

The Socio Cultural Formation of a Colonial Town: The City Scape of Palakkad, 1860-1947

**Thesis
submitted to the University of Calicut
for the award of the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in History**

Anitha. P

**Department of History
University of Calicut**

2017

Declaration

I, Anitha. P., hereby declare that this thesis '**The Socio Cultural Formation of a Colonial Town: The City Scape of Palakkad, 1860-1947**', submitted to the University of Calicut, is a bonafide record of research work done by me and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any other degree before.

C.U.Campus

Anitha. P

Certificate

Dr. Sivadasan. P.
Associate Professor
Department of History
University of Calicut

This is to certify that this thesis '**The Socio Cultural Formation of a Colonial Town: The City Scape of Palakkad, 1860-1947**' is a bonafide record of genuine research done by **Anitha. P**, under my guidance. No part of the thesis has been submitted before for the award of any degree.

Department of History
University of Calicut

Dr. Sivadasan. P
(Supervising Teacher)

Acknowledgement

I have immense pleasure in expressing my heartfelt gratitude to a number of persons and institutions for their untiring assistance and encouragement during this thesis. At the very outset, I owe a deep sense of gratitude to my supervising teacher, Dr.Sivadasan.P. I remain indebted to him for the discussions I had with him, the resourceful advice, useful suggestions and the persistence enthusiasm at every turn of the work. Truly, my indebtedness to Dr.Sivadasan.P., is beyond words.

I am grateful to the other members of the teaching faculty and the members and staff in the office and library of the Department of History, University of Calicut for their co-operation and timely assistance in making the research work fruitful.

I would like to place on record and also acknowledge the services rendered by the staff and members of the Kerala State Regional Archives, Kozhikode,Ernakulam,the Archives of the Karnataka Theological College, Mangalore, the Tamil Nadu State Archives, C.H. Memorial Library, University of Calicut and other libraries in the vicinities of Chennai, Kozhikode, Palakkad,Thrissur etc.

I am thankful to the University Grants Commission for awarding me a fellowship under the Faculty Improvement Programme for pursuing this PhD research work.

I remember with gratitude my late mother, uncle, brother, husband and children for all their support and encouragement and also putting up with all the troubles and inconveniences caused by keeping aloof for the sake of research.

Thanks to Bina Photostat, Chenakkal, University of Calicut for promptly helping me with typing and printing of the thesis.I also thank all my friends who had constantly motivated me.

Last but not the least, I dedicate this thesis in memory of my beloved mother who passed away while this work was in progress.

Place: C.U.Campus
Date: 20.01.2017

Anitha. P

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Glossary

<i>aadharam</i>	:	title deed
<i>aluvupaimash</i>	:	accounts prepared by the surveyors
<i>bandy</i>	:	carriages
<i>chakram</i>	:	cochin term of a coin
<i>cusbah</i>	:	a town
<i>fanam</i>	:	coin or money in general
<i>grama</i>	:	also equivalent to <i>agraharam</i> , a Brahmin village.
<i>hobblies</i>	:	group of revenue villages constituting a subdivision of a taluk.
<i>hoons</i>	:	an imaginary coin
<i>huzurniguthi</i>	:	land tax
<i>Jenmaka</i>	:	landlords by birth
<i>jumna</i>	:	the total amount of land revenue the government demands
<i>kanakkar</i>	:	one who holds <i>kanam</i>
<i>kanampattam</i>	:	tenure by mortgage
<i>karnam</i>	:	village assistant
<i>kavalphalam</i>	:	protection fund or compensation for protection
<i>kudi</i>	:	house
<i>kuzhikanam</i>	:	tenure by labour
<i>malikana</i>	:	what is due to the <i>malik</i> or proprietor when set aside from the management of his estate, allowances to the deposed king.
<i>modan & punam</i>	:	the name applied to cultivation of a particular paddy in the high land in the northern division of British Malabar. <i>punam</i> is that land where there

cultivation takes place once in six years.
The *punam* land is not ploughed but dug.

- mugma* : a tax levied from the traders in Malabar by the regional land holder.
- nazrani* : Christians
- pagoda* : equivalent to four rupees or eight shilling
- paimash* : measure or survey
- para* : a measure of capacity. The word also describe the area of paddy field by the amount of grain in *para* it produces
- paramba* : coconut plantation
- patam* : single rent or lease
- pettah* : an open town
- punjilvivaram* : #ndetails of punja and it stands for a crop
- sultanifanam* : a coin of Tipu Sulthan which had fallen in value.
- tara* : territorial unit

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Urban Studies is a recent area of research in social sciences. The cultural life in an urban space has been the focus of scholarship attention since a long period. A particular atmosphere for the growth of towns and cities arose in India with the establishment of British imperialism. The transformation of the Indian society by the penetration of colonial modernity on one hand and its contacts with other regions brought forth a multitude of issues. Till the commencement of the twentieth century not much head way was being made in the urban studies in India. It can be considered as a rapidly expanding field of study of interdisciplinary nature today. The proliferation of urban studies with towns and cities as the subject matter took place in recent years. The social scientists have begun to take interest in the study of city life. They began to locate urban history with wider system of modernisation, i.e., transport, communication, social relations etc. This branch has become a well established one with historical research. The urban studies attempt to explain the growth of towns and cities. Interest in the study of the history of towns and cities in India was initially commenced by Patrick Geddes in the Bombay University. Substantive research occurred only in the post independence time.¹

Among the writings on urban histories, Max Webber offered a historical as well as a comparative writing on the cities of India. Anthony D

¹ R. Ramachandran, *Urbanisation and Urban Systems in India*, OUP: New Delhi, 1989, p.6

King's work on the transformation of Delhi in the twentieth and twentieth is important among them. Almost these works covers major international towns and cities like New York, Glasgow, Paris, Amsterdam etc. With Lefebvres' *Production of Space*, the spatial element began to be introduced into the study. He saw that the relation between the urban and rural, as the British like to call, transformed the rural which is being urbanized.² Thus, the new urban history emerged in the 1960's as a branch of social history.

Urban history theorists and scholars usually view the industrial revolution as a pivotal point to understand pre industrial cities, industrial cities, towns and metropolitan cities. Along with the drastic changes in technology, industry, agriculture, etc., they had to grapple with the subject urbanisation. Innovations in agrarian techniques caused people to settle in one place which created surplus production and trade and which in turn resulted in the rise of cities. Along with this, population increased and large scale migration took place to some places which became urban spaces.

We find many definitions for a city in the literature.³ *The American Heritage History* defines urban space as a town of a significant area. According to the modern definition, a municipality with definite boundaries and legal power set forth in a charter granted by the state. In Canada, a town is a municipality of high rank, usually determined by population, varying by province. In United Kingdom a large incorporated town, usually the seat of

² David Harvey, *Rebel Cities*, Verso: New York, 2012, davidharvey.org, accessed on 26th August 2016 2 P M. David Harvey in his *article Theories on Urban Sociology, Socio Spatial Approach or the New Urban Sociology, 2002, Lecture 22*, Harvey articulated how it is possible to use the approaches of Marx and Engels, uses economic categories in the analysis of a city. The development process was the product of capitalist system, activities involve space .The rise of real estates, and the state using of space for social activities.nptl.ac.in. courses published by University of Chicago Press: accessed on 3rd July, 2016, 5 p m.

³ nps.prehall.com, accessed on 4th June, 2016, 2.30 p m.

the Bishop with its title conferred by the crown is an urban space. In ancient literature a town is a walled area in the centre of a community. The British dictionary defines a cityscape as an urban land scape.⁴ As per Merriam Webster, a city is viewed as a scene or an urban environment.⁵ According to another view for a settlement to qualify as a city it must have enough surplus of raw materials to support trade and relatively large population.⁶

As far as India is concerned, the urban evolution dates back to B.C.2500 in the Indus valley. The Harappan civilization provides the earliest evidence for urbanism and a state of society in the north western part of Indian sub-continent. After the mature phase there followed a disintegration of the state as is known from the material evidence from the sites.⁷ The period from 6th century onwards, there existed many towns and cities in the medieval times, with a definite growth in trade and commerce and the consequent rise of towns and cities.⁸ The growth of towns and cities began to accelerate after independence.

In post independent India a number of works appeared in the realm of urban studies. It is now recognized as a dynamic research field and subjects like environment, geography, population, culture, spatial city life, etc., have become different areas of investigation in this discipline. The social scientists have understood the importance and the dynamism of this subject and they took up this field of study zealously, closely followed by geographers and sociologists. Scholars like Max Weber, Arnold Toynbee, and Percival Spear etc., have made a pioneer contribution in this field. *The Study*

⁴ www.dictionary.com , accessed on 4th June, 2016, 2.30 p m.

⁵ www.merriam – webster.com, accessed on 4th June, 2016, 4.00 p m.

⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/city>, accessed on 3rd August,2016, 4.30 p m.

⁷ Satish Saberwal, and Supriya Varma (ed.), *Traditions inMotion –Religion and Society in History* OUP: New Delhi, 2005, p. 24.

⁸ See for details Champakalakshmi, *Trade Ideologyand Urbanisation*, OUP: Delhi, 1996.

of Ahmadabad by Kenneth Gillone, Christine Dobbins', *Study of Bombay*, Bayley's *Study of Allahabad* are important research works. Pradeep Sinha, Sujatha Patel, and Alice Thorner contributed much in the exploration of the history of Indian cities. Sandip Hazaresingh's study *The Colonial City and the Challenge of Modernity: Urban Hegemonies and Civic Contestations'* and Janaki Nairs' *Bangalore's Twentieth Century: The Promise of a Metropolis* are also significant. In addition to these there are large numbers of micro studies on Indian cities.

