1888	1,59,198	1,33,890	25,81,754	28,74,842

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.17, RAK.

Table 5.25

Percentages of Numbers and Receipts (1884-1888)

Year	Numbers			Receipts		
	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
1884	0.27	0.65	99.08	6.88	4.82	88.30
1885	0.22	0.57	99.21	6.29	4.67	89.04
1886	0.21	0.53	99.26	6.18	4.61	89.21
1887	0.17	0.48	99.35	6.20	4.65	89.15
1888	0.16	0.51	99.33	5.54	4.66	89.80

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.18, RAK.

The political developments do have an impact on railways. “The number of passengers in all classes shows a marked improvement as compared to the previous year, but there is a slight falling off in receipts under “first class”. The increase under second class is attributed to the annual

meeting of the National Congress having been held at Madras during the year under review, and to the carriages of this class being for the first time furnished with cushions. Compared with 1887 the totals show an increase in number of 10.9 per cent. and in receipts of 7.6 per cent"[57]. Though the railways had been identified as a colonial initiative, the leaders of the INC used it for their travels. The circulatory practices of the Congress leaders and workers in those days were fashioned by the colonial interventions in transportation. It further talk about the class nature of Congress in the immediate years after its formation. It was an organisation of the Indian elite and they preferred to travel in the second class. Which constituted only 0.51% of the total passengers in that year. Majority of the travellers had preferred Third class and it came around 99.33%.

Table 5.26

Number of Passengers (Exclusive of Troops and Police)

Carried in Each Year (1885-1886)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1885	11,924	31,323	5,438,024	5,481,271
1886	13,025	33,177	6,216,897	6,263,099
1887	12,082	33,173	6,915,779	6,961,034
1888	12,524	39,280	7,670,895	7,722,699
1889	13,201	38,279	8,409,355	8,460,835

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.19, RAK.

[57] *Ibid.,*p.18.

Table 5.27

Receipts from Each Class (1885-1889)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1885	1,59,729	1,18,605	22,60,292	25,38,626
1886	1,62,475	1,21,018	23,44,190	26,27,683
1887	1,65, 686	1,24,132	23,81,993	26,71,811
1888	1,59,198	1,33,890	25,81,754	28,74,842
1889	1,60,243	1,40,512	27,47,153	30,47,978

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.19, RAK.

Table 5.28

Percentages of Numbers and Receipts (1885-1889)

Year	Numbers			Receipts		
	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
1885	0.22	0.57	99.21	6.29	4.67	89.04
1886	0.21	0.53	99.26	6.18	4.61	89.21
1887	0.17	0.48	99.35	6.20	4.65	89.15
1888	0.16	0.51	99.33	5.54	4.66	89.80
1889	0.16	0.45	99.39	5.26	4.61	90.13

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.19, RAK.

Meanwhile, railways have made some measures to attract passengers. "With an object of attracting native gentlemen into the first class, the single fare of 18 pies and the return fare of 25 pies per mile, were, from the 1st July

1889, reduced to 12 pies for each journey"[58]. This could be an attempt to integrate the local population to the colonial enterprise of railway. This might be done as the British had experienced some kind of positive attitude from the indigenous elites towards railways.

Table 5.29

Earnings of the Madras Railway Company (MRC)-1889-1890

Year	Gross Earnings (in Rs.)	Expenditure (in Rs.)	Net Revenue (in Rs.)
1889	91,10,895	53,72,474	37,38,421
1890	95,06,135	49,84,655	45,21,480

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1891, p.18, RAK.

Table 5.30

Number of Passengers (Exclusive of Troops and Police) 1889-1890

Carried in Each Year

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1889	13,201	38,279	8,409,355	8,460,835
1890	14,601	38,609	8,310,211	8,363,421

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1891, p.19, RAK.

Table 5.31

Receipts from Each Class (1889-1890)

Year	First Class	Second Class	Third Class	Total
1889	1,60,243	1,40,512	27,47,153	30,47,978
1890	1,45,255	1,38,145	28,15,824	30,99,224

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1891, p.19, RAK.

[58] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), *Op.Cit.,* p.19.

The following observations could help to ascertain the passenger profile. “The increase in the number of passengers in the first class is due to an influx of European tourists, but decrease in earnings is attributable partly to the reduction from 1st July 1889 of the first-class fare from 18 to 12 pies per mile, and partly to the opening of the Southern Mahratta Railway through from Poona to Bangalore which has affected the gross receipts obtained from first-class passengers traffic”[59]. This makes clear that a considerable number of foreign tourists, especially that the Europeans, had visited South India. The authorities of Madras Railway Company had adopted a policy of encouraging the foreign tourists by reducing the fare of the first class.

In some other cases, there was a decline in the third class passengers and the reasons are being explained here: “The third-class passenger traffic showed a decrease of 99,144 in numbers but an increase of Rs.68,671 I receipts. The decrease in numbers is due to cholera prevailing very extensively from Podanur westwards during the three months of the first half of the 1890, to the severe outbreak of the influenza which checked travelling over the whole line, to the suspension of traffic for some days in October 1890 owing to severe floods having breached the line in several places between Podanur and Calicut, and also the rearrangement of train service and the addition to the time table of through mixed trains from 1st October last”[60]. It is evident that the occurrence of contagious diseases had an impact on the functioning of railways. Further the “third class passengers contributed 90.86 per cent. of the earnings and constituted 99.37 per cent. of the number carried. The average number of third-class passengers in a train was 292, and the average fare paid was 1.85 pies per mile, as compared with 306 306

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59 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), *Op.Cit*., p.20.

60 *Ibid.,* p.20.

passengers and 1.84 pies in 1889[61]". A study of third class passengers' legacy in the making of colonial railway in Madras is of prime importance. They contributed much in the revenue of Madras railway.

Table 5.32

Passengers in Various Classes- Number and Earnings (1890-1891)

	First Class		Second Class		Third Class		Total	
	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings
1890	16,853	1,59,014	74,346	2,00,088	8,669,608	28,93,976	8,760,807	32,53,078
1891	17,534	1,62,585	70,342	2,06,990	8,465,339	27,43,620	8,553,215	31,13,195
Increase	681	3,571		6,902				
Decrease			4,004		2,04,269	1,50,356	2,07,592	1,39,883

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1891-92* (A/1280), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1892, p.15, RAK.

The analysis of the share of each class in railways is interesting. It is noted that "the first-class traffic showed an increase both in numbers and in receipts, being the result of heavier traffic under the head of "troops and police"[62]. The second class traffic decreased in numbers, but the receipts were larger than in the previous year, the improvement being principally in "troops and police"[63].The third class traffic showed a large decrease both in numbers and earnings. This decrease is formed the leading feature in the accounts of the past year and is almost entirely attributable to famine and sickness which have been widely prevalent"[64]. It is a fact that the social developments determined the performance of railways.

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61 *Ibid.,* p.20.

62 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1891-92* (A/1280), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1892, p.15, RAK.

63 *Ibid.,*p.15.

64 *Ibid.,* p.15.

Table 5.33

Passengers in Various Classes- Number and Earnings (1891-1892)

	First Class		Second Class		Third Class		Total	
	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings
1891	17,534	1,62,585	70,342	2,06,990	8,465,339	27,43,620	8,553,215	31,13,195
1892	17,789	1,58,923	69,260	2,10,203	8,966,014	28,66,036	9,053,063	32,35,162
Increase	681	3,571		6,902				
Decrease			4,004		2,04,269	1,50,356	2,07,592	1,39,883

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1892-93* (A/1281), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1893, p.15, RAK.

Table 5.34

Passengers in Various Classes- Number and Earnings (1891-1893)

	First Class		Second Class		Third Class		Total	
	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings
1892	17,789 1/2	1,58,923	69,259	2,10,203	8,966,013 1/2	28,66,035	9,053,062	32,35,162
1893	19,392 1/2	1,70,338	67,686 1/2	2,14,420	9,739,177	30,71,538	9,826,256	34,5
Increase	1,603	11,415		4,217	7,73,163 1/2	2,05,503	7,73,194	2,21,
Decrease			1,572 1/2					

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1893-94* (A/1282), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1894, p.14, RAK.

Table 5.35

Passengers in Various Classes- Number and Earnings (1894-1895)

	First Class		Second Class		Third Class		Total	
	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings
1894	25,176 1/2	1,74,277	85,895	2,27,896	10,342,977 1/2	31,69,347	10,454,049	35,71,520
1895	26,768	2,16,241	117,237 1/2	2,66,574	9,339,737	36,92,214	9,483,742 1/2	41,75,029
Increase	1,591 1/2	41,464	31,342 ½	38,678		5,22,867	7,73,194	6.03.509
Decrease					1,003,240 ½		9,70,306 1/2	

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1895-96* (A/1284), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1896, p.14, RAK.

Malabar played a significant role in generating revenue to the Madras railway and it is evident from the references below. “The improvement under the first and second classes may be ascribed generally to ordinary development of traffic; and the increase in third class receipts is due to the fact that from 1st January 1895 the fares by mail trains between Podanur and Olavakod and between Tirur and Calicut were raised from 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 pies per mile between Olavakot and Tirur from 1 1/2 to 2 pies per mile and the fares by ordinary trains all over the line were increased from 1 1/2 to 2 pies”[65]. There was visible increase in the fares of mail trains in the Western coast line, especially from Olavakot to Calicut during 1895-96, and it is ascribed to the increase in the number of passenger commutation. Further, the authorities of the Madras Railway Company identifies this section as a lucrative one and to the year 1895-96. Further, there was an increase of Rs.6,44,550 under the head coaching in 1895 than the preceding year. In the year 1895 the total earnings of the Company under head coaching was Rs.47,82,318 and in the preceding year it was Rs.41,37,768[66]. This increase in the revenue under the head ‘coaching’ was primarily due to the fare hike in the western line and also due to the increase in the number of passengers.

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65 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1895-96* (A/1284), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1896, p.14, RAK.

66 *Ibid.,* p.14.

Table 5.36

Passengers in Various Classes- Number and Earnings (1895-1896)

	First Class		Second Class		Third Class		Total	
	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings
Previous year	26,768	2,16,241	117,237½	2,66,574	9,339,737	36,92,214	94,83,742½	41,76,029
1896	26,455	2,00,986	114,972½	2,47,335	10,469,610	36,32,018	10,611,037	40,80,339
Increase					1,129,873		1,127,295	
Decrease	313	15,255	2,265	19,239		60,196		94,680

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1896-97* (A/1285), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1897, p.13., RAK.

Table 5.37

Passengers in Various Classes- Number and Earnings (1896-1897)

	First Class		Second Class		Third Class		Total	
	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings
1896	24,186½	1,99,062	1,00,797½	2,43,594	9,598,281	35,54,810	9,723,265	39,97,466
1897	25,169	1,97,301	1,02,397½	2,50,296	9,946,187	34,63,035	10,073,753½	39,10,632
Increase	982½		1600	6702	347,906		350 888½	
Decrease		1761				91,776		86834

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1897-98* (A/1286), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1899, p.27., RAK.

Table 5.38

Passengers in Various Classes- Number and Earnings (1897-1898)

	First Class		Second Class		Third Class		Total	
	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings	Number	Earnings
1897	25,169	1,97,301	1,02,397½	2,50,296	9,946,187	34,63,035	10,073,753½	39,10,632
1898	21,636	1,99,105	97,701	2,53,108	8,212,366	29,57,145	8,331,703	34,09,358
Increase								
Decrease	3,532	1,804	4,696	2,812	1,733,822	5,05,890	1,742,050½	5,01,274

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras, Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), Printed by the, Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1899, p.29., RAK.

As stated earlier, the outbreak of contagious diseases had a negative impact on the performance of railways. "The decrease in third-class traffic may be ascribed generally to a large falling off in the number of travelling attributable to plague restrictions during the year"[67]. The year 1898-99 marked a steep decline in the transportation of passengers commuted via trains. Unlike other classes, the occurrence of plague had badly affected passengers in the third-class and it is an indicator of the poor living standard of common people. The number of passengers in the third-class dwindled due to the restrictions imposed on their mobility.

The gross earnings of the Madras Railway Company for the half year ending on 31st December 1898 raises some concerns with regard to the performance of the Company in the plague-prone Madras Presidency. During the period "the passenger traffic is far more below the average both in numbers and receipts. Most of the decrease is accounted for by the receipt from third class passengers having fallen from an average of Rs. 16,80,000 to Rs.12,37,000. This result must be attributed to the effects of plague restrictions. The weight of goods lifted and the ton mileage are somewhat below the average of previous half-years, and receipts too have still further declined"[68]. The occurrences of plague in the Presidency had badly affected the fortunes of the Madras Railway Company and they even sceptically approached their performance in the Madras Presidency.

From the analysis of the various categories of passengers in railway, certain inferences could be made. "First class passengers were also all British, while Indians had to travel only third class"[69]. The classification of classes in railway is a clear indicator of the class character. Railways in Madras was

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67 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), *Op.Cit.*, p.30.

68 *Ibid.,* p.9.

69 Daniel R Headrick, *Op.Cit.* p.190.

sustained by the influx of Indians in the third class. In 1881, passengers in first, second and third categories came as 11,956, 1,12,977 and 4,178,289 respectively. That constitute the total number of passengers as 4,223,747. The passengers in first class could make a revenue of Rs. 1,59,012, the second class made Rs. 1,12,977 and third class with Rs. 18,95,850 as their share in the revenue of the railways. Percentage of the share of revenue is also interesting. The first class made 0.28% of the total passengers, second class with 0.79% and third class with 98.93% of the total passengers. When it comes to the revenue, the first class made 7.34% , second class with 5.21% and third class with 87.45% of the total revenue. By 1898, first class passengers were 25,169 in number who made Rs. 1,97,301/- as the earning. The number of passengers in the second class was 97,701 and they made Rs. 2,53,108/- as their contribution to the earnings of Madras railway. 8,212,366 passengers were there in the third class and they made Rs. 29,57,145/- to the total earnings.

Since, Malabar was a part of Madras presidency, a separate of analysis of goods and passengers from the headquarter of the western terminus is relevant and it would make the present exercise a meaningful one. As it is known the Calicut extension was commissioned on 2nd January 1888, and till then Beypore was the northern most point of the Madras railway in the western coast. The following is an attempt to see the monthly average number of passengers and goods passed in and out of Beypore and Calicut stations. It would make clear the progressive developments of passengers and goods from the headquarter of western terminus.

Table 5.39

Passengers and Goods From Beypore Station

Year	Monthly average	
	Passengers (In Nos.)	Goods (In Tons)
1870	12,729	2,134
1871	13,219	4,279
1872	14,826	7,480
1873	15,507	4,986
1874	10,291	3,770
1875	15,628	4,383
1876	14,767	3,054
1877	15,492	3,650
1878	14,311	3,190
1879	14,751	3,431
1880	18,297	3,206
1881	20,012	2,709
1882	21,796	2,931

Source: William Logan, *Malabar* (Vol.1), The Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1951, p.69.

Table 5.40

Passengers and Goods From Calicut Station

Year	Monthly average	
	Passengers (In Nos.)	Goods (In Tons)
1888	34,980	3,510
1889	37,711	4,991
1890	34,054	4,403
1891	35,553	4,540
1892	40,241	5,670
1893	40,702	4,918
1894	41,703	4,818

Year	Monthly average	
	Passengers (In Nos.)	Goods (In Tons)
1895	33,885	4,357
1896	34,377	4,004
1897	31,055	6,777
1899	27,718	4,100
1899	29,984	8,107

Source: William Logan, *Malabar* (Vol.1), The Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1951, p.69.

From the above statistics, it is evident that, being the important station in Malabar, Beypore, in the beginning, and Calicut, later, could attract passengers. Similarly, the stations could make substantial contribution in the form of goods transportation.

To Feed the Coast: Freight Transportation and Railways

Along with passenger transport, the railways in Malabar had brought in the essential foodstuffs and carried away the commercially important articles. Malabar was one of the principal consumer of foodstuffs in the late 19th century. "The total quantity of food grain carried during the calendar year was 1,16,045 tons yielding Rs. 4,90, 871 as compared with 1,24, 169 yielding Rs. 6,44,324 in the previous year, the falling off in receipts was probably partly due to the reduction in certain rates. North Arcot was the principal contributor and Malabar was the principal consumer"[70]. The essential food grains required to the Malabar populace was brought in from other parts of South India via railways. In that sense, the Madras railways fed the hungry stomachs of the Malabar coast. In 1883 and in the succeeding year, there was substantial progress in grain traffic. The total quantity of food-grain carried during 1884 was 174,773 tons yielding Rs 7,03,707, as compared with

[70] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), *Op.Cit*., p.14.

116,030 tons yielding Rs.4,90,871 in the previous year. North Arcot and Salem were the principal contributors and Malabar and Coimbatore the chief consumers"[71]. Malabar emerged as one of the chief consumers of food grain from rest of the Presidency. It is an indicator that a consumer society was getting emerged in Malabar and the region was lacking proper agriculture scheme to feed their populace.

Salt transportation from Malabar coast was one of the important items that contributed to the revenue of Madras railways. It is noted that "a reduced rate of $6^1/_2$ pies per ton per mile for inferior salt from Coimbator (present day Coimbatore), Tirur and Beypore, in wagon loads of not less than 8 tons, was introduced on the 1st of April 1883"[72]. From the reference, it could be inferred that Malabar was a principal producer of salt in that period and from there it transported to other parts of the Presidency. Malabar possessed a lengthy littoral tract and the communities involved in fishing and salt making brought that fame to the land. During 1886-87 some changes were there in salt trade. It is noticed that "the total number of salt carried over the system was 67,321 tons yielding a receipt of Rs. 4,40,134 was compared with 67,066 tons yielding a receipt of Rs. 4,64,014. The slight increase in weight is due to consignments from Tirur and Beypore to Coimbatore, but the lead the Western Coast being shorter than from Madras, the receipts were not so large"[73].

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71 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), *Op.Cit*., p.15.

72 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), *Op.Cit*., p.16.

73 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), *Op.Cit.,* p.16.

Table 5.41

Revenue out of Salt Export from Malabar (1882-1886)

Articles	1882	1883	1884	1885	1886
Salt	Rs.3,73,071	Rs.4,06,565	Rs.4,09,698	Rs.4,64,014	Rs.4,40,134

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.14, RAK.

There are some interesting references to the exports from Malabar by using railways. Salt, rice, gram, cotton, betel nuts, chillies, potatoes, cloths, coffee, firewood, grains, iron, jaggery, tamarind etc., were the major items that had been transported by using the Madras Railways[74]. During colonial times, Malabar was famous for salt trade and it could add substantial revenue through salt trade[75]. It is interesting to note that "the total quantity of salt carried over the system was 67,321 tons yielding a receipt of Rs.4,40,134 as compared with 67,066 tons yielding a receipt of 4,64,014. The slight increase in weight is due to consignments from Tirur and Beypore to Coimbatore, but the lead from the Western Coast being the shorter than from Madras, the receipts were not so large"[76]. The fame of the Malabar coast as producer of fine salt has been attested by the brisk salt trade carried through the railways. During 1888-89, salt, rice, cotton, timber, skins, seeds of all kinds etc., were the major items transported by using railways[77].

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74 *Ibid.,* p.16.

75 *Letter No. 2094 Dated 17th June, 1858 from G S Forbes, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue to W H Bayley, Acting Secretary to Government, R D*, in *Reports on the Settlement of the Land Revenue of the Provinces under the Madras Presidency for Fusly 1266/1856-57,* Published by H Smith, Madras, 1859, p.9, RAK.

76 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), *Op.Cit*., p.17.

77 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), *Op.Cit*., p.19.

During 1889-90, one of the major visible trends related to the freight transportation in Malabar was the importance to rice trade. Until then, the transportation of salt was the major contributor of freight revenue. However, in 1889, rice brought the revenue worth Rupees 5,67,586 and the contribution of salt trade reduced to Rupees 4,05,944[78]. In the previous year it was for Rupees 3,69,770 and 3,87,107 respectively[79]. There are references to the extensive rice trade with the Malabar coast and Coimbatore. When it comes to the goods traffic in the Madras Railway, some interesting facets are visible during the period under discussion. Substantial increase in grain traffic to Malabar was visible. Malabar, being an important rice consuming region, had an important role in this. It is noted that the receipts from rice traffic in the Madras Railway Company were Rs.567,586/- and Rs.309,680/- respectively in 1889 and 1890[80]. It is further noted that "the smaller receipts earned from the carriage of grain traffic are accounted by an almost total cessation of the rice traffic usually carried from Katpadi to the Malabar coast. The average receipt per ton lifted was Rs.4.78 against Rs.5.11"[81].

Along with that there are references to the cotton transport from Coimbatore to Malabar. During 1892-93, there was a decline of cotton transport due to crop failure[82]. As a region, Malabar had depended on rail borne grain traffic. "Decrease in tonnage due to smaller despatches of wheat from Southern Mahratta Railway to Madras and Coimbatore, or rice from

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78 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1880*-90 (A/1278), *Op.Cit*., p.21.

79 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-8*9 (A/1277), *Op.Cit*., p.19.

80 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), *Op.Cit.,* p.21.

81 *Ibid.,* p.22.

82 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1892-93* (A/1281), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1893, p.16, RAK.

Arcot and Katpadi to Malabar district and from South Indian Railway to Bangalore and Malabar district, and of other grains from Madras to Bangalore branch and from stations on the Bangalore branch to Madras, Coimbatore district. The increase in receipts is due to the traffic being carried longer distances"[83].

Another interesting reference on the *betel nuts* trade of Malabar coast via railway is found in 1895-96. "Smaller despatches of *betel nuts* from stations on the Malabar district to Salem, Coimbatore and South Indian Railway, of *pepper* from Calicut to Bangalore branch, of *chillies* from Erode to Malabar district and Southern Mahratta Railway to Madras and North Arcot district"[84]. In 1895-96, the total earnings of the Madras Railway Company under the head goods was Rs. 63,96,604/- and it marked an increase of Rs.3,55,432/- than the preceding year where the total earning then was Rs.60,41,172[85]. It underlines the freight transportation constitute a major item of revenue of the Madras Railway Company. In the same year revenue made out of passenger transport was Rs.47,82,318 only. It is a strong indicator that the Company had depended on the freight transportation carried via railways and the entire Presidency had the fame of being a major supplier of commercially important items.

Grains traffic again came to the fore in 1896-97. "Small despatches of wheat from the Great Indian Peninsula and the Southern Mahratta Railways to Madras, of paddy from Madras to Coimbatore district, and from Bangalore city to Malabar district, and of grain and pulse from Madras to North Arcot district, from the Bangalore branch to Madras and Malabar district, from Salem district to Madras and Coimbatore district and the South Indian

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83 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1895-96* (A/1284), *Op.Cit.*, p.15.

84 *Ibid.,* p.15.

85 *Ibid.,* p.14.

Railway, and Bellary districts"[86]. During 1896-97, an unusual trend was visible in the freight transportation. Unlike the previous year, the year marked a decline in the revenue under the head 'goods'. In the previous year goods' transportation could add Rs.63,96,604 and it reduced to Rs.62,11,931 and there was a decline of Rs. 1,84,673[87]. The decrease seems to be due to crop failure that the region had experienced as there was a decline of merchandise in grain and pulse during the year. It marked a decline of 256 tons that costs around Rs.1,17,552[88].

There are some interesting references about the transportation of grains to Malabar by using railway. Malabar had the practice of depending on grains brought from other parts of India and railways had been the prime channel through which the transportation of rice was carried out. "Larger despatches of rice not in husk from Arcot to Malabar district, from Katpadi to Malabar district and Bangalore branch, and from the South Indian Railway to Bangalore branch and Malabar district; of jawar and bajra (*cholam* and *cumboo*) from Salem and Coimbatore districts to Malabar district"[89]. Unlike the previous reports, this report says that the rice transport to Malabar from other parts of India was 'larger despatches', earlier it was 'small despatches' and it is an indicator to the rice eating habits of the people of Malabar and railways helped them to ensure the availability of rice.

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86 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1896-97* (A/1285), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1897, p.14, RAK.

87 *Ibid.,*p.13.

88 *Ibid.,* p.14.

89 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1897-98* (A/1286), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1898, p.27, RAK.

The railway connectivity established with different parts of the country helped them to make sure of the stock of rice in Malabar. Further, the details on the imports to Malabar could be found here: "Smaller despatches of wheat from Madras to Katpadi and Mettupalayam and from Great Indian Peninsula Railway to Madras and Bangalore city; of rice not in the husk from Arcot to Calicut, from Katpadi to Malabar district and Bangalore branch, from Southern Mahratta Railway to Madras and Bellary district, and from South Indian Railway to Malabar and Coimbatore districts and Bangalore branch; of jawar and bajra (*cholum* and *cumbu*) from Salem to Malabar and Bellary districts"[90]. Hides and skins were imported to Malabar. "Smaller despatches of cattle hides (dressed or tanned) from Arcot and Vaniyambadi to Madras and from Coimbatore to Madras and Malabar district"[91]. The railways in Malabar had benefitted in ensuring the essential food supply to the region and also to export the commercially valuable products from here. In Malabar, railways acted as the channels through which the transportation of foodstuffs and other essential items were ensured.

Labour and Railways: The Malabar Episode

Railway offered a new employment avenue to the Indians who were worst affected by the colonial economic policies. Railways in Malabar had offered a new channel for the circulation of labour. The indigenous people and their capacity to work were circulated and it ensured the making of railways. The railways emerged as major sector of employment as the construction and running of it demanded a huge labour force. In the construction of railways, labourers without much technical knowledge were preferred and India during colonial times supplied such labour force. As it is known, railways were

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90 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), *Op.Cit*., p.30.

91 *Ibid.,* p.31.

precisely a capitalist project as it meant to advance the interests of the British capitalists. The reflection of the capitalist spirit was evident in the management of labour force in the colonial railways in India. The construction and management of railways in Malabar, too had a similar tale to share. There were instances in which the British brought in several new technological innovations. However, the making of railways in Malabar was largely labour-intensive as the region could supply enough and more labour force required.

In the construction of railways, often the entire families were employed. Work was divided along gender lines with women carrying earth, bricks, rocks and men doing heavy works of laying rails, hauling timber etc.[92]. In the case of Malabar, the Thiyyas had involved in the construction of railways. Traditionally, Thiyyas had involved in toddy tapping and plucking coconut from the coconut trees. Apart from that the thiyya girls had involved in the picking of coffee beans in the factories of western coast[93]. Railway construction was in full swing in Malabar, and the Thiyyas got enough and more employment avenues in the railways. It is noted that "railway construction is now in full in Malabar, and hundreds of Tiyan men, women and children get employment. Labour is very cheap in India and wages run to fourpence a day for men, two pence and half penny for women and one penny or three half pence for boys and girls[94]. Along with them Mappilas too had taken part in the construction of railways.

Most of the colonial documents do not contain much information on the labour required for the construction of rail. However, when detailed project report of the Nanjangud-Tellicherry was prepared, a section is devoted

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92 Laxman D Satya, *Op.Cit.,* p.73.

93 Sir W De W Abney, *The Photographic Journal* (Vol. XLVI), Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain, London, January to December 1906, p.232.

94 *Ibid.,* p.232.

to labour. It states that, "very labour is to be had in south Malabar however, in the form of Mappilas (Moplahs) and it is probable that the bulk of the work will be done by them. A few masons and carpenters and very good blacksmiths are available locally and the few hill-tribes which can be induced to do jungle-cutting are quite good at it"[95]. It makes clear that in the construction of railway in Malabar, the British had exploited the labour potential of all professional groups in Malabar.

The labourers in the work site were often thrown to the bounty of nature. Neither the Company, nor the European contractors had taken any responsibility of ensuring safe work environment to the workers. In the work site the construction accidents were quite common and often led to deaths. There were several instances of accidents, in which the workers were severely injured and even killed[96]. Further, "working on cliffs to drill and blast into rocks often sent workers down with suspension that dashed into rocks or snapped taking life"[97]. As stated earlier, the labour usually hails from rural areas where they traditionally follow agriculture as their profession. Their socially submissive position and poverty due to the problems in the agrarian sector, often compelled them to suffer the hardships at work place, including the harassment of supervisory officers.

In the Madras railway, as in other railway companies in India, they preferred to post Indians largely in jobs that demanded manual labour. "Indians came to hired as lower-level personnel in such jobs as engine drivers and guards. All management posts continued to be held totally by Britons"[98].

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95 *Nanjangud-Tellicherry Railway Survey: Tellicherry-Wynaad-Coorg Railway, Report and Estimates*, (R/307) 1924, RAK, p.18, RAK.

96 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), *Op.Cit*., p.9.

97 Laxman D Satya, *Op.Cit.,* p.73.

98 *Ibid.,* p.73.

Further "Britons also held the best jobs as station master of large stations, drivers of express trains and administrators"[99]. Some historians opine it as the reflection of the racial segregation that the British had practiced[100]. But generally, Indians lack technical training required to be appointed in higher rank and file of Madras Railway, as there were no such institutes that could impart scientific knowledge and practical skills. Further management of railways were not at easy due to the climatic conditions in Madras Presidency. There were many instances in which derailments were quite common and rail lines were washed off due to heavy monsoon[101]. Further, Indian railway was the output of the British capital. The British capitalists who invested money in India, had an eye on the proper running of the Madras Railway and any lapse either in the making, or in the running of the rail would desist them in investing in India. Indians were not given higher offices as they did not want the ongoing rail projects to be affected due to the fear of loss to the British capitalists.

Further, the occurrences of contagious diseases often took the lives of labourers, who were not properly protected by the colonial bosses. They were frequently affected by Malaria, smallpox, typhoid, pneumonia, dysentery, diarrhea, ulcers etc. In Malabar the recurring epidemics had affected the ongoing construction of railways. There were instances of cholera being reported in Malabar, and it took lives of workers at the work site[102]. There was callous neglection of the health condition of workers as the conveniences for

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99 *Ibid.,* p.73.

100 Dharma Kumar and Meghnad Desai (eds.), *Cambridge Economic History of India* (Vol.2), Cambridge, 1973, pp.741-743.

101 See *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), *Op.Cit*., p.7; and *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Op.Cit., p.9.

102 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), *Op.Cit*., , p.25.

healthcare were very limited. Even in 1898-99, only one medical officer was posted to manage health care in the railway stations across the entire Presidency[103]. Only Calicut and Pattambi had one apothecary each to ensure healthcare of the employees[104]. Other railway stations did not have a mechanism to take care of the workers and employees. Further, no proper housing or essential services were provided at work sites. The contractors who were driven by the capitalist motive of maximizing profit at the cost of the lives of poor workers did not resort to provide decent living conditions at the work sites. Further, there were not even measures to protect the workers from extreme weather conditions like heat, rain and cold. As Malabar, experiences heavy monsoon, the workers were bound to carry out their duty under such compelling work conditions.

Labour Management in Railways

Railway is usually divided into sections and sections were further divided into divisions. The management of divisions was vested with European officials called Resident Engineers, who were assisted by Assistant Engineers and Overseers[105]. To ensure effective communication with the local people, one Indian interpreter was posted to all European officials. All the European officials got the assistance of Indian clerks. "The Resident Engineer was assisted by an Indian head clerk and two assistants, while the Assistant Engineer were aided by two Indian office clerks"[106]. The overseers, who was either an European or an Indian, had to manage a workforce of 500. He was bound to maintain a close eye on the day today work. The organisation of Indian labour force often formed a challenge to the officers. The Indian

[103] *Ibid.,* p.28.

[104] *Ibid.,* p.28.

[105] Madhumita Bandyopadyay, *Recruiting Labour: Experience of BB&CI Railway (1852-1869),* in the *PIHC,* Vol.73, 2012, p.872.

[106] *Ibid.,* p. 873.

workforce largely constituted the unskilled labourers. There were skilled professionals like masons and carpenters.

The supervisors and contractors faced certain difficulty in labour integration due to certain domestic factors. In some occasions labour was not available. The manual workers of the railway construction were primarily agricultural workers and when sowing season arrives, they usually left their job of railway construction and involved in agrarian activities. It shows that they consider the construction work at railways as secondary. Further, during festive seasons also they left the job of railway construction. In the case of north India, it is noted that "every year, construction activities slowed down after Holi-holidays as labourers habitually took time to return to work"[107]. Such an instance offers some space for analysis. Workers, generally, works at railway as temporary or secondary of nature. They primarily, involved in agriculture, which was depended on climatic changes. In that sense, the arrival of monsoon had of crucial in determining the availability of workforce in the construction of railways.

Malabar too had a similar tale to share. "The Palghat branch was at the same time badly injured in several places, the bank being completely washed away in four places, leaving gaps from 75 to 160 feet in length and 9 to 15 feet depth. At Koilpatti bridge the water rose to rail level, 19 feet 6 inches over the highest recorded flood. The bridge however, sustained no serious damage. Owing to large amount of earthwork that was necessary to repair the breaches and the difficulty of obtaining labour during the Deepavali festival, this branch was not opened for traffic until 24th November"[108]. Due to Deepavali, the labourers could not be made available. Such a reference is an

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107 *Ibid.,* p.873.