Some of the recent works on India include *On India: Self Image and Counter Image* by Anindita N Balslev. It addresses the philosophical religion as well as socio political forces that shape the multiple factors in the life of India. *Urban Villages: Life in an Indian Satellite Town* by Vandana Vasudevan, describes the growth of Delhi towards the borders and about the contradictions, oppositions and the ironies one has to go through. Similar observation is made about major cities like Kolkotta, Chennai, and Mumbai. Another work, *New Forms of Urban Government in India* by I.S.A. Band and J.Dewit examines the decentralization of local governments, the participation of rich and poor in the democratic process and the relation between city and the local. A work entitled *Urbanizing Citizenship, Contested Spaces in Indian Culture* by Renu Desai and Romolia Sanyal looks at urbanisation in contemporary Indian cities. It tries to analyse how citizenship and urbanism is connected. *Urban Women in Contemporary India* edited by Dehane Ghadially examines gender identity, violence against women, media, politics and women participation etc., in the urban space. S.K.Kulshrestha's work *Urban and Regional Planning in India* provides a detailed study of

India's ethics, scope of work in public, private joint sectors, procedure for procuring consulting etc.⁹

1.2 Research problem

As far as Kerala is concerned scholars have realised the importance of the city scape. Some of the recent works like *Urbanisation in Kerala: Idea of Two Panchayats* by Yacoub Kuruvilla, looks into the rapid urbanisation of Kerala and outlines the challenges as well as offers so the solutions for them.¹⁰ *High Pace of Urbanization in Central and Northern Parts of Kerala* by ArunJayan, studies population density among the Indian states.¹¹ A detailed study of under utilization of land is made in the state.¹² *Regional Economic Development in India* edited by SusheelaSubramanya, M.V.SrinivasaGowda underlines the the strong relationship between urbanisation and female work force in Kerala. 'Urbanisation in Kerala – Trends and Consequences', a research paper by Hima Hari talks about the huge growth of urban population and focuses on the trends and consequences of urbanisation in Kerala affecting the life style of the people as a consequence of urbanisation.¹³

Thus, we find in Kerala urbanisation as an important aspect of the socio-economic development connected with migration, sanitation, transport, power structure etc. *Unacknowledged Urbanisation: the New*

⁹ All the above mentioned books are from the Sage Publishing List, accessed on 2nd July, 2016, 10 a m.

¹⁰ Uploaded article in the academia.edu. accessed on 3rd July, 2016, 10 am.

¹¹ The New Indian Express, last updated on 12th July, 2012, accessed on 5th July, 2016, 1 pm.

¹² www.newindianexpress.com, last updated on 12th July, 2012, accessed on 5th July 2016, 1pm.

¹³ www.worldwidejournals.com, accessed 5th July, 2016, 2 p .m

Census Towns of India by KanhuCharan gives insight into the growing share of urban population in towns.¹⁴

It is in this scenario, the urban history of Palakkad is to be studied from 1865 to 1947. Only limited endeavours have taken place in this subject. Working papers on Palakkad like the District Spatial Plan¹⁵ and 'Palakkad in its 2001 Census' etc., states that the process of urbanisation was rather slow in Palakkad and it is positioned in the 10th place in the list of districts in 2001 census and in the next census year 2011 it was dropped to the 11th position.¹⁶

It is in this context, the attempt to examine the urbanisation of Palakkad, its beginning, growth, and progress in various periods is undertaken for historical investigation. The urban space of Palakkad came into being in the eighteenth century due to the intervention of some external forces. Unlike other major towns in India and Kerala, the town space of Palakkad formed because of many factors which are not properly known to us. What were these factors is to be investigated. What happened to the urban space formed in the eighteenth century under the colonial rule is to be answered effectively. What forced the people from rural areas of Malabar and nearby Tamil region to migrate to this town in the nineteenth century,. The process of the work of colonial modernity and national modernity is to be understood. The Basel Mission and the Brahminical revivalism of nineteenth century also played a significant role in shaping the city culture of Palakkad.

¹⁴ www.cprindia.org. accessed 5th July, 2016, 2 p m.

¹⁵ Department of Town and Country Planning, see www.townplanning.keralagov.in. accessed on 3rd September, 2016, 10 pm.

¹⁶ www.censusindia.gov.in, www.researchgate.net/deref. accessed on 3rd September 2016, 10 pm.

The thesis is an attempt to understand the urbanisation of Palakkad and its transformation in the period of nationalism.

1.3 Hypothesis

It is assumed that several changes occurred in the urban space of Palakkad in between 1865 -1947. The Mysorean interlude inaugurated it and the British domination accelerated it. The contacts with interior India, colonial domination and the activities of the Basel Mission ushered in an era of such diverse and multifarious transformation. It was the Mysorean interlude which laid the base of the transformation of the town space. By the construction of the fort under the Mysorean rule, the administrators realized the strategic importance of this place which the English power later on agreed upon. The requirements of colonial rule and the different intervention of the German Basel Mission shaped the city of Palakkad in the nineteenth century. It can be assumed that the city of Palakkad could not move further due to the handicap of colonialism and the resistance to the colonial rule in the above period.

1.4 Chapterisation and Methodology

This work consists of seven chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which displays the general outline of the work. It examines the historical back ground of Palakkad town and schme of the study. It also examines the theories and also reviews literature connected with this study. In the second chapter, the period prior to the take over of the British is looked into. It attempts to record the role of the Mysorean government in building up a town space in Palakkad. The next chapter which is the third one deals with the geography and demography of the town space of Palakkad. The boundaries of the town, population etc., are debated in this chapter. In

the fourth chapter, communication and technology which played a significant role in shaping the town is examined. Subjects like transport and communication, lighting, telegraph, are examined. The next chapter in the thesis explains the culture in the colonial town. The work of spiritualists, temple festivals, graveyards, the work of the Basel Mission, markets etc., are discussed to understand the process of transformation. In chapter six, the life of the people in between two World Wars in the town space of Palakkad is explored. The town became a public space with the arrival of the difficulties in the early part of the twentieth century due to the penetration of colonialism and capitalism.

The thesis is crafted with a sound methodology of historical research. It was necessary to follow an inter-disciplinary method to understand the life of the people in the urban space. It was seen that the conventional methods in historical research is incapable of helping urban studies. Findings in major disciplines in social sciences and humanities are useful to understand the life of the people in the city today. These are to be used in historical research to understand the formation of the Palakkad town. Thus, a comprehensive social science methodology is used in this study.

1.5 Review of the Literature

The number of books and literature directly connected with the topic is very limited. There are few works available to understand the general history of Palakkad district in the form of gazetteer, district hand book, non authentic history works etc. One important work among them is written by V.C.Kabir called *Palakkattucheri Muthal Palakkadu Vare*. V C Kabir tries to explain the history of Palakkad, its cultural heritage, life styles of different people, industries, language etc. In this work, myths and truths are

interwoven and it is a laborious process to differentiate the two. The *Palakkad District Gazetteer* by Dr.C.K.Kareem is another comprehensive work.This work gives an outline of the history of the people, agriculture, banking, trade, commerce, local self-government, public health, etc. Another work titled *Palakkad: Sthalam, Kalam, Charitram* is prepared by the Palakkad District Tourism Promotion Council.This work edited by K.V. Mohankumar examines history, geography, biodiversity, agrarian sections, education, culture etc., of the Palakkad District. Another book *Nagaram Pinnita Naal Vazhikal*, published by the Palakkad Municipality is a collection of articles on the history, culture, *geography*, agriculture etc., of Palakkad.

There are plenty of biographical literatures touching the history of the town in Malayalam language. In K.P. KesavaMenon's work *Samakaleenaraya Chila Keraleeyar* examines the town and its people in certain pages. The *Bharathapuzha* is a travelogue by Dr.RajanChungath which examines the Fort, palace of the Kollengode Raja, and the oxen carrying grains through the town in the early part of the last century. The place names of Palakkad is examined in historical spirit by V.V. Valath in his book *Keralathile Stala Charitrangal Palakkadu Jilla. Veezhumalayude Thazvarayil Ninnu* is an autobiography written by R.Krishnan. He writes about the changes of Palakkad over the period he saw in his life. Bhaskaraguptan in his *Desayanam*writes about the geography, health, and the *vaisya* people in Kerala. *Kerala under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan* written by Dr.C K Kareem, outlines the far reaching consequences of the Mysorean invasion. Another book the *Cultural History of Kerala* by Rajan Gurukkal and M R Raghava Varier, *The History of the Freedom Movement in Kerala* by P K K Menon examines the political conferences in Malabar.The *Perspectives on Kerala History* edited by P.J. Cherian contains a lot of information about Kerala in

general and Palakkad in particular. Another work which gives the local history of Palakkad is *Konganpada, Onam, Thoppi, Charitrathile Atayalappetuthalukal* written by Prof. K. Gopalankutty.

In addition to these books the literary works are also perused for the research work. The novels of Thakazhi Sivasankaran Pillai, Kesava Dev, Vaikom Muhammed Basheer, Uroob, S.K.Pottekadu and Lalitambika Antarjanam touch the life of the people in Palakkad in various degrees. The writings of M.T.Vasudevan Nair, T.Padmanabhan, Madhavikutty, V.K. Narayanankutty, are also useful to understand the town life. O V Vijayan's works were also examined. His *Nagaradevatha* explains settlements around religious places in the town. His major work *Thasrakilelthihasam* deals about the marginalized people in the society. These fictions and literature unfold the Kerala society.

1.6 Inter disciplinary relevance

In the world history the mention of urbanisation and urban life can be seen in the works of Aristotle. He considers a city composed of different kinds of men and that similar people could not bring a city into existence. It is said that in the world parameter, the notion of city includes the complementary concepts of urban and the civic, which starts from the traditional Roman differentiation towards *urbs* and *civitas*.¹⁷ The medieval cities it is said argued for two factors i.e., bourgeoisie and an organization.¹⁸

¹⁷ *urbs* describes about the space for habitation which is ever changing. *civitas* refers to the community life in which citizens participate. See for details Catherine Farvacque – Vitkovic, Lucien Godin Hugues Le houx, *Street Addressing and the Management of Cities*, World bank Publications: Washington: 2005. (Her book *Municipal Finances*, [elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs \(scholar.google.co in\)](http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/scholar.google.co.in) accessed on 28th August, 2016, 11 a.m.

¹⁸ Theory of Henri Pirenne, www.Britannica.com/https/topic/urban accessed 30th August, 2016, 3 p.m.

This had many drawbacks and so could not be accepted. Lewis Mumford opines city as 'a theatre of social action and city as a stage which intensifies and underlines the gestures of the action in the play'.¹⁹ We come to know from his work about cities, their function, their internal spatial structure, their relationship with environment and argue that it is the art, culture and politics and not numbers which define the city.²⁰ Max Webber gives five attributes needed for cities, fortification, market, law courts, association of urban citizens, sufficient political autonomy.²¹

In India, it was not until the middle of third millennium B.C, that true urban life started, the first traces of it can be seen in India in the Indus Valley with its mature phase at the main site of Mohenjo-Daro.²² The beginnings of the urban evolution in India again started from sixth century onwards. It was the time where cities began to come to existence along with the development of trade. This era was commonly called as period of second urbanisation in India. The Brahmanical scriptures, Buddhist and Jain works testify this. We get a number of references on the urban cities and the prosperous trade of that period. During the medieval times, with the consolidation of Delhi Sultanate the volume of trade and commerce augmented with the consequent rise of towns and cities.²³

In the 18th century, India was once again united under the banner of Great Britain which completely changed the pace of urbanisation which

¹⁹ kisi.deu.edu.tr/Mumford.pdf, p. 93, accessed on 9th September, 7 p m.