108 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890*-91 (A/1279), *Op.Cit*., p.11.

indicative to the labour profile as they were Hindus. Colonial records attest the Mappila presence in the railway work site.

Employment in Colonial Railways

In the making and operation of Madras railway huge labour force was required and that demand was met by a powerful labour force which consisted of Europeans as well as indigenous people. The system adopted on Madras Railways Company for training the native lads for duties of drivers and shunters was the same, viz., to employ them as cleaners or second firemen promoting them through the higher grades according to the ability shown.

Table 5.42

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1884-85)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	18	46	551	615
Traffic and Telegraph	78	418	2,395	2,891
Engineering	23	83	4,081	4,197
Locomotive	90	407	3,276	3,773
Total	209	954	10,313	11,476

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1885, p.10, RAK.

Table 5.42 provides the departmental wise split up of employees worked in the Madras railway. The data provided above would underline that the colonial railway in Madras through the Madras Railway Company (MRC) was in the forefront of providing employment avenues to the Indians. There was large scale labour integration in all departments of the Madras Railway Company during the period under discussion. The number of Europeans employed in the administration department of Madras Railway Company was 2.93%. Their presence in the Departments of Traffic and Telegraph,

Engineering and Locomotive respectively came as 2.70%, 0.55%, and 2.39%. When it comes to the total staff strength, their contribution was 1.82%. At the same time, Indians had 89.60% in administration department, 82.84% in the Traffic and Telegraph, 97.24% in the engineering, and 86.91% in the locomotive department. When it comes to the total staff strength, the Indians constituted 89.87%. It shows that Indians had substantial participation in the running of railways in Madras.

Table 5.43

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1885-86)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	18	47	565	630
Traffic and Telegraph	88	449	2,541	3,078
Engineering	24	77	4,117	4,218
Locomotive	99	417	3,404	3,920
Total	229	990	10,627	11,846

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886, p.10, RAK.

Table 5.43 furnishes some data on the employee profile of the Madras railway and some inferences could be made. In the Administration department, the strength of Europeans was 2.86% of the whole strength. East Indians were 7.46% and Indians made 89.68% of the total strength of the Administration Department. In the Department of Traffic and Telegraph, the European participation was 2.86%**.** East Indians were 14.59% and Indians made 82.55% of the total strength. In the Department of Engineering Europeans made 0.57% of the total employee list. The East Indians made 1.83% and Indians' share was 97.61% of the total workforce. In the Department of Locomotive, Europeans were 2.53%, East Indians made 10.64% and Indians constituted 86.84% of the total workforce. The meagre

European presence is visible when the total is being calculated. Their share was only 1.93%, when Indians made 89.71% and East Indians with 8.36%.

Table 5.44

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1886-87)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	18	49	600	667
Traffic and Telegraph	86	443	2,546	3,075
Engineering	24	87	4,230	4,341
Locomotive	100	442	3,425	3,967
Total	228	1021	10,801	12,050

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887, p.10, RAK.

Table: 5.44 provides details of employees of the Madras Railway in 1886-87. In the Department of Administration, the Europeans were 2.70%, East Indians made 7.35% of the total workforce and Indians constituted 89.96% of the total employees of the Department. In the Department of Traffic and Telegraph, the Europeans had a meagre representation of 2.80%, then the East Indians with 14.41 % and finally the Indians with 82.80 % representation. In the Engineering department the Europeans were 0.55%, the East Indians with 2.00% and Indians with 97.44% of the total workforce. Like all other departments, the Department of Locomotive constituted by 2.52% of Europeans, 11.14 % of East Indians and 86.34 % of Indians. 1886-87, the Indians constituted the major segment of railways workforce with 89.63%, then came the East Indians with 8.48% and finally the Europeans with 1.89%. Though the Europeans were tiny in terms of quantity, their leadership and supervision were significant.

Table 5.45

Natives in Madras Railway: (1884-1888)

Profession	1884	1885	1886	1887	1888
Drivers	3	7	9	12	13
Shunters	5	3	6	8	9
Firemen	28	31	57	71	73
Cleaners	257	272	272	269	271

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889, p.5, RAK.

Table 5.45 shows the distribution of Indians in different capacities of the Madras railway. Indians were appointed primarily as drivers, firemen and cleaners. The number of drivers got increased to 13 in 1888 and it was only 3 in 1884. Such a leap forward was visible in the post of firemen also. From 28 in 1884, it rose to 73 in 1888. On the Madras Railway the number of English speaking native firemen entertained was 34[109]. But such a progress could not be seen the job of shunters. Jobs that require high quantity of human labour were largely met with the service of Indians.

Table 5.46

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1888-89)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	16	47	812	875
Traffic and Telegraph	87	477	2,963	3,527
Engineering	24	122	4,552	4,698
Locomotive	90	454	3,685	4,229
Total	217	1062	12,012	1,3329

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.10, RAK.

[109] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), *Op.Cit.*, p.5.

Table: 5.46 underlines the meagre participation of Europeans in the management of Madras railways. Indians constituted the lion's share of labour force in engineering department as they represent 96.89% of the workforce. They made 92.8% workforce of the administration department. In the department of locomotive it was 87.13% and in traffic and telegraph, their participation was 84%. A comparison of it with Europeans is interesting. In the administration department, the European presence was only 1.83% of the total workforce and it was 2.47% in the Department of traffic and telegraph. It was quite meagre in the engineering department with 0.51% and in locomotive department, it was only 2.13%. The increased participation of Indians in each of these departments might be due to their employment in petty offices and also due to the opening of new stations. "As compared to the previous year, there was an increase in the total number of persons employed, which is due to the greater requirements in Telegraph, Traffic and Engineering Departments, and to the extra staff needed for additional stations, maintenance of purposes and to the block system"[110]. Most of all the crucial supervisory posts were held by the Europeans.

Table 5.47

Natives in Madras Railway Company: (1885-1889)

Profession	1885	1886	1887	1888	1889
Drivers	7	9	12	13	14
Shunters	3	6	8	9	10
Firemen	31	57	71	73	82
Cleaners	272	272	269	271	262

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.10, RAK.

[110] *Ibid.,* p.11.

Table 5.47 shows some unusual developments in the number of natives in the Madras Railway Company. The number of drivers, shunters and firemen was increased, but a decline was visible in the cleaners. Apart from that a substantial number of Indians were unwilling to work in the railways. They either resigned or absconded as they did not want to a part of Madras Railway. "During the year, 38 English speaking native firemen were entertained; of these 5 absconded after a few days, 8 resigned after a few months, and one was dismissed after four months' notice"[111]. Such instances of abstinence or unwilling to work with Madras railway was quite common in those days and that might be due to the then prevailed unhospitable work environment in the railways. Though the railways had opened up the avenues of employment, some Indians had unwilling to work with and the traditional Indian values system and the fear of being in 'demonised railways' might also be causes of Indians' apathy to railway jobs.

Table 5.48

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1890-91)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	19	52	827	898
Traffic and Telegraph	91	476	3,339	3,906
Engineering	21	134	4,466	4,621
Locomotive	84	454	3,894	4,432
Total	215	1116	12,526	1,3857

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.11, RAK.

[111] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889*-90 (A/1278), *Op.Cit*., p.10.

Table 5.48 indicates the growing participation of Indians in the management of railways in Madras. In the Administration department, Europeans were 2.12%, East Indians were 5.79%, and Indians were 92.09%. In the department of Traffic and Telegraph it were 2.33%, 5.79% and 85.4% respectively. Like previous years the Engineering department had the highest number of Indians. They constitute 96.65% of the total staff strength. East Indians were 2.90% and Europeans were only 0.45%. In the Locomotive department Indians were 87.86%, East Indians were 10.24% and Europeans were 1.90% of the total workforce. An analysis of the total number of persons worked in the Madras railway, it is clear that Indians were 90.40% of the total staff strength, Europeans were 1.55% and East Indians were 8.05%. The opening of new lines offered employment avenues even to the local people and it is evident in the number of Indians inducted in the operation of railways in Madras. "Sixty-five more employees have been engaged than the preceding year, chiefly under the "traffic" on account of the introduction of the revised train service, and also of the opening of new stations &c., notwithstanding the large decrease under "engineering" owing to the amalgamation of three districts into two on North-west line in the second half of the 1890"[112]. Further, it makes clear the at the running of railways in the Madras presidency, of which Malabar was a part, was the outcome of the efforts of local people as they constitute major workforce.

[112] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), *Op.Cit*., p.11.

Table 5.49

Natives Employed in Madras Railway: (1889-90)

Profession	1889	1890
Drivers	14	14
Shunters	10	12
Firemen	82	92
Cleaners	262	176

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890, p.12,

Table: 5.49 shows that a steady state was in vogue in the profession of drivers, but an increase was visible in the case of firemen. It is noted that "during the year there were 38 English speaking firemen engaged, of these five at the last moment failed to join, four absconded after few months, six resigned after a few months and one was dismissed after 5 months on account of irregular attendance"[113]. The profession of firemen seems to be challenging one, as there were some instances in which they had an apathy in taking up or continuing in service. The unusual tendency was visible in the case of cleaners. Unlike 262 in 1889, the number reduced to 176 in 1890. This drop out might be due to mass dismissal of cleaners. Further, it seems that some train services might have stopped and cleaners were not required then.

[113] *Ibid.,* p.12.

Table 5.50

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1891-92)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	18	52	839	909
Traffic and Telegraph	85	488	3,524	4,101
Engineering	20	138	4,518	4,676
Locomotive	84	451	3,930	4,465
Total	207	1129	12,815	14,151

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1891-92* (A/1280), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1892, p.9, RAK.

Table 5.50 shows that Europeans had constituted 1.98% of the entire workforce in the department of administration. The number somewhat reduced than the previous year, where it was 2.12%[114]. The participation of East Indians were 5.72%. Indians constituted 92.30% of the total workforce and it underlines their role in the proper running of the Department. When it comes to the department of Traffic and Telegraph, the strength of Europeans was 2.07% only. However, East Indians were 11.90%, and Indians were 85.93%. Like previous years, the real pullers of the engineering department were the Indian as they constituted 92.62% of the entire workforce. East Indians were 2.95% and the Europeans were a few with 0.43% of the total workforce. In the Locomotive department Europeans constituted 1.88% of the total workforce, whereas East Indians were 10.10%. Indians were 88.02% of the total strength of the department. When it comes to the total strength, the Europeans were 1.46%, East Indians were 7.98% and Indians constituted the backbone of the railways as they were 90.56% of the entire workforce.

[114] *Ibid.,* p.11.

Table 5.51

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1892-93)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	17	49	813	879
Traffic and Telegraph	90	476	3,609	4,175
Engineering	20	116	4,517	4,653
Locomotive	88	436	3,921	4,445
Total	215	1077	12,860	1,4152

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1892-93* (A/1281), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1893, p.9, RAK.

Table 5.51 shows certain new details of the running of railways in Madras. It simply gives us somewhat comparative analysis of the participation of Europeans, East Indians, and Natives in the running of railways. In the year 1892-93, Europeans' strength in the department of administration was mere 1.93% of the total workforce. In comparison with the previous year the participation of Europeans got reduced. At the same time Indians grabbed the maximum participation with 92.50% employees. The East Indians had 5.57% participation. In the Traffic and Telegraph department the Europeans were 2.16%, East Indians were 11.40% and 86.44% Indians. Engineering department like previous year, the Europeans constituted .0.43%, East Indians were 2.50% and Indians were 97.07%. In the department of Locomotive there were 1.98% Europeans. East Indians were 9.81% and Indians made 88.21% of the total workforce. When it comes to the total, the Europeans were 1.52%, East Indians constituted 7.61% and Indians with 90.96% of the workforce.

Table 5.52

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1895-96)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	18	58	811	887
Traffic and Telegraph	96	448	3,707	4,251
Engineering	15	91	4,367	4,473
Locomotive	71	427	3,934	4,432
Total	200	1024	12,819	14,043

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1895-96* (A/1284), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1896, p.8, RAK.

Table 5.52 contains some significant information on the working of Madras railway. In comparison with 1893-94, the participation of Europeans and East Indians had reduced in the management of the Madras Railway. In the department of Administration, Europeans were 2.03 % of the total workforce. East Indians were 6.54% and Indians were 91.43% of the total employees of the Department. When it comes to the Department of Traffic and Telegraph, Europeans were 2.25% and it was lesser than 1893-94. Similarly the East Indians were 10.54% of the total labour force and that was much lesser than 1893-94. When the participation of Europeans and East Indians had reduced the Indians could enhance their representation to 87.20%.

In the Engineering department the representation of Europeans got dwindled to 0.33% and in 1893-94 it was 0.39%. Representation of East Indians also got reduced to 2.03% in 1895-96 than 2.33% in 1893-94. At the same time the number of Indians in Engineering department increased to 97.63% than 1893-94, where it was 97.28%[115]. Same trend was visible in the

[115] *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1893-94* (A/1282), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1894, p.11, RAK.

Locomotive Department also. Europeans constituted 1.60% and it was only 1.86% in 1893-94. The East Indians were 9.63%. A slight increase was visible in the Indians as it rose to 88.76% from 88.56% in 1893-94[116]. While calculating the total strength of the employees of Madras railway, Europeans were 1.42% and it was 1.57% in 1893-94, East Indians were 7.29% and Indians were 91.28 and it was 90.98% in 1893-93[117].

Table 5.53

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1896-97)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	20	58	856	934
Traffic and Telegraph	80	457	3,791	4,328
Engineering	17	72	4,527	4,616
Locomotive	85	441	4,104	4,630
Total	202	1028	13,278	14,508

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1896-97* (A/1285), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1897, p.7, RAK.

Table 5.53 states that the strength of Europeans in the Administrative Department was 2.14%. The East Indians had 6.21% and Indians were 87.59% of the total employees of the Department. When it comes to the Department of Traffic and Telegraph, Europeans were 1.85%, East Indians made 10.56% and Indians with 87.59% of the total labour force of the Department. The participation of Europeans in the Department of Engineering was very limited with 0.37%. Though it increased from 0.33% in 1895-96, the

116 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), *Op.Cit*., p.11.

117 *Ibid.,* p.11.

number sill is not substantial[118]. East Indians were 1.56% and Indians were 98.07% of the total workforce. A slight progress from 1.60% in 1895-96 to 1.83% of European presence was there in the Department of Locomotive. The number of East Indians reached at 9.52% in the Locomotive Department and Indian share was 88.84%. Indian participation has narrowly reduced than the previous year. The total strength of the Europeans was 1.39% and it was 1.42% in 1895-96[119]. The East Indians were 7.09% and Indians were 91.52%. The general trend was the declining participation of Europeans and slight increase in the number of Indians.

Table 5.54

Persons Employed in Madras Railway: (1897-98)

Departments	Europeans	East Indians	Natives	Total
Administration	20	57	819	896
Traffic and Telegraph	85	437	3,796	4,318
Engineering	16	72	4,626	4,713
Locomotive	66	462	4,345	4,873
Total	187	1028	13,585	14,800

Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1897-98* (A/1286), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1898, p.20, RAK.

Table 5.54 is indicative of the employee profile of the Madras railways during 1897-98. A slight increase was visible in the presence of Europeans in the Department of Administration. In place of 2.14% in the 1896-97, it rose to 2.23% during 1897-98. The number of East Indians got increased from 6.21% in 1896-97 to 6.36%. Indians constituted 91.41% of the total workforce of the department. In Traffic and Telegraph department, Europeans were 1.97%,

118 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1895-96* (A/1284), *Op.Cit*., p.8.

119 *Ibid.,* p.8.

East Indians were 10.12% and Indians were 87.91% of the entire employees of the Department. In the Engineering Department the European presence was 0.34%. East Indians were 1.53% and Indians were 98.15%. In the case of Locomotive department, Europeans constituted 1.35% of the total workforce and there marked a decline from the year 1896-97[120], where their share was 1.83% of the total strength. East Indians were 9.48% and Indians were 89.16%. When it comes to the total staff strength, Europeans still could constitute only 1.35% and it was 1.83% during 1896-97. The East Indians were 9.48% and Indians were 89.16%. Indian share in staff strength in 1896-97 was 88.64%.[121]. From the above analysis it is understood that the European presence in Madras railways got dwindled from the previous year, but the contribution of the Indians to the staff strength has somewhat increased, though it was less than 1%.

It is interesting to note that there was no Indian as driver in the Madras railway till 1882, the year in which a driver was appointed and since then certain progressive changes were visible with regard to the induction of Indians into colonial service. It is specific to note that Indians had to carry out menial works like cleaners and second firemen etc. By 1888, the number of drivers rose to 13 and firemen to 73. The number went up to 14 drivers and 262 cleaners in 1889. In the year 1890, the number of drivers remained the same as 14, shunters to 12, firemen to 92 and the number of cleaners reduced to 176 in 1890 from 262 in 1889[122]. It underlines that in the running of railways in colonial Malabar, the British had to ensure the backing of the Indians on a substantial manner.

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120 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1896-97* (A/1285), *Op.Cit*., p.7.

121 *Ibid.,* p.7.

122 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889*-90 (A/1278), *Op.Cit*., p.10.

During 1883-84, there were 9,707 Indians took employment in Madras railways. It came around 90.03% of the total strength. From 1884-85 onwards, the colonial administrators began to document the labour presence in department wise. They started documenting the presence of Europeans, East Indians and Natives in the maintenance, running and management of railways in Madras. Europeans constituted 2.93% of the total workforce in the Madras railway. In 1884-85, in the Administration department of Madras Railway 2.93% Europeans had employed. Numerically their strength was weak as it is seen that Europeans constituted 2.70%, 0.55%, and 2.39% participation the functioning of Traffic and Telegraph, Engineering and Locomotive departments respectively. Indians had sound participation with 89.60% in Administration department, 82.84% in the Traffic and Telegraph, 97.24% in the engineering, and 86.91% in the Locomotive department. During 1889-90, Indians had adorned 92.43% in the Administration department and only 2% Europeans were there at that time. Engineering department seems to accommodate maximum number of the Indians as they made 97.26% of the total employees.

In 1893-94 the department of Administration had 2.18% European officers. At the same time only 5.63% East Indians employees were there and Indians made 92.18%. of the total workforce. In 1893-94, totally there were 1.57% Europeans, the East Indians were 7.45% and finally 90.98% Indians. In 1897-98, the number of European presence in the total staff strength got reduced to 1.35% and Indians were 89.16%. Hence, it is surmised that railways in Madras Presidency, of which Malabar was a crucial part, had provided a new and promising employment avenue to the Indians. Put it differently, the Madras railway had plied with the sweat and efforts of Indians.

Railway Police System in Colonial Malabar

The British made railways as a separate administrative establishment with all amenities and executive mechanisms of its own. It had a law, police, courts, schools and even health care system as well. During 1883-84, there were 247 police personnel including officers and constables in the Madras Presidency. Certain proposals had been submitted by the Inspector General of Police for the strengthening of the police force in the railways as the property of the railways were at risk. Theft was the major crime reported in the running lines and specific arrangements were made to curb such instances of crime[123]. Along with the police force, Madras Volunteer Guards (MRV) were organized as the exclusive force of the Railways, which was placed under Mr. Trevithick, the Locomotive Superintendent, who is a major in the regiment. He was assisted by two officers. Recommendations were made to give arms training to them[124].

Railway had a force to watch and ward the railway stations and inside train. That force was private in nature, hence they did not come under the Police Act. "They have no other further powers that are possessed by all Railway servants under the Railway Act"[125] Unlike, police, this system in railway had a different mechanism to manage, where the force was placed under 'Superintendent of Watchmen' who works under the orders of the Agent and Manager. In 1884, the total strength of that force was 250 and by realising the increased burden of job, a supplement force of watchmen with 90 constables from the police at the cost of government was constituted[126]. A

123 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), *Op.Cit*., p.8.

124 *Ibid.,* p.8.

125 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), *Op.Cit*., p.10.

126 *Ibid.,* p.10.

remarkable development happened in August 1885, a new force was formed as a distinct regiment under the name Madras Railway Volunteers[127]. In 1885 its strength was 30 officers and 660 commissioned officers and men[128].

"The 'Madras Railway Volunteers' has grown during the year 1886-87, from 25 officers and 660 non-commissioned officers and men, total 685, to 24 officers and 749 non-commissioned officer and men, total 773, and with this increase it is satisfactory to note that the number of non-efficients has fallen from 100 of all ranks to 47. A new company has been established at Beypore"[129]. Interestingly some news report contains reference to the presence of railway volunteer company at Beypore along with other stations like Araconum, Sooranungalum etc[130]. At Beypore company of Madras Railway Volunteers force, there were 27 personnel[131]. The Madras Railway Company had its own mechanism for the purpose of watch and ward and they were called as Madras Railway Volunteers. With opening of the Calicut extension, some specific arrangements had been made by them: "The Beypore Company has been moved along with the railway staff at that station to Calicut, where, it is hoped, they may be able to use the range of the Malabar corps and perhaps have the advantage of drilling with that regiment"[132].

This corps had a mechanism to regulate its activities. It is as follows: "The corps is under the command of Mr. Trevithick, the Locomotive

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127 *Ibid.,* p.10.

128 *Ibid.,* p.10.

129 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), *Op.Cit*., p.11.

130 *Allen's India Mail and Official Gazette*, Vol. XXXVI, No.1365, London, 23 December, 1878 p.1283.

131 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), *Op.Cit*., p.11.

132 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), *Op.Cit*., p.11.

Superintendent, who is a Lieutenant Colonel in the regiment. The headquarters of the Corps are at Perambur Works, Madras, and there are sixteen companies located at various stations. There were 33 members at Calicut station[133]. During 1888-89, "the strength of the 'Madras Railway Volunteers' has slightly decreased since last year, owing to some of its members, who were employed on the construction of the Calicut extension, having left company's service"[134]. This is an important reference to the labour integration, that the Madras Railway Company had devised in Madras as a whole and Malabar in particular. They sought the help and support of the volunteers for the making of the railway and once it is done, they were forced to leave the service. It is clear that on 31st March 1889, the number of Calicut Company of Madras Railway Volunteers got reduced to 21[135]. During the year there a sharp decline in the strength of the MRV and it come around 25% of the existing strength, that reduction was done within a period of one year. This was the hallmark of the labour management policy of the MRC as they understood the labourers could be dispersed once the work is done. On 31st March 1890 the strength of Calicut Company of Madras Railway Volunteers got increased to 27[136].

During 1889-90, the number of police force increased to 332, including 323 constables and 9 officers. These force was maintained by the Company for the purpose of watch and ward[137]. With the expansion of railway in the Presidency, substantial progress was made in increasing the number of MRV. During the year 1890-91, there marked an increase of 51 new personnel in the

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133 *Ibid.,* p.11.

134 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-8*9 (A/1277), *Op.Cit*., p.11.

135 *Ibid.,* p.12.

136 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1880*-90 (A/1278), *Op.Cit.,* p.12.

137 *Ibid.,*p.11.

MRV. On 31st March 1890, the strength of the regiment was 863 and it rose to 914 on 31st March 1891[138]. The Calicut Company of MRV had 30 members on 31st March 1892[139]. "During the year 1891-92, the strength of the Madras Railway Volunteer Corps has increased by 50"[140]. "On 31st March 1891, the strength of the regiment was 914 and it rose to 964 on 31st March 1892[141]" . In 1893-94, the number of volunteers in Calicut Company has increased to 32, that included 27 volunteers and 5 non-commissioned officers.[142]

During the year 1895-96, the total strength of the MRV has decreased by 24. As on 31st March 1895 there were 980 personnel were there in the Madras Railway Volunteers Corps, and it reduced to 956 on 31st March 1896[143]. It is also interesting to note that the areas where the volunteers were deputed to work on. Out of the total strength of 956 in the MRV Corps, the number of personnel worked in locomotive section was 465 and it constitute the major sector. After that traffic came, where 338 personnel had been deployed. 46 volunteers were posted as engineers, 22 as telegraph engineers and 14 were in the audit department. Medical sector and civil service constitute 4 and 6 respectively. Further there were 61 non-railway employees[144].

During the year, the total strength of the MRV Corps has increased by 27. The number of effecients is 144 less than in the last years' return, and the

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138 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890*-91 (A/1279), *Op.Cit.,* p.12.

139 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1891-92* (A/1280), *Op.Cit.,* p.11.

140 *Ibid.,* p.10.

141 *Ibid.,* p.10.

142 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1893-94* (A/1282), *Op.Cit*., p.9.

143 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1895-96* (A/1284), *Op.Cit*., p.8.

144 *Ibid.,* p.9.

non-effecients was 171 more. The following reference may give details on the strength of the regiment on 31st March of the last two years: On 31st March 1896, there were 956 members and on 31st March 1897, it increased to 983[145]. Calicut Company of MRV had 15 members on 31st March 1897[146]. The police system and mechanism for watch and ward of railway executed by the Madras Railway was a powerful instance on 'capitalist concern' on safeguarding its property. They further felt the need that no situation would jeopardise the smooth functioning of railways in Malabar. Further the MRV and police system could assimilate the Indian labour to the colonial service.

In short, the colonial railway in Malabar, though conceived and constructed at the designs of the British capitalism, the indigenous workforce and labour of the colonized made it into a reality. Though British capital spearheaded the process of rail making in Malabar, the guaranteed interests on colonial capital investments were frequently met from the Indian revenue. The sweats and tears of the Indians made the Indian revenue. Though British share was in the form of colonial capital, Indians had their role in ensuring the necessary Indian revenue. During the time of construction, and hours of operation of the rail in Malabar, the major share was borne by the colonised. At the construction sites, nameless Indians had to work and the same was continued during the time of 'train in operation'. In some instances, Indians constituted more than 90% of the total workforce, where the Europeans made less than 2%. Though the idea of railway was of British origin, it got materialised and managed with the help of Indian workforce. It was an epitome of hybridity. Despite the initial challenges, the rail in Malabar, could prove its financially viability as it brought in enough and more revenue. In goods' transportation, the salt from Malabar contributed the major share of the

145 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1896-97* (A/1285), *Op.Cit*., p.7.

146 *Ibid.,* p.9.

revenue. Salt, being an item of importance to all, largely furnished by the littoral tract of Malabar. In the total passenger revenue, the income from Malabar was significant. The mechanism to safeguard the capitalist interests in the rail lines and beyond, acquainted the local populace about the colonial watch and ward system. An exhaustive survey of railways in colonial Malabar would underline the pivotal role played by the local population. In that sense, railway epitomised the notion of hybridity. The railway made possible for the men and material to travel and to explore new areas and sensibilities. New circulatory practices and patterns came into vogue with the laying of two parallel steel lines across Malabar.

CHAPTER 6

CIRCULATION AND REPRESENTATIONS: ON LITERARY GENRES AND THE POLITICS OF MOBILITY

> "From the first kicks of the new-born baby to the travels of international business people, mobility is everywhere"[1]

Malabar, during the period of colonial rule, had achieved remarkable progress in the construction of transportation infrastructure which eased the circulatory practices inside and outside the region. Started with the networking of riverine channels, the British had proceeded with the project of transforming the pristine footways into roads and finally focused on constructing extensive rail networks[2]. The experiences of circulation in colonial Malabar bring forth the past again before the reader in the form of different genres of composition and such 'representations' can offer another side of the story. Hence, it is essential to offer a definition of representation as it would ease the following exercise. In *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary,* two different contexts have been assigned to the term 'representation'. It states: "to represent something is to describe or depict it, to call it up, in the mind by description or portrayal or imagination; to place a likeness of it before us in our mind or in the senses"[3]. Put it differently, "to represent also means symbolize, stand for, to be a specimen of, or to substitute

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1 Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World*, Routledge, New York, 2006, p.1.

2 See Appendix VI: Representations on Circulation in Malabar.

3 *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2007.

for"[4]. Stuart Hall has added another dimension to this. To him: "representation means using language to say something meaningful about, or to represent, the world meaningfully, to other people…Representation is an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between the members of a culture. It does involve the use of language, of signs and images which stand for, or represent things"[5]. He was more focusing on the cultural determinants of representations.

Every representation contains the historical setting it has produced and "there is a close relation between historical past and cultural texts"[6]. Hanna Pitkin who has studied of representation in the realm of politics stated that "representation means, as the word's etymological origins indicate, *re-presentation,* a making present again"[7]. In that sense, representation means any text that makes the present again before an audience or reader. It re-enacts historical making of the representation. The term representation is used to denote the way in which writers or authors portray ideas, characters, events of socio-political issues in their works. In Malabar, the colonial interventions in the expansion of transportation networks caught the imagination of the creative minds and their reactions, naturally, gave genesis to various genres of literary creations. There were novels, poems, autobiographies, memoirs and travelogues of pilgrims with abundant notices on transportation networks.

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4 *Ibid.*

5 Stuart Hall (Ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices,* Sage Publications Ltd., London, 2003, p.15.

6 Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, *Representing Violence, or "how the west has won*" in Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (eds.), *The Violence of Representation,* Routledge, New York, 2014,p.2.

7 Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Concept of Representation*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1972, p. 8.

Such representations do offer an alternative picture to the native reactions to the transportation networks in Malabar[8].

Devotees on the Move: *Tirtha-yathra* from Malabar and Beyond

Circulation and consequent representation of pilgrims constitute an important genre of composition in Malabar during colonial times. "Pilgrimage has long been an important and complicated part of South Asian popular cultures"[9]. The expansion of circulatory networks had an impact on the circulation of pilgrims from Malabar. The expansion of transportation networks, especially railways, resulted in substantial increase in pilgrim traffic. Along with that the nature of constructing transportation networks during the colonial period was determined by the presence of pilgrimage centres. There are instances in which certain railway lines were intentionally routed through some of the pilgrimage sites[10]. There is a dialectical relation between the pilgrimage centres and the development of circulatory channels.

The nature and destinations of pilgrimage were redesigned with the expansion of transportation networks. "Pilgrimage refers to the journey undertaken by an individual or group to a sacred place during which the participants consider themselves to be pilgrims"[11]. Representations on pilgrimage from Malabar indicate that most of them were carried away as groups and they often visited places like Kasi, Puri etc. In the second half of the 19th century, Puri emerged as an important pilgrimage centre in India. As noted, "by this time the Indian railway system had long been appropriated by

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8 See Appendix IV: Important pictures on Transportation in Malabar.

9 Ian J Kerr, *Reworking a Popular Religious Practice: The Effects of Railways on Pilgrimage in the 19th and 20th century South Asia*, in Ian J Kerr, *Railways in Modern India,* Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 2001, p.311.

10 Anand A Young, *Bazar India: Markets, Society and the Colonial State in Gangetic Bihar,* University of California Press, Berkeley, 1998, p.157.

11 Ian J Kerr, *Op.Cit.,* p.307.

pilgrims to Hindu shrines and even by those who ventured to Puri"[12]. Access to several pilgrimage centres in north India were very difficult earlier, as it demanded travels of long duration. It is correctly pointed out that "as late as in 1881, the road journey from the railhead of Raniganj in Western Bengal to Puri had taken twenty-six days[13].

The expansion of rail network, especially in the last decade of the 19th century, changed things in a positive manner. It is correctly pointed out that "from the turn of the century the journey from Calcutta to Puri could be done in twelve hours"[14]. The materialization of rail networks across the country had redefined the circulatory patterns of pilgrims to pilgrimage centres of north India. "In the early 1880s it was believed that the pilgrimage to Gaya had more than doubled after the construction of railway. From the same decade onward, there was also a marked increase of pilgrimage to Jagannath which was at least partly due to improved railway communications: pilgrims from north or central could travel by road to locations in Bengal"[15]. Pilgrims from Malabar too made use of the expansion of rail networks, and they visited many famous pilgrimage centres in north India. The representation of their pilgrimage memories is in the form of poems and travelogues.

First such composition under analysis is K C Krishna Pillai's *Sreekrishna Sree Kashi Yathra*, published in 1898[16]. This is collection of 200 *manipravala* slokas and is about the journey of Edathralpad Kozhikode with

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12 Ravi Ahuja, *'The Bridge Builders': Some Notes on Railways, Pilgrimage and the British 'Civilizing Mission' in Colonial India*, in Harald Fischer-Tine and Michael Mann (Eds.), *Colonialism and Civilizing Mission: Cultural Ideology in British India*, Anthem Press London, 2004, p,110.

13 Ravi Ahuja, *Op.Cit.,* p,110.

14 W Wesley Clemesha, *The 37th Annual Report of the Sanitary Commissioner for Bengal (1904)*, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1905, p.12.

15 Ravi Ahuja, *'Op.Cit.,* p,110.

16 K C Krishna Pillai, *Sreekrishna Sree Kashi Yathra* (Mal.), Vinjaana Chinthamani Achukoodam, Pattambi, 1898.

an entourage of 22 other members. The journey was commenced on 31st of Chingam ME 1070, which is corresponding to 14th September 1894 and returned on 4th Vrishchikam ME 1070 corresponding to 18th November 1894[17]. Categorically, it is noted that the same journey became a theme for another book namely *Kasiyathra Charithram (Part I)* and was authored by H H Vidwan Manavikrama the Zamorin of Calicut[18]. The details of the entourage are given and is entitled as *aaluvivara pattika* Altogether there were 23 members, and most of them are closely linked to Samuthiri royal family. It included Krishnan Edathralpad, Ettan Thamburan of Padinjare Kovilakam, Cheriyettan Thamburan of Puthiya Kovilakam etc. It is interesting to note that there were two women in the group, namely Manikkatha Thulu Amma and Ambalakkatt Lakshmi Amma.