²⁰ online.library.wiley.com, reviewed articles, p.300, accessed on 9th September 2016, 7 p m.

²¹ www.britannica.com/https/topics/urban, accessed on 30th August, 2016, 3.30 p m.

²² See for details S R Rao, *Lothal and the Indian Civilization*, Asia Publishing House: 1974. This changed our perception of India.

²³ See R. Champakalakshmi, *Trade, Ideology, Urbanization: South India, 300BC to AD1300*, OUP: Delhi, 1996.

began to accelerate. In Kerala, with the treaty of Seringapatnam with Tipu Sultan, the British power consolidated their domination over the Malabar region and Palakkad thus came under the direct rule of the Presidency. In pre colonial India, urban centres had tended to be political at the core, their rise and fall linked to the political regimes.²⁴

Many scholars had tried to define this concept and they had put forth different viewpoints. It is a process by which large number of people becomes permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities here people living in cities increases when compared to people living in rural areas, people will be mostly engaged in non-agricultural activities.²⁵

Another group of scholars argue new degree of urbanisation classification as densely, intermediate and thinly populated area. The aim of this type of approach is to harmonise several similar but not identical spatial concepts. This new classification is based on population grid. That can be considered as a new tool, created by a small but growing number of countries in European Union, based on population registers or other detailed sources of where people live. This will give accurate information about the population distribution within the region.²⁶

As far as Palakkad is concerned we find the village settlement registers which stores huge data and is voluminous and greatly resembles

²⁴ As far as medieval towns are concerned the conspicuous features are prakara or high wall surrounding the town, a moat deep and broad water less wells or pits near prakaras for the enemy to fall down, roads, markets full of commodities, bristling trade, grand temples etc are some of the characteristics. Refer Sathish Sharma, *Social Transformation in Urban India*, Dominant Publishers and Distributors: 2002.

²⁵ Water : [tkk.f1>glob>Harpele>pdf-files](#), seen on 23.05.2016, 10 a m.

²⁶ Lewis Dijkstra and Hugo Poleman. *A Harmonious Definition of Cities and Rural Areas: The New Degree of Urbanisation*, Regional Working Paper, 2014, European Commission.ec.europa.eu>2014-01-new_urban.seen on 24.5.16 (2) doc player.net. accessed on 24.5.2016, 10 a m.

the above mentioned population grid system. From such registers one would understand the region wise concentration of the population and the cultivable, garden and barren lands and the occupiers and how much land they occupy. Detailed description is got so as to enable one to understand a whole lot of things on a particular region. Private owned, temple owned as well as government owned lands are elaborated. These details also gives a description of land, whether it is fertile or less fertile as well as about the residential and Governmental area, the group of traders, agriculturists etc.

As per the Census definition, the urban definition in India did not undergo much change from 1891 to 1951. The 'town is defined, as every municipality of any size, all civil lines not included within municipal limits, Houses inhabited by not less than five thousand, can be treated as town for Census purposes'.²⁷ Urbanisation is also defined by the United Nation as a movement of people from rural to urban areas.²⁸ Urbanisation refers to the transition from a rural economy to a more productive urban economy on a national scale.²⁹

In this context, it is worthwhile to a make an understanding of the ideas of Lefebvre.³⁰ He relied on the works of Marx and Engels and showed how it was possible to use economic categories such as capital investment profit, rent, wages etc in the analysis of the city. Thus, he argued that the development process was the product of capitalist system. He put forth the ideas that interaction among the individuals is not the only activity but about space as well. Social activities take place in the space as well. City building

²⁷ *Census of India*, 1901, Government of India , vol. 1, p. 21.

²⁸ Questia online research, accessed on 23.5.16, 11 am.

²⁹ TuckerPatrick, *The Futurist*, vol. 39, no. 6, Nov- Dec 2005, <http://www.question.com.magazine>, accessed on 24.5.16, 10 am.

³⁰ He was a French Marxist philosopher and sociologist.

process creates certain space. He also introduced the concept of circuits of capital and its primary aim is the production of commodity of workers and the production process in the factory, which are created for a profit. Finally he discusses on the role of government and space, the government making use of space close by to the habitats of people in upkeep of police station and fire station.³¹ Urban scholars have often emphasised different characteristic in defining city.

Scholars have predicted an urban explosion in Asia. The rapid growth of certain cities in Asia and India can be considered as a major contributor to this explosion.³² It is also said that the failure to conceptualise is the cause of our problems, and if we are able to identify the real problems, only then we will be able to formulate appropriate policies. It is also opined that geography could not remain objective in the face of urban poverty and put forth the theory that 'capitalism annihilated space to ensure its own reproduction'.³³ Harvey further elaborates urbanism as a particular form of social processes and a city as a tangible, environment and he defines a society as a 'group of human beings sharing a self sufficient system. 'He further considers urbanism as a social form in which hierarchical division of labour exists which is compatible with the dominant mode of production.³⁴ Urbanisation it is said that has played a crucial role in absorbing the surpluses and has done so by dispossessing the urban masses and this ends in a revolt.³⁵ Marshal Berman opines that Rousseau can be considered to be

³¹ nptel.acin.courses, lecture22. Theories of Urban Sociology, Some Spatial Approach or the New Urban Sociology, 20.2, Lecture 22 , accessed on 22nd May, 2016, 7 a m.

³² Amitab Kundu, *Trends and Processes of Urbanisation in India*, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) London, September 2011, accessed on 1.30 p m, 23rd May 2016.

³³ See for details, David Harvey, *Social Justice and City*, University of Georgia Press: 1973.

³⁴ David Harvey, *Social Justice and City*, University of Georgia Press: 1973, pp. 106, 203.

³⁵ David Harvey here refers to the city of Paris.

the first person to use the word 'modernise' in the way used by the 19th—20th centuries. He argues that those who are critical of modern life and modernism must initiate a change in our environment and us. He takes Marx as a sure example, as he can be considered as one of the great modernists who even though he does not have a solution to the problems can lead us to contradictions through modernity.³⁶ He defines modernity as a contradiction which at the same time strives for a positive change and at the same time an unstoppable or inevitable process which tends to destroy all appreciable and accustomed things. This modernity spreads and has its roots from the European origins 'to take the whole world, shattering as it does into a multitude of fragment'.³⁷ It is opined that modernity came to India not through any indigenous evolution, but through the agency of colonialism. The different writers upheld everything western as superior.³⁸ The critiques of colonial modernity argue that equality, liberty and all progressive ideas are seen only in European countries and not in the colonies. In the period of the colonial rule it is seen that along with the introduction of town planning a new relationship towards space also came up. Here the author refers to the naming of the places according to the works in which they were engaged.³⁹ Urbanity, Urbanism and cityscape are also important notions. Urbanity means the quality of being urbane. Urbanisation is an index of transformation from traditional rural economies to a modern industrial

³⁶ Marshall Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air*, Verso: New York, 1983, p. 17.

³⁷ Marshall Berman, *Ibid.*, Lefebvre and David Harvey shared this view.

³⁸ PradipBasu, (ed.), *Colonial Modernity, Indian Perspectives*, SetuPrakashani: Kolkotta, 2011, p. 6. These different writers are belonging to nationalist, colonial, post colonial, Marxian, subaltern etc.

³⁹ Janaki Nair, *Promise of a Metropolis*, OUP: New Delhi, 2007, p. 67.

one.⁴⁰ Urbanism is the way of life of people who live in a large city.⁴¹ Cityscape is explained as the visual appearance of a city or an urban area, an urban equivalent of a landscape.⁴² Anima Gupta argues that urbanisation when dealt within the Census classified definition is limiting its scope definitely and expresses a need to re-examine it in its multi-dimensional concepts. She further states that scholars belonging to different disciplines have varied views concerning urban areas. Economists view it as an organisation for economic enterprise which provides goods and services and also labour. Geographers are concerned with the spatial and physical aspects of cities. Historians tend to view this as centres of civilization. Political scientist looks out for the political organization and Sociologists looking into something more than population, busy streets etc.⁴³ Sorokin and Zimmerman say that it should consist of a multiple factors. They outline eight factors like occupation, environment, size of the community, density of population, heterogeneity, social differentiation, stratification etc.⁴⁴ Anima Gupta outlines the close association between urbanisation and economic development. It includes all physical and social infrastructures present in the settlement. Development leading to urban growth and also the role of the administrative set up. More money diversion will lead to more flow of money which changes the living patterns.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Anima Gupta, *Measuring Urbanisation Around a Regional Capital...PERIURBAN—Bhopal—wp 6—1—pdf*, Working Paper Series, SUBURBIN., accessed on 6.12.2015, 10 a.m.

⁴¹ www.dictionary.com, accessed on 6.12.2015, 10 a.m.

⁴² <https://en.m.wikipedia.org>.

⁴³ Anima Gupta, *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Sorokin and Zimmerman, *Principles of Rural – Urban Sociology*, New York: 1929 in Anima Gupta's work.

⁴⁵ Anima Gupta, *op.cit.*

Kingsly Davis has opined about the economic base of urban life and has undergone vast and tremendous change and explained urbanisation as a process of switch from spread out pattern of human settlements to one of concentration in urban centres. He compares it to a cycle through which a nation passes as it evolves from agrarian mode to industrial society. He puts forth three stages in the process of urbanisation. The initial stage featured by agrarian and traditional outlook and scattered pattern of settlement. In the next stage certain improvements in the mode of transport and communication takes place and also refers to the restructuring of the society. The proportion of urban population gradually increased from 25 percent to 40, 50, and 60. The final stage in the terminal stage where urban population exceeds 70 per cent or more and a constant point is achieved here. He argues that the rate of population and total population remain the same at this stage.⁴⁶

Kingsly Davis makes an interesting analytical distinction between the process of urbanisation and that of urban growth. He says that cities can grow without any urbanisation, provided that the rural population grows at an equal or greater rate or in other words it is possible to have urban growth without urbanisation.⁴⁷

The movement of population from rural to urban area and the resulting increase in the proportion of population that resides in the urban rather than rural is called urbanisation. The pattern involved not only

⁴⁶ PranetiDatta, *Urbanisation in India*, June 21 – 24, 2006. Here in this paper the argument of Kingsly Davis is put forth. www.infostat.sk/vdc/epc... seen on 23.5.16, 1 p m.