The commencement of the journey has been elaborately explained: "*Maharajamaanyarajyasree Kozhikode Puthiya Kovilakath Edathralpad Thirumanass* has commenced his journey in horse cart and reached Calicut railway station around 7.45 in the morning. In the station he was welcomed by a group of friends and men of high position, and they discussed the journey details"[19]. The entry of royal family at the railway station has been explained in a lucid and befitting manner. The entire group amused to see the passengers who were expecting the train to arrive at the Calicut railway station[20]. The raja, along with the entourage, entered first class compartment. Inside the train they enjoyed the company, being with brethren and friends

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17 Punnasseri Nilakanda Sharma's *Avatharika* to K C Krishna Pillai, *Op.Cit.,* p.1.

18 H H Vidwan Manavikrama the Zamorin of Calicut, *Kasiyathra Charithram (Part I)* (Mal.), The Mangalodayam Company Ltd., Trichur, 1914, pp.1-3.

19 *Ibid.,* p.1.

20 "ചെന്നത്തീവണ്ടിതൻ മന്ദിരമതിലഥ
തന്നാഗമത്തെ പ്രതീക്ഷി-
ച്ചന്നെത്തീട്ടുള്ള നാനാപുരുഷമണികളെ
കണ്ടു നന്ദിച്ചമന്ദം". (ശ്ലോകം 23) See K C Krishna Pillai, *Op.Cit.,* p.2.

and such an experience was totally unknown to them[21]. On their journey, they were sent off by Ramakrishna Iyer at Panniyankara railway station and Puthiya Kovilakathe Unni Thamburan at Feroke railway station[22]. Panniyankara railway station might be the Kallai railway station. The journey was not fully performed via railways. Due to heavy monsoon, certain warnings were given to stay away from train journey, and they continued the further travel in car to Bangalore[23]. The entire tour team had visited places like Mysore, Bombay, Delhi, Nasik, Allahabad, Kasi, etc., and amused by watching the attractions in these towns. The broader world outside the territorial limits of Calicut was now opened to the members of the royal family. They had enjoyed the journey in horse carts at tourist destinations with their beloved[24]. The pilgrimage they performed had a 'redefining effect' on them. The entourage was consisted of Brahmins like Kizhinippurath Namboodiri, Puthisseri Namboodiri, Aadhimoorthi Pattar, Parameshwara Pattar etc., and according to the caste-prescriptions, trans-marine or on-board

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21 "ക്ഷടെത്തെന്നടെ വണ്ടിയിൽ സമന്വയാ-
നം ചെയ്ത ബന്ധുക്കളോ
ടീടേറും സരസോക്തി ചൊല്ലിയുമിട
യ്ക്കാപ്പീസു തോറും പ്രിയേ" (ശ്ലോകം 24) See *Ibid.,* p.5.

22 H H Vidwan Manavikrama the Zamorin of Calicut, *Op.Cit.,* p.2.

23 മഴയതിയായതുമൂലം
വഴിയിൽ പാലങ്ങൾ കേടുവന്നതിനാൽ
രായച്ചൂർ വഴിയായി
പ്പോയീടാനായ്ത്തനിഞ്ഞില്ല നൃപൻ (ശ്ലോകം 30) See K C Krishna Pillai, *Op.Cit.,* p.7.
അന്നാൾ രാത്രിയിങ്കലേഴുമണിയാം
നേരം പുറപ്പെട്ട് പി-
റ്റേന്നാളാറു മണിയ്ക്ക് കാരോളികചേ
ബാംഗ്ലൂരിലെത്തീടിനാൻ (ശ്ലോകം 31) See *Ibid.,* p.7.

24 പ്രാണപ്രേയസിമാരൊത്തു കുതിര
സ്സാറട്ടിലേറിത്തിരി
ച്ചേണപെൺമിഴി തത്ര വന്ന സരസം
തീരപ്രദേശങ്ങളിൽ (ശ്ലോകം: 105) See *Ibid.,* p.27

ship voyages were taboos to them. But they could not desist the temptation as and when they saw the ships.

There are instances in which they perform ship voyages[25]. It shows that they could not keep the taboos imposed on them by the caste values and they enjoyed the attractions offered at the cities they visited. They did not want the caste taboos to be kept as unchanging or unquestioned. Further, the caste norms and taboos did not sustain in an environment, where people do frequently involve in trans-regional and trans-riverine circulations. In their journey to different places in India, they had mainly depended on train services[26]. Being the elite Hindus in the caste hierarchy, the presence of the downtrodden castes in train would pollute them. But they had no other options left and train became a space where caste norms became irrelevant. The concept of purity and pollution didn't work in such an atmosphere. Hence, it is argued that the circulation of people from their caste-ridden social environment to the world outside had opened umpteen possibilities and new norms of social mingling and interaction came into vogue. The shackles of caste rigidity got stumbled off in the new age of extensive circulations facilitated by the fresh modalities of transportations.

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25 സന്തോഷാലിവയൊക്കെ വേണ്ടുവിധമായ്
വീക്ഷിച്ചു ഭക്ഷിത്തുടൻ
ചന്തം ചേർന്നൊരു കപ്പലിൽ കയറിയ
ശില്പങ്ങളും കണ്ടു താൻ (ശ്ലോകം: 107) See *Ibid.,* p.28.

26 അന്നഥ മണിയഞ്ചായി
ടുന്നേരം മന്നവൻ പുറപ്പെട്ടു
ധന്യേ! ശ്രീകാശിയിലെ
ത്തുന്നൊരു തീവണ്ടി കയറിനാൻ വീണ്ടും (ശ്ലോകം: 143) See *Ibid.,* pp.36-37.

ശ്രീകാന്താംഘ്ല നിനച്ച രാത്രി സുഖമായ്
തീവണ്ടിയേറീടിനാൻ (ശ്ലോകം:160)

ആറാത്തുള്ള കുളഹലേന നൃപന
ന്നേവം ഗമിച്ചത്തുലാ
മാറാംതീയ്യതി താനയോധ്യയിലെഴും
നൽ സ്റ്റേഷനിൽ ചെന്നുടൻ (ശ്ലോകം: 161) See *Ibid.,* p.40.

However, it should also remember that such pilgrimages contributed to the community assertion of Hindus in Malabar, as it integrated them to the sacred geography of Hinduism in north India. The pilgrims had visited places like Kasi, Ayodhya, Haridwar, Kurukshethra, Mathura etc. The very title of the book is *Sreekrishna Sree Kashi Yathra*. The prime destination of the pilgrimage was Kasi, which means the 'City of light'. Kasi is also called as Benaras or Varanasi. A colonial officer in the late 19th century noted that, "Banaras is to the Hindoos what Mecca is to the Mohammedans, and what Jerusalem to the Jews of old. It is the holy city of Hindostan"[27]. Kasi is a place of spiritual liberation, which is called *moksha* or *mukthi*. They believe in "*kashyam maranam muktih*, means 'death in Kasi is liberation"[28]. Further, is significant to note that Kasi and other places visited by these pilgrims were important centres of scared geography of Hinduism. They are also alluded as tirthas or crossing the streams. "Among city tirthas, the cycle of the seven moksha-giving cities is acclaimed: Ayodhya, the ancient capital of Lord Rama, Mathaura, the old Buddhist and Jain sanctuary and the birthplace of Lord Krsna; Haridvar, where the Ganga enters the plains of India, from the mountains; Varanasi or Kasi, the eternal city of Lord Siva on the Ganga; Kanci, the Vaisnava and Saiva city of Tamilnadu; Ujjain the site of great linga of Mahakala in central India; and Dwaraka, the capital of lord Krsna in western India"[29]. It has rightly been pointed out that "a larger religious zone is being opened up at the all-India level with focal points outside the state, to which pilgrim-tourists from Kerala now have better access"[30]. With the expansion of rail networks, the elite Hindus from Malabar identified sacred

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27 Norman MacLeod, *Days in North India,* J B Lippincott and Company, Philadelphia, 1870, p.20

28 Diana L Eck, *India: A Sacred Geography*, Harmony Books, New York, 2012, p.11-12

29 Diana L Eck, *India's "Tirthas": Crossings in Sacred Geography* in *History of Religions*, Vol.20, No.4, Chicago University Press, May 1981, p.335

30 Muralidharan M, *Hindu Community Formation in Kerala: Processes and Structures under Colonial Modernity*, in *South Indian Studies,* July-December 1996, p.256.

spaces in north India as the part of their religious belief and it is argued that such pilgrimages favoured the process of community formation among the Hindus of Malabar.

The narrations of experiences they had in cities like Bombay are interesting. The market at Bombay had a mesmerizing effect on them. The richness of the market in terms of the variety of products and their uniqueness are nicely represented[31]. Such an experience enriched them. Similarly, the Bombay city was a novel experience to them as it was assembled by people of diverse interests and background. The Bombay city represents an extensive diversity in terms of its cosmopolitanism and that is being highly alluded here[32]. Differences in terms of language, caste or even dress became irrelevant in cities like Bombay and such unique experiences might have prompted them to introspect and to take a critical position regarding the casteism, they had practiced. In that respect, the journey to Kasi was not just a pilgrimage as they were exposed to the progressive developments across the country. Such journeys had a redefining effect on the mindscape of the social elites in Malabar. It gave an impetus to the ongoing movements for socio-political mobility.

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31 കറ്റക്കാറണിവേണി! ബോംബായിലെഴു
ന്നാവീഥിതന്നിൽ തദാ
വിറ്റിടുന്നതിനായ് നിരത്തിയപദാ-
ർത്ഥൗഘങ്ങൾ വർണ്ണിക്കുവാൻ
ചെറ്റും ഞാൻ തുനിയുന്നില്ല മനുജ
ർക്കാവശ്യപ്പെട്ടിടു
ന്നറ്റം വിട്ട വിശിഷ്ട വസ്തുവതിലൊ
ന്നില്ലാതെയില്ലെത്ര കേൾ (ശ്ലോകം 95) See *Ibid.,* p.24.

32 നാനാഭാഷയിലുള്ളവേഷമധികം
ഭേഷായ് ധരിച്ചുടൻ
നാനാഭാഷ തകർത്തുരച്ചവിടെയ
ക്കാഴ്ചയ്ക്ക് വന്നെത്തിടും
നാനാ ജാതി ജനങ്ങൾ തിങ്ങിവിളയാ
ടീടുന്ന ഘോഷങ്ങളും (ശ്ലോകം.94) See *Ibid.,* p.23.

Another book that represented circulation of men in the region is *Sree Kumbakona Yathra* by Oduvil Kunhikrishna Menon[33]. This book is a poem on the journey performed by Oduvil Kunhikrishna Menon during 'X' Mas vacation to visit his father-in-law Mr. T V Ananthan Nair, who was appointed as sub-judge at Kumbakonam. The picturization of the train powered with steam locomotive is referred here[34]. Further, there are references to *thekkinthyarail* and *pukavandi* in the poem and it is indicating to the profit-making South Indian railway and its steam locomotive[35].

Tharavath Ammaluamma's book *Oru Theerthayathra* is an interesting composition of a journey to Kasi to perform a religious rite and hence it became a pilgrimage. This book is about a journey performed by Tharavath Ammaluamma in the months of July and August 1924 to Kasi. The purpose of the journey was to immerse the mortal remains of his beloved brother Dr. TM Nair, who was deceased in England, in Kasi. She proceeded her journey to Madras from Palakkad via train and the details are given[36]. From there she continued the journey to Puri and then to Kasi. Instead of performing the funeral rites of the deceased in the nearby areas, the journey to the far-off places like Kasi could be done as it was connected via railways. Such journeys of pilgrims from the South-west part of the country to the religious centres in North India were frequently done via rail networks. In that sense,

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33 Oduvil Kunhikrishna Menon, *Sree Kumbakona Yathra* (Mal.), Trichur, 1924.

34 "തീവണ്ടിക്കരി വേഷമൊന്നിളകിയാ-
ടിക്കുകിയോടും വിധൗ
പൂവഞ്ഞാ പുതുപ്പുലരി പൊലിമയാൽ-
പൊന്നോമന പുത്രന-
ന്നാവണ്ടിയ്ക്ക കമാർന്നൊരാളുകളില-
ത്യാനന്ദമേറ്റിടിനാൻ" See Oduvil Kunhikrishna Menon, *Op.Cit.,* p. 3.

35 "വെള്ളിപ്പേമഴപെയ്തിടും പടിപണം
വാരുന്നതെക്കിന്ത്യറൈൽ-
പ്പുള്ളിക്കാർപ്പുകവണ്ടിവെച്ചുവരുമാ-
വിസ്തീർണ്ണമാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളിൽ" See *Ibid.,* p. 7.

36 *Ibid.,* p.1.

the network of pilgrim centres in the country got expanded with the growing up of rail network and pilgrimage could be performed with ease and comfort than earlier. In short, the *tirtha-yathras* performed from Malabar and the representations thematised on them provide another aspect of the circulatory practices. The women, instead of confining to the limits of their domestic environment, could perform and even lead pilgrimages to the religious centres in North India. The caste values and the dogmas upheld by the casteism were withered away due to new world experience to the pilgrims with the help of transportation networks expanded across India during the imperial heyday of Britain and it offers a new picture.

On Reading *Smarakashilakal* and *Theevandichinth*

No literary text is free from the context that gave shape to the historical imagination of the writer. Every literary creation is the outcome of a historical process that the writer had undergone. To have a proper understanding of a text one must realise the historical context that gave birth to it. Similarly, each text contains the elements of the historical context that produced it. New Historicism does talk of it. It is "reciprocal concern with the historicity of the texts and the textuality of history. By *the historicity of texts*, I mean to suggest the cultural specificity, the social embedment, of all modes of writing. By *the textuality of history*, I mean to suggest, firstly, that we can have no access to the full and authentic past… and secondly, that those textual traces are themselves subject to subsequent textual mediations when they are construed as the "documents" upon which the historians ground their own texts called histories"[37] . For the meaningful understanding of a text, one must comprehend the material making of it and that include all the cultural, social ingredients of the past. All texts are embedded in the historical setting and

[37] Louis A Montrose, *Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture*, in H Aram Veeser (Ed.), *The New Historicism,* Routledge, New York, 2013, p.20.

texts can have an autonomous domain where it could speak of the process of its making. Similarly, one could look at the making of a text and its historical conditioning by peeping through the text. Such an exercise can be done to look at Punathil Kunhabdulla's *Smarakashilakal* and Moyinkutty Vaidyar's *Theevandichinth*.

Smarakashilakal by Punathil Kunhabdulla, initially brought out in 1977, is more than a novel as it contains some references to the historical process that the region of Karakkad had undergone. Being a resident of Karakkad, Punathil Kunhabdulla was well aware of the historical process through which his locality had transcended. Karakkad was a *desam* in the in present day Onchiyam Panchayat in Kozhikode district of Kerala state. Karakkad had witnessed several historical incidents that could shape the destiny of later Kerala. In 1917, Vagbhadananda has started Atma Vidhya Sangha, which later became a beacon of reform spirit in Kerala. The region had housed certain labour co-operatives that could write the tales of alternative labour culture.

Much before the arrival of reform spirit in the area, there was a Basel Evangelical Mission (BEM) settlement near to Chombala. They had involved in the education of women and downtrodden. Vocational training was imparted to women. They had run an orphanage, that could help many in the locality. The English education imparted under their initiative in the coastal region had brought some progressive changes. The beneficiaries of English education imparted at the Chombala settlement had helped the members of fishermen caste to get employed in the imperial service and they could ensure upward mobility in the society. The progressive social intervention of BEM missionaries and employed youth in the coastal region made it a place with certain differences.

The presence of Tharammal family at Karakkad made the situation conducive to the emergence of a progressive public sphere. The name of Tharammal family has come into prominence with Syed Salim Thangal, who was a Sufi saint and interested in travelling. Syed Zain Koya Thangal, another member of the family, was a Sufi saint, poet and spiritual leader and he could win the consent and confidence of the populace around the household. He composed poems on the deep humanity that Sufism has represented[38]. During the period of Karakkattil Hydros Thangal the material prosperity of the family reached into new heights as he could own lands of several tax defaulters. His eldest son Karakkattil Muthukoya Thangal was the most prominent and influential member of the family. He had trade links with Singapore and it gave him a cosmopolitan outlook. He had expertise in traditional medicine and witchcraft. He had close personal contacts with Vagbhadananda and they even attended some meetings together[39]. Thangal was very active in the region in the early decades of the 20th century. In the region of Karakkad, he had initiated certain progressive steps like prompting women to wear upper cloths etc., and he could enjoy wide acceptance among the local populace around.

At Karakkad, a progressive youth collective was getting momentum in the first decade of the 20th century due to the interplay of multiple factors like the proximity with BEM settlement, influence of educated and employed in the coastal region and of the presence of enlightened Tharammal household. They vehemently criticized and questioned the blind faiths and unwanted rituals in Hinduism. Consequently, clashes between the religious orthodoxy and the progressive youths were common in Karakkad. Karakkattil

[38] Rajendran Edathumkara, Jineesh P S and Soman T K, *Munnettam: Uralungal Labour Contract Co-Operative Societyude Vijayagatha* (Mal.), ULCCS, Madappally, 2013, p.44.

[39] Swami Brahmavrathan, *Maharshi Vagbhadananda Gurudevan* (Mal.), Vagbhadananda Memorial Research Institute, Thottappalli, 1971, p.35.

Muthukoya Thangal alias Karakkad Thangal acted as the conflict resolving mechanism and his intervention was crucial in bringing normalcy in the region as he enjoyed wide acceptance.

In *Smarakashilakal*, Karakkad Thangal was picturised as a man with extra-human potential and his words were the final in all issues in the region. His links with Singapore have been alluded to by the author. Thangal had played a leading role in bringing modernity to Karakkad. They brought many items and ideas from Singapore to Karakkad. Certain instances of cultural exchanges with Singapore like carpenters are also explained[40]. Similarly, once he stopped the train at Karakkad while there was no such stop at that time. As stated earlier, Karakkad Thangal had strong trade ties with Singapore and he was a regularly visited there. Usually he proceeded to Calicut via horse-cart and from there he took train to Madras and then on board to ship to Singapore.

In one instance, he could not avail the horse-cart from Mammukeyi of Thalassery and the option left for him was to walk, but within a short time he could not reach Calicut by walking. If he failed to reach Calicut on time, he would miss the train to Madras and will have to wait another three months for the next ship to Singapore. All others, including the family members and servants, were baffled, but he was calm and had a smile on his face. He declared that he will go to Calicut via train and all others watched him on this implausible claim. He ordered the servants to carry the luggage and they walked to the nearby railway lines. He was followed by a big group of people, expecting something is about to happen. When the train was coming, he simply whispered something. He continued the whispering and the train suddenly stopped then he got into the train and proceeded the journey. The

[40] Punathul Kunhabdulla, *Smarakashilakal* (Mal.), D C Books, Kottayam, 2021.p.23.

escorted locals were stumbled to see the *karamath* and the news spread like wildfire in Karakkad[41].

This incident is not a mere reflection of the imaginative mind of the writer and it needs to be analysed historically. As mentioned earlier, the Tharammal household was a 'source of solution' to many problems that the locality had faced and people around there, used to seek the intervention of the household to reach at a decision on issues they confronted with. They had confidence in the capacity of the household in taking proper decisions on apt time. From an interview with the member of the household it is learnt that the fishermen of the coastal region mainly depended on fishing for their subsistence[42].

The export of dried fish from Malabar had substantially increased even in the second half of the 19th century. In 1862-63 value of dried fish from Malabar was £26.272, in 1867-68 it was £48,207 and in 1872-73 it rose to £90,849[43]. Fish export from Calicut had prime share in it. The same had been repeated in the first quarter of the 20th century also[44]. For the transportation of dried fish, they had depending on railway. Usually they had to take the whole goods to Calicut for transporting the freight to Madras and it caused much inconveniences to them. They jointly decided to meet Thangal and bring the issue before him and sought his intervention to solve the problem. Thangal had fluency in English and he had good relation with them. Family's relation with the British has already been stated in *Smarakashilakal* as they conferred

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41 *Ibid.,* pp.33-36.

42 Interview with Hakheem Koya Thangal, aged 89 years, a member of the Tharammal, at his residence on 12th November 2022.

43 *The Fisheries Exhibition Literature Vol. XII,* William Clowes, and Sons Ltd., London, 1884,p.138.

44 *Madras Fisheries Bulletin* (Volume 11) , 1918, The Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1918, p.18, TNSA, Egmore.

the title of Khan Bahadur to Karakkattil Attakoya Thangal[45]. Letter of interest to start a station after Badagara was sent to Madras and an official visit of British officials was made to Tharammal household. They were cordially received and to amuse them circus was also performed in the courtyard of the household. The British were so happy and consented to commence a trial station[46].

In the first decade of 20th century, the British authorities at Madras had initiated the steps to start a trial station between Badagara and Mahe. The initial gesture towards that direction was taken by the Secretary to Government, PWD Railways of Government of Madras on 17-03-1909[47]. The land for the trail station was identified in the Vellikulangara village in the Kurumbranad taluk in Malabar district. The Collector of Malabar, in his letter no. 320/B&G dated 18th May 1909 informed that the proposed land owned by Sankara Varma Raja of Ayencheri Kovilakam had offered to give the land without claiming any compensation. The notification was finally approved by the Secretary to Government, as per proceedings no. 324/Railway dated 28th May 1909 and it was decided to publish the notification for starting a trial station between Badagara and Mahe in the Fort St. George Gazette[48]. Hence it is clear that in the first decades of the 20th century the Karakkad railway station, which was later called as Nadapuram railway station, was started. Punathil had explained it as the magical act of Karakkattil Thangal. It is a clear that how the initiatives for railway development deeply imprinted in the social psyche and in the mind of the writer too.

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45 Punathul Kunhabdulla, *Smarakashilakal* (Mal.), D C Books, Kottayam, 2021.p.24.

46 Interview with Hakheem Koya Thangal, *Op.Cit.*

47 *R.Dis. File B.73, Sl.No.19. It is a memorandum No.157/Revenue Dated 17-03-1909 from the Secretary, PWD Railways to the Collector of Malabar,* RAK.

48 *R.Dis. File B.73, Sl.No.19. It is a memorandum No.157/Revenue Dated 17-03-1909 from the Secretary, PWD Railways to the Collector of Malabar,* RAK.

Moyinkutty Vaidyar and *Theevandichinth*

Moyinkutty Vaidyar (1852-1892) was a most celebrated Mappila poet who was alluded as the 'master craftsman of Arabi-Malayalam'. Being an ayurvedic physician by profession, he preferred to write even the prescriptions in Malayalam. He made generous contribution to Arabi-Malayalam and he enriched Mappila literature in Malabar. His poems have the remarkable credit of being upheld the position of women in high esteem. His poems are notable on multiple respects like the selection of topic, presentation etc. Within a short span of time he wrote "14 most elegant poems ever written in Mappila literature"[49]. His diversified interests are visible in the themes and different genres of compositions he made. Vaidyar's works include letter songs, short love poems, animal stories, *padappattu* or battle songs, historic narrative and a romantic epic"[50].

There are some instances in which Moyinkutty Vaidyar had positively responded to the modern changes brought into Malabar by the British. Conventionally, train was narrated as 'a single-eyed demon, moving on two simple iron roads by howling and spitting smoke'. It was another 'invention of the British to terrorise the local people' and they viewed the coming of train quite sceptically. Like many other strategies and devices to dominate over the Indians, train was perceived as a tactic to ensure massive killing of the people as there were some initial instances in which were killed at the railway tracks[51]. Contrary to that, Moyinkutty Vaidyar wrote *Theevandichinth*, to picturise the wide reception and enthusiasm of the local people towards

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49 Abdullah Abdul Hameed, *Mappila Literature as a Paradigm for Countercultures: Reading Moyinkutty Vaidyar in Context* in *Performing Islam*, Vol.8, Nos. 1&2, p.18.

50 *Ibid.,* p.18.

51 Jineesh P S, *Mishaps In/Front of the Iron Horse: A Social History of Train Accidents in Madras Presidency (1881-1891)* in *International Journal of History and Cultural Studies* (Henceforth it is cited as *IJCHS),* Volume 7, Issue 2, 2021, pp.1-10.

train. It portrays how the coming of train got perceived in the public imagination of Malabar. "*Theevandichinth* is a 34 lines poem about the coming of the train into Kerala. It captured the bewilderment of the people at sight of a line of railway cars coupled together and drawn by locomotive when it was newly introduced in Malabar by the British"[52]. There is an ambiguity on the date of the composition of *Theevandichinth*. Due to the absence of proper mentioning of the year in which it came out, it is surmised that Vaidyar wrote *Theevandichinth*, probably before the composition of *Badarul Muneer Husnul Jamal* in 1872[53].

Moyinkutty Vaidyar hints that the coming of train to *Malayalanadu* was wholeheartedly welcomed by the inhabitants of the land. The local people perceived train as a wonder that could make big sound 'enough to tremor a hill and was like a 'roaring sea'[54]. It is interesting to note that he used the term *Malayalanadu* to denote Malabar[55]. Instead of the 'demonised picturisation' of train, Moyinkutty Vaidyar offers another version, in which the local inhabitants of *Malayalanadu* were amazed to see the magnificence of train. It underlines how the ignorant and traditional populace have perceived a big machine called train, not as a devil or demon, but as object of wonder.

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52 Abdullah Abdul Hameed, *Op.Cit.,* p.18.

53 Rajendran Edathumkara, *Aakhyanangalude Pusthakam* (Mal.), Logos Books, Palakkad, 2018,p.95.

54 See K K Muhammad Abdul Kareem and K Aboobacker. *Mahakavi Moyinkutty Vaidyarude Sampoornna Krithukal* (Vol.3) (Mal.), Mahakavi Moyinkutty Vaidyar Mappila Kala Academy, Kondotty, 2015*.,* p.1911 and Appendix 6 also.

55 It signifies the influence of linguistic sense and consciousness in fixing the name of a place. Vaidyar's imagination testifies that a linguistical affinity and the consequent consciousness have appeared much before the demand for linguistical reorganization of Indian states. Two things are apparent in his usage: one, he could understand the instrumentality of language in fixing the cultural identity of a region, and two, he perceived Malabar as the landscape which could be equated with *Malayalanadu,* the land of all *Malayalis.*

Moyinkutty Vaidyar proceeds to explain the operational activities of train. "Before the train begins the journey, fire is ignited in the locomotive and the attendant connect it with the wagons. The train then runs on the rail lines"[56]. The guard and guard's room at the end of the train are being mentioned here[57]. From each station, passengers got into the train by giving pass for which they paid for and the moving of the train by carrying them on the rail line was a nice sight. The train plied day and night and people in the vicinity of the rail and station amused to see the running of the train[58]. The details of staff associated with the running of train are also mentioned.

A textual reading of Moyinkutty Vaidyar's *Theevandichinth* underlines that train has become a normal presence to the Malabar populace. They were amused to experience the journey in the train and even watching it from outside had entertained them. The general attitude of the people of Malabar could be gleaned out of it. They were neither freighted of, nor distanced out from the train. Further train has become a part of their everyday life. The local people got acquainted with the operations behind the running of a train and the poem did not contain even a negative reference to rail connectivity in Malabar. Apart from that the use of train for travelling by the local populace has been referred. In the poetic imagination and experience, train got represented as the new modality of circulation. Moyinkutty Vaidyar's *Theevandichinth* offers some scope for inter-textual reading with other sources. Intertextual reading with the archival sources underlines that in the first decades of the second half of the 19th century, there were substantial increase in the number of rail passengers[59]. Hence, it is argued that rail and

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56 K K Muhammad Abdul Kareem and K Aboobacker. *Op.Cit.,* p.1911.

57 *Ibid.,* p.1911.

58 *Ibid.,* p.1912.

59 *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1883-84* (A/1272), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1884, p.12, RAK.

train in Malabar have caught the imagination of creative minds. They caricatured the lived experiences of the people in Malabar. Like any other place, railway and the system around it began to determine the habits of the people in Malabar.

On the Politics of Mobility in Colonial Malabar

The colonial making of connectivity infrastructure in Malabar brought certain structural changes in the socio-political fabric of the region. It resorted to remake the habits of circulation, which in turn contributed to the alterations in the politics of mobility. Tim Cresswell suggested a definition of politics of mobility. "By politics I mean social relations that involve the production and distribution of power. By a politics of mobility I mean the ways in which the mobilities are both productive of such relations and produced by them"[60]. Mobility primarily talk of the movement of the people, things and ideas. Along with walking, mobility is materialised through the mechanised circulation and such actions do have crucial role in fixing the nature of politics of mobility. To substantiate, it is opined that, "these forms of mobility (walking, driving etc) and these aspects of mobilities (movement, representation and practices) are political-they are implicated in the production and power and relations of domination"[61].

In Malabar, politics of mobility is linked to the social mobility too. It is evident that the "individual mobility by itself is limited and ephemeral"[62]. There are ample manifestations of social mobility in the region. "The term social mobility refers to the process by which individuals move from one position to another in society- positions which by general consent have been

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60 Tim Cresswell, *Op.Cit.,* p.21.

61 *Ibid.,* p.20.

62 David G Mandelbaum, *Society in India*, University of California Press, Berkeley,1970,p.471.

given specific hierarchical values"[63]. Development of transportation networks in colonial Malabar acted as a catalyst for the social mobility. Several caste groups moved away from their domestic landscape and the restrictions on certain social spaces, like temples, began to be challenged on the basis of the experiences of the increased social mobility they had already achieved. Thus the new channels of circulation or transportation networks stimulated the quest for expanding social mobility.

In Malabar, like any other parts of the country, caste played a crucial role in the social mobility. "Caste remains an important arbiter of people's chances for upward mobility"[64]**.** In Malabar, social mobility contributed to the restructuring of caste norms and values. "Mobility may weaken primary group ties, isolate mobile men, and erode traditional values"[65]. Symptoms of losing the caste ties were evident and such instances could be found in the political aspirations of people in Malabar. The "new forms of transport allowed movement over previously unthinkable scales in short periods of time. Narratives of mobility-as-liberty and mobility-as-progress accompanied notions of circulatory movement as healthy and moral"[66]. The British intervention in Malabar by expanding circulatory channels contributed to the socio-political mobility. It is evident in the autobiography of A K Gopalan and the diaries of P Madhusoodhanan Thangal.

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63 Seymour Martin Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, *Social Mobility in Industrial Society*, University of California Press, Berkeley,1964,pp.1-2.

64 Anirudh Krishna, *Obstacles to Social Mobility in India-And the Way Forward*, in *Current History,* Vol.118, No.807, South Asia, April 2019, p.127.

65 M Francis Abraham and R Subramanian, *Patterns of Social Mobility and Migration in a Caste Society*, in *International Review of Modern Sociology* (Henceforth it is cited as *IRMS*), Spring, Vol.1, No.1, 1974.p.403.

66 Tim Cresswell, *Op.Cit.,*p.2.

Socio-Political Mobility in Malabar: On Reading *Ente Jeevitha Kadha*

Socio-political mobilisations in colonial Malabar are of crucial importance in fixing the nature of the region in the political fabric of later Kerala. Unlike, any other parts of India, the national movement in Kerala, was not so 'national' in the strict sense of the term. Instead it was enriched with mass rallying of people for assuming social rights as well. Kerala, being a landscape with intense casteist prescriptions, had an innate tendency to amalgamate the social reform spirit with the quest for political freedom. The socio-reform movements that the land had witnessed prepared the soil for the forthcoming socio-political mobilisations. Malabar had a unique tradition of producing prominent leaders of the socio-political mobilisations. The march towards socio-political emancipation got a proper direction and ideological orientation consequent to the involvement of such organic intellectuals. Hence, it seems to be relevant to examine their personal accounts in the form of autobiographies so as to fix the contours of socio-political mobility which intrinsically linked with the expansion of transportation networks across Malabar. An attempt is being made here to read the initial sections of A K Gopalan's *Ente Jeevithakadha*, since the *Pattini jatha*, organised under his leadership constitute the end-point of the present study.

A K Gopalan, being a prominent leader of political articulations in colonial Malabar had travelled extensively and he understood the potential of walking. He noted that "places like Chirakkal, Kottayam did not have enough facilities for road transportations and I preferred to walk. One has to walk ten to twenty miles a day to reach such destinations and I have enough experience in walking and it helped me a lot"[67]. Unlike many other political leaders A K

[67] A K Gopalan, *Ente Jeevithakadha* (Mal.), Chintha Publishers,Thiruvananthapuram, 2022,p.27.

Gopalan had worked among the plantation workers in Wayanad. It is noted that "after the Gandhi-Irwin pact of 1931, I was in Wynad for nearly six months. I travelled extensively in places like Mananthavady, Kalpetta, Vythiri, Meppadi etc. Kelappan, another Congress leader, too reached Wynad and spoke to the people on the temple entry agitations in the meetings at Mananthavady, Kalpetta etc. I worked among the plantation workers in Wynad and authorities were alarmed of the rising political consciousness of the workers"[68]. As a result of the campaigns initiated under the leadership of A K Gopalan, K Kelappan etc., the plantation workers in Wayanad came to the ambit of ongoing socio-political movements. Their issues came to the serious consideration of the then political leadership and they could reach out to the plantation due to the expansion of transportation networks on Wynad.

Kerala, in general, and Malabar, in particular, had witnessed struggle to establish an egalitarian social landscape and A K Gopalan was a prominent leader who devoted his entire life to cherish that goal. His autobiography *Ente Jeevithakadha* cites several such instances. For instance, Guruvayur Satyagraha was one of the important struggles in the history of Modern Kerala, to ensure the socio-political mobility of the downtrodden. It was initiated to obtain the right to enter into the Guruvayur temple, irrespective of the caste status of the devotees. Vaikkom Satyagraha held in 1924-25 was a motivating factor for the Guruvayur Satyagraha. It is presumed that roads are meant for the circulation of people and any attempt to curb, whether it is by the casteist norm or on the basis of the decision of the state, would invite wrath of the common people. Hence it is natural that a movement to open up the roads for the circulation of all, would and did bring mass appeal. That was the significance of Vaikkom Satyagraha and it could bring the social psyche for the anti-untouchability movement. Guruvayur Satyagraha learnt the

[68] *Ibid.,* p.31.

strategies of a mass movement mostly from Vaikkom Satyagraha. Before the commencement of Guruvayur Satyagraha, the Congress leaders had travelled across Kerala, to disseminate the goals of the Satyagraha and to ensure the participation of all. "In order to mobilise people to the anti-untouchability movement and Guruvayur satyagraha Moyyarath and Kelappan and I travelled across Ponnani and campaigned among them"[69].

In North Malabar, A K Gopalan had campaigned along with C Kannan Nair and K T Kunhiraman Nambiar[70]. A K Gopalan enumerates one incident to unmask the aggressive nature of caste taboos. It was happened in a meeting, held at Kandoth near Payyannur, meant to propagate the idea of anti-untouchability and to bring the people to the proposed Guruvayur Satyagraha. But the caste Hindus organised and delivered serious assault on the leaders and others assembled there. A K Gopalan and K A Keraleeyan were seriously injured and they were taken to hospital in a car and it shows how much worried the elite caste about the anti-untouchability campaign.

To retain public interest in the slogans and to propagate spirit of the Satyagraha, a group of volunteers left for Guruvayur from Kannur, on 21st October, 1931 under the leadership T Subramanian Thirumumb. A K Gopalan was the captain of that group. The Jatha received wide reception during the course of theri way to Guruvayur. The Satyagraha was started on 1st November. On 7th November, T S Thirumumb was arrested and soon Satyagraha got a national attention. A K Gopalan too was arrested and imprisoned at Bellary jail, where he had subjected to inhuman treatment even during the moments of his epileptic fits[71]. The developments followed then underlined the government's decision to supress the movement without any

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69 *Ibid.,* p.35.

70 *Ibid.,* p.35.

71 *The Indian Express* on Sunday 1st November 1933.

mercy. Leaders including A K Gopalan were arrested and jailed. As the final gesture, in September 1932, K Kelappan declared a fast unto death, until the temples are opened for all.

The decision of Kelappan to observe fasting unto death, had created big tremor, not only in Kerala, but other parts of country as well. A huge meeting of Namboodiris in support to the temple entry was organised at Guruvayur. The meeting, presided over by Mattanur Madhusoodhanan Thangal, had unambiguously declared their solidarity with the Satyagrahis, and vowed to open the doors of the temples to all cutting across castes. On tenth day of the fasting, Kelappan's health condition got worsened and there was strong demand for Gandhi's intervention. On Gandhi's personal assurance, Kelappan stopped the indefinite fasting and the Satyagraha came to an end[72]. To tap the influence of Satyagraha in favour of temple entry, a jatha was planned with T S Thirumumb, N P Damodaran, A K Gopalan and seventeen others as members. It got wide receptions in Thiruvithamkoor, Kochi and Malabar. Meanwhile a referendum on the temple entry was conducted among the elite Hindus in which 77% favoured temple entry of all, irrespective for caste position. The jatha finally dispersed at Kanhangad. The satyagrahis had travelled more than 1000 miles by foot and they attended 500 meetings[73]. Guruvayur satyagraha, in which A K Gopalan had played a lead role, was an attempt to usurp the restricted place in the backdrop of the growing quest for circulation, especiallythe journey to the pilgrimage centres. Along with the challenge on discriminatory restrictions, the Guruvayur Satyagraha offers a powerful instance of societal quest for circulation.

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72 A K Gopalan, *Op.Cit.,*p.53.

73 *Ibid.,* p.53.

Through the Diaries of a Legislator: The Case of P M Thangal

The term Thangal usually refers to families among Muslims, whose descent is traced to the prophet Muhammed. However, in the northern part of Malabar, certain Brahmin households adorn the title of Thangal. Certain arguments of mythical leaning are being proposed on the origin of Thangal family among the Hindus. Most of these are referring to the Brahmins who were belligerent and undergone militaristic training. *Sabdatharavali* also shares similar meaning. It denotes Thangal as *Valnambi*, a caste specialised in the use of sword[74]. Gundert Dictionary also shares a similar meaning to Thangal as 'honorary title of head Brahmans'[75]. They had extended protection to the Rajarajewari temple when it faced an attack. As they took arms and deviated from their traditional profession, they began to be treated as a separate group called as Thangals. Certain newspapers contain stories of Thangal families in North Malabar and prominent among them was Pulleri Illam at Mattanur[76]. The pre-eminence of the Pulleri Illam reached its optimum point with the period of Pulleri Illam Madhusoodhanan Thangal, who became an important landlord in Kottayam taluk. Despite his social baggage as an elite land lord, Madhusoodhanan Thangal came to the fore as the chairperson of the meeting of elites in solidarity with the indefinite fasting of K Kelappan during the Guruvayur Satyagraha. An attempt is being made to analyse the journeys of Madhusoodhanan Thangal in and outside of Malabar, his use of various modalities of transportation, and the services rendered by him for the furtherance of connectivity networks.

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74 Sreekanteswaram G Padmanabha Pillai, *Sabdatharavali* (*Malayalam Dictionary*), National Book Stall, Thiruvananthapuram, 2019.

75 Rev. H Gundert D.Ph., *A Malayalam and English Dictionary*, C. Stolz; Trubner and Co., Mangalore, 1872.

76 *Kerala Koumudi* Daily, Dated 14th December,1995.

Pulleri Illath Madhusoodhanan Thangal was born as the son of Kunnirikka Mahalakshmi Amma and Pulleri Illath Kesavan Thangal on 18th August 1900. Being a multi-linguist, he was fluent in Kannada, Tamil, Hindi, Sanskrit, English along with Malayalam. Thangal had maintained a good rapport with prominent personalities like Malabar Collector Woods, Commander Dickson, K Kelappan, Mannath Padmanabhan, A V Kuttimalu Amma, C K Govindan Nair, Chirakkal T Balakrishnan, T V Ananda Kurup etc. Being a prominent leader of the elites, P M Thangal had presided over the Savarna meeting organised in support of K Kelappan, who was on fasting unto death. In his speech Thangal urged his community to save the life of Kelappan[77].

Certain assumptions could be made on the basis of analysis of the unpublished personal diaries of Pulleri Illath Madhusoodhanan Thangal. During 1924-25, he had performed only a limited number of journeys. He often travelled to Thalassery from Mattanur, where his home is located and back. The prime mode of conveyance he had used then was private car. In one instance he wrote that "I went to the home of Mr. Appa Nair at 8 AM and returned to Mattanur via a private car and its charge was Rs. 17/-"[78]. In rare occasions, he commuted through public bus conveyance. "I left for Tellicherry via bus and the charge being Rs. 3 and 6 anna"[79]. In order to travel other parts of the district, he often depended on train. He writes: "came to Calicut via mail train. I took two third class and one second class tickets to Calicut. One

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77 C K Moosath, *Kelappan Enna Mahamanushyan* (Mal.), Kottayam, 1982, p.127.

78 Events marked on Wednesday, 1sr October 1924/1100 *Kanni* 16 in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1924-25 (1100 *Chingam* 1/16th August 1924 to 1100 *Karkkidakam* 32/16th August 1925).

79 Events marked on Friday, 3rd October 1924/1100 *Kanni* 18 in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1924-25, *Op.Cit.*

ticket is also taken for Palakkad and the total ticket fare was Rs.8 and 14 anna"[80].

When time went on, the nature of his journey began to change. During 1930-31, he preferred to travel by bus. He rarely used private cars. In one instance he stated that "he had gone to Tellicherry via Sita Ram bus"[81]. In another instance, "I travelled to Koothuparamba via Arjuna Vilas Bus and it costs Rs. 1/- and from there I took a special car, that costs Rs. 5/-"[82]. Similarly, in another instance, he combined various modes of conveyance like road and rail for travelling to Calicut. "Woke up at 6 AM. Left for Calicut with Madhava Sharmaji. Till Koothuparamba bus was my mode of conveyance and from there I took a car to Tellicherry and it charged Rs. 4/-. From Tellicherry to Calicut I took two second class and two third class tickets, that cost Rs. 5 and 14 anna"[83]. He cites the instance of another bus journey: "I left for Tellicherry at 9.40 AM and the journey charged Rs. 3 and 6 anna"[84]. During the period he had mainly travelled inside the district that too were done by bus.

Being a member of the Taluk board, District Board and Madras Legislative Council, Pulleri Illath Madhusoodhanan Thangal had to perform, intra-reginal, inter-reginal, intra-district and inter-district journeys. His personal notes attest the impacts that the transportation networks had exerted

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80 Events marked on Saturday, 10th January 1925/1100 *Dhanu* 27 in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1924-25,*Op.Cit.*

81 Events marked on Tuesday 19th August 1930/1106 Chingam 3, in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1930-31 (1106 *Chingam* 1/17th August 1930 to 1106 *Karkkidakam* 31/16th August 1931).

82 Events marked on Thursday 4th September 1930/1106 *Chingam* 19, in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1930-31, *Op.Cit*.

83 Events marked on Saturday 6th September 1930/1106 *Chingam* 21, in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1930-31, *Op.Cit*.

84 Events marked on Friday 3rd October 1924/1100 Kanni 18, in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1930-31, *Op.Cit*.

on him. Being a member of the Kottayam Taluk Board, Thangal had to travel on everyday basis to Thalassery and most of these journeys were done via road, that too by bus. He rarely depended on private car transport. Certain instances could be sculled out of his diary for the year 1933. He writes: "Woke up at 6 am. After bath and meals went to Tellicherry by bus at 12 noon. Attended Taluk Board office from 2 pm to 5 pm"[85]. Similar instances were also there: "Woke up at 6 am. After bath and meals went to Telly (Tellicherry) by bus at 11 am. Did the TB office work from 11 am to 5 pm"[86]. It shows that, to reach the headquarter of his taluk, Thalassery, he had used public mode conveyance.

Thangal was also a member of Malabar District Board and journey to Calicut, the headquarter of the Malabar District Board, was quite normal. To reach Calicut and to return he depended on passenger trains. There are some instances: "Woke up at 6 AM. After bath in the morning, left for Calicut by 9.30 local train to attend the District Board Meeting which begins from tomorrow"[87]. To attend District Board meeting he regularly travelled in the passenger train that leaves Thalassery at 7.35 am. "Woke up at 4 AM. After morning bath left for Calicut by 7.35 AM. Local reached Calicut. Took meals at Modern Hotel"[88]. In another instance. "Woke up at 4 AM. After morning bath….Left for Calicut by local at 7.35 am"[89]. Similarly, he used to return from Calicut by the passenger train at 3.20 PM. He writes: "Woke up at 6 am.

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85 Events marked on 31st January 1933, Tuesday, in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

86 Events marked on 7th March 1933, Tuesday, in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

87 Events marked on 3rd May 1933, Wednesday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

88 Events marked on 14th May 1933, Sunday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

89 Events marked on 22nd May 1933, Monday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

After bath and meals attended the DB Committee meeting from 11 am to 2.30 pm. Left Calicut for Tellicherry by 3.20 PM local"[90].

Thangal was a member of the Madras Legislative Council from 1929 to 1934. Being a member of the Madras Legislative Council, Thangal had to travel to Madras at least once in a month. To reach Madras he relied on the express mail and he boarded the train from Thalassery. In one instance he notes: "Woke up at 5 am. After bath, and meals left Mattanur for Madras at 10 AM. Reached Tellicherry at 11 am. Left Tellicherry by mail at 1.20 pm. Took meal at Podanur. Rao Saheb K Chandran was there in the train who is going to Madras"[91]. His reception at Madras and some details of his stay there are also described. "Woke up at 5 AM. Reached Madras in time. Mr. D H Namboodiripad was in the station. Came to Modern Hindu Hotel and occupied Room No. 6. After bath and meals attended the council at 11.30 AM. Returned from chamber at 4 pm. Made an evening drive in Krishna Swami's taxi"[92]. He returned to Malabar by the express mail that leaves Madras at 8.50 PM[93]. His journeys to Madras on 22nd February 1933 and 12th March 1933 are also mentioned[94]. At Madras he used to watch movies and made purchases[95]. The journey to Madras gave him certain new experiences of a developed city.

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90 Events marked on 16th May 1933, Tuesday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

91 Events marked on 22nd January 1933, Sunday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

92 Events marked on 23rd January 1933, Monday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

93 Events marked on 29th January 1933, Sunday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

94 Events marked on 22nd February 1933, Wednesday and 12th March 1933, Sunday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

95 Events marked on 1st March 1933, Wednesday and 2nd March Thursday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

The expansion of transportation networks in Malabar and beyond, helped a legislator like Pulleri Illath Madhusoodhanan Thangal to travel inside his district and headquarter of the presidency. In his official capacity as the member of taluk and district boards, he had frequently travelled to Thalassery and Calicut. He depended on bus and passenger trains for such travels. The experiences he had at Madras broadened his perspectives on society and life. He became quite philanthropic and extended all helps to his people.

While analysing the circulatory practices Pulleri Illath Madhusoodhanan Thangal, one interesting perspective, namely career mobility can be added and he is an example of it. "Career mobility can be defined as any change in occupational or employment status over the life course, focusing an orderly upward mobility"[96]. P Madhusoodhanan Thangal had chosen the path of being a legislator and public servant travelled extensively in and outside Malabar and such travels were the outcome of his career. In that sense, a person's career mobility was linked to the political life of the region.

Further, he had shown interests in the development of transportation networks in Malabar. In one instance he persuaded the authorities to speed up the process of road construction and he had accompanied them to the work site. He writes: "Went to Dharmadam for inspection the road Dharmadam to Melur with AE (Mr. Sridhara Rao)"[97]. Similarly, he cites another instance: "Woke up at 7 AM. Took bath….went to Iritty with K T Chandu Nambiar and attended the function "Opening of the Iritty Bridge". Opened by the Collector of Malabar (Mr. T B Russel) at 5.20 PM. After that function, there was a tea

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96 Marco H D van Leeuwen and Ineke Maas, *Historical Studies of Social Mobility and Stratification* in *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol.36, 2010,p.438.

97 Events marked on 12th June 1933, Monday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

party. Returned at 6 PM"[98]. In short, Pulleri Illath Madhusoodhanan Thangal's social outlook and active involvement in political life were determined by his experiences from the places beyond his own domestic environment. He could travel to Thalassery, Calicut and Madras with the help of developed transportation networks. He made his own active involvement in the expansion of transportation networks in Malabar.

Walk to Madras: Hunger March or *Pattinijatha*

In the middle of 1930s, being an organic intellectual, A K Gopalan could identify certain new issues that impede the socio-political mobility of the downtrodden. The issues identified by A K G were not afresh, but are hidden in the society and they became apparent then. It was a strategic move from an organic intellectual to use the state of being in hunger as an occasion to advance the question of socio-political mobility. In Malabar, as like any other place, every year a good number of youngsters came out as graduates. By obtaining graduation and getting education, they thought of entering into government service, which would ensure their social mobility. To add their desperate state, the avenues of employment are a few and that too were grabbed by the social elites. Their hope of upward mobility in the social ladder got waned and they resorted to capitalise their social subjectivity as an occasion for ascertaining political mobility for all.

In the early decades of 20th century, majority of the educated youth of Malabar were struggling to meet both ends of their lives as they did not get proper accommodation in the Madras government service. No wonder they had undergone the serious state of starvation. The educated youth due to their false pride and hesitation did not openly state their condition of being starved. A K G was confident that if the potential of these educated youth could be

98 Events marked on 7th June 1933, Monday in P Madhusoodhanan Thangal, Unpublished Diary for the year 1933.

tapped, it would bring a situation where the socio-political mobility of the downtrodden can be ensured. As a preliminary step, committees of the educated but unemployed youths were formed at Kathirur and nearby places in north Malabar. They decided to lead a march towards the Collector at Thalassery from Koothuparamba[99]. When the March began, there were hardly 1000 members attended and when it reached Thalassery it became a huge one, marking the dawn of a new spirit, an enthusiasm to shed away socio-political subjectivity and to bring forth active socio-political mobility. Even the Collector of Thalassery could not dodge the growing momentum of the 'starvation-based mobilisation' of youth in Malabar. He promised to bring the intervention of the authorities from Madras in the issue and in that matter the 'experimental youth mobilisation by problematising hunger' was a success.

The leaders and the mass who attended the march to Thalassery Collector's office, then proceeded to the beach and assembled there. They decided to lead a *pattini jatha* or hunger march, in the very next day, towards Madras, the headquarter of the Presidency, to bring the issue into a wider canvas. The declaration of *Pattini jatha* from Kannur to Madras was made by Chandroth Kunhiraman Nair. The *jatha,* consisted of 33 members was started on 1st July 1936 and ended on 24th August at Madras. A K Gopalan was the Director of the Jatha and Chandroth was the Secretary[100]. K P R Gopalan, A N Kunhikannan, T K Raju, K Chathukutty, M K Kelu, P M Gopalan, Vatavathi Krishnan, Pinarayi Krishnan Nair, C C Gopi, Kasim, Manuel, Gopalan etc were the other important members of the jatha.

After receiving much excited reception at various centres in Malabar, the jatha reached Coimbatore via Walayar. Finally, they reached Madras. The reception given to the Jatha at Madras exemplifies the impact of propaganda

99 A K Gopalan, *Op.Cit.,*p.91.

100 *Ibid.,* pp.92-93

that it could make on the populace at the headquarter of the Presidency. About 3000 people reached at Madras to welcome the Jatha. They marched towards Madras Legislative Assembly, but the police blocked them[101]. On behalf of the hunger marchers, V P Narayanan Nambiar MLC, sent a memorandum to the law member and that marked the official end of *pattini jatha*[102]. It is interested to note that "from Madras we back to home via train"[103]. The rail connectivity between Madras and Malabar was crucial. The impact of Jatha has been explained by AKG in a lucid manner: "We walked about 700 miles. We addressed around 500 meetings attended by nearly 2 lakhs of people. We could sell 25,000 pamphlets and through which disseminated the objectives of the jatha to the people"[104].

It is important to contextualise the *pattini jatha* as an epitome of emerging ambitions for socio-political mobility in Malabar[105]. It has some intricate connections with the transportation networks that came into vogue in the region. *Pattini jatha*, the Malabar version of Long March, devised by AKG and the rest of his fellow leaders, turned into an occasion to assert the quest for political mobility of youth. The experimental *pattini jatha* to Thalassery, one of the headquarters of the British in Malabar, turned to be success and they decided to lead such a march to Madras, the headquarter of the province. *Pattini jatha* from Kannur to Madras had attended by 33 satyagrahis and their planned to reach the destination by walking. Earlier, especially during the itinerary of Francis Buchanan, travel from Madras to

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101 *Ibid.,* p.95.

102 *The Indian Express,* Dated 27th August 1936. (*Hunger-marchers Prevented entry into Fort-Escorted back to Congress House* is the title of the news.)

103 A K Gopalan, *Op.Cit.*,p.95.

104 *Ibid.,* p.95.

105 In Malabar, hunger became a serious issue to be addressed as the educated youth did not get proper jobs and their social mobility was arrested. AKG and other leaders identified it as an occasion to advance the demands for political mobility. The social issue of hunger became an ignition for demanding political mobility.

Malabar was not easy and it involves high amount of effort. Both Buchanan and A K Gopalan reached their destination, the first one from Madras to Malabar and the latter one from Malabar to Madras, by walking. A reading of second volume of Buchanan's *A Journey from Madras Through the Countries of Mysore Canara and Malabar* would underline the strain and pain he had suffered to reach Malabar. However, such a tale of suffering is absent in *Ente Jeevitha Kadha* by AKG. Buchanan had travelled through the least developed channels of circulation. But AKG's walking was though the developed networks of transportation in Malabar. Most of these developments of transportation had happened during the British period. Between the two journeys-one in 1800-1801 and the other in 1936, much improvements in transport facilities had taken place in Malabar.

Along with that it is crucial to note that before one performs the actual journey, s/he should travel through the mindscape. Buchanan's writing contains instances of disillusionment in reaching the destination. He might be sceptical in reaching the destination as he could not plan the journey in his mindscape. But such a fear is not there in AKG. For Buchanan, Malabar was a far off place from Madras and to reach there by walking was not an easy job. However, to reach Madras from Malabar by walking, AKG and his fellowmen had already travelled through the mindscape and that is done before the actual journey. Such a journey becomes easier as the destination is familiar to them due to the development of transportation networks in Malabar during colonial period. Hence it is argued that the progress of transportation networks achieved in Malabar during the British period had positive reflection not only in the landscape, but also in the mindscape as well.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

Mobility is indeed a fundamental and primary trait of living organism. The journey, in that sense, begins with the movement of sperm in search for the egg and the fuse of two gametes forms zygote which leads to the birth of a being. Capacity to move on, both in landscape and in mindscape, does literally underlines the state of being alive. Mobility makes life possible. It is not simply the physical movement, and it encompasses the explorations of mind as well. Since, history does foster largely of human-centric imaginations and interrogations, the focus of the present pursuit is confined to the movements of this bipedal. The ability to move, both geographically, physically, and even imaginatively is the defining characteristic of Homo sapiens. In terms of mobility, the Homo sapiens, had followed the footsteps of Homo habilis, which means 'handy man' and that had, lived approximately 2.4 to 1.4 million years ago during the Lower Palaeolithic period. To move on or to be mobile is not exclusive to human beings and instead it is applicable to all organisms. Mobility attests whether one is stale or alive. Mobility equips human beings to explore new environments, adapt to different geographic conditions, and migrate to different regions. Mobility allows human beings to access different resources, establish diverse communities, and develop cultures and societies in a wide range of environments. Further, the cognitive ability to plan, strategize, and navigate has contributed to human mobility.

Though there is an intricate connection between mobility and circulation, they are not synonymous. "Circulation is different from simple mobility, inasmuch as it implies a double movement of going forth and

coming back, which can be repeated indefinitely"[1]. Circulatory practices do involve in a frequent process of making and remaking or defining and redefining. Circulation in that sense, is a dynamic process which imbibe the time and space that transcends. The patterns and modes of circulation consistently and dialectically intersect with the landscape and mindscape they pass through. Hence, one cannot ascribe a definite character to circulatory traits in a given landscape. Circulatory patterns itself ensemble the multiple and diverse interests and influences exerted on it during the transverse.

Since, circulation involves the frequent movement of people or ideas, it does intersect with the ruling systems and cultural ideologies it passed by. Colonialism, being a political system with extensive cultural paraphernalia, has resorted to bring the circulatory practices under its spell as and when they entered the colonies. But that attempt of usurpation has ended in vain as circulation possesses a mechanism of defining its character. It does not mean that circulation has an autonomous mechanism to determine its characteristics and traits. Circulation does dialectically interact with the surroundings-say political system or cultural practices-and sheds away some of its attributes and at the same time adorns something that take from the setting. It involves in a process of creatively interacting with the environment and engages in a symbiotic exercise. In that sense, the process that circulation involves in, is not unilateral. Malabar came under the spell of colonial yoke and the circulatory practices of the Malabaris underwent a tremendous change, not solely due to the British governmentality, but also due to the novel ways by which the region transcended and adapted to the colonial hegemonic state system.

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1 Claude Markovits, Jacques Pouchepadass and Sanjay Subramanyam (Eds.), *Society and Circulation: Mobile People and Itinerant Cultures in South Asia 1750-1950*, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2003, pp.2-3.

The physiographical identity has contributed to the development of a unique settlement pattern of Malabar. Instead of having the exclusive clusters of the caste residences, people had inhabited here without considering their position in the caste hierarchy. The region is further blessed with an extensive coastal belt in the west and a herculean ghat in the east. Both prevented an easy entry of aliens and by which the chances of external political domination were minimal. However, the same forces that insulated the region had laid red carpets to mariners, traders and administrators and such interactions had embossed on the cultural fabric of the region. Apart from that the rich variety of fauna was of great interests to the British and previous European commercial encounters. The spices, and other hilly products from Malabar were of high demand in the Western markets. The British, in the beginning had to act in tune with the demands of the indigenous rulers, but it could not be tolerated for a long time. They convinced that the political sway alone would not be sufficient to tap the commercial potential of Malabar. Existing channels of circulation of material were insufficient to meet the demands of the British.

In the inception of their heyday in Malabar, the British were primarily driven by mercantile motives. The caste-ridden Malabar society did not foster extensive economic activities. The semi-closed nature of the economy was the outcome of the caste rigidity as it forbade free circulation. Further there was professional specialization which in due course of time crystalized into hereditary caste groups. Restrictions on mobility were there both on elite and menial caste groups. Most of them had relied on their immediate environment and it adversely affected their external outlook. Further, their circulatory channels were totally localized, and such a socio-economic condition did not warrant much extensive circulation. Hence it is argued that the circulatory practices in the early colonial Malabar were clutched by the then prevailing

crude socio-economic environment dominated by casteist norms and value system it upheld.

The crude socio-economic environment dictated by the casteism began to wane with the expansion of British domination. With the increased volume of trade through the port cities, certain new tendencies began to appear. As the British carried away their items of trade primarily through the riverine modality, arrangements had to be made for expanding ship building initiatives. Carpenters with specialized skill in making boats and ships began to settle in port towns like Calicut, Beypore etc. Further, timber like teak was required to make boats and ships. Apart from that a group of local people emerged as the intermediaries in the trans-marine trade and they began to settle in the port cities. In trading activities, some Muslim families had actively involved and it contributed to their economic prowess. Unlike earlier, a good number of Muslims began to leave for Mecca to perform Hajj, so as the pilgrimages of the Hindus. In that sense, in the later phase of early British period a substantial number of people began to move away from their domestic and village environment.

In early colonial period, the British urged to strengthen the then existing modalities of transportation in Malabar. The region had very limited transportation infrastructure in the early British period as the circulation was done by means of waterways. Roads were practically absent in the modern sense of the term. The goods produced in the east were brought to the shores with the help of riverine networks. The itinerant merchants might have walked through the pathways in vogue in the country side. The crude state of roads made impossible for the expanded use of carts in Malabar. The idea of roads in modern lines began to enter Malabar with Tipu Sultan as he had to mobilize his troupes. It was from him, the British got the political control of

Malabar. In that sense, Tipu Sultan prepared the ground of Malabar for the British rule as he handed over the region with somewhat developed roads.

In the initial years of their political sway on Malabar, the British had desisted from investing men and material in the expansion of transportation networks. But they could not stay in that 'state of abeyance' for long time. The increased pressure from the shareholders of the English East India Company to grab as many spices as possible and other commercial items from Malabar, compelled the authorities to rethink their policy. Further, the Company now began to purchase spices directly from the producers by averting the intermediaries. Such a situation demanded more involvement in ensuring a well-made transportation channel for the circulation of men and materials. In the beginning they made use of the naturally knitted riverine networks of Malabar, which later became insufficient. Initiative to network the riverine channels in the interiors of Malabar began in the latter half of the 19th century. Officers were deputed to conduct systematic surveys of such prospective programmes. Directions were issued to use the revenue collected from the ferries for expanding modalities of transportation. The rebellious situation in south Malabar also necessitated the British to go for river linkage and they could tame the rebels with the help of it. Hence it is clear that, despite the initial inhibition, the British had actively involved in the construction of river networks.

The political turmoil in Malabar in the 19th century and the demands for more goods for the European market compelled the British to shed away their non-interventionism in road making in Malabar. District collectors and other revenue officers actively came with proposals for constructing roads in Malabar. The troop mobilisation in the hilly regions of Wayanad too necessitated them to involve in road making. To speed up the process, certain specific arrangements were made. Special contingents like 'Corps of

Pioneers' and 'Sappers and Miners' were sent to expediate the process of road construction. However, road making did not make the desired results in mercantile activities and they withdrew from that too. Hence it is evident that the British intervention in the making of riverine networks and roads were driven by the motive of maximizing profits and when their fortunes were affected they suspended the work and withdrew.

Capitalist motive of profit mongering was another criterion that guided the British intervention in the expansion on transportation networks in Malabar. With much expectation they resorted to expand both riverine and road networks, but the efforts were suspended in the midway as it was not lucrative. The instances of experimental failures in water and road transport, did not pull back the British in investing men, material, capital, technology, and managerial skill in railways. The first rail line in Malabar was opened on 12th March 1861and it was within eight years of first railway in India. It shows that Malabar or western coast had an important place in the railway history of British India. The archival documents underline that there was a serious discussion within the administrative circle on the western terminus of Madras railway as some favoured Kochi and some others Beypore. But the final decision was in favour of Beypore, as the region being a commercial hotspot and had riverine linkage with timber rich Nilambur. Within a short span of time, Malabar had an exhaustive rail network, and it could rise to the expectations of the British.

Capitalist spirit had actively involved in the making of railway development in Malabar. A powerful capitalist class emerged in Britain in the post-Industrial Revolution period, and they had been searching for lucrative investments in and outside their homeland. Capitalism has an innate tendency to figure out its own future. By 1900, British Indian railway had a mileage of 24,000 miles and it could be possible with the active financial backing of

capitalism. In some point of time, the British capitalists had skeptical about the lucrativeness of investment made on Indian railways and to win their confidence the Government implemented the guarantee scheme. By this system, the capital invested by the British capitalist would get a guaranteed interest, without considering the loss or profit of the railway. The British capitalists had an assured guaranteed interest on the investment made on Indian railway. The guaranteed interest was to be met from the Indian revenue, the one that collected from the Indians by the British officers. Here the fusing of British capital with Indian revenue is happening and it was on that financial foundation that the huge structure of British Indian railway had constructed. It further blasts a myth that the Indian railway was the outcome of British capitalist investment. The statistics collated from various archival documents underline that the railways in British India were financially viable and successful enterprise. It is argued that Indian railway was built on the financial foundation provided by the amalgamation of British capital with Indian revenue. When it ensured havoc-free flow of money to the British capitalists, India got an autonomous system called as railways.

Railways in British Malabar provided ample employment opportunities to the local people. The involvement of the indigenous people could be found both in construction and operation of railways. Railway was in the form of a repent to the indigenous Indians, who were devastated by the economic policies of Britain. The colonial policies that the British followed in India were instrumental in shattering agrarian and village industries. It made most of the Indians as jobless. The intense construction of railways had resulted in the integration of Indian labour force to the British colonialism. The Indian labour class possessed labour power alone and they exerted it in the making of railways. In the running of the train too, Indians were employed on a mass scale and data show that they surpassed the Europeans in all departments.

Such data underline that Indians were an integral part of railway in British India.

The detailed analysis on the making and operation of British Indian railway brings out certain hidden truth to the fore. The historiography of railway development in India prefers to brand the railway as a colonial product. It was imported to India from the colonial core as the brainchild of British capitalism, which got strengthened with the coming of Industrial Revolution. But such narratives are being questioned. It is argued that British Indian railway is an epitome of hybridity on multiple grounds. Though the idea of steam power railway in India was brought from Britain, it was materialized by the labour power of Indian workers. Though the British had introduced certain technological knowledge and tactics, they lacked man power to construct and run railways. Indian labour class had come for the help of British. Similarly, along with the British capital, Indian contribution was in the form of guarantee to the British investments in railways. Indian revenue was utilized to meet that demand.

Circulation cannot be explained as a unidirectional and mechanical movement of men and material from one place to another. Since it does involve the movement of people through the circulatory channels and such mobilities have been understood differently by varied sections of people. Creative minds, men of letters and organic intellectuals do have the trait of recording and sharing such circulatory experiences for the benefit of others. They try to ‘re-present’ what they had experienced during their circulation. To a reader, who has some inquisitiveness, such representations do open a new area to explore, especially of the circulatory experiences of the bygone generations. These representations become the window through which a later reader can experience the real trajectories of circulatory practices. A historical reading and meaningful understanding would help a reader to scull out the

minute nuances of circulatory practices. Understanding the context of the text and textuality of the context would offer a comprehensive picture not only of the text, but also of the historical situations that are embedded in it. Representations, in that sense, are the microcosms which could speak more loudly of the circulatory experiences it bore. Historical experiences in colonial Malabar attest the strong influence that British colonial state had exerted on the circulatory practices. It further brought forth multiple representations on circulatory experiences from Malabar.