⁴⁷ Deborah Stevenson, *Cities and Urban Culture*, Rawat Publications: New Delhi, 2009, p.13.

movement from village to cities but also change in migrant's attitude, beliefs, values and behaviour patterns.⁴⁸

One tends to find that there is no international consensus on city and urban. The process of population movement from within town and cities to the rural urban fringe is described by the term sub urbanisation. That is also to be looked into. Louis Wirth summarized urban theory in urbanism as a way of life; he argued that for sociological purposes a city may be defined as a relatively large and permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals. From there we come to understand that a large group of people with diverse views and ideas live together in a space called city. He tries to show that social implication of this is that, a large population, dense environment and different individual groups. David Harveys' *Social Justice and City* also partly agrees, as he started from the question of understanding space. Castells understands from the basic question of social relations.⁴⁹

Castells, another important theorist focuses on the impact of capitalist dynamics on the transformation of urban space and the role of urban social movement in this process. It also approached the city as a social product that is the result of conflicting social interest and values. He recognizes the urban social movements contain a dialectical mixture of both class based and non-class based orientation that finds expression in the civil society and state.⁵⁰ Louis Wirth, the human ecologist of the Chicago school was interested in providing a systematic definition of urbanism as a way of

⁴⁸ Louis Wirth, 'Urbanism as a Way of Life' in *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 44, no. 1 (July 1938), pp. 1-22, accessed on 23.5.16, 4 p m.

⁴⁹ AnoopKhanne and AdeshChaturvedi, *Urbanizing India, Challenges and Responses*, Shruti Publications: 2010, p. 16.

⁵⁰ Stevan. M. Buechlar, 'New Social Movement Theories', *The Sociological Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 3, 1995, inflienet, University of Calicut.

life unique to cities and as an outcome of the heterogeneity, size and density of urban environments.⁵¹

According to Louis Wirth, Urbanism causes people to become dependent on society. They depend on others for their needs whereas the rural community was self sufficient or if at all need help will depend on their family and neighbours to help them. Louis Wirth belonged to the Chicago school of urban sociologist.⁵² He also examines how cities influence the social organization, attitudes and personalities of the residents. Small settlement in close proximity to metropolitan centres tends to have urban features. Denser the settlement the more heterogeneous the pattern will be according to him.⁵³ Robert Redfield contrasted the image with folk community and he was strongly influenced by the Louis Wirth and others in the Chicago school.⁵⁴

Urban scholars tend to emphasis different aspects in a city. Ulf Hannerz, a Swedish anthropologist takes relative density and size for granted and concentrates on the quality of heterogeneity. Wider services are available in a city than in smaller communities. Some scholars' emphasis on demography while others stress for communities with specific institution.⁵⁵

⁵¹ We find two major schools on the origin and early development of cities. The German school under Weber, Spengler, Simmel and the Chicago school headed by Robert part, Ernest Burgess, Louis Wirth, Robert Redfield. (2) Debora. H. Stevenson, *Cities and Urban Culture*, Rawat Publications: New Delhi, 2000, p. 20.

⁵² Louis Wirth, *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 44, no. 1, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/scholar.google.in>. accessed on 15.6.2016, 4 p m.

⁵³ Louis Wirth, 'Urbanism as a Way of Life' in *American Journal of Society*, vol. 44, 1938, pp. 3-24. <http://www.jstore.org/stable/scholar.google.in>, accessed on 15.6.2016, 5 p m.

⁵⁴ www.britannica.com/https/topic/urban, accessed on 30th August, 2016, 4 p m.

⁵⁵ Ulf Hannerz, *Exploring the City, Inquiries Towards an Urban Anthropology*, New York, 1980. Columbian University Press: pp. 109-118. nps.prehall.com. accessed on 15.6.2016, 5 p m.

Burgess's concentric theory, the process of expansion as cities grow, population flows outward from centre in a form described as concentric zones. The first zone is the central business district encircling this is the nucleus zone of transition 'invaded' by small business men of residents living in dilapidated boarding house. Area within the third circle is the zone of working men's homes – The multiple families may lead to single family house.⁵⁶ It is further elaborated that, spaces allocated to different uses in the city were on economic and competitive basis. Residential areas were segregated from commercial zones, thus modelled on concentric zones. Each area is being marked for a particular purpose. Example business place, financial centre, lines of transportation, retail merchandising centre etc. Cities grow and the process of expansion occurs and population flows outward from centre in a form described as concentric zones. But later on this model was challenged as it was found that in America, cities tend to confirm to a pattern of sector rather than of concentric circles. Thereafter Harries and Ullman developed a multiple nuclei model.⁵⁷ Davie and Hoyt also refuted concentric zone theory. They maintained that there was nothing in the rates to suggest combination into concentric zones. He also indicated that the rate of delinquency in an area varies with nearness to industrial and commercial activities, areas characterised by physical deterioration and high rates of foreign born population.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ernest W. Burgess puts forth one of the earliest models to explain urban social structures in 1925. <https://wikipedia.org/wiki>, accessed on 15.6.2016, 4 p m.

⁵⁷ Mark Abrahamson, *Urban Sociology*, Prenticehall Ins, New Jersey, 1976. (2) Annapurna Shaw (ed.), *Indian Cities in Transition*, Orient Longman: 2007, pp. 344-347, accessed on 15.6.2016, 4 p m.

⁵⁸ Maurice. R. Davie, 'The Pattern of Urban Growth' in George. P. Murdock (ed.,) *Studies in the Sciences of Society*, New Haven, Yale City Press: 1938.

Since 1970's many cultural theorists started to focus on the city as it is 'lived' rather than on structures and patterns. George Simmel became one of first scholars who problematized the idea and the 'lived' experience of modern urban culture and the urban conditions.⁵⁹

Manuel Castell's book, '*The Urban Question*', posed a serious challenge to both Weberian theories as also Chicago school. He was influenced by Henri Lefebvre. Castell was not interested in 'lived' but in the structural and objective as well as asserted on the scientific basis of urban sociology and also to identify the capitalist mode of production.⁶⁰

Castells in his other work '*The City and the Grass Root*', sought to incorporate new form of social identities by going even further beyond the conventional Marxist frameworks, through an emphasis on consumption, process and their role in the reproduction of labour.⁶¹

The shortcomings of these approaches were questioned by feminist writings focusing on issues and which questions the emphasis placed on economic and class based matters. We find feminist theorists perspective in this context. Feminists have explored how the urban policy, the structure of cities as well as urban studies have in some way marginalised or ignored the

⁵⁹ Simmel's main essay 'The Metropolis and Mental Life', tries to know the urban in its fullest sense of the term, not living in villages nor seeing everything modern with deep distaste. He was also not interested in the settlement patterns etc. But he stressed on the contemporary life and culture, industrialism, urban conditions greatly caught his attention. He focused on the idea and lived experience of modern urban culture and urban conditions. (Deborah Stevenson, *Cities and Urban Culture*, Rawat Publications: New Delhi, 2009, p. 20)

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁶¹ John Eade and Christopher Mele, (ed.), *Understanding the City - Contemporary and Future Perspectives*, Black Well Publishing: 2002, p. 5.

needs of them, their priorities, needs, likes etc.⁶² Some scholars opine about the vertical and the horizontal dimensions of the urban society, for an understanding of the nature of urban society. Horizontal changes implies a change of only occupational position, an improvement without causing changes in the position in the social hierarchy whereas vertical change refers to changes in the status and thereby a change in the social stratification in the society.⁶³

The smallest urban limit in pre colonial unit India was called *cusbah* – which usually presided over the administration, political and economy of the rural world. It can be considered as the vertical dimension of the society. *cusbah* occupy an important part and it acts between urban and rural society, linked former to latter. Urban studies largely focused on the analysis of cities in their horizontal dynamic while making theoretical dimensions of the geographical space.⁶⁴ The pattern of urbanization in India is characterized by continuous concentration of population and activities in large cities. Kingsly Davis used the term ‘over urbanisation’ where an urban misery and rural poverty exist side by side with the result that city had to hardly be called dynamic.⁶⁵

We also come to know about hidden urbanisation. This is particularly seen on the peripheries of major cities and mostly not captured by official statistics. This is symptomatic of the failure to adequately address

⁶² See articles in UN WomenWatch, *Gender, Equality and Sustainable Urbanisation*, www.UN.org/womanwatch/feature/urban, accessed on 19.10.2015, 11 am. Also see www.genderanddevelopment.org/page/urban, accessed on 19.10.2015, 10 a m.

⁶³ www.yourarticlelibrary.com, accessed on 19.10.2015, 11 a m.

⁶⁴ H. K. Naqvi, *Studies on Urban Medieval Society, Urban Centers and Industries in Upper India.1556-1803*, Asian Publishing House: 1968. See for details C. A. Bayly, *Rulers Townsmen and Bazaars’, 1770-1870*, OUP: 1983.

⁶⁵ Davis Kingsly, *Urbanization – Past and Future*(ed.,) *India’s Urban Future*, University of California Press, Berkeley, www.infostat.sk>vdc>epc2006, seen on 28th April 2016.

congestion constraint that arise from the pressure of urban populations on infrastructures, basic services etc.⁶⁶ In the urban life analysis the patriarchy fails to acknowledge women diversity their public private space to be understood in relation with the cities, urbanisms, identity etc. Thus an attempt is made by the writers to understand and experience the city life in various ways.

We find that the planning in Europe is not completely applicable in India or to Kerala or Palakkad. But we do find some small scale migrations, taking place. The thrust for planning initially came from European civil servants, doctor's merchants and influential Indian living in the cities. Only later did the civil engineers, town planers showed up. The archival documents help to push back modern planning to an earlier data is 19 century.⁶⁷

Study of urbanisation makes a clear distinction between the 'primary and secondary development'. In the case of 'former it is due to the internal development whereas in the latter case, this is the direct outgrowth of the expansion of an empire with its forts, regional administrative centres' acting as a place from where culture is disseminated.⁶⁸ This can be considered true in the case of Palakkad, where it acted as a direct off shoot of a colonial empire.

A scholar argues that history of colonisation will reveal that the city has been one of the key devices used as a base of power for the control of

⁶⁶ m.the hindu.com, *Indian Challenge of Disordered Urbanisation*' updated on February 26, 2016, 20. 54 IST, accessed on 28.5.2016, 7 p m.

⁶⁷ ParthoDatta, *Planning the City: Urbanisation and Reform in Calcutta – 1800 – 1940*, Tulika Books: New Delhi, 2012, p. 4.