The development of transportation networks and the consequent expansion in circulatory practices in Malabar exerted a powerful influence on the imagination of creative minds. The interplay of colonialism with circulation was represented in different forms in Malabar. There were different genres of compositions, ranging from novels to poems, and from travelogues to autobiographies. Personal memoirs too bore influences of circulation in Malabar. A reading of pilgrim travelogues sheds light on the least noticed facets of historical imagination. Circulation to the pilgrimage centres by the social elites in Malabar shows certain undercurrents in the society. The pilgrimage was done to Kasi, and they visited many such places in north India. In one instance, they all performed a ship voyage from Bombay port. The narration was excellent and lucid. As per the caste norms sea voyages were taboos to the caste Hindus. But the circulatory experiences that acquired from big cities like Bombay delivered a severe blow on the caste prescriptions. Put it differently, the circulation of people from their traditional casteist society to the developed cities familiarized them with new life there and such experiences fostered unhindered social interactions. A mentality to move ahead with egalitarian social outlook led their social interventions. By violating the caste taboos, they challenged the very basis of traditional caste society, and such an orientation was developed as the outcome of the experiences they acquired through voyages outside. The pilgrimages, in that

sense, had a redefining effect on the caste life in Malabar. In that sense the abolition of casteism was not materialized through legislation alone. These kind of changes in the mindset of the social elites too have contributed to the liquidation of caste rigidity. Simultaneously another process was also getting strengthened. The railway networks opened the sacred geography of Hinduism in north India to the social elites in Malabar. The familiarity with the religious centres in north India, strengthened the community formation among Hindus.

A K Gopalan, being the director of the *Pattini jatha* led it from Kannur to Madras in 1936. There were 33 determined satyagrahis, whose plan was to reach the destination by walking. The identification of the destination of the jatha and modality to reach there raise some thoughts. Everyone should perform a travel through the mindscape, before the actual journey. A K Gopalan and his fellow satyagrahis could 'reach' Madras before the physical landing at the Presidency head quarter. He was confident that the Jatha could reach in the fixed date. However, such a confidence was absent in the notices of Buchanan, who proceeded to Malabar from Madras. He could not travel through the mindscape as there was no transportation networks prevailed in British Malabar. But A K G and his retinue could do as they encountered the circulatory channels made by the British. The success the jatha adorned him the title 'the vanguard of the downtrodden' and he was elevated to the status of a national leader.

Interestingly, the Malabar episode of national movement put more emphasis on societal aspects and hence it designed to ensure the socio-political mobility of the downtrodden and the marginalized. It was a long struggle to exert the politics of mobility. In Malabar, the condition of 'being mobile' is created by struggling against the traditional economic structure. In Malabar, as other parts of Kerala, the traditional economic system had

conditioned to keep the common people as subservient to their own domestic environment. A subtle change witnessed in that system as and when Malabar was integrated to the world capitalist system through the British. Malabar, being a part of the global capitalist system, had faced all the tremors and shakes that capitalism had experienced.

Global capitalism reached a point of development with the Industrial Revolution in the second half of the 18th century, and it demanded speedy transportation of men and material. The expansion of transportation networks in Malabar could be seen in connection with the development of capitalism on global scale. It identified Malabar as an integral part of the global capitalist system and it is exemplified by the inclusion of this region into the railway map of India with extreme urgency. Generally, British had developed an exhaustive transportation network in Malabar. Then the region witnessed a clash between the caste based traditional society with the mobility practices ushered by the British. In that conflict, the Malabar populace, barring a few, had embraced the mobility traits brought in by the British with the help of exhaustive transportation networks. They began to be attracted to the new circulatory channels in Malabar and anti-untouchability movements should be seen in this context. Even the politics of mobility is deeply rooted in the expansion of transportation networks in colonial Malabar.

RECOMMEDATIONS

The present study is primarily aimed at an analysis of the emergence of transportation networks in colonial Malabar and how it redefined the circulatory practices in the region. It also looked at the various genres of writing in Malabar as the narrations and representations of that change. The thrust area of the present study is the chronological development of the transportation development in different modes of conveyance like waterways, roads and railway. Following areas may also be studied in future.

Firstly, the relation between the development of transportation and environment can be studied further. Malabar is a specific physiographical region that housed distinctive fauna and flora varieties. The construction of transportation modalities like roads and railways demanded clearing of forests on a large scale and that might have made certain species as endangered. The natural habitat of the animals and birds might have badly affected due to such development initiatives. That changes are the impacts of human-nature interactions. Such aspects have not been covered in the present study. Along with that, in the making of roads and railways, a big quantity of jalli stone and laterite stone were required. The availability of such materials in Malabar made the job very easier. To materialize railway networks and an exhaustive roadway, the exploitation of such natural materials is essential. Quarrying was the way by which they collected the required materials. The environmental impacts of such activities are not covered in the present study. One can investigate the remaking of environment in the context of the expansion of transportation networks in Malabar.

Secondly, the surveying of the region is a prerequisite for the development of transportation channels. Malabar, being a region with multiple geographic features, demanded an exhaustive survey before proceeding with the construction initiates. To understand the geographic and geo-morphological specificities, the British surveyors and cartographers had involved in laborious assignments across Malabar. They engaged in trigonometrical surveys of the land and such painstaking works helped for the proper understanding of the region. A substantial number of local people too had participated in the exercise of surveying as assistants and informers. Such an interrogation is not done as part of the present study. It can also be studied in future.

Thirdly, the British involved in the expansion of transportation networks in Malabar to ease the movement of goods and other items of economic importance. The political expansion of the British coupled with mercantile motives had some impacts on the agrarian production in Malabar. Due to the expansion of transportation networks, the agrarian of structure of Malabar too began to change. Capitalist investments were made on agrarian sector. Plantations began to emerge, and they initiated new production process. It redefined the status of agrarian worker, as they were being regulated by the capitalist norms and such an analysis too can be initiated.

GLOSSORY

Agraharam	:	The settlement of the Brahmins
Bramhaswam	:	The land owned by the Brahmins
Devaswam	:	The land owned by the deity.
Karamath	:	A kind of magical action.
Malai	:	Hill or mound.
Manchal	:	A manchal is a kind of hammock slung on a pole and carried by four men, two at each end.
Maramut	:	Construction works of public nature.
Marumakathazham	:	Matrilineal system of inheritance.
Pardesis	:	People from other lands.
Sambandham	:	A system of temporary marriage in which Brahmin male on the One side and Nair women on the other end.
Swarupam	:	Power centres of post-Perumal *nadu* in Kerala.
Tenga	:	Coconut
Theru	:	The settlement of the Saliyas, the weaving community.

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APPENDIX 1

PRE-BRITISH MAPS OF MALABAR

Map 1.1 From Ortelius's "Theatrum Orbis Terrarum", Latin edition of 1603.

Map 1.2 From Mercator's "India Orientalis", Amsterdam, 1636.

Map 1.3 A miniature map from Pierre Duval's "Geographiae Universalis", 1679

Map 1.4 From a map by Bellin, 1740.

Map 1.5 From a map by Kitchin, 1761, from a new general and Universal Atlas by Andrew Dury (Laurie and Whittle and Bowles & Carver, London)

Map 1.6 The lower portion of the Malabar Coast, from Bonne's "Atlas Portraitif" (Paris 1780-81)

(Source:http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00routesdata/1700_1799/malabar/malabarmaps/malabarmaps.html)

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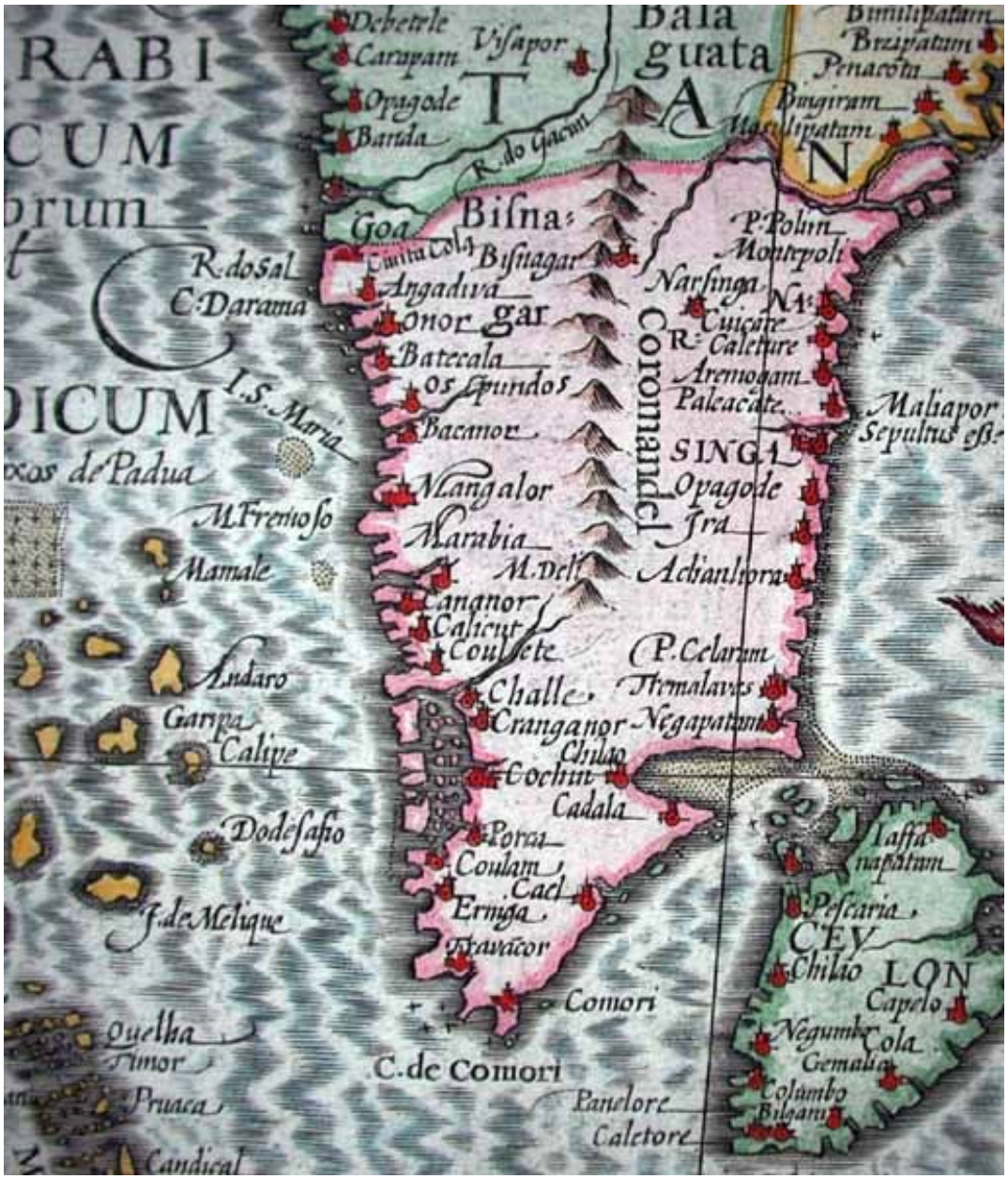
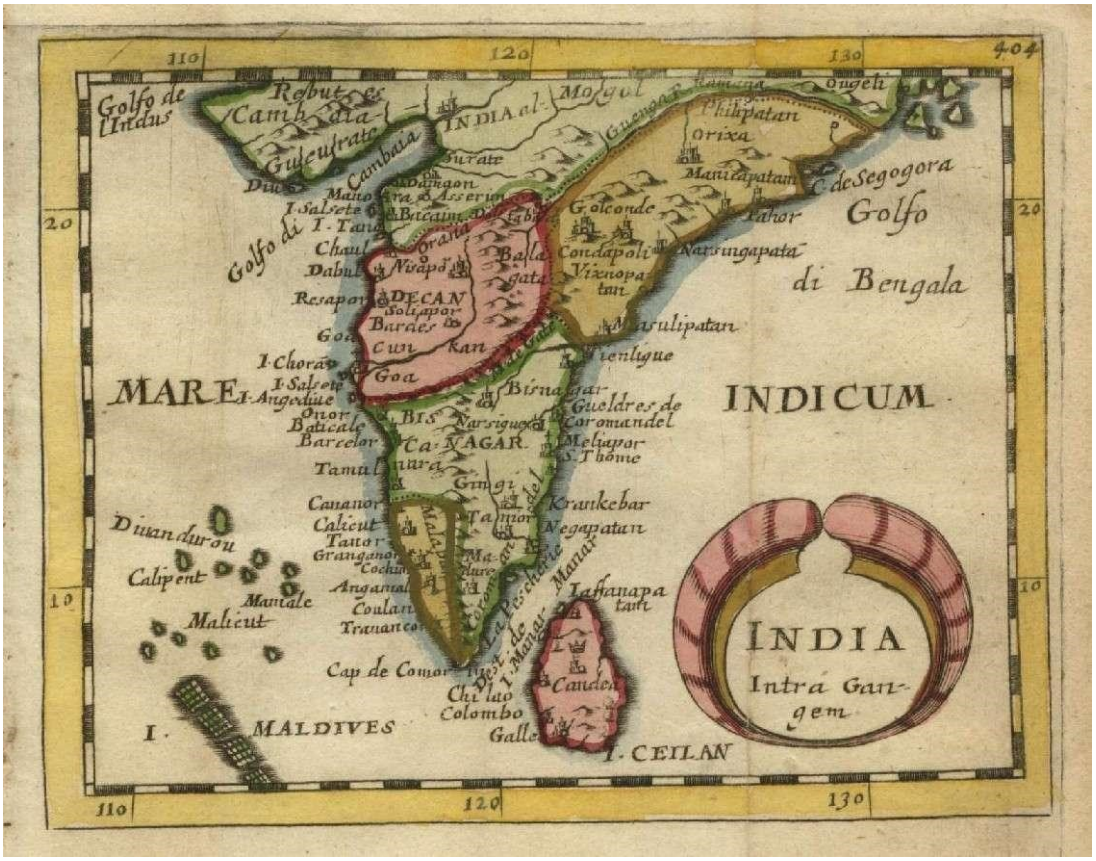
Map 1.2 From Mercator's "India Orientalis", Amsterdam, 1636.



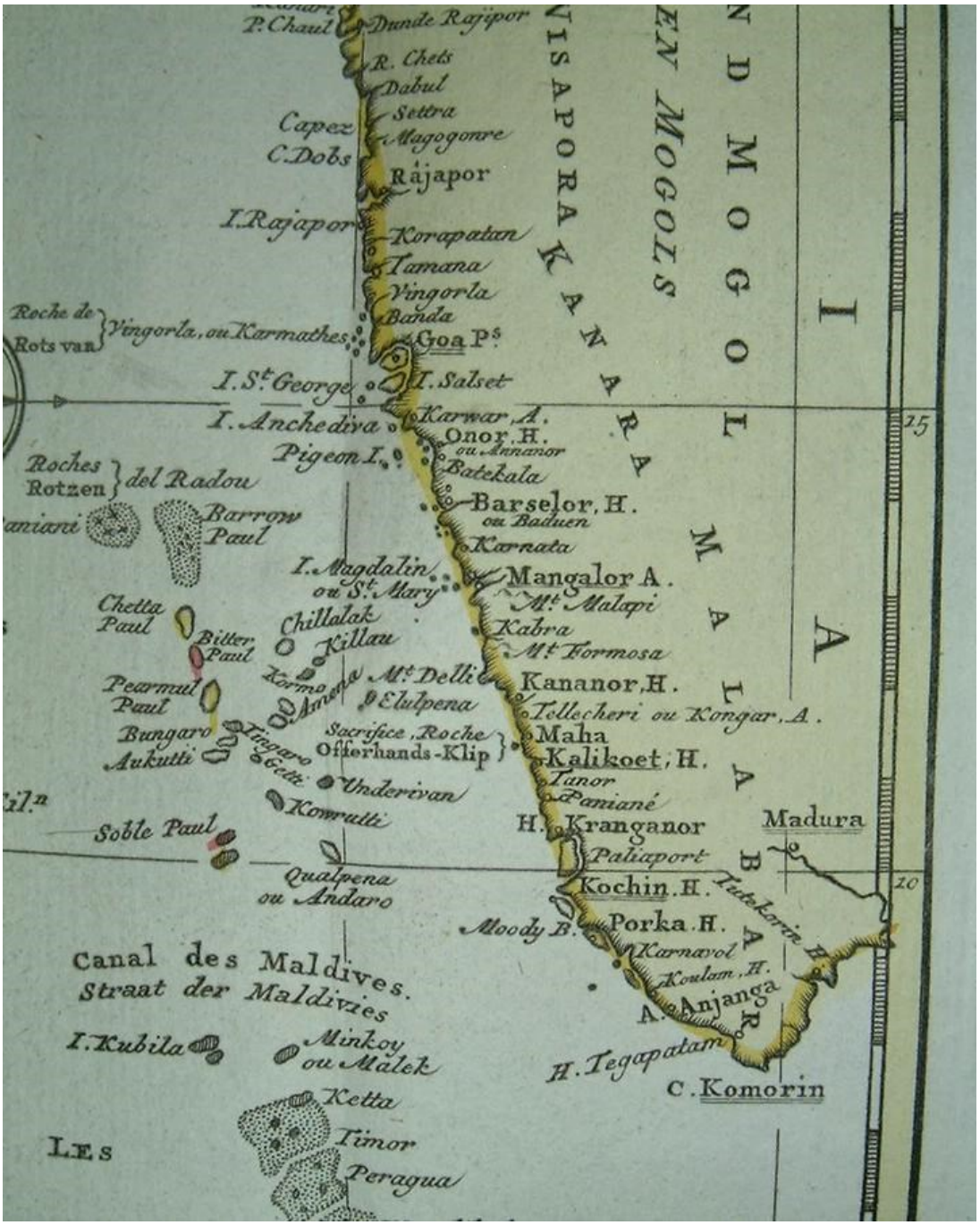
(Source:http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00routesdata/1700_1799/malabar/malabarmaps/malabarmaps.html)

Map 1.3 A miniature map from Pierre Duval's "Geographiae Universalis", 1679



(Source:http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00routesdata/1700_1799/malabar/malabarmaps/malabarmaps.html)

Map 1.4 From a map by Bellin, 1740.



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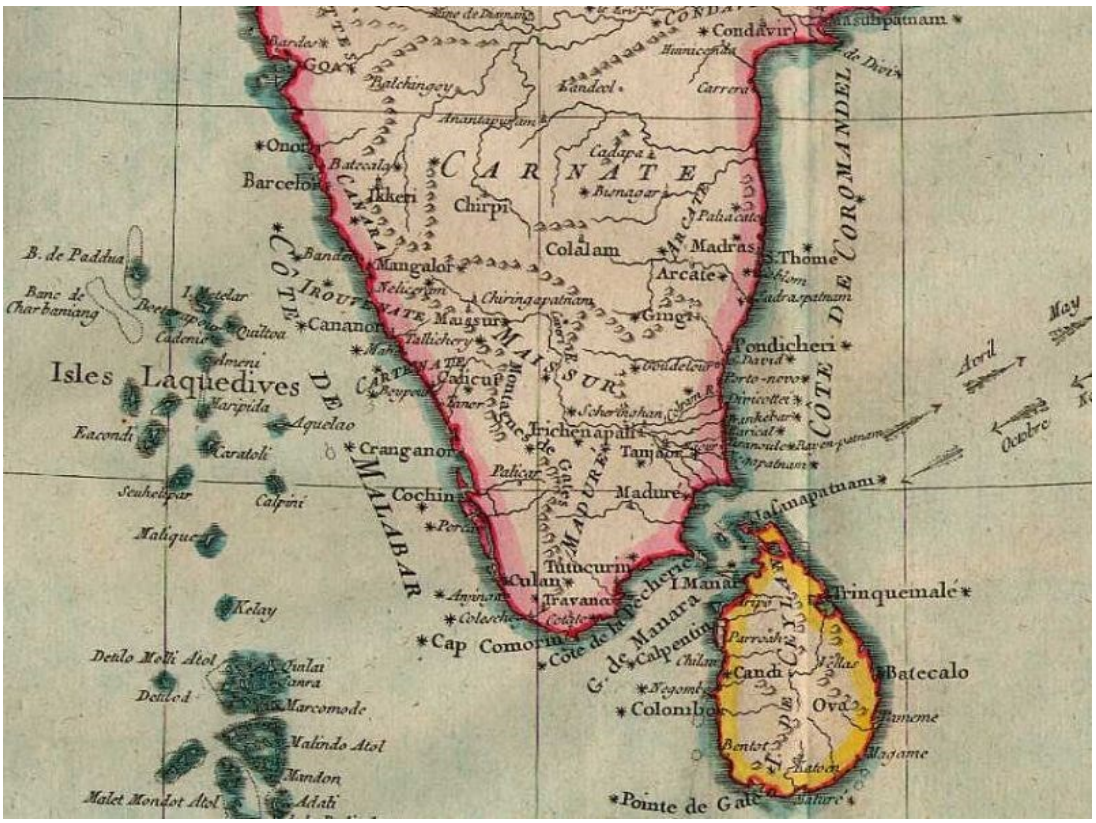


(Source:http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00routesdata/1700_1799/malabar/malabarmaps/malabarmaps.html)

APPPENDIX 2

MAPS SHOWING RIVERS, CANALS AND ROADS IN MALABAR

Map 2.1 Public Work Department Circles and Divisions.

Map 2.2 Revenue Districts and Main Lines of Roads.

Map 2.3 Railways and Navigable Canals

Map 2.4 Irrigation Works and Navigable Canals

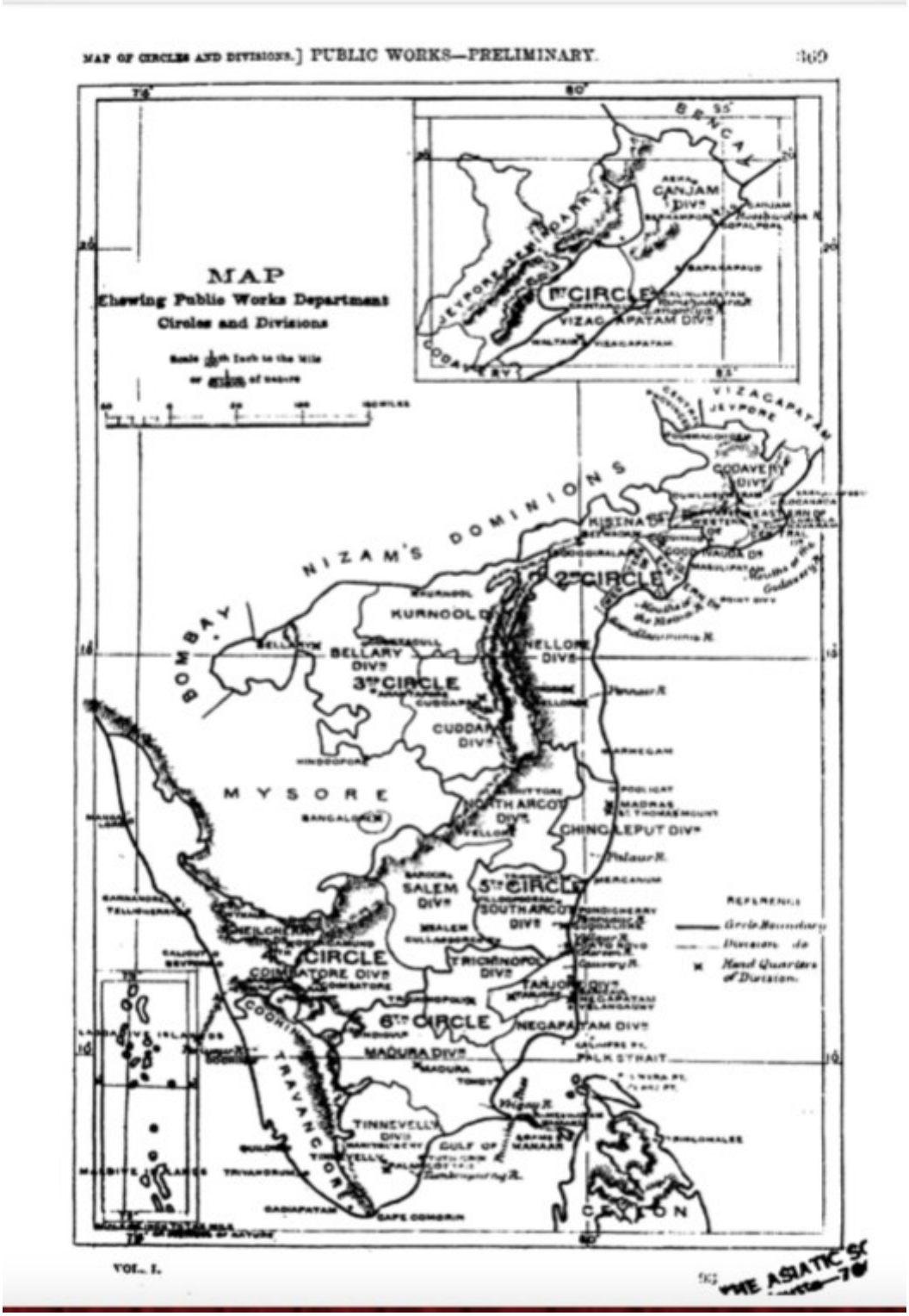
Map 2.5 Catchment areas of Principal Rivers

Map 2.6 Map of Malabar District

Map 2.7 Kerala River map

Source: Maclean, C D, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency* (Vol.1), Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1987.

Map 2.1 Public Work Department Circles and Divisions.



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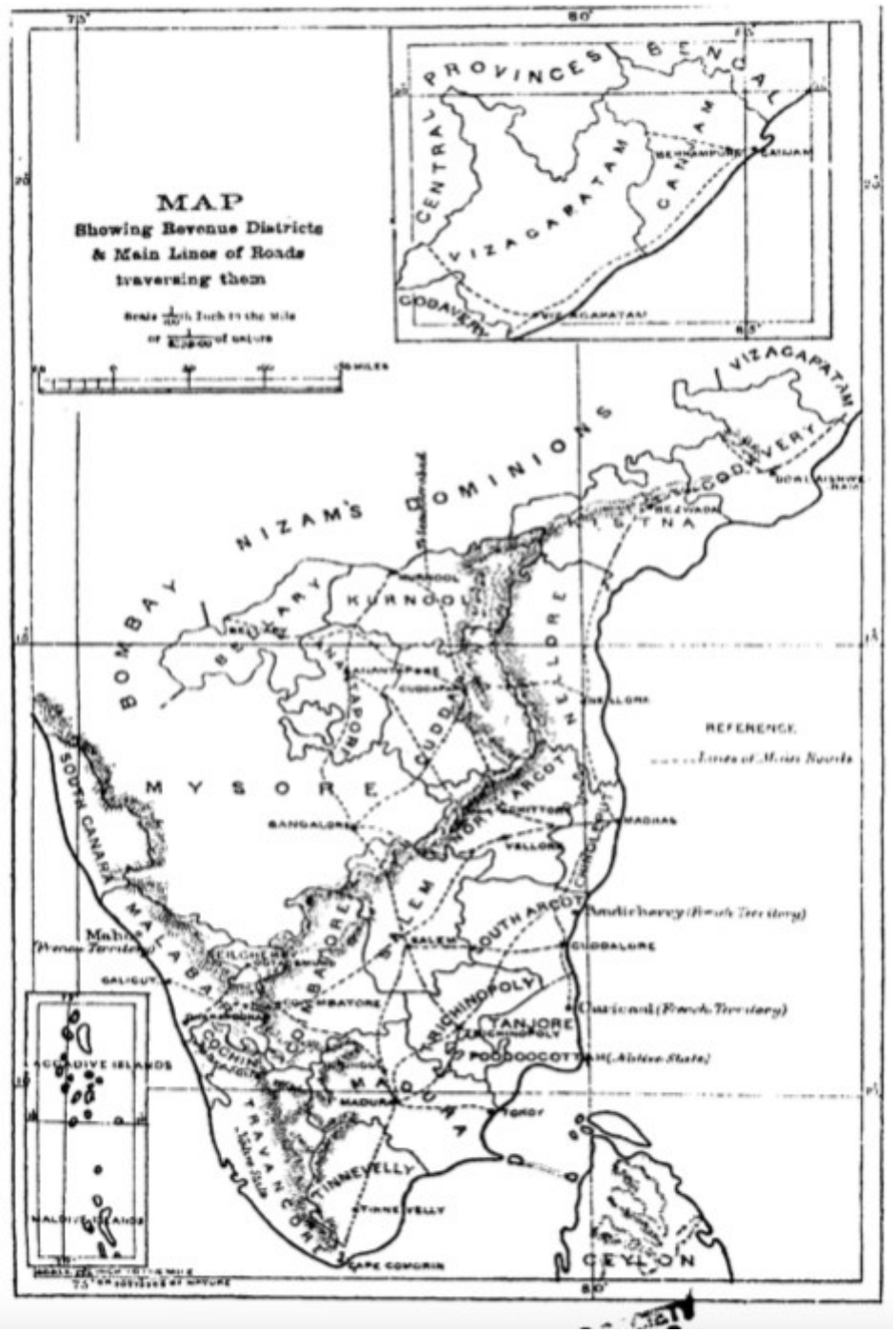
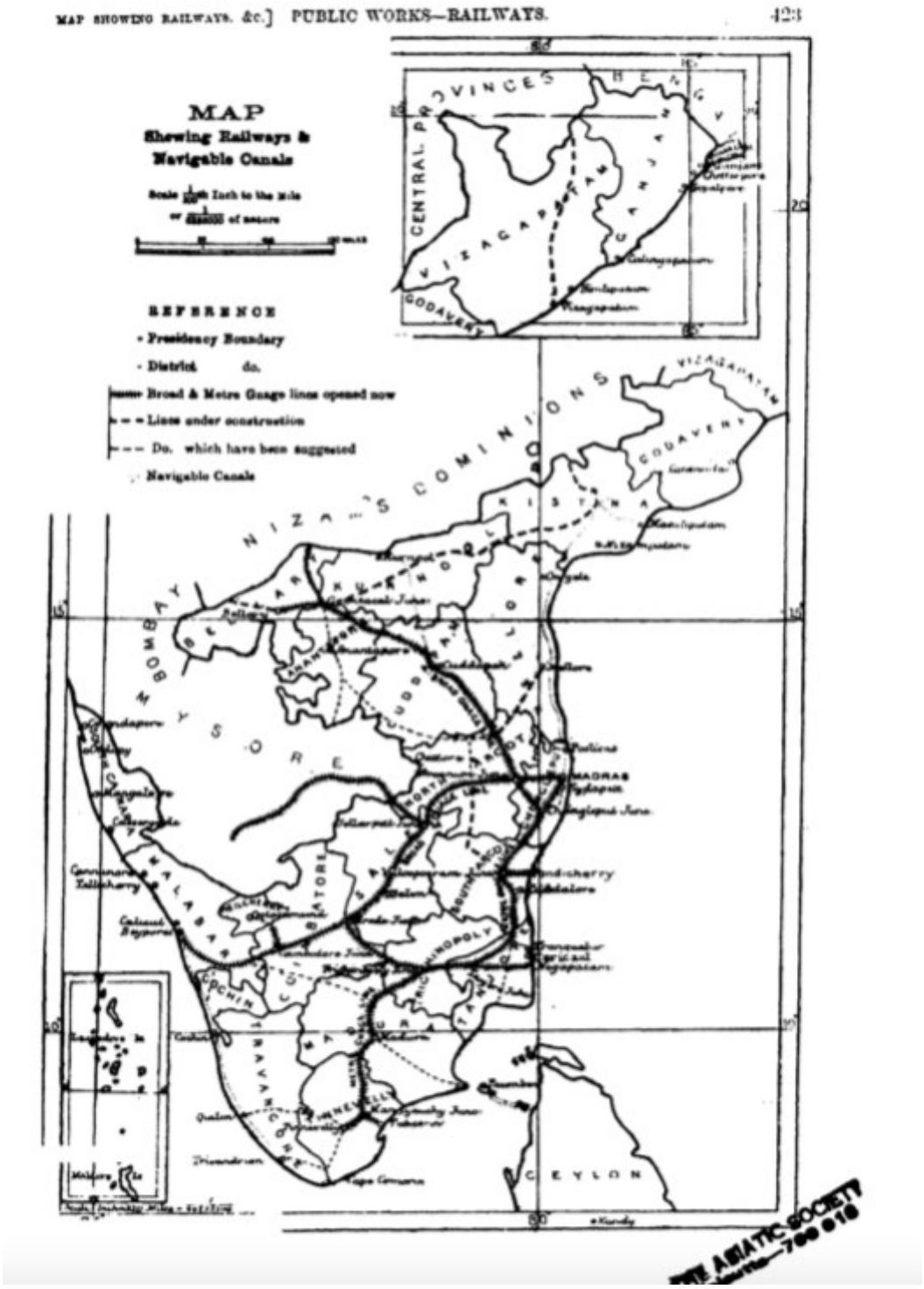


Source: Maclean, C D, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency* (Vol.1), Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1987.

Map 2.3 Railways and Navigable Canals



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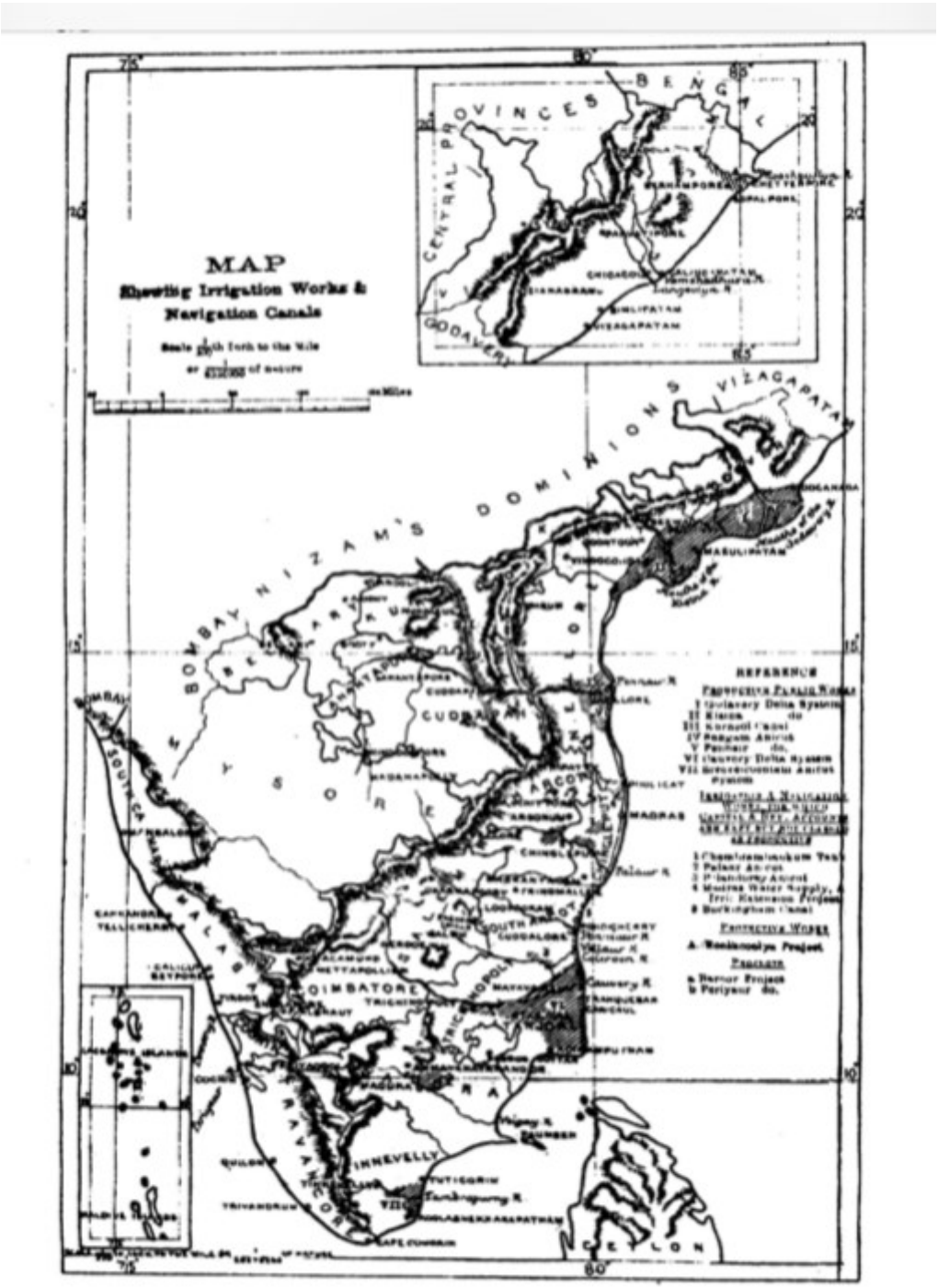
Map 2.4 Irrigation Works and Navigable Canals



Source: Maclean, C D, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency* (Vol.1), Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1987.

Map 2.5 Catchment areas of Principal Rivers

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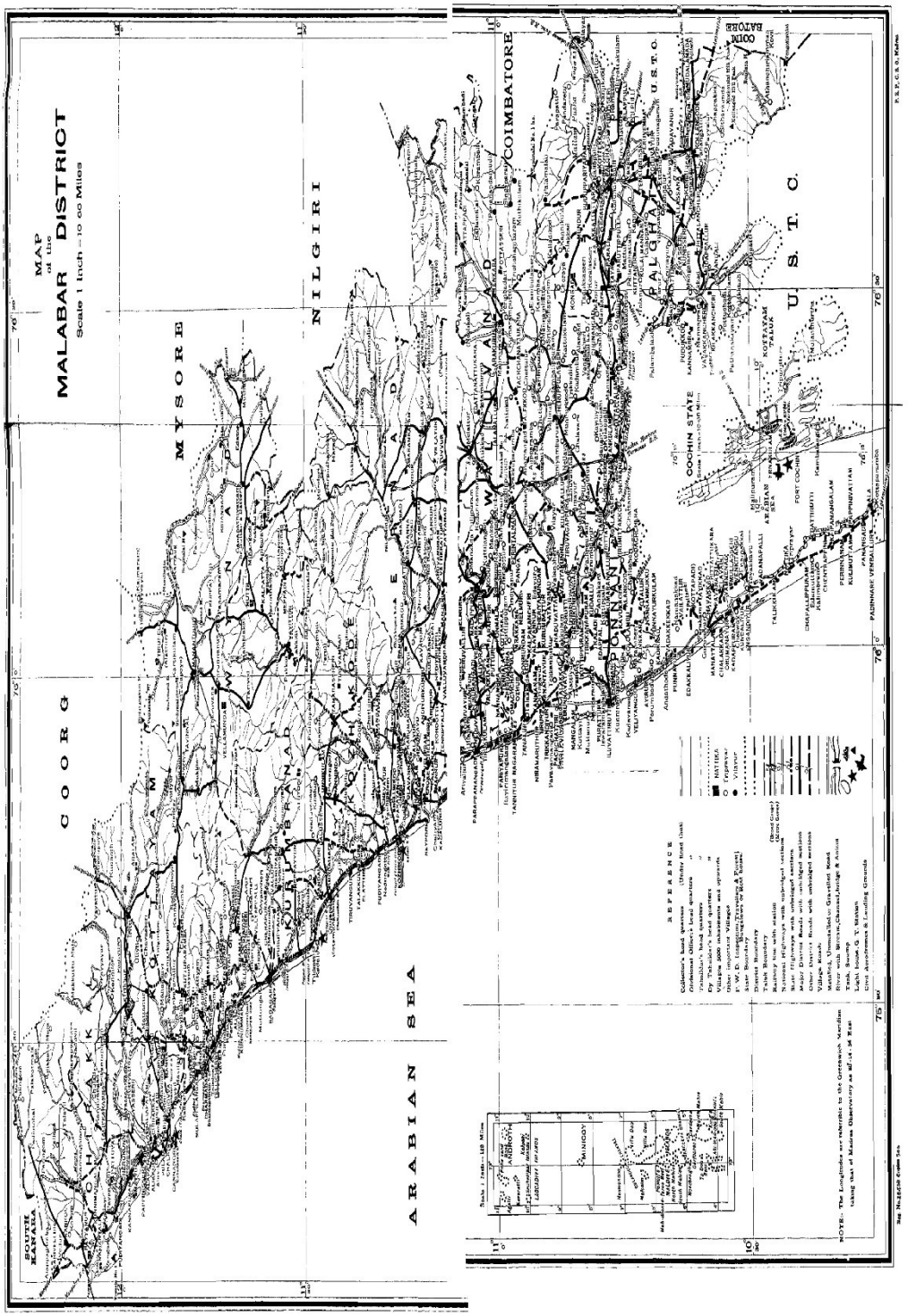
Map 2.6 Map of Malabar District



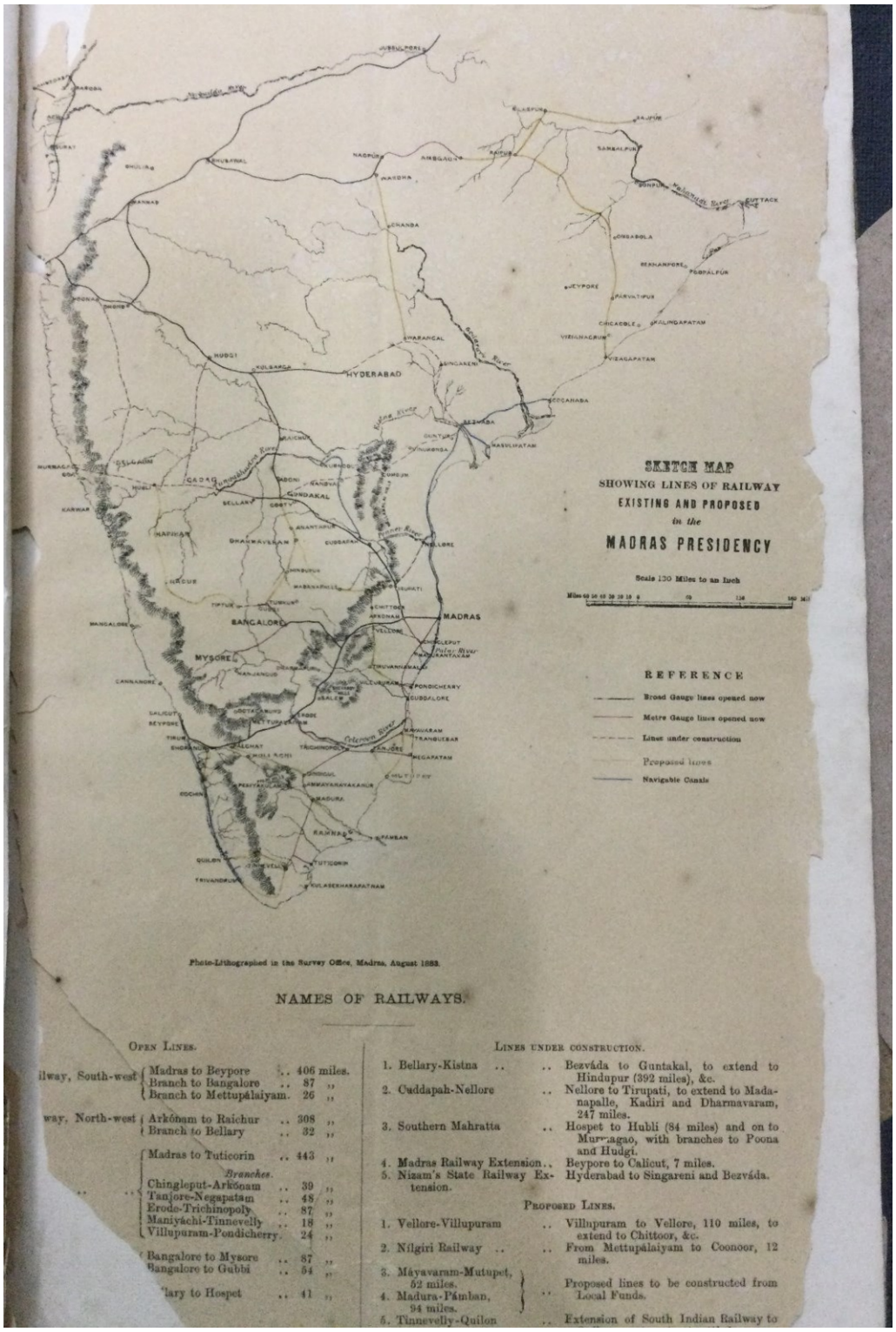
Source: Maclean, C D, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency* (Vol.1), Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1987.

Map 2.7 Kerala River map

APPENDIX 3

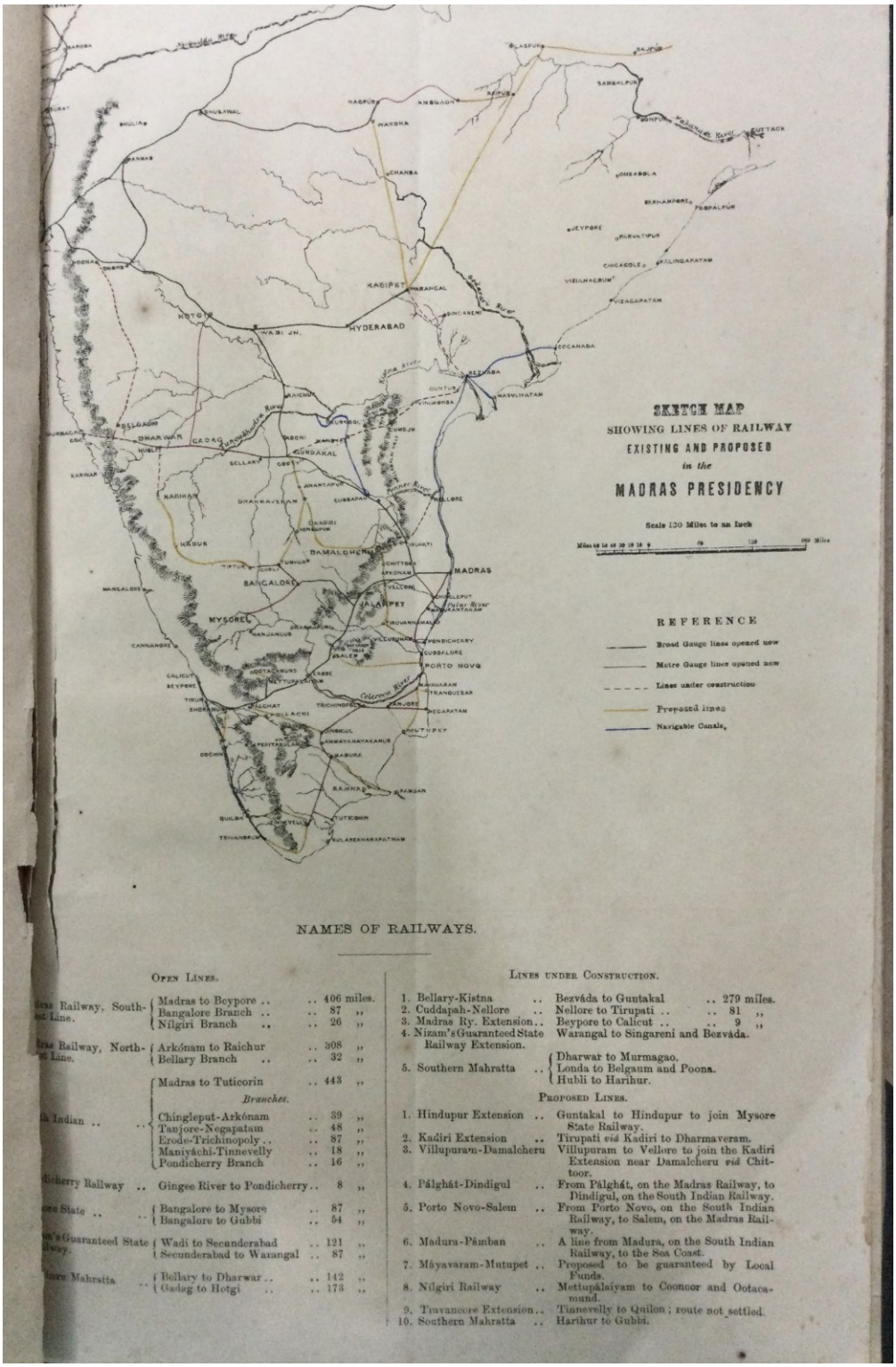
MAPS SHOWING THE EXPANSION OF RAILWAY IN MADRAS

Map 3.1 Railway Map of Madras : *1884-85*



Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1884-85* (A/1273), Printed by E Keys, Government Press, Madras, 1885.

Map 3.2 Railway Map of Madras : *1885-86*



NAMES OF RAILWAYS.

OPEN LINES.

...ras Railway, South-...n Line.	Madras to Beypore ..	..	406 miles.
	Bangalore Branch ..	..	87 ,,
	Nilgiri Branch ..	..	26 ,,
...ras Railway, North-...n Line.	Arkónam to Raichur	..	308 ,,
	Bellary Branch ..	..	32 ,,
...h Indian ..	Madras to Tuticorin	..	443 ,,
	Branches.		
	Chingleput-Arkónam	..	39 ,,
	Tanjore-Negapatam	..	48 ,,
	Erode-Trichinopoly ..	..	87 ,,
	Maniyáchi-Tinnevelly	..	18 ,,
	Pondicherry Branch	..	16 ,,
...dicherry Railway ..	Gingee River to Pondicherry ..		8 ,,
...ore State ..	Bangalore to Mysore	..	87 ,,
	Bangalore to Gubbi	..	54 ,,
...n's Guaranteed State ...lway.	Wadi to Secunderabad	..	121 ,,
	Secunderabad to Warangal	..	87 ,,
...thern Mahratta ..	Bellary to Dharwar ..	..	142 ,,
	Gadag to Hotgi ..	..	173 ,,

LINES UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

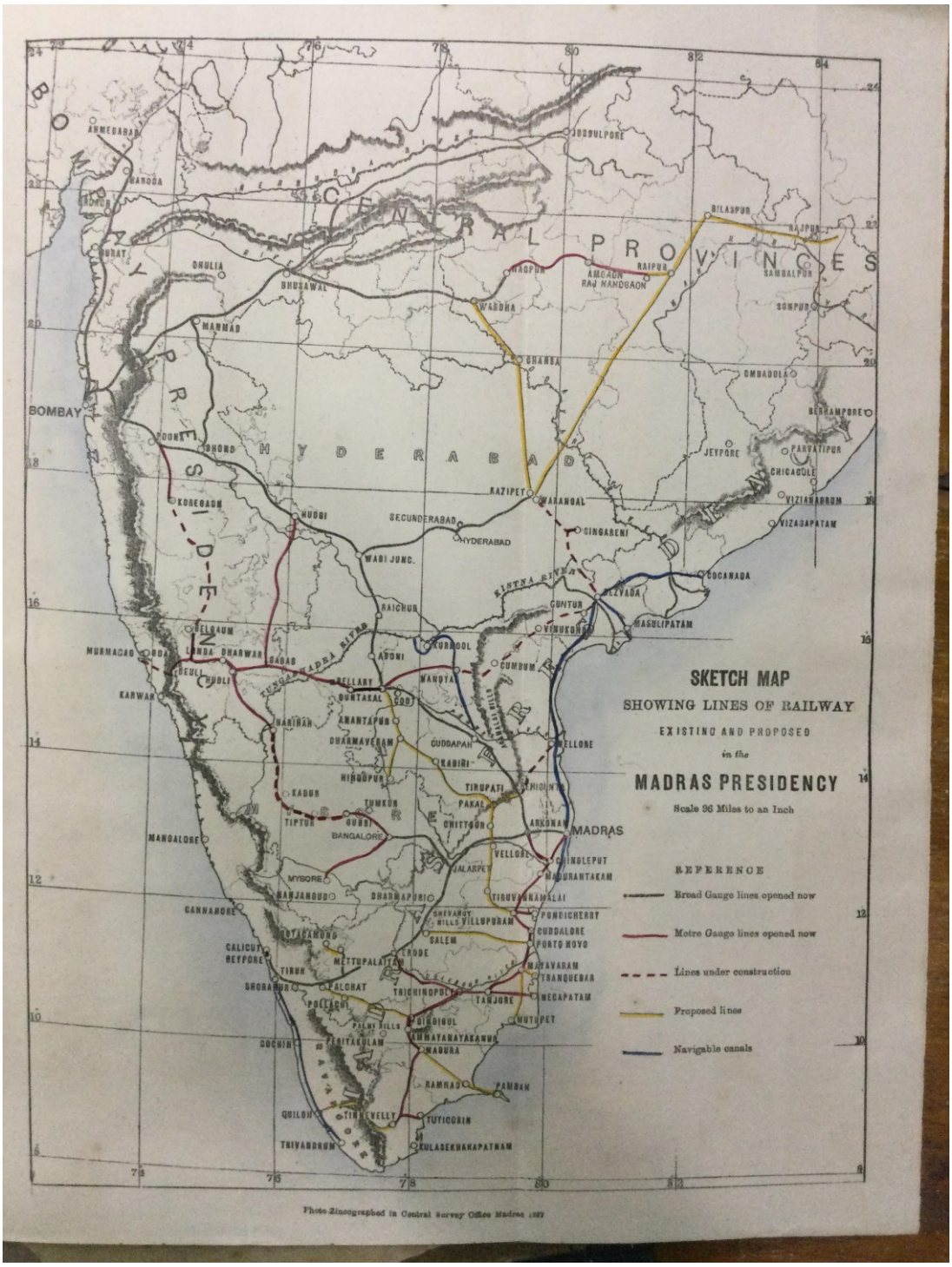
1. Bellary-Kistna ..	Bezváda to Guntakal	..	279 miles.
2. Cuddapah-Nellore ..	Nellore to Tirupati ..	..	81 ,,
3. Madras Ry. Extension ..	Beypore to Calicut ..	..	9 ,,
4. Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway Extension.	Warangal to Singareni and Bezváda.		
5. Southern Mahratta ..	Dharwar to Murmagao. Londa to Belgaum and Poona. Hubli to Harihur.		

PROPOSED LINES.

1. Hindupur Extension ..	Guntakal to Hindupur to join Mysore State Railway.
2. Kadiri Extension ..	Tirupati *vid* Kadiri to Dharmaveram.
3. Villupuram-Damalcheru	Villupuram to Vellore to join the Kadiri Extension near Damalcheru *vid* Chittoor.
4. Pálghát-Dindigul ..	From Pálghát, on the Madras Railway, to Dindigul, on the South Indian Railway.
5. Porto Novo-Salem ..	From Porto Novo, on the South Indian Railway, to Salem, on the Madras Railway.
6. Madura-Pámban ..	A line from Madura, on the South Indian Railway, to the Sea Coast.
7. Máyavaram-Mutupet ..	Proposed to be guaranteed by Local Funds.
8. Nilgiri Railway ..	Mettupálaiyam to Coonoor and Ootacamund.
9. Travancore Extension ..	Tinnevelly to Quilon; route not settled.
10. Southern Mahratta ..	Harihur to Gubbi.

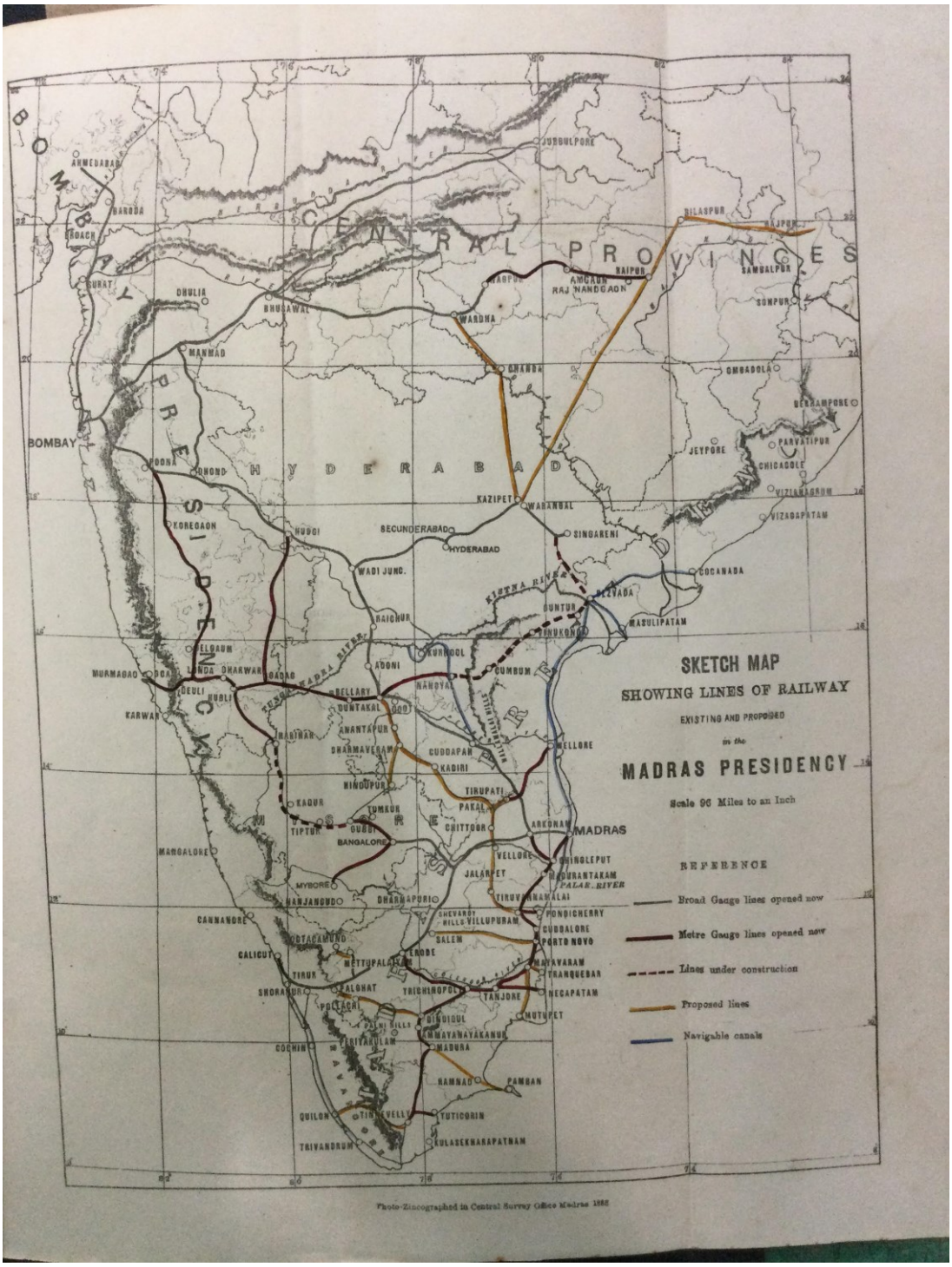
Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1885-86* (A/1274), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1886.

Map 3.3 Railway Map of Madras : *1886-87*



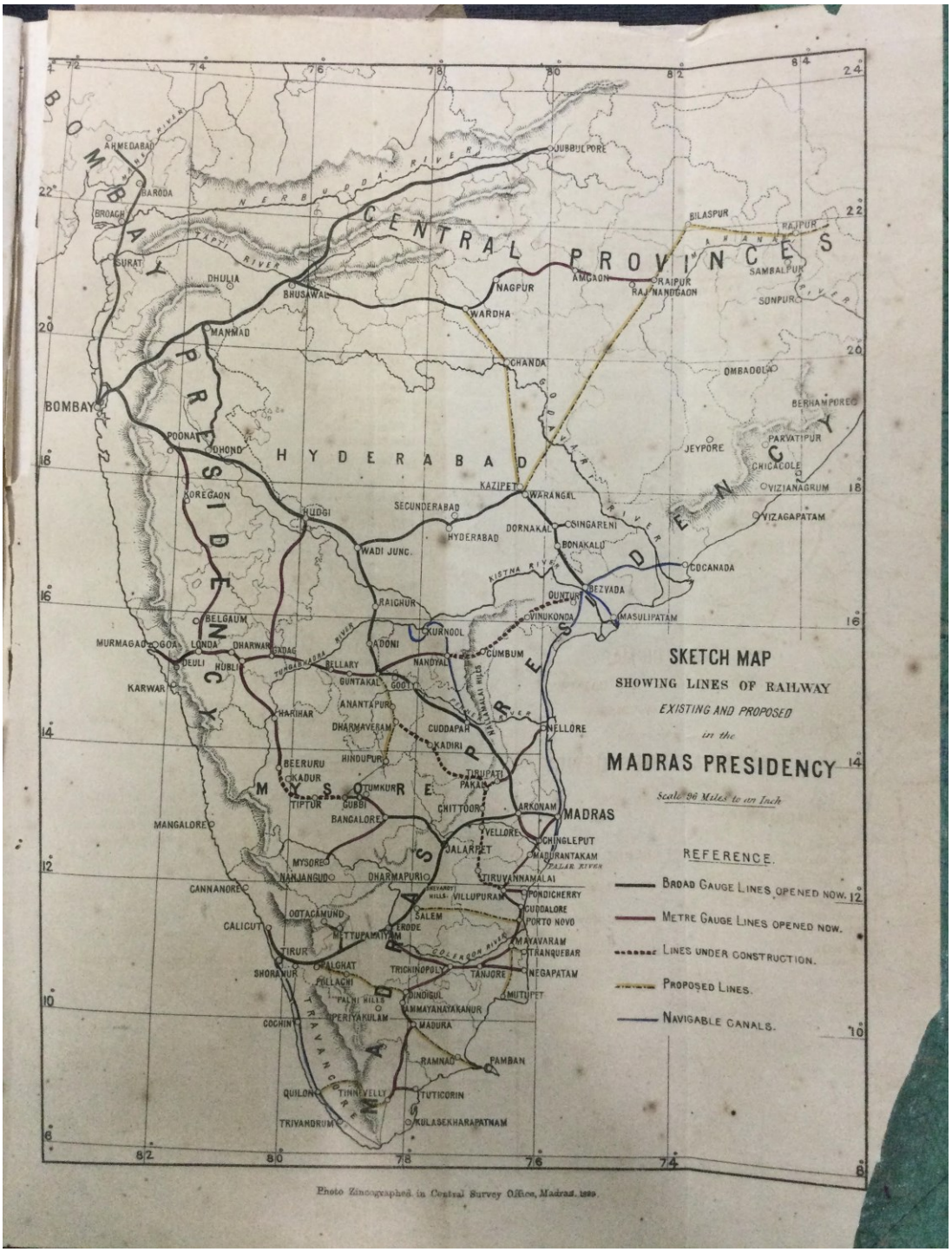
Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1886-87* (A/1275), Printed by R Hill, Government Press, Madras, 1887.

Map 3.4 Railway Map of Madras : *1887-88*



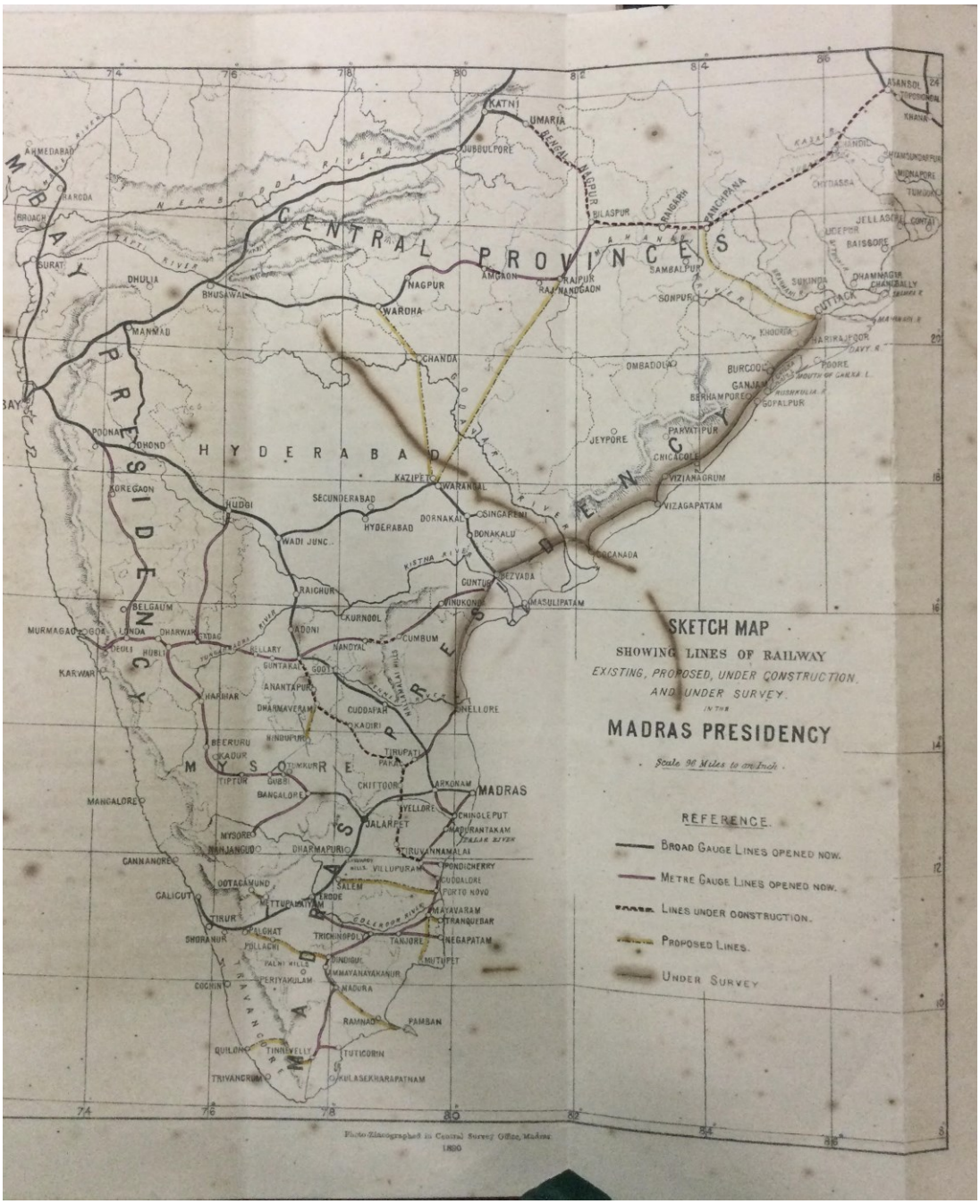
Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1887-88* (A/1276), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1888.