⁶⁸ R.M. Mubarak Pasha, *Trade Centre and Trade Groups in Kerala*, Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Calicut, 1997, p. 12.

subjected areas.⁶⁹ Urban studies approaches in the critical, political economy traditions have ably absorbed as analysis of cultural forms into a theory of social production and space. Then approaches concerns with the city as a force that shapes the everyday life of urban dwellers. An attempt is made by the urban theorists to account for the new form of a social difference and identity within the political economic paradigm.⁷⁰

Katznelson in *Marxism and the City* sought to explain the rise of new identities by stretching the theoretical framework to include these realities. Arther Gunther Frank's World System theory refers to the interregional and transnational division of labour which divides the countries into core countries, semi periphery countries and the periphery countries. He says that the core countries dominance can be seen as they focuses on high skill, capital - intensive production where as the rest of the country focuses on low skill labour intensive production. This system has dynamic features, as a result of revolution in transport technology and this status of core, semi periphery and periphery is liable to change.⁷¹ Development theories are about understanding how the processes of change in societies take place. Development concepts acknowledge ideas of change, progress as well as right action conducive to the development of progress of people and society. Development theories make an attempt to understand how these processes

⁶⁹ Ronald .J. Horvath, *In Search of a Theory of Urbanization: Notes on the Colonial City*, East Lakes Geographers, No. 5, 1969-75.

⁷⁰ John Eade and Christopher Mele (ed.), *Understanding the City – Contemporary and Future Perspectives*, Blackwell Publishing: 2002.

⁷¹ Gunther Frank was a German American economic historian and sociologist who promoted Dependency theory after 1970 and world systems theory after 1984.He made use of some of the Marxian approaches on political economy but rejected his stage of history and economic history. See World Systems Theory ps://enm.wikipedia.org. accessed on June1st, 2016, 3 pm.

take place.⁷² Thus the modernisation theories are used to explain the process of modernization within the societies. It implies a transition from pre modern or traditional to a modern society.

Wallenstein's world system theory and its legacy of theories of globalization is foundational, especially its designation of cities as of first and third worlds, North or South. These theories absorbed cities across the globe into an integrated developmental narrative in which the cities are placed in a globally urban hierarchy produced by one single force.⁷³ Another view worthy of our attention is that in the earlier stage this urban development was the product of the mercantilist system, the colonial towns having a close connection with the imperial towns. As agents of imperial expansion, colonial towns were consciously conceived and planted to precede a more direct settlement. In economic usage these towns were called 'entrepôts' i.e., a collection agency of goods from these colonies for shipment to the mother country. The immediate areas around colonial towns were not highly developed. Thus a regional approach is to be considered. It is also noted here that the term urban by itself will not make any sense, it takes a meaning only when seen in the context of the totality of the society, another aspect stressed is that by using a regional approach it will be possible to know whether the cities and towns had an active role to play or whether they passively reflected the larger society as such.⁷⁴ Urbanisation is the process by which villages develop into towns and towns into cities. Agricultural

⁷² John Harris, *Development Theories*, www.developmentideas.info accessed July, 2nd 2016, 5 p m.

⁷³ <https://www.boundless.com/theories/world-systems-theory>, pp. 429-537, accessed July, 2nd 2016, 4 p m.

⁷⁴ Gilbert A Stelter, 'A Regional Framework for Urban History' in *Urban History Review*, vol.X111, No.3,February,1985, pp. 193 – 205, www.erudit.org accessed on 30th August, 2016, 11 p m.

revolution along with industrial changes was a major breakthrough leading to urban development.⁷⁵ Sociologists treat urbanisation as a process of diffusion of certain modernising traits or features in a population.⁷⁶ It is being argued that there is a tendency to treat urbanisation as co-existent or simultaneous with modernization and development along the western models.

As far as Palakkad is concerned this cannot be fully applicable. It is only one among the factors that led to this transformation.⁷⁷ Anthony D King opines that until recently the understanding of urbanism and urbanisation we mostly depend on the theories derived from west and these theories do not fit the majority of cities in the non-western worlds especially 'the colonial' and 'post colonial' cities of Asia and Africa. So it is imperative that the colonial cities to be treated as distinct types.⁷⁸ The diversity in these definitions of urbanization led McGee to call it a balloon into which each scientist blows his own meaning.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Gukind Peter, C.W. VanGorcum and B.V. Comp, *Urban Anthropology; Perspectives on Third World Urbanisation and Urbanism*, Netherlands, 1974, p. 1, in Narayani Gupta, Chapter 1, introduction, shodganga.inflibnet.ac.in, accessed 30th August, 2016, 12 p m.

⁷⁶ Gould and Kaib, *A Dictionary of Social Sciences*, p.739 cited in Narayani Gupta, accessed 30th August, 2016, 1 p m.

⁷⁷ Narayani Gupta, Chapter 1, introduction, shodganga, inflibnet, accessed on 30th August 2016, 3 p m.

⁷⁸ Anthony D King, *Culture, Social Power and Environment*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: Boston, 2010.

⁷⁹ TG Mac Gee, *Urbanisation Process in the World*, London:1971, p. 10, cited in Narayani Gupta's work.

Chapter 2

Palakkad before the British Raj

2.1 Introduction

Palakkad¹ is District in the state of Kerala today famous for its pre historic relics. Many archaeological sites were discovered or unearthed from different parts of Palakkad.²The remains found at Pallavur, Kalladikoden valley, can be considered major findings.³ The erections built of granite works over a burial site can be termed as megaliths. They are important findings in the field of archaeology regarding the antiquity of Kerala history.

Much work is being carried out in this area in the district of Palakkad. A large number of prehistoric, early historic, medieval and late medieval archaeological sites relating to ancient Tamizhakam have come to light. The site at Chatiyodu has the image of a bull engraved on a flat rocky surface near an open shrine, motifs of trees are found. Similar discoveries have been made along the Gayathripuzha valley of Thenmala in Arayakulam, Seetharkundu, Thavarmaniporai and Vamala. Carvings of foot prints are found in Kalavethi, Kalpathy, Thenary, Thiruvilwamala and Malayathur hills.⁴

¹ In ancient records this region is known as 'Palakattucherry', in Mysorean records this region is 'Palghaut', in British records it is 'Palghat'. Now it is known 'Palakkad'. Throughout the thesis I have used Palakkad and Palghat.

² It is enumerated in the Archaeological Survey of Southern India, vol.1, by Robert Sewell. It is being detailed in Palakkad Gazetteers, by Dr. C. K Kareem, printed in the Superintendent of Government Press: Ernakulum, 1976, pp. 50 – 54.

³ In *Kerala and her People* gives us details about the importance of prehistoric relics at Pallavur (See details,L. A Krishna Iyer, *Kerala and her People*, 1961, p. 26.) About Kalladikode we find description in William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, vol.1, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2010, p. 180.)

⁴ These are different megalithic places or sites in and around Palakkad, shows these region were inhabited by people. (*The Hindu*, April 21, 2014 (updated April 21, 2014, 14:11 IST) accessed on 22.8.2015, 2 p m.) The early mans respect for the dead itself as a powerful image, in fact the dead were the first to have a dwelling. (<https://www.amazon.com> accessed 9th September, 2016, 7 p m.)

Relics from the megalithic culture are to be found in Mupuzha, in Kuthanur Panchayath, Malampuzha, Vaddakenchery etc. In South India, several hundred megalithic relics have been found by archaeologists and the Government. The relics excavated in Kerala include *kodakkal*⁵, Rock Cut Caves, Urn burials, Hat stones, Slabcists, Menhirs, multiple hood stones.⁶ Major archaeological sites can be seen even today in Kollengode, Muthalamada, Elavancherry, Nenmmara, Pallasena.⁷ The megalithic burials and monuments built of granite are the predominant cultural evidence of the Iron Age found in the Palakkad region.⁸ Several thousand megalithic sites were found in Kerala and here reference is made to a place near Pothundy Dam near Nelliampathy. Many dolmens, cists, cists with stone circle and urn burials were found.⁹ Many iron objects like knives, arrowheads, swords, spears etc are found along with precious stones, pots in these megalithic burials.

In these megalithic one can also find the presence of iron and also the use of Black and Red Ware (BRW). It is also believed that use of iron and the construction of megaliths were as a result of cultural contacts with regions of north and west and these megalithic distributions is not in extensive clusters,

⁵ *kodakal* is the umbrella stone, a megalithic remain.

⁶ Archeology News Network, online website, 6.5.2010, 12:09:00pm, source, The Hindu, accessed on Saturday, 22.08.2015, 2.00pm.

⁷ *The Hindu*, October 26, 2013 (updated on October 26th2013, 10:24 IST) m.thehindu.com, accessed on 20.8.2015, 2.00pm.

⁸ In the year 2007, a two day exhibition at Kozhikode, throwing light on the places of worship and historical monuments. In Malabar was conducted under the aegis of Malabar Chamber of Commerce, Department of Architecture, NIT-C, ASI (Trichur Circle), DTPC, Department of History, The University of Calicut, *The Hindu*, November 5, 2007, accessed on 20.8.2015, 10a.m} *It was also mentioned in The Hindu*, October 26, 2013 (updated on October 26, 2013, 10:24 IST), m.thehindu.com, accessed 20.8.2015, 2.00pm.)

⁹ Archaeological Survey of India, asi.academia.edu>documents, accessed on 12th August 2016, 4 p m.

it is a pointer to the dispersed nature of the settlements.¹⁰ The megaliths of Kerala, Srilanka and Tamilnadu are assigned to the period between first millennium BC and the beginning of the first millennium A.D. on the basis of comparative archaeology.¹¹

T.A.S Ayyankar, Chandrasekhara Menon, R.V.Joshi, P.Rajendran and others has made extensive study of the Stone Age period in Palakkad. The works were conducted on the banks of Bharatapuzha points out to this. Perayri, Podipara, Perigottukurissi, Walayar, Malampuzha, Narasimukku, Parali, Kanhirapuzha, Mukkali are some of the places associated with this.¹²

In the year 1882, British official Robert Sewell, was the first person to bring to notice about the existence of the megaliths in Palakkad region. He had recovered about the extensive collection of megaliths in and around Palakkad. In South India iron is said to have found by about 1200 BC. On the basis of the scientific study of artifacts like of the iron implements, pottery, beads etc., it is concluded that the megalithic age is between 100C and 300 A.D. Even though megalithic remains were found in almost all districts of Kerala, the Palakkad's artifacts show a variety as well as concentration of these centers. Alongside the Gayathri Puzha near some temple remains we come across some terracotta figurines in the region of Kollengode, Chittur, Alathur, shows a linkage to their traditions and beliefs and peculiarities one can see in places where Brahmin form of worship is not prominent. At the

¹⁰ Buchanan in his *Journey from Madras through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, vol.ii, have mentioned about the region of Kollengode where iron ore is found in the district of Palakkad.

¹¹ Dr.P.M.Rajan Gurukkal, *Historical Antecedents in Perspectives on Kerala History*, (ed.), P.J.Cherian, *Kerala Gazetteers*, Government of Kerala: 1999, p.25.

¹² K.Rajan, *Keralathinte Puravasthu Sthanangal in Palakkad, Alathur*, in *Stalam – Kalam - Charitram*, (Mal.), DTPC: 2011, p.63.

same time the imprints seen refer to the influence of Jainism or Hinduism it seems.¹³

2.2 Palakkad Raja and the Regional Politics

Only scanty materials are available regarding the ancient periods of the Palakkad region. The remaining materials include various grants, coins, epigraphic inscriptions, from which we can reconstruct some details about the early times. All these sources state that the royal dynasties of Kerala came into being after the breakup of the Perumals or the second Chera kingdom. The history of the origin of this dynasty was obscure. It seems they were called by the titles *Vadekkenaikkan* and *Thekkenaikkan* with whom was entrusted the watch and ward of Palakkad gap.¹⁴ Going by the dismemberment of the kingdom by Perumal, it was said that Palakkadcherry came to the hands of Sekhary Raja of the Kshatriya caste.¹⁵ Ancient Tamil literature terms the Raja of Palakkad as Velappnetta (Velappanad) Raja and the Tarur family tracing their lineage back to Sekharivarma. Special relation with Calicut as well as Cochin existed (number of *sambhadhams*¹⁶ existed with Cochin). The contacts with Cochin also stood in the way of the *samoothiri's*¹⁷ expansionist policies. The Nedumpuraiyar royal families were known as Tarur, Taravur of Taruvayur Swaroopam, finally became Palakkad Raja Swaroopam. The Tarur Swaroopam covered Palakkad, Alathur and Chittur taluks. It was said that close relationship existed between Taroor family and Cochin family. The succession of the Taroor Swaroopam was

¹³ V.Sanalkumar, *Palakkadan Jillyale Puravasthu Bhoomika*, in Palakkad Stalam - Kalam-Charitram (Mal.), DTPC: 2011, pp.74-83.

¹⁴ Dr.C.K.Kareem, *Kerala Gazetteers*, Palakkad, Government Press: Ernakulum, 1976, pp. 54-56.

¹⁵ Buchanan, *Journey from Madras through Mysore Canara, and Malabar*, vol.ii, p.53.

¹⁶ *sambhadham* is a peculiar system of marriage.

¹⁷ *samoothiri* is the ruler of Kozhikode

further cemented by an alliance. Even in a fight against *samoothiri* and Cochin, they supported the Cochin family. In a war which ensued between the *samoothiri*, Portuguese and Vijayanagar, the Taroor Rajas fought on the side of Cochin Raja who helped the Vijayanagar rulers. Severe fight continued in which the *samoothiries* were victorious. Enraged he destroyed and razed to grounds the Taroor fort and this might be the reason why the Palakkad Rajas gave up Taroor swaopam and settled in *akathethara*.¹⁸ The Naduvazhis of Kongad, Edathara and Mannur were originally feudatories of Palakkad Raja. Sekhary Raja was the head of (8) eight *edom*¹⁹ divided between its Northern and Southern branches. The Southern or *Thekke* branch comprised of Elayachan Peruvakal, Naduvil and Ponnil edom. The *Vadekke* (Northern) thavazhi comprised of Cherikotta, Pulickal, Mele, Poojakkal edom. The members were called *achanmars*²⁰ and the eldest five were the Rajas Sekhari, Elaya, Cavasseri, Talantapuram and Tariputamuran raja. The rajas get to come to power at a very old age and hence need deputies to do the work and an able *achan* was appointed.²¹ These *edom* gradually became twenty seven. Of course their relation with Calicut and Cochin often wavered and sometimes engaged in battles also. During the 13th century the Palakkad dynasty maintained its male succession through the marriage of two princesses of the family to that of Cochin royal family and also that the Palakkad raja always helped the Cochin raja in times of

¹⁸ C.K.Kareem, *Kerala District Gazetteer, Palakkad*, Superintendent Government Press: Ernakulam, 1976, p. 72. The Nedumpurayur family was later known as 'Taroor Swaroopam' and later as Palakkad Raja Swaroopam and later on settled in *akathethara*, place in Palakkad

¹⁹ *edom is house or tharavad*

²⁰ *achanmar* denotes the title name of the rulers.

²¹ historicalalleys.blogspot.com, historic musings from a Malabar Perspective, accessed on 20.8.2015, 4pm.

need.²² This friendly relation with Cochin invited the wrath of the *samoothiri* and after that till 1732 we do not have any materials on this dynasty. In a letter to Jonathan Duncan by the Cochin raja it was said that as he had always helped Palakkad raja, he enjoyed suzerainty over Palakkad.²³

Stories are rampant about the origin, caste, and ascendance of this dynasty.²⁴ The main sources of information about this time are epigraphy, numismatics, works of classical Roman writers, classical literature of Sangam times etc. But the above mentioned sources do not contain much direct references pertaining to this region. Only after the breakup of the Perumal rule, we find the rise of royal dynasties in Kerala and in Palakkad, their earliest rule was in Nedumpurayur swarupam. The history of the origin of this dynasty was not clear. The Rajas of Palakkad were believed to be the descendents of Namboodiri Brahmins and Kshatriya woman. They were known by the titles Vadakke Naikkan and Thekke Naikkan.²⁵

Another belief was that, connected with Parasurama legend, almost all royal families were associated with some legend in the ancient times. Another story connected with the origin of this dynasty was that it was the result of the illegal relationship of the Kshatriya prince with a low caste woman.²⁶ The Raja extended his sway over these uninhabited region i.e. Palakkattucherry. In support of this low caste origin of the Palakkad rajas, it was believed that the common deities worshipped were Nili, Kali, Iravi

²² C.K. Kareem, *Kerala under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan*, Paico Publishers: Ernakulam, 1973, p. 273.

²³ *Ibid.*, p.273.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 56-63.

²⁵ See details Report of Wardon on the Condition of Palakkad, March 9, 1801.

²⁶ Rajas of Tarur Swarupam, Oriental Manuscripts, Madras vol.VII and VIII in Dr.C.K.Kareem, *District Gazetteers*, Palakkad, Government Press: Ernakulam, 1976.

Kothai etc and usual festivals were *vela* and *pooram*.²⁷ These were commonly connected to *parayar*, *pulayar*²⁸ and other aborigines. Another point which the supporters of this theory contented was that of the less in number of the *namboodiri illam*²⁹ in these parts. Their lesser numerical strength points to the fact that the raja as a result of his low caste marriage was excommunicated and the *namboodiries* fearing the wrath of the ruler, fled from the place.³⁰ It was also argued that this low caste origin of the ruling dynasty cannot be attributed to the lesser number of *namboodiri* families as in southern region also this is the case. Those who believe in the dismemberment of the region by Cheraman Perumal say that Palakkadtucherry on the division fell to the lot of Shekkarry Raja of Kshatriya caste.³¹

It was said that unable to bear the constant attacks of *samoothiri*, the Palakkad Raja sent his emissaries to Mysore with an appeal to render military help against the threats of Kozhikode *samoothiri*. The Mysorean ruler asked Haider Ali who was a faujdar at Dindigal to render necessary help. Haider thought this as an opportunity to enter the Palakkad region.³² In 1757, *samoothiri* to realize the dream of dominating the whole of Kerala sent an army under Chencheri Namboothiri against Palakkad Raja and in this critical juncture Palakkad Raja asked for help.³³ On the request of the help, Haider sent a force under his brother – in - law, Mukkadam, drove back

²⁷ *vela* and *pooram* are local festivals

²⁸ *parayar*, *pulayar* were the native people of this region.

²⁹ *illam* is the abode of the Namboothiri.

³⁰ C.K.Karream, *Kerala District Gazetteers, op.cit.*, 1976.

³¹ *Namboothiries* are Malayali Brahmins (See Buchanan's *Journeys from Madras through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, vol. ii, p.53).

³² K.K. Nair, *By Sweat and Sword, Trade, Diplomacy and War in Kerala through the Ages*, Manohar Publications:New Delhi, 2013, p. 239.

³³ J.Spencer, J.Smee,A.P.Walker, *Report on the Administration of Malabar*, 1801, p. 6.

samoothiries army, and *samoothiri*, compromised the matters by agreeing to pay rupees twelve lakh as a military contribution and by restoring the conquests he made from the Palakkad Raja.³⁴

Meanwhile we come across certain data pertaining to Cochin Raja and Palakkad Raja. It was recorded that the British Commissioners issued new orders not exempting the Cochin Rajas goods from custom duties coming from east to west or vice versa. Cochin Raja voiced his protest against it and also regarding the demand of land revenue due for Cochin Raja's lands in Palakkad. Raja also complained of plunder and pillage committed by Palakkad raja.³⁵ In another document, it was detailed that the Palakkad Raja, Kunju Achan and family and his agent Ramachandra Pattar should not be allowed to stay in Cochin as they evade payment of company' dues.³⁶ There occurs a description of territorial dispute between Cochin Raja and Ittikombi Achan of Palakkad from 1861-1870.³⁷ About the charges of plunder and pillage by Kombi Achan of the stock in the Cochin sirkar store house, Temmalapuram, it was said that General Duncan interfered and started negotiations on matters regarding territorial claim also.³⁸ In one of the memorandums given by Cochin Raja, to General Duncan it was said that Cochin at all times had helped Palakkad Raja in times of need and Palakkad Raja was his dependent.³⁹ General Duncan also puts forth a proposal for the

³⁴ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2010, vol.1, pp. 660-661.

³⁵ Series Files, (1684-1869), Series no.1, no.253, List vol. xvii, printed by SGP, Government Press: Trivandrum, 1966, Ernakulam Archives. Hereafter RAE.

³⁶ Series Files (1684-1869), Series 1, no.251, List xvi, printed by SGP, Government Press: Trivandrum, 1965, RAE.

³⁷ See for details Series Files 1684-1869, Series 1, no.340 A, vol. xxxii, A, RAE.

³⁸ Series Files,(1684-1869),Series 1, no.358/, List xlv, dated 4th Mithunam, 972AD,Printed by SGP, Government Press: Trivandrum, 1966, RAE.