Map 3.5 Railway Map of Madras : *1888-89*



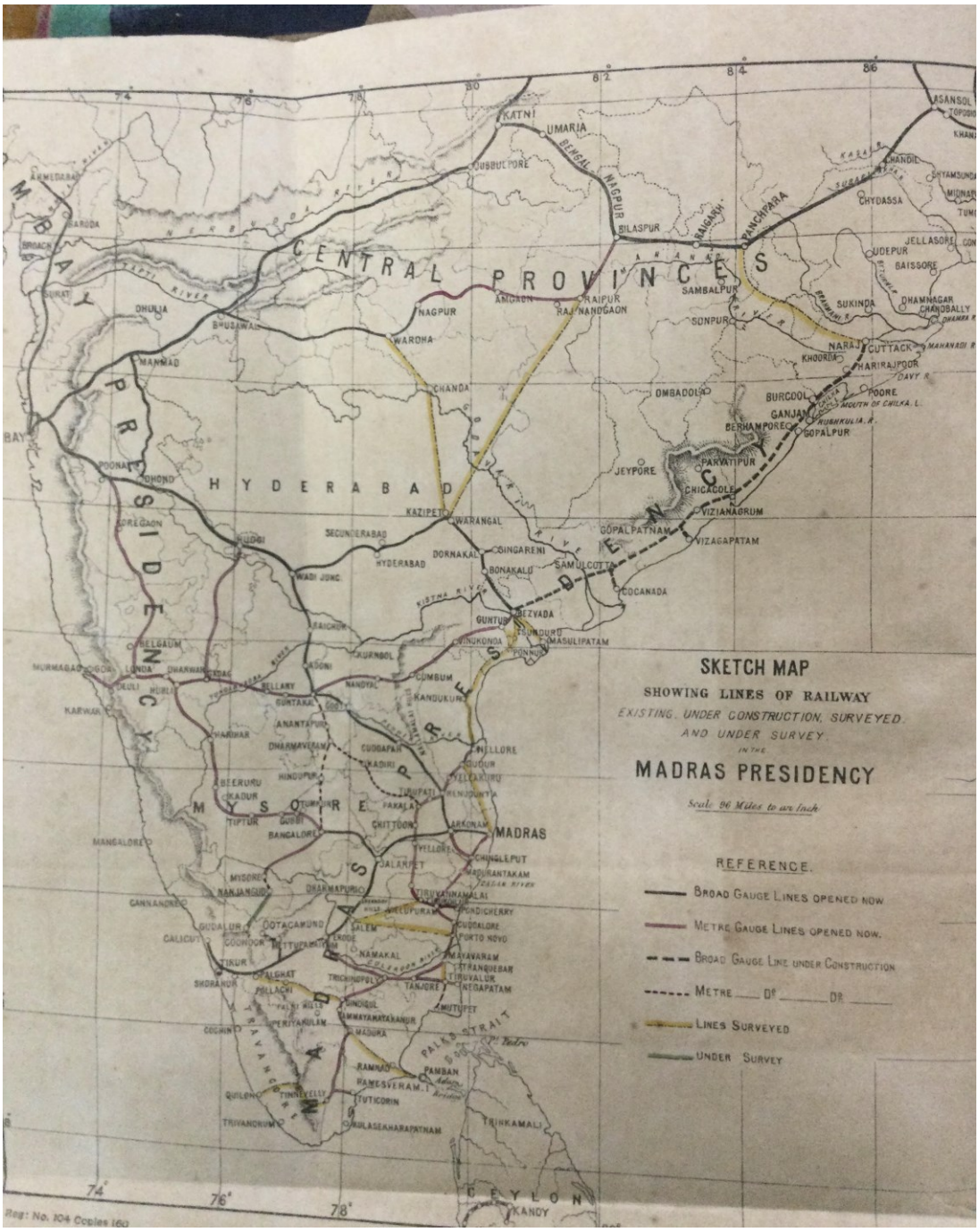
Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1888-89* (A/1277), Printed by , the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1889.

Map 3.6 Railway Map of Madras : *1889-90*



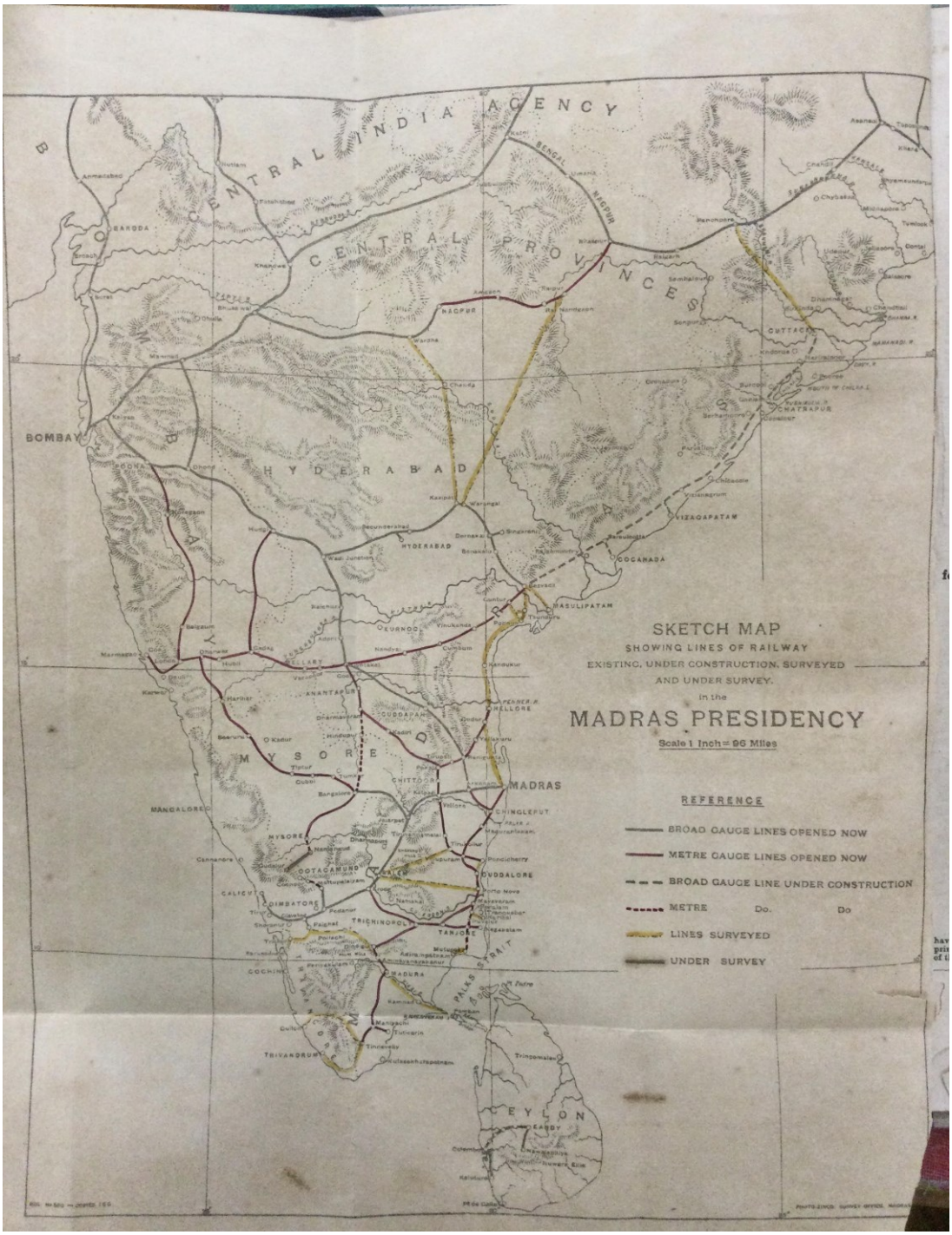
Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1889-90* (A/1278), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1890.

Map 3.7 Railway Map of Madras : *1890-91*



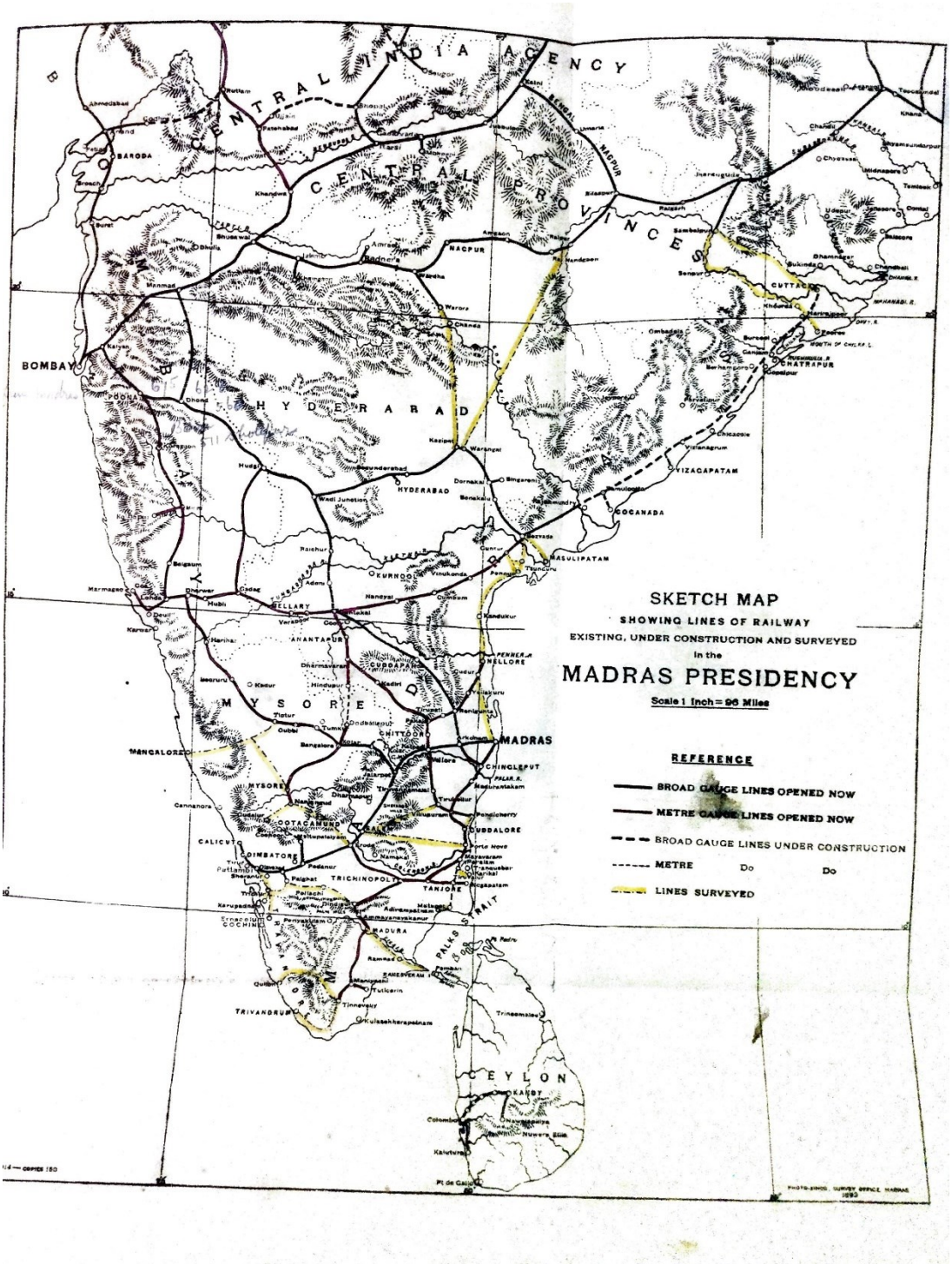
Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1890-91* (A/1279), Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1891.

Map 3.8 Railway Map of Madras : *1891-92*



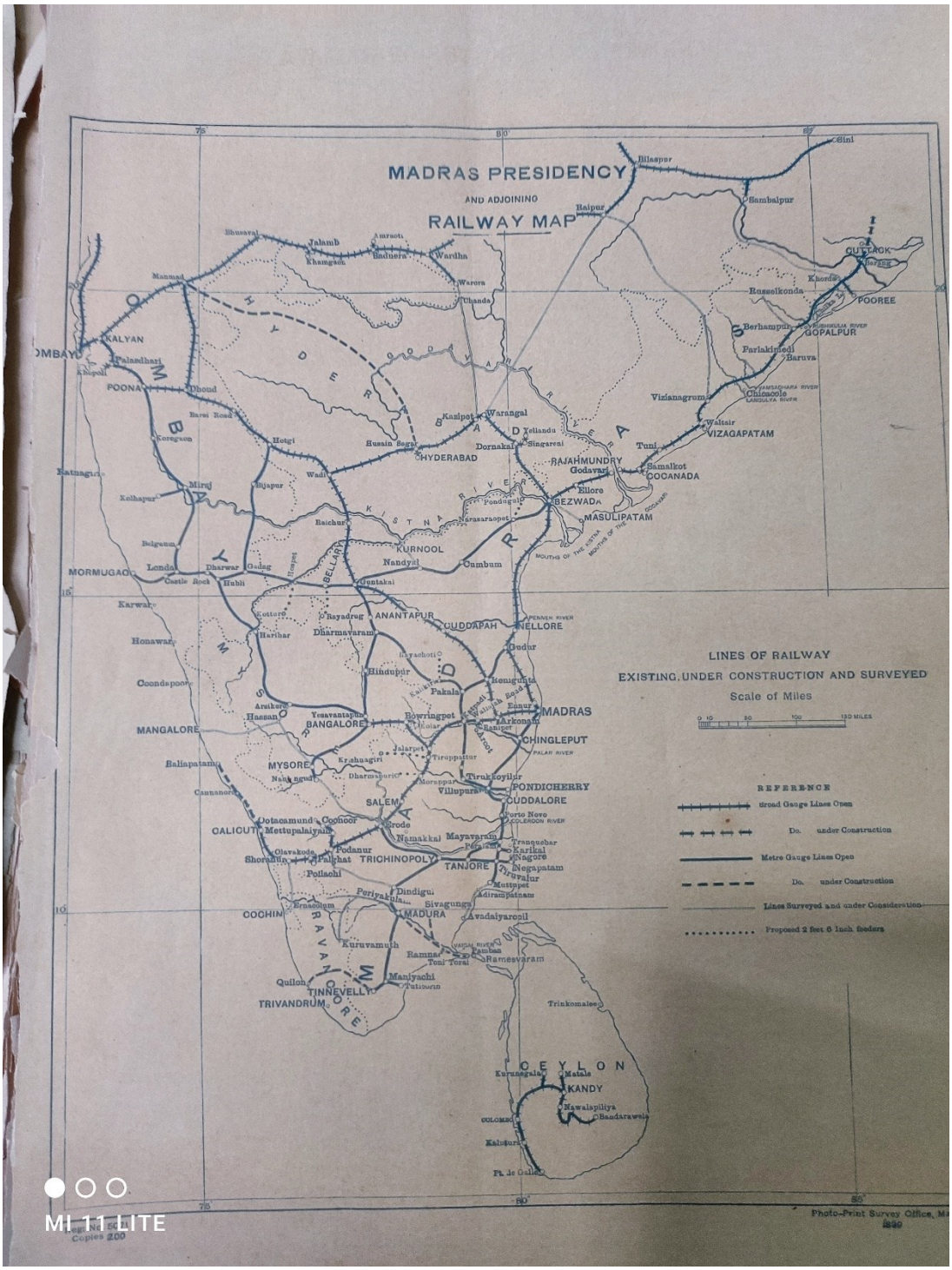
Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1891-92* (A/1280), Printed by , the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1892.

Map 3.9 Railway Map of Madras : *1892-93*



Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1892-93* (A/1281), Printed by , the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1893.

Map 3.10 Railway Map of Madras : *1898-99*



Source: *Administration Report of the Public Works Department, Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency for the year 1898-99* (A/1287), Printed by , the Superintendent, Government Press, Madras, 1899.

APPENDIX 4

IMPORTANT PICTURES ON TRANSPORTATION IN MALABAR

4.1 Thoni

4.2 Backwater and Canal in Malabar

4.3 Feroke Bridge:

4.4 Public Vehicle (1929)

4.5 Canal in Ponnani

4.6 Tellicherry *(A drawing of Tellicherry published in 1736, showing the fort as it appeared some years earlier)*

4.1 Thoni

Thoni boat; Pic courtesy @ BM archices

Source: B Arunachalam, *Maritime Heritage of Southern Peninsular India*, Maritime History Society, Mumbai, 2010.

4.2 Backwater and Canal in Malabar

Fig. 67. Backwater and Canal, Malabar.

Source: Edgar Thurston, *The Madras Presidency , with Mysore, Coorg and the Associated States,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1913.

4.3 Feroke Bridge:

Source: B E M Archive

4.4 Public Vehicle (1929)

Source: B E M Archive

4.5 Canal in Ponnani

Source: B E M Archive

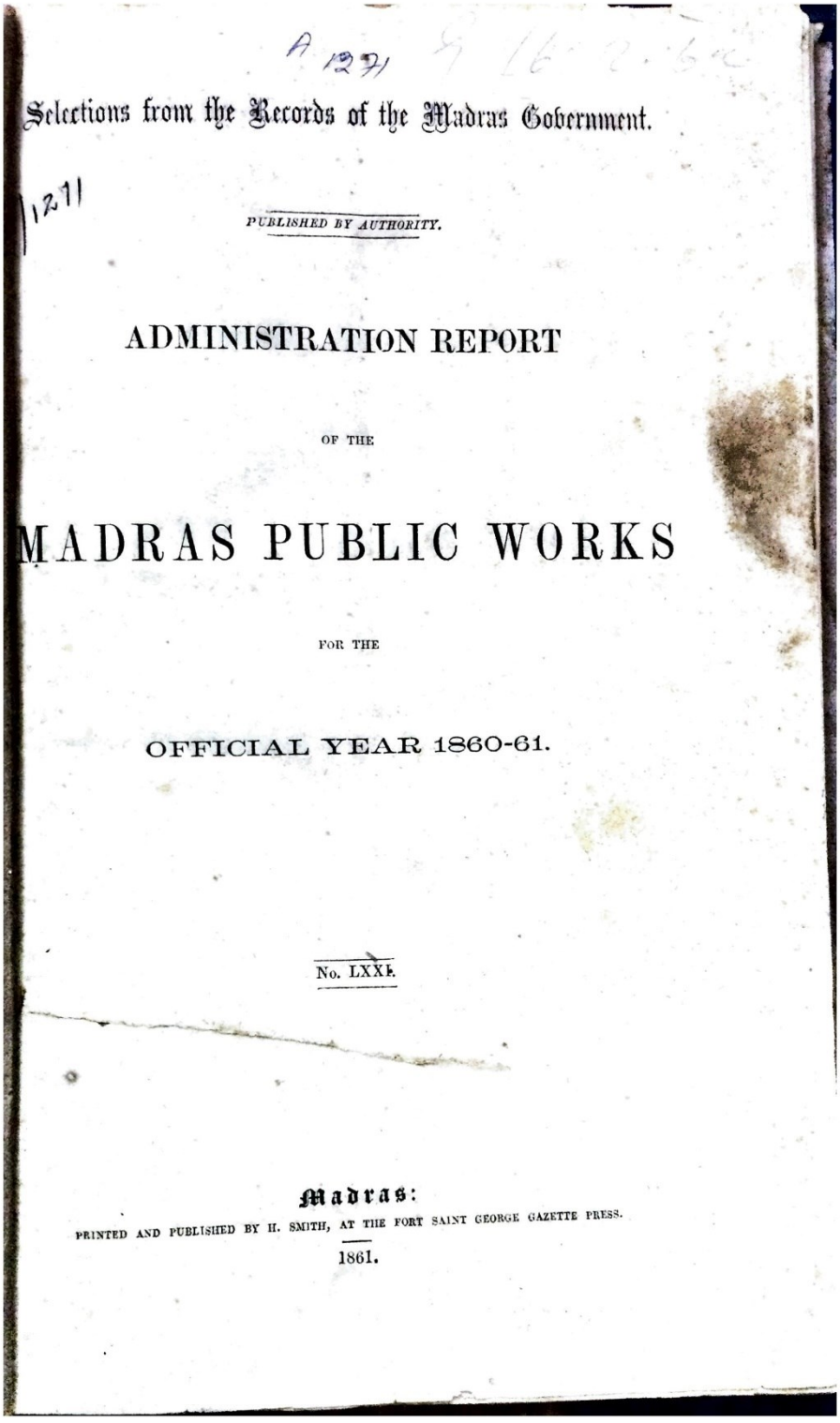
4.6 Tellicherry:

(A drawing of Tellicherry published in 1736, showing the fort as it appeared some years earlier)

Source: https://pazhayathu.blogspot.com/2011/12/more-old-pictures-of-kerala.html

APPENDIX 5

COVER PAGES OF IMPORTANT ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS



A 127

Selections from the Records of the Madras Government.

1271

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

OF THE

MADRAS PUBLIC WORKS

FOR THE

OFFICIAL YEAR 1860-61.

No. LXXI.

Madras:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY H. SMITH, AT THE FORT SAINT GEORGE GAZETTE PRESS.

1861.

272

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

OF THE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,

RAILWAY BRANCH,

IN THE

MADRAS PRESIDENCY,

FOR THE YEAR

1883-84.

MADRAS:
PRINTED BY E. KEYS, AT THE GOVERNMENT PRESS.
1884.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

OF THE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,

RAILWAY BRANCH,

IN THE

MADRAS PRESIDENCY,

FOR THE YEAR

1885-86.

MADRAS:
PRINTED BY R. HILL, AT THE GOVERNMENT PRESS.
1886.

A/1280

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

OF THE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,

RAILWAY BRANCH,

IN THE

MADRAS PRESIDENCY,

FOR THE YEAR

1891-92.

MADRAS:
PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRESS.

1892.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

A/1287

OF THE

RAILWAY BRANCH

OF THE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

IN THE

MADRAS PRESIDENCY,

FOR THE YEAR

1898-99

MADRAS:
PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRESS.

1899.

G.A.B.
4-10 62
Vide Memo. [illegible] by Cllr [illegible]
& Letter to Captn. Bean, 4 Oct 62

6/10/62 HR

No. 162.

Calicut 3rd October 1862

97D

Captain J. Bean
District Engineer Malabar

To,

G. A. Ballard Esqr.
Collector of Malabar

Sir,

In reply to your letter dated 27th Ultimo No. 3981 I have the honor to inform you that I approve of the Earthwork of the Road from Kalpatti to Sultans Battery being done on Contract. I do not consider Rupees 1000 — too large a sum, if the Road is made practicable for Bandies. I also approve of the proposed outlay on the repairs of ex Bridges on the same line, and in the line from Pancamarram to Corote. The co enclosures of your letter are herewith returned.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your Most Obdt. Servt.
J. Bean Captain
District Engineer Malabar

[illegible] No. 183
dated 26th Sept. 62.
agreement of 26th
Sept. 1862.

30-R.
[3,000—22-7-05.]

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

P. W. (RAILWAY) DEPARTMENT.

PROCEEDINGS No 342 RY.

Dated the 28th May 1909

Received 190 .

Registered 190 .

COLLECTOR
31 MAY 1909
MALABAR

ENCLOSURES.

No.

READ the following paper:—

I.
Letter from the Agent, South Indian Railway,
To the Secretary to the Govt. of Madras, P.W.D.(Railway),
Dated the 2nd March 1909, No.A.C.3006/1/13.

II.
Memorandum from the Public Works Department (Railway),
To the Collector of Malabar,
Dated 15th March 1909, No.157 R.M.

III.
Letter from the Collector of Malabar,
To the Secretary to the Government of Madras, P.W.D.(Ry),
Dated the 18th May 1909, Ref.on C.No.320/B.& G.
Submitting a draft notification for the acquisition of land required for a trial Railway station between Badagara and Mahe.

Order:--No. 342 Railway, dated 28th May 1909.

The notification, as amended by Government, is approved, and will be published in the Fort St.George Gazette.

(True extract)

W. Nathan,

Secretary to Government.

To the Collector of Malabar.
To the Agent, South Indian Railway.
Notification to Press.

Forwarded to the Collector of Malabar

(By order)

G.D.Plummer

First Assistant. 28.5.09

L. R. 161—110,000—21-08.

Revenue - RND (19) 1909

COLLECTOR'S OFFICE,

Back Number B.No: 73 ~~…~~ 19 of 190 .

Disposal No. R19/Pub.09

Dated 3/6/09

Forward Number E152/D.11 of 190 .

To whom sent

A.C. Tellicherry.

	Date	Initial.
Given for Copying		
Copied		
Examined		
Signed		
Given for despatch		
Despatched. 8/6/09.		

Pages in file

[DISPOSAL ABSTRACT.]

Acquisition of land

Comm. G.O. approving and directing the ~~dae~~ publication in the Fort St. George Gazette the draft notification for the — reqs for a trial Railway Station between Badaga and Arrie.

R/307

NANJANGUD-TELLICHERRY RAILWAY SURVEY

TELLICHERRY-WYNAAD-COORG RAILWAY

2'-0" GAUGE
127·8 MILES

REPORT AND ESTIMATES
1924

SELECTIONS

FROM

THE RECORDS

OF

THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Published by Authority.

No. XLVII.

REPORT

ON THE

DISTRICT ROADS,

FOR

1855—56.

Madras:

PRINTED BY G. SARRAVUPPA CHETTY, AT THE HINDU PRESS, 13, ARMENIAN STREET.

1857.

SELECTIONS

FROM

THE RECORDS

OF

THE MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Published by Authority.

No. VI.

GENERAL REPORT

OF

THE ROAD DEPARTMENT.

Madras:

PRINTED AT THE FORT ST. GEORGE GAZETTE PRESS.

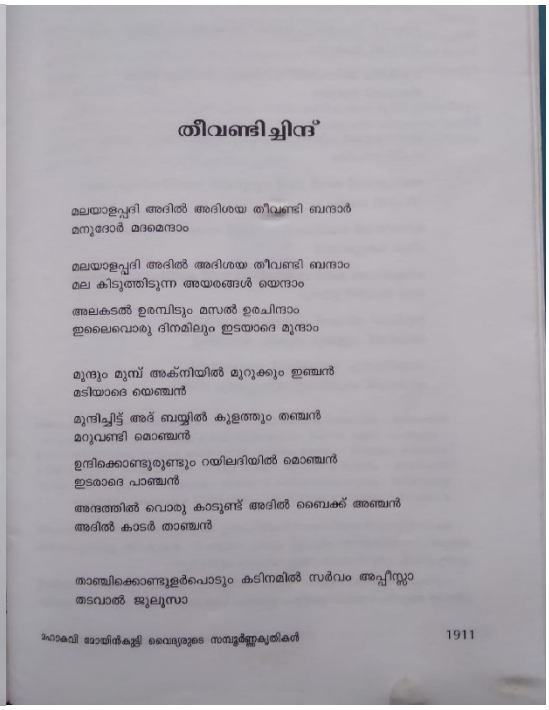
1854.

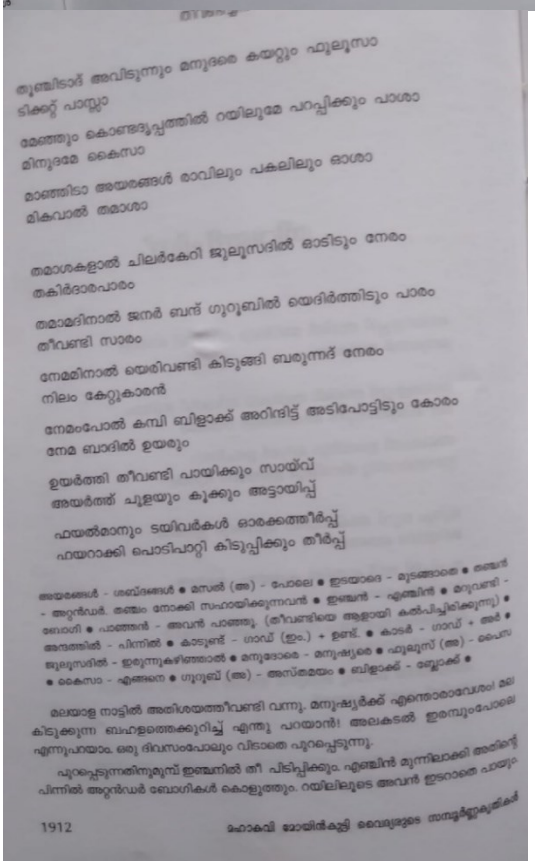
APPENDIX 6

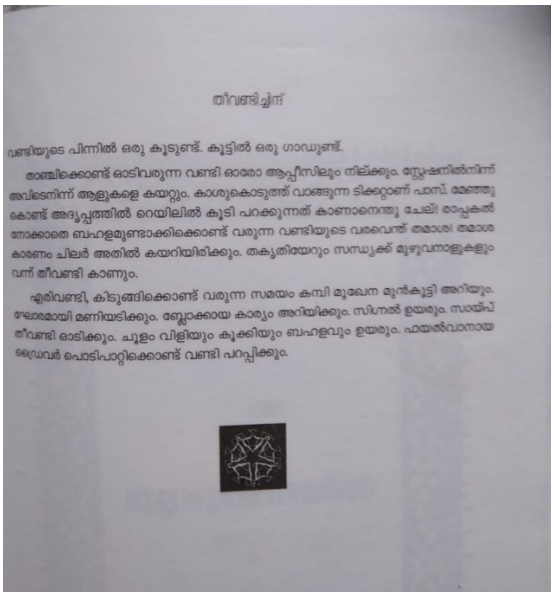
REPRESENTATIONS ON CIRCULATION IN MALABAR

6.1	*THEEVANDICHINTH*	–	MOYINKUTTY VAIDYAR
6.2	*KASI YATHRA*	–	K C KESHAVA PILLAI
6.3	*KASI YATHRA CHARITHRAM*	–	VIDWAN MANAVIKRAMAN ETTAN THAMBURAN
6.4	*KUMBAKONA YATHRA*	–	KUNHI KRISHNA MENON
6.5	*THEETHA YATHRA*	–	AMMALU AMMA

6.1 *THEEVANDICHINTH* – MOYINKUTTY VAIDYAR

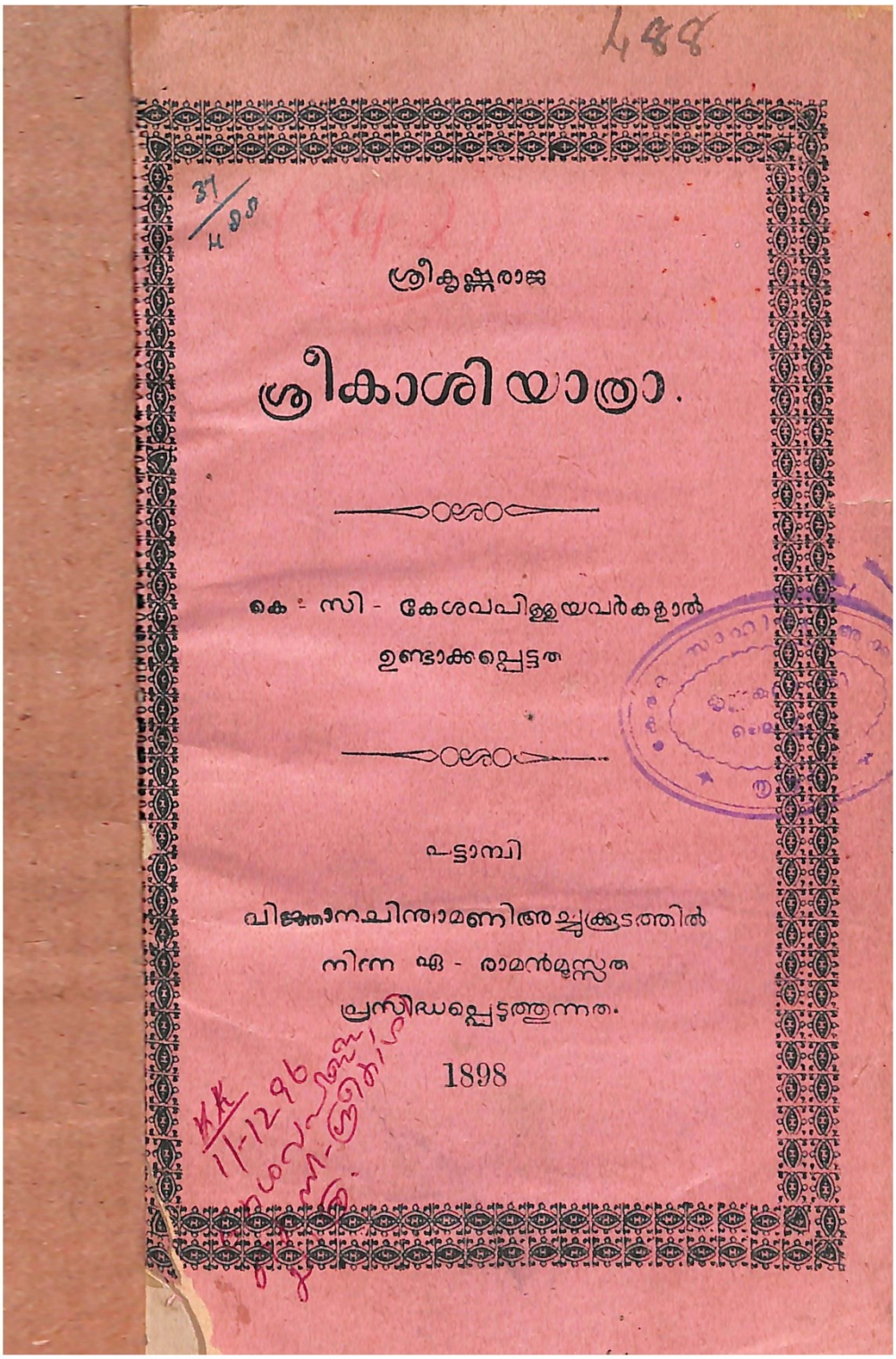






Source: Kareem, K K Muhammad Abdul and Aboobacker, K, *Mahakavi Moyinkutty Vaidyarude Sampoornna Krithukal* (Vol.3) (Mal.), Mahakavi Moyinkutty Vaidyar Mappila Kala Academy, Kondotty, 2015.