³⁹ Series 1, no. 166/viii, dated 12.2.1669 (1794),RAE.

resettlement of boundaries regarding Cholas, Perum cholas etc.⁴⁰

In pre colonial Kerala, land was a measuring rod to the status of a *jenmi*⁴¹ or raja. There also existed strong interconnection between these. What was the situation in Palakkad? The Kavalapara Nairs and Nampidies of Kollengode are forces to be reckoned with in Palakkad. As a landed aristocracy the family of Kavalapara Nairs maintained some of the feudal privileges including authority over temples.⁴² These landed aristocracies were closely related to temples and religion. They exercised control over vast areas of land as they were the trustees of the temples. The *granthavarikal*⁴³ are pointers to the political and social conditions of that time. But in the 18th century, a change occurs in their very existence and one can find they were assuming more independent powers and authority. The Moopil Nayar held eight dignities or *stananms* and enjoyed landed properties appertaining to these stanams in several villages from his overlords like Raja of Cochin, Palakkad Raja. It seems they also had certain traditional *desavazhi*⁴⁴ rights in certain villages.⁴⁵ These *grandavarikal* are a lot helpful in understanding the situation, even though their point of view is depicted.⁴⁶

The region Venganad was situated in the south eastern corner of the Palakkad taluk of British Malabar, Venganad was one of the traditional *nadus*

⁴⁰ Series 1, no.358/List xlv, printed by SGP, Government Press: Trivandrum, 1966, RAE

⁴¹ *jenmi is the landlord.*

⁴² *Kavalapara Papers*, K.K.N.Kurup (ed.), Department of History, University of Calicut, 1984.

⁴³ *granthavarikal* were prepared by ruling class or temples regarding contemporary events.

⁴⁴ *desavazhi* is the person having control over a small area of land.

⁴⁵ K.K.N.Kurup (ed.), *Kavalapara Papers*, Department of History, University of Calicut, 1984, pp.XVI, XVIII.

⁴⁶ *grantavarikal*, written on cadjan leaves, kept by various aristocratic or royal families helps in the reconstruction of the past to some extent.

or territorial division of Kerala. Nothing is known of them today. It was mentioned that Haider Ali allowed Muddu Killedarr, his commandant at Palakkad to grant an *inam*⁴⁷ to Kaccenkurissi⁴⁸ for the maintenance of the temple in 1773 – 74. But due to the general disorder and chaos of the region because of the Mysorean attacks, Nambootiries abandoned this place and settled in Travancore. The *urayma*⁴⁹ right claimed over these temples by the Nambootiries living far away is the only evidence.⁵⁰

In the ballads and songs of the Palakkad taluk, *Nampiti* was constantly mentioned. He has an honoured place in the Pallavur *desakkali* (annual dance of Nairs) of village in house of deity. In the local songs like *Vellonpathu* or the song of the serfs and *Malampattu*, song of the mountaineers he was referred as the good chief of Venganad.⁵¹

The Nairs of Kollengode, whose leader he was, show him special honour by having his residence as the venue of last night's *deshakkali* where as a rule it was to be held only in temples or *manram*. When Malabar came under Haiders' domination he recognized the ancient position of the *Nampiti* as the Natuvazhi and granted inam in 1772 – 73 A D through his commandant.⁵² When the British succeeded the Mysoreans they respected his former status and treated his family as a swaroopam calling it the Nayarship, chieftainship and stanam, involving the *melkoyma*⁵³ of

⁴⁷ *inam* means payment or gift

⁴⁸ place near Palakkad.

⁴⁹ *urayma* or *ooryama* is ownership of the temple may be for two or more families together to rule the temple.

⁵⁰ Prof.K.V.Krishna Iyer, 'The Venganad Nampitis' in *Bulletin of Rama Varma Research Institute*, vol.X, Part I, Kerala Sahitya Academy, Trichur, Kerala History Association, Ernakulam, 1975, pp.41-43.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-43.

⁵² This is confirmed in the Government Revenue Records.

⁵³ *melkoyma* means authority.

Kachankurissi.⁵⁴ When they granted the *malikhana*⁵⁵ to the *Samoothiri* in 1806, they even induced him to allow the *Nampiti*⁵⁶ who was his vassal, an annual pension of rupees eight fifty.⁵⁷

2. 2.3 Literary Sources

Literature is one of the main sources of information about the social history. We find route description, the sandesa vahaka travels, lot of geographical, social news as well as some cultural information. The Sandesa Kavyas are an important branch in the Sanskrit literature from which we can glean information about the society of 14th to 18th century Kerala. Among the Sandesa kavyas, *Sukasandesam* and *Kokilasandesam* can be considered as outstanding for their poetic beauty and meaningful descriptions, leave little scope for exaggerative narration.⁵⁸ Probably the Sandesha Kavyas belong to 14th and 18th century in Kerala. Kesaven Veluthat enquires into the reason for the flood of this type of literature in this age and aptly points out that this age referred by Sheldon Pollack as vernacular millennium, an age in which Sanskrit works decreased, and local or vernacular languages coming up to fill the space.⁵⁹ One tends to get to know about the different types of

⁵⁴ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2010, vol. 1, p.44, vol. II, pp.CCCXCVII,(This is also mentioned in O.3.55 of 1887 in the Sub Court of Palakkad, Appeal No. 43 of 1888, in the Madras High Court, Nilakantan Nampiti Vs Padmanabha Ravi Varma. Privy Council 1895, in the Bulletin of *Rama Varma Research Institute*, vol. X, Part I, Kerala Sahitya Academy, Trichur, 1975, quoted in the article of K.Vrishna Iyer.)

⁵⁵ *malikhana* is allowance to the deposed king.

⁵⁶ *nampiti* is local raja of Kollengode.

⁵⁷ Krishna Ayyar, *Zamorian of Calicut*, in the Bulletin of Ramavarma Research Institute, vol.x, Part I, Kerala Sahitya Academy, Trichur, 1975, p. 324.

⁵⁸ Opines thus Kesavan Veluthatt in the introductory part, *Rendu Sandeshangal*, (Mal.), Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sangham, NBS: Kottayam, 2014, p. 9.

⁵⁹ Sheldon Pollack, *The Cosmopolitan Vernacular* in Journal of Asian Studies in *Rendu Sandeshagal* (Mal.), Sahitya Pravathaka Sahakarana Sangham, NBS: Kottayam, 2014, p. 10.

literature on a comparative basis and also it helps to know about the different lifestyles of people.⁶⁰ These Sandesa kavya literatures can be used to construct the history too.

Kokilasandesam speaks of a Nayaka king (nair ruler of Kerala), describing his wealth and domicile that is unrivalled in quality. It says that Palakkad had the name of Vatamalapuram, and that there was a market nearby. *Kokilasandesam* also describes about the legendary history of Palakkad pass, and ascribes its origin to the invincible Parasurama an avathar of Vishnu. According to this legend, Parasurama found it impossible to bring settlers into his own land of Kerala, as the mountain to the east were impassable. With his axe, Parasurama cut the chasm in the Western Ghats, creating the approximately twenty miles wide Palakkad pass. This could be seen in *Kokilasandesam*.⁶¹ Thus the Sandesa branch of literature is also historically important in that it helps us to get some valuable glimpses of the history.

2.2.4 Legal Sources

It was understood that the traders assemble in the markets. The Tamil Brahmins, Ravuthans, and Chettis each played a prominent part in shaping the economy of Palakkad. The *nazranis*⁶² also played an important role in the trade especially in oil and areca nuts. Palakkad was considered to be a great trading center and it was to be noted that *nazranis* had a special warehouse (*varakkotil*) at Palakkad where they stored their produce. This was a

⁶⁰ M.R.Raghava Varier, *Swaroopa Neetiyude Charitra Patangal*, (Mal.), Sahitya Pravarttha Sahakarana Sangam, NBS: Kottayam, 2014, p.24.

⁶¹ K. Ramapisharati, 'Uddanta Sastri' in the *Bulletin of the Rama Varma Research Institute*, vol. IX, Part II, Published by the Kerala Sahitya Academy, Trichur, 1972, p. 122.

⁶² *nazranis are Kerala Christian*.

co-operative concern and was similar to the warehouses maintained by guilds in medieval Europe. There was good demand for the teakwood which the East India Company needed in huge quantities for ship building, and the Christian traders took this opportunity to augment their trade. For example, a large contract for teakwood was undertaken by the well-known *nazrani* merchant, Moothan Tharakan who was very rich by any standards, as indicated by the arrears owed to him by the Company amounted to fifty lakhs or more at the time of his death.⁶³

One *aadharam* (title deed) mentions Palakkad and Themmalappuram *nilam* and *parambu*⁶⁴ were places from where iron ore were taken. The perpetual lease here was at rupees thirty a year. Elayachan Edathil Kelu Achan⁶⁵ was also mentioned in the deed. The company which buys the ore was an iron and steel company.⁶⁶ A series of land transactions were registered for free hold, property disputes etc.⁶⁷ Mortgaging of land as a surety was a common practice in those days for getting any Governmental post. For example the posts of *amsom adhikari*, *amsom clerk*, *taluk gumasthan*, stamp vendors etc. These positions in the Government can be considered as very influential, powerful as well as lucrative. These people do not get any fixed salaries and if any grave misappropriation was found the property mortgaged would be taken over by the Government (*ozhimuri*).

⁶³ The Parsis were pioneers in business but the Syrian Christians were not lagging behind. See details, (P.J.Thomas, 'Keralas Trading Class', Economic Advisor to the Government of India, 'Finance Department, New Delhi, in the *Journal of Ramavarma Archaeological Society*, vol.XIV, January 1948, published by the Secretary, Archaeological Society, Trichur, in South Indian History Association, Ernakulam, p. 11)

⁶⁴ *nilam and parambu are plain grounds*

⁶⁵ He belongs to the royal family.

⁶⁶ (1) Buchanan in his *Journeys* has mentioned that in the Kollengode region iron ore is found. (2) South Malabar Registrar Office Records, Doc.6, Register-1,vol.2, 1851, pp.118, 119, RAK.

⁶⁷ South Malabar Register Office Records,Kozhikode,1844-50, vol.2, Part ii, pp. 118, 119, RAK.

Certain examples will make the matters clear. For a person named Arpanneyyan, a bond of security executed for the Company Government for the job of a taluk gumasthan on 30th June 1847.⁶⁸ Bond of security deed registered by Thammalapuram taluk, Vadavanoor amsom, Parakkal Panakassa Menon to Government of India for the post of clerk in the Palakkad toll office to Alampallam gramam, Ramayyan son of Ganapathy Sastri registered on 26th February 1848.⁶⁹

Bond of security deed registered by Palakkad taluk, Kavilpad amsom, Puthupariyaram desom Parakkate Achan Nair and Theyyan Menon to the Government of India for the post of Kavilpad amsom अधिकारी to Kennathu Narayana Nair, registered on 22nd March 1848.⁷⁰ Another bond of security deed registered by Palakkandi taluk Vilayanoor amsom, Vemballur desam, Thiruvemballor vilekkatharay Aandy to Government of India for the of Vilayanoor amsom clerks to Chemkam Veettle Ravunny Nair. The deed registered on 21st July 1848.⁷¹

Bond of security deed registered by Palakkad taluk, Yakkara amsom, Kannanoor desam Saravanapillai son of Ramaswamy Pillai to Government of India for the post of clerk in Palakkad post office.⁷² From an article it was understood that in the process of establishing colonial state, the British made use of collaborative network in which the natives were recruited into the administrative fold. This so called net work was also brought under the

⁶⁸ South Malabar Register Office Records, Kozhikode, 1844-1850, vol.48 A, Part ii, RAK.