6.2 *KASI YATHRA* – K C KESHAVA PILLAI



ശ്രീകൃഷ്ണരാജ

ശ്രീകാശിയാത്രാ.

കെ : സി - കേശവപിള്ളയവർകളാൽ

ഉണ്ടാക്കപ്പെട്ടത

പട്ടാമ്പി

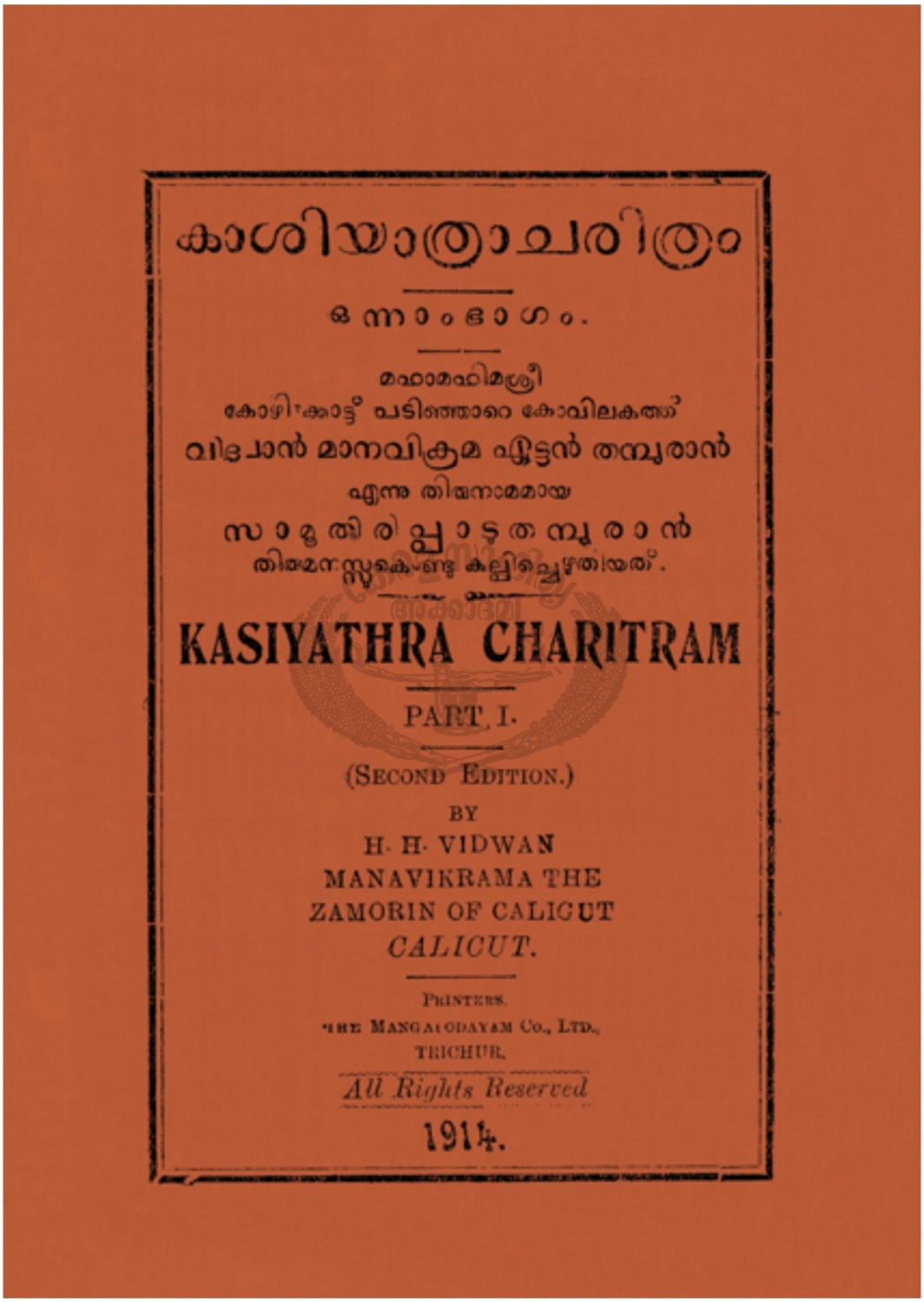
വിജ്ഞാനചിന്താമണിഅച്ചുക്കൂടത്തിൽ

നിന്ന ഏ - രാമൻമൂസ്സത

പ്രസിദ്ധപ്പെടുത്തുന്നത.

1898

6.3 *KASI YATHRA CHARITHRAM* – VIDWAN MANAVIKRAMAN ETTAN THAMBURAN



കാശിയാത്രാചരിത്രം

ഒന്നാംഭാഗം.

മഹാമഹിമശ്രീ
കോഴിക്കോട്ട് പടിഞ്ഞാറെ കോവിലകത്ത്
വിദ്വാൻ മാനവിക്രമ എട്ടൻ തമ്പുരാൻ
എന്ന തിയനാമമായ
സാമൂതിരിപ്പാട്ടതമ്പുരാൻ
തിയമനസ്സുകൊണ്ടു കല്പിച്ചെഴുതിയത്.

KASIYATHRA CHARITRAM

PART I.

(SECOND EDITION.)

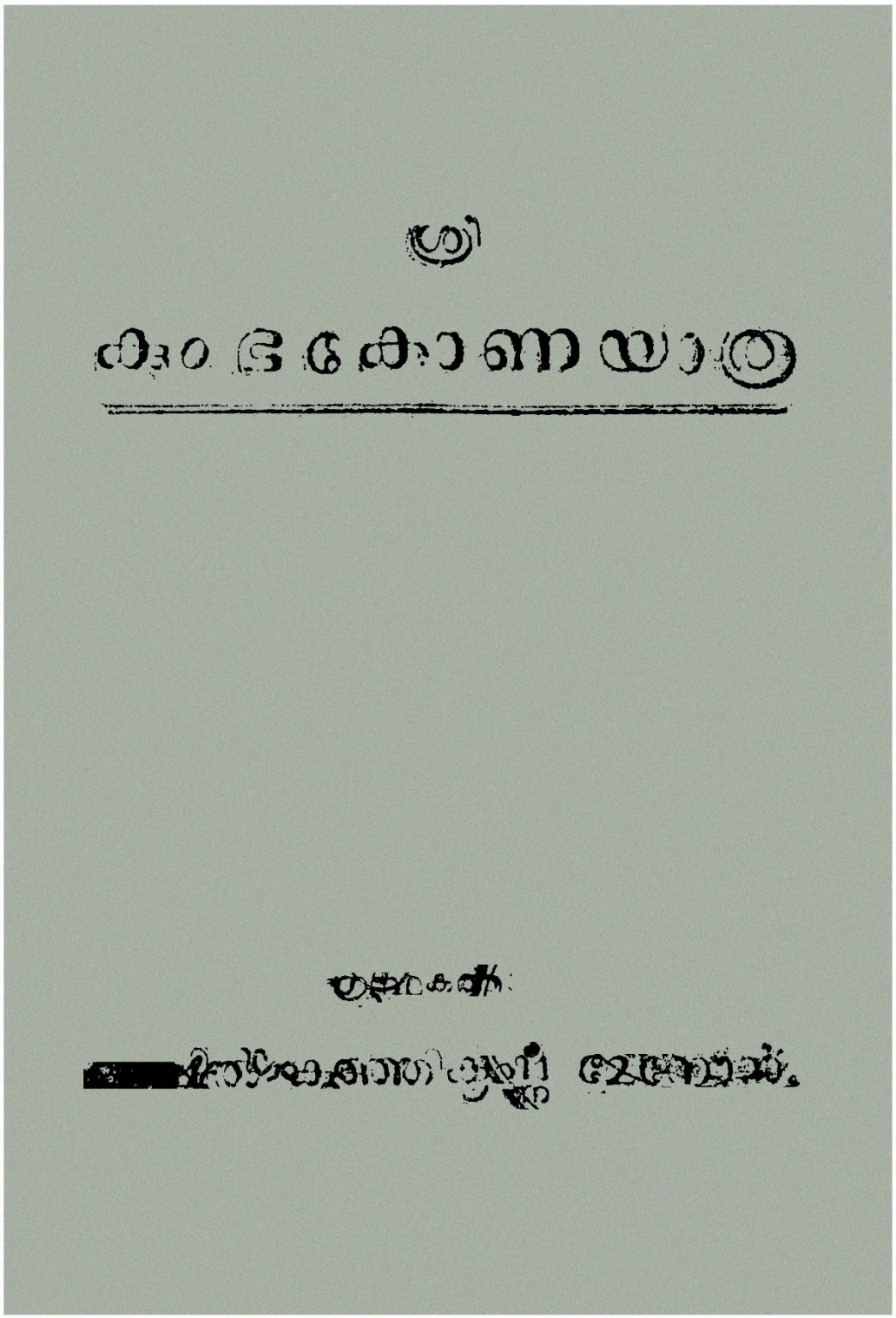
BY

H. H. VIDWAN
MANAVIKRAMA THE
ZAMORIN OF CALICUT
CALICUT.

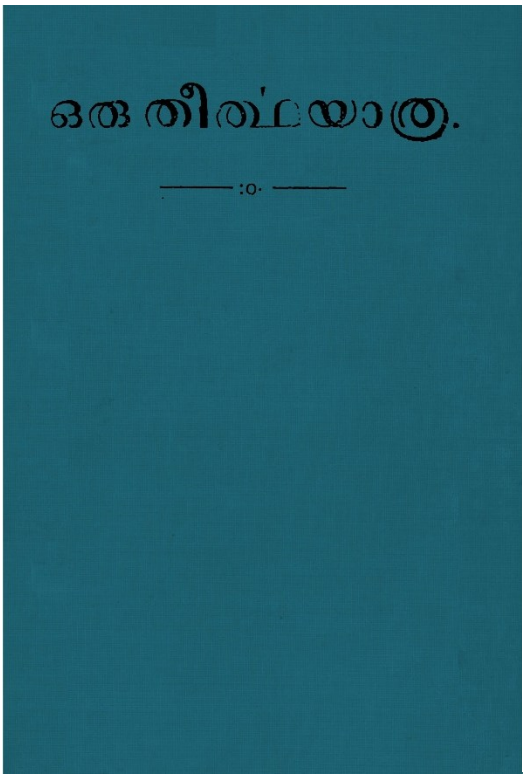
PRINTERS.
THE MANGALODAYAM CO., LTD.,
TRICHUR.

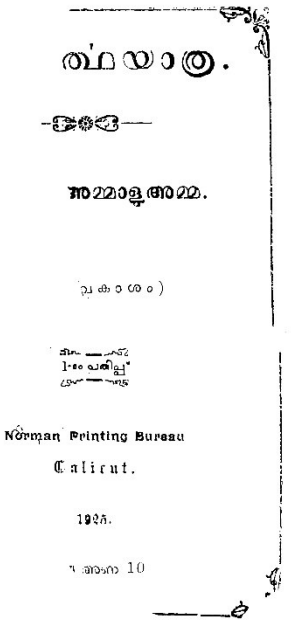
1914.

6.4 *KUMBAKONA YATHRA* – KUNHI KRISHNA MENON

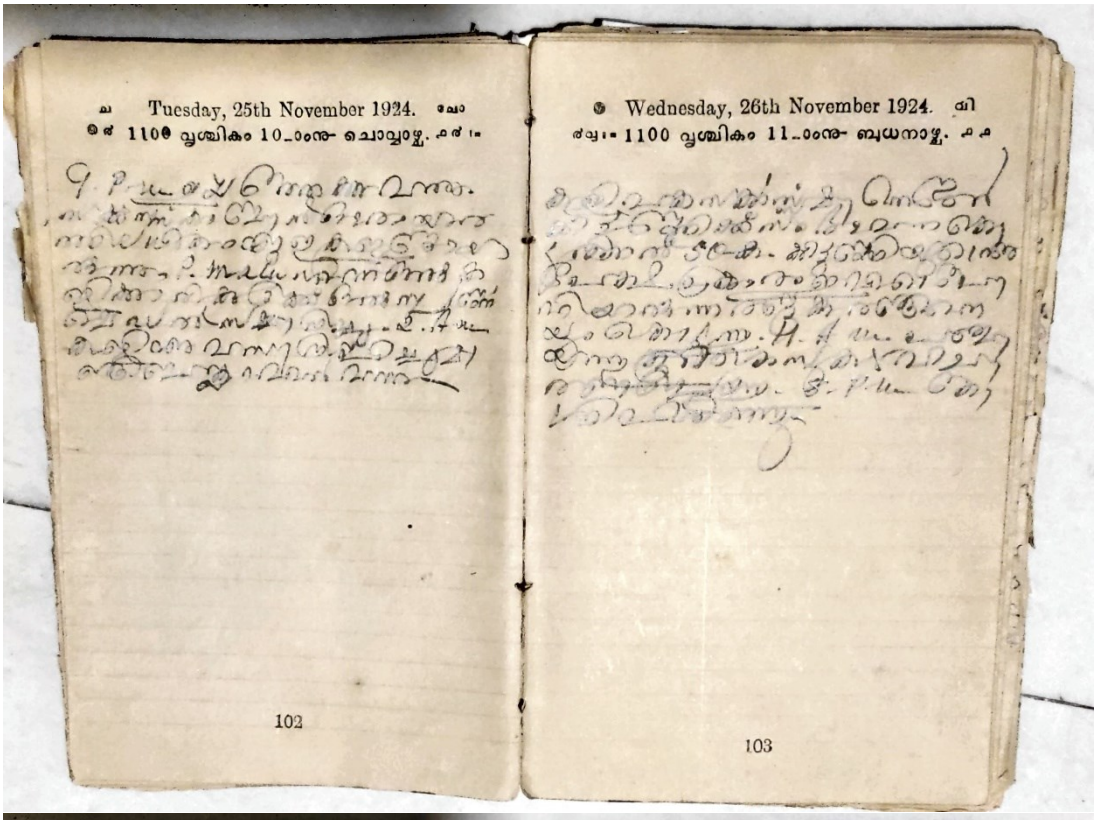


6.5 *THEETHA YATHRA* – AMMALU AMMA





6.6. *DIARIES OF P. MADHUSOODHANAN THANGAL*

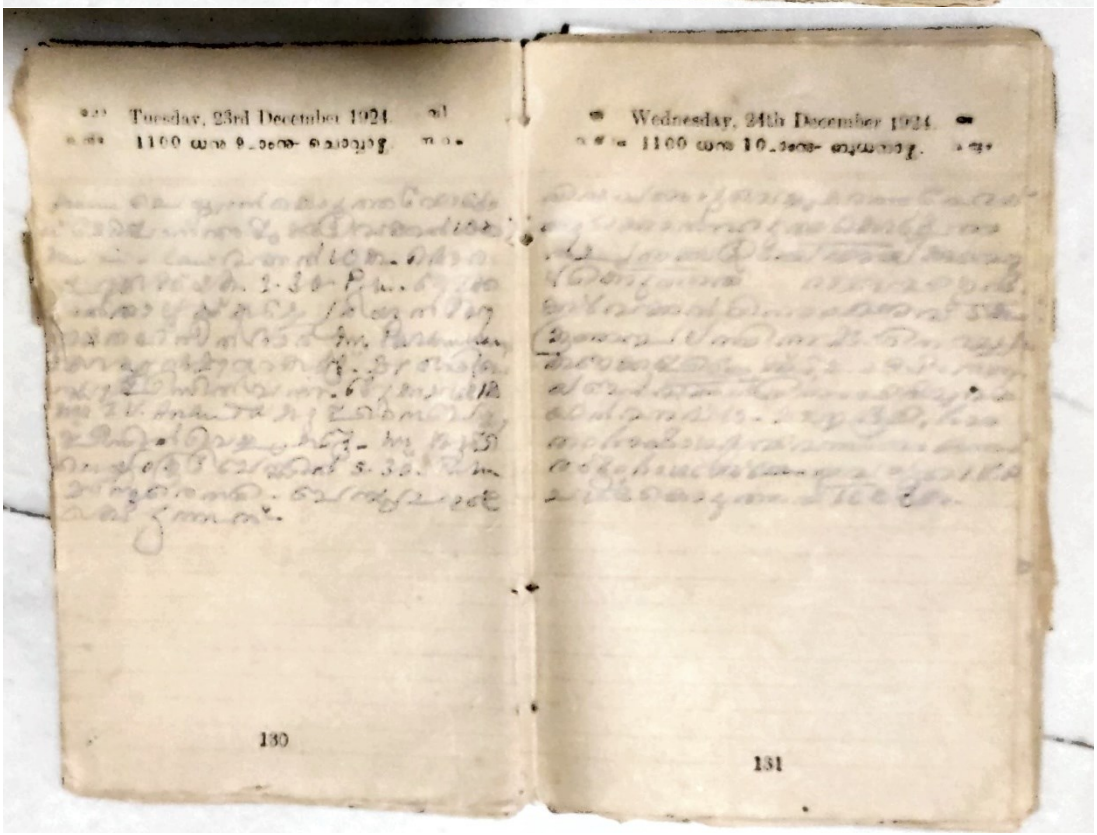


Tuesday, 25th November 1924.
1100 വൃശ്ചികം 10_൦൦ന- ചൊവ്വാഴ്ച.

102

Wednesday, 26th November 1924.
1100 വൃശ്ചികം 11_൦൦ന- ബുധനാഴ്ച.

103



Tuesday, 23rd December 1924.
1100 ധനു 9_൦൦ന- ചൊവ്വാഴ്ച

130

Wednesday, 24th December 1924.
1100 ധനു 10_൦൦ന- ബുധനാഴ്ച.

131

॥ശ്രീ॥

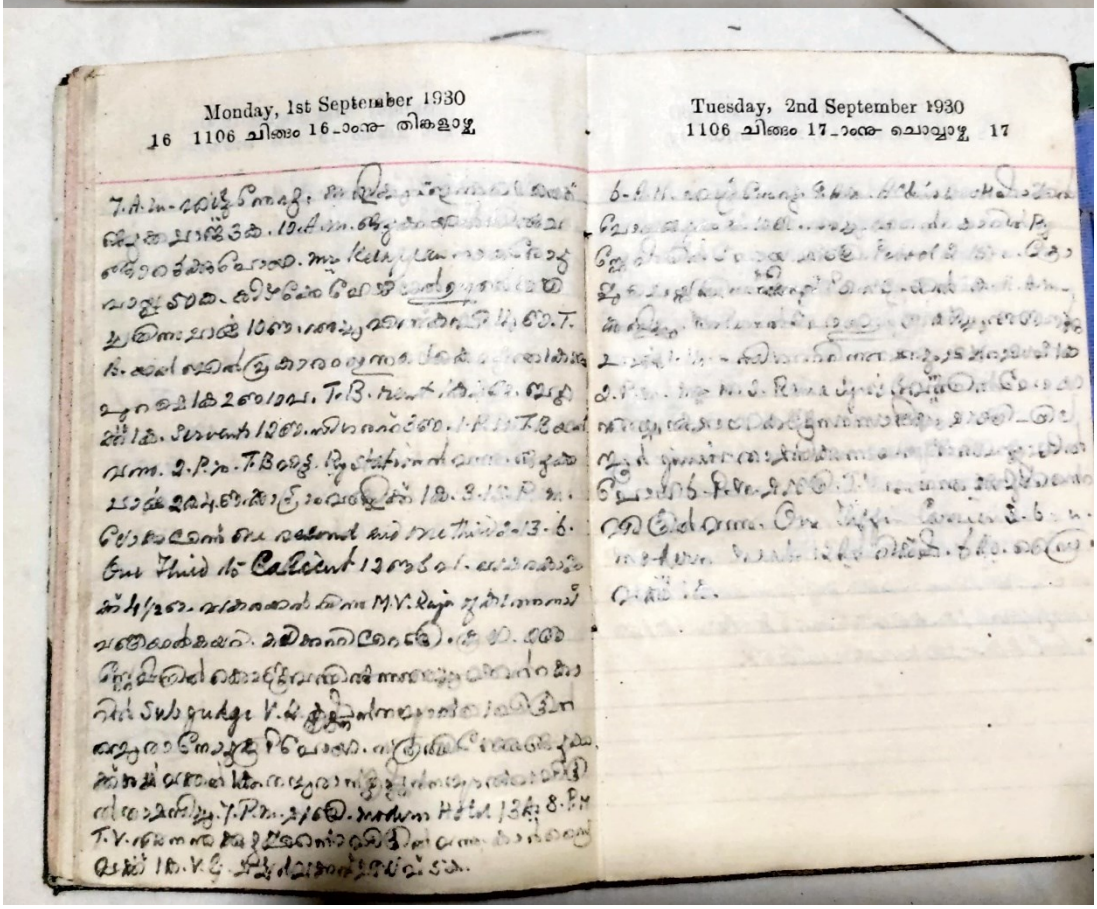
1106-ലെ

മംഗളോദയം

ഡയറി.

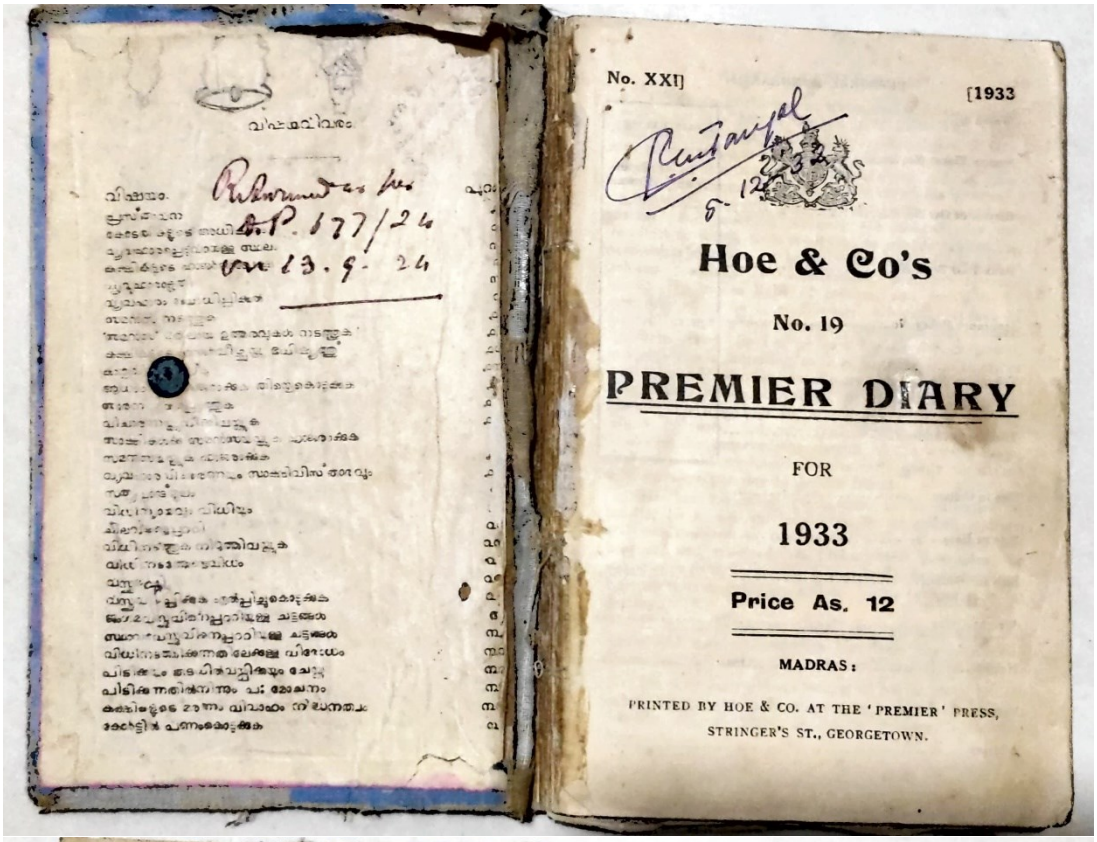
Printed and Published by
The Yogakshemam Co., Ltd, at
The Mangalodayam power press,
TRICHUR & CALICUT.

വില 12 അണ. മാത്രം.



Monday, 1st September 1930
16 1106 ചിങ്ങം 16-ാംന- തിങ്കളാഴ്ച

Tuesday, 2nd September 1930
1106 ചിങ്ങം 17-ാംന- ചൊവ്വാഴ്ച 17



No. XXIJ [1933

Hoe & Co's

No. 19

PREMIER DIARY

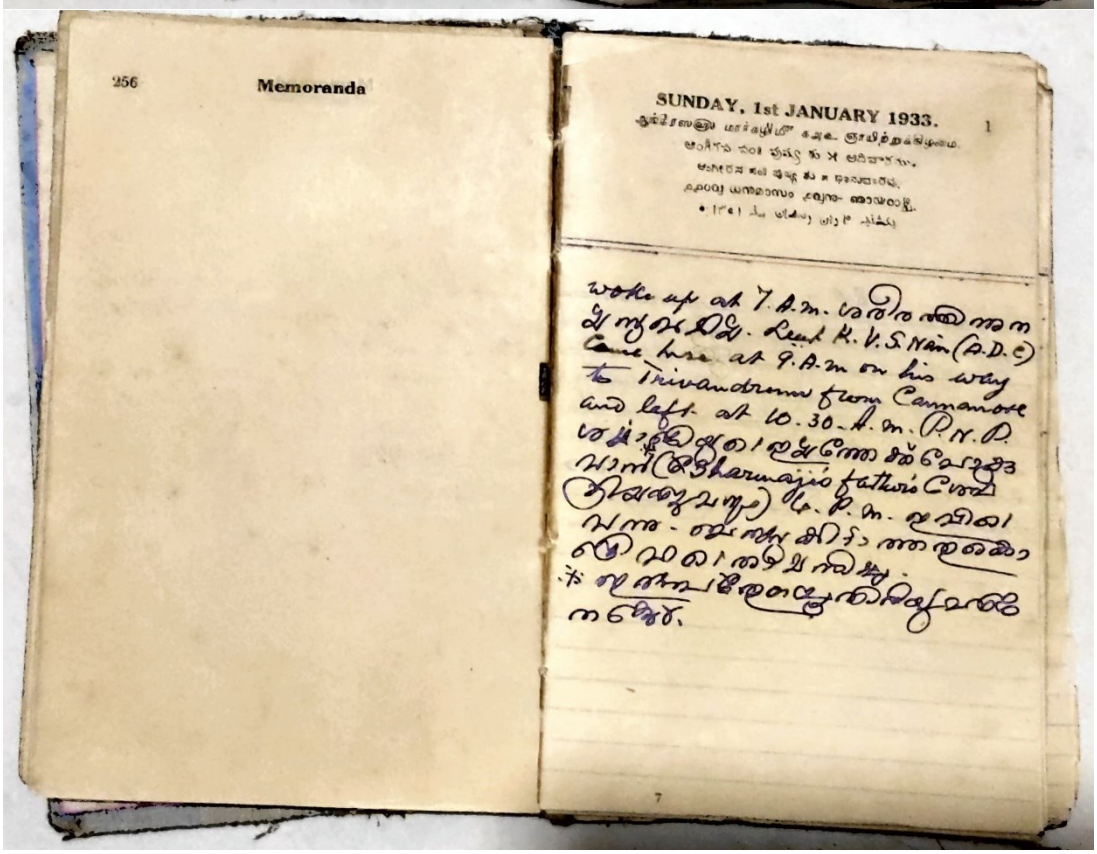
FOR

1933

Price As. 12

MADRAS:

PRINTED BY HOE & CO. AT THE 'PREMIER' PRESS,
STRINGER'S ST., GEORGETOWN.

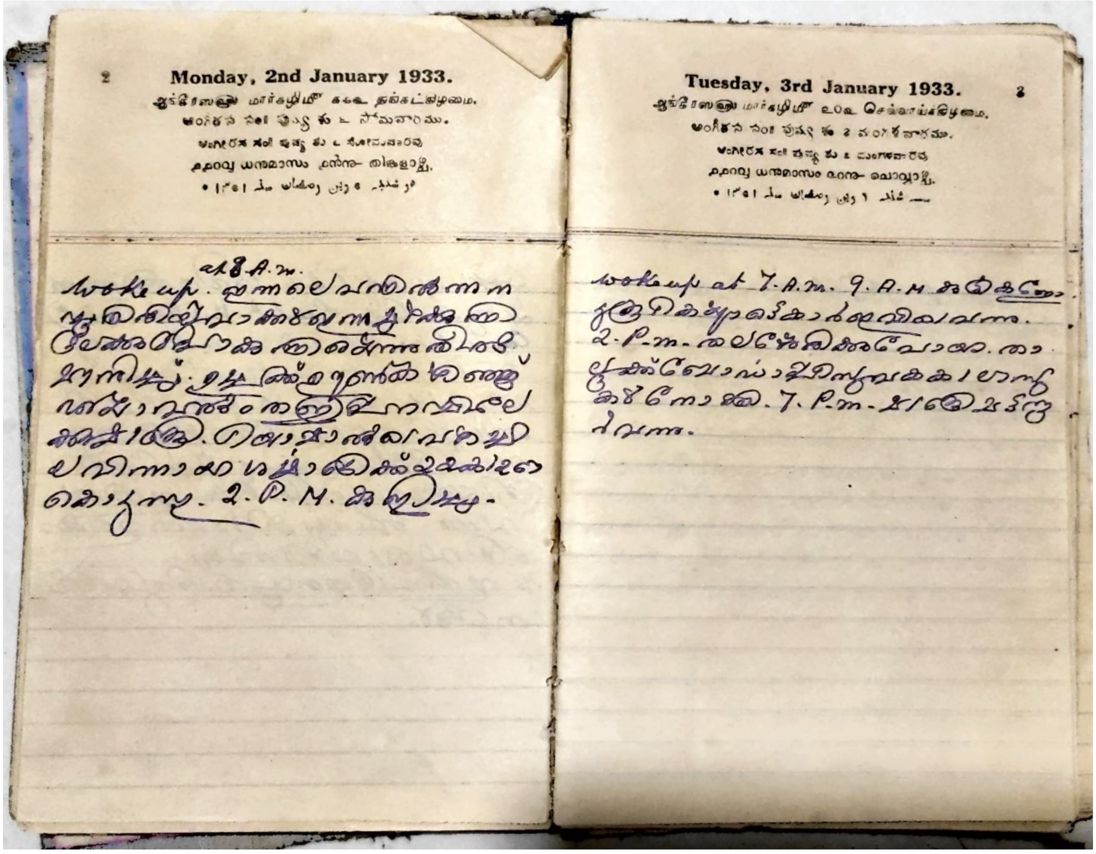


256 Memoranda

SUNDAY, 1st JANUARY 1933. 1

Woke up at 7 A.m. Lieut K. V. S. Nair (A.D.C) came here at 9 A.m on his way to Trivandrum from Cannanore and left at 10.30 A.m. P.N.P.

Sharmaji's father


2 Monday, 2nd January 1933.
Tuesday, 3rd January 1933. 3