⁶⁹ Register Book No. 49, vol. no.9, Doc.no.40, p.59 in South Malabar Registrar Office, Deeds of Mortgage, vol. 1, 1848 – 1851.

⁷⁰ Register Book no. 49, vol. No.9, Doc. no. 50, p.72 in South Malabar Registrar office, Deed of Mortgage vol. 1, 1848 – 1851.

⁷¹ South Malabar Register, vol.no.9, Doc. no. 119, p. 154, RAK.

⁷² Register Book No. 49, vol. II, Doc. no. 224, p.303, in South Malabar Registrar Office, RAK.

direct control wherein these natives were enjoined to follow certain rules and regulations as a means of enforcing discipline and to avoid corruption in the administration. The point about to be stressed was that as a means of effecting discipline among the native officials the practice of taking security from them existed and thereby the British can ensure good governance in the region.⁷³ In the beginning, the part of Palakkad and Themmalapuram districts which was conquered by the *samoothiries* of Kozhikode had a tax imposed upon land under the name *kavil or cavilpullam* or compensation for protection.⁷⁴ It is also pointed that the poligars of Madhura and Tinnevely also imposed 'kavil' upon the less powerful villages. Thus before Haiders invasion, in AD 1776 there was no regular tax collection. And some contribution was levied according to the needs. Definitely the lands of the Brahmins were excluded from taxes.⁷⁵

2.3 The Mysorean Interlude

The political situation of North Kerala during the 18th century was very conducive to attack from the outside. *samoothiri* was being aggressive towards the neighboring regions of Kolathunad, Kochi, as well as Palakkad, leading to enmity between these regional factions. This greatly helped the Mysoreans who were waiting for an opportunity to interfere. Haider Ali was considered as a very enterprising and innovative personality and came to power in 1749 –1755. The Mysorean rulers always feared the attacks of

⁷³ Dr. Santhosh Abraham, *The Making of Colonial Law, Discipline, and Corruption in British India*, in *The Journal of Indian Law and Society*, vol.2, www.manupatra.co.in, accessed 31st June, 2016, Thursday, 3.30 p.m.

⁷⁴ It amounted to a quarter of an *old veeroy fanam* (Samoothirie's coin) on each local purrah (para) (measurement of grains) of the mentioned land. See details, William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2010, vol.1, pp. 660

⁷⁵ R/251 –B, H.S. Graeme, *Reports of the Revenue Administration of Malabar*, dated 14th June 1822, pp. 25-30.

Marathas and Nizam and Haider utilized the situation to his advantage .On his return to Mysore Haider began to drill the recruits with the aid of a few French peons and deserters with certain European flintlocks which he had possessed.⁷⁶ By about 1763 Haider Ali conquered Canara region and thus got closer to Malabar. Ali Raja of Cannanore was in good terms with him and had invited him to subdue Malabar. IttiKombi Achan of Palakkad also gave an invitation to him to free him from the clutches of the *samoothiri*. Haider obliged as and when the time permitted. The Nairs of the Malabar army were indeed no match for the disciplined army of Haider and Prof. Sinha opines that the conquest of Malabar was perhaps Haider's most 'arduous feat of arms'.⁷⁷ As he was very much successful in his conquests of Malabar, the Palakkad Achan, or ruler, was greatly impressed and went to receive him. After his takeover of Palakkad, he made certain administrative arrangements in Palakkad with the elder prince of *fedoms*, before leaving for Coimbatore. A letter from Haider Ali to the Governor of the British East India Company, Madras reveals his economic vision and he adds that if any of his subjects had desires against the European traders, they will be helped by Haider.⁷⁸It can be understood that Haider viewed the Persian region with awe and as a place where the ruler's initiated great progress in the economic spheres and he even sent a delegation to Persia with many officers. Gifts, jewels etc were lavished on them and in response the King of Persia sent back thousands of soldiers and plenty of Persian horses as a token of appreciation and diplomacy. We can see that Haider correctly understood the pulse of the

⁷⁶ Bowring, *Haider Ali and Tipu Sulthan*, Rulers of India Series, London, U.K:1893, p. 25 in Shodganga, Chapter 1V, *Haider Ali and Tipu Sulthan: A Brief Profile*, accessed on 24th June, 2016, 1 p m.

⁷⁷ C.K. Kareem, *Kerala Under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan*, *Op.cit.*, p. 31.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.31.

power region and acted accordingly.⁷⁹ He further agreed to the Shah to make use of Mangalore as a base and at the same time enable Haider to build a commercial base at Bander Abbas.⁸⁰ He rightly recognized that region as the hub of economic and commercial activities. From another source we find reference to a conversation about how happy the people will be if Tipu's rule came to an end, as he was the son of an adventurer who deposed and ill treated the lawful ruler of Mysore, and it would be an act of justice had the English dethroned him and an opinion was voiced that if the princes tend to set aside their quarrels and to join together against the enemies.⁸¹ We find a reference to Haider's edicts which condemn the Nairs to a degrading position; taking away many of their rights and these Nairs could regain their lost positions and privileges only if they embraced Islam religion. The veracity of this document is doubtful. After careful consideration it is understood that the 'so called' edicts of Haider Ali were just imagination of the author of '*The History of Hyder Shah*'. The Dutch Governor Meons also does not make a mention of these edicts. It is to be concluded that these were only figments of imagination by these writers.⁸²

After suppressing the rebellion, he (Hyder Ali) made up his mind to construct a fort at Palakkad, to facilitate communication with the newly acquired province.⁸³ At that time, the *Manuel of State Information of Madras Presidency*, reports that a rebellion has broken out in Malabar. Haider acted

⁷⁹ C.P. Brown, *Memoirs of Hyder and Tipu- Rulers of Seringapatnam*, Simkins & Co: Madras, 1849, Book 2, p. 43, in Shodhganga, chapter -6, pdf, accessed on 20th May, 2016, 4pm.

⁸⁰ Public Department Dairy, No 65, Part 111, 1774 in Shodhganga, 6th Chapter accessed 21st May, 2016, 9 a.m.

⁸¹ G.A. Hetry, *The Tiger of Mysore, Story of the War with Tipoo Sahib*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2005, p. 287.

⁸² Meons work is *Memorandum on the Administration of Malabar Coast*, in C K Kareem's *Kerala under Haider and Tipu Sultan*, Paico Publishing House: Ernakulam, 1973, p. 135.

⁸³ C.K. Kareem, *Kerala under Haider and Tipu Sultan, Op.cit.*, pp. 47-48.

strongly against the rebellion, leading to a superficial calm in the provinces: he then proceeded to Coimbatore, after giving orders for the construction of a fort (the present fort), which was in the centre of the Palakkad pass. This spot was chosen to provide communication to the newly subdued province.⁸⁴ Thus his achievements were great, but he had a number of enemies around, waiting for a chance to regain their power at the earliest. The English powers constantly felt that they must maintain amicable settlement with Haider as they were convinced that much of their trade and goods passed through this region. However the Madras Presidency did not follow the same policy as that of Bombay Presidency, who gave more importance to the friendship and good will with him.⁸⁵ Palakkad was not an easy place for the British to subjugate. It has resisted all previous efforts of McKenzie to conquer it. Col. Fullerton followed up his success by the capture of the fort at Coimbatore. At that time it was ordered to cease all his hostilities by the Government of Madras, a sort of peace was patched up by the Company and Tipu Sultan.⁸⁶ In the final phase of the war, we find the charge entrusted with Col. Fullerton to regain the British power. In his work '*In View of British Interest in India*', he related Palakkattucherry as a very advantageously situated place as also a place of 'first strength' in India, and he stationed at two miles east from the fort across the road that leads from Coimbatore and he decided to accelerate the attacks and occupied *pettah* or open town on the end and north faces of the fort after prolonged battle, the

⁸⁴ William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, Asian Educational Services: Delhi, 2010, p. 417.

⁸⁵ B. Sheik Ali, *Haider's Relation with British*, Kerala Basha Institute: Trivandrum, 2001, pp. 36, 44.

⁸⁶ William Fullerton, *A View of English Interest in India*, published on 1789, e – copy, accessed 20th May, 2016, 10 a.m.

defenses were pierced.⁸⁷ Thus the region of Palakkad came under British control.

When Tipu's invasion of the Palakkad province took place by about 1760, there were much independent sovereignties in the area, including the Palakkad nadu located in the South of Cotah River, the Raja who had invited the Mysoreans to repel the attacks of *samoothiri* of Calicut. At that time no direct taxes were there on land, at times of invasion 1/5th of the produce was levied and the landlords were bound to attend the summons for war. The Rajah also had huge amount of landed property, their main source of income was from the imports of trades and duties, some fines etc offerings made by other subjects on festival days together with tax on distillers, weavers, fishermen etc. Meanwhile Haider got an invitation from Itty Comby Achan, with his attack of Malabar; many fled from their kingdom and took refuge in Travancore.⁸⁸ Settlement was made for Palakkad, understanding the *cusbah*⁸⁹, the district region of *koorwye*⁹⁰, Celunyoor, Mungara and Nayarship of Congad, Manoor and Edathara was estimated by Tippu at Hoons 88,000 of the divisions.⁹¹

The first alone belonged to the Rajah who had been reinstated by the Diwan of Travancore the second had been previously conquered by the Samoothiri. In the Palakkad family it had grown into custom that one of the younger branches called *Aitchens*, (*Achans*) had sovereign powers under an authority equivalent to regent. In the settlement with the *cusbah* statement

⁸⁷ William Logan, *Malabar Manuel, op.cit.*, 2010, pp. 445, 448.

⁸⁸ R/231C, *A Report on the Administration of Malabar* dated 28th July 1801, By J. Spencer, J. Smee and A.Walkar, Printed by the Collectorate Press: Calicut, 1910.

⁸⁹ *Cusbah* means region.

⁹⁰ *koorwye* is Koduvayur, a place near Palakkad, renowned for trade and commerce.

⁹¹ Hoons are imaginary coin in which the Revenue accounts of Malabar used to be kept equal to Rs.3. The accounts were kept in hoons, fanams and cash.

of funds of which he gave 3, 60,000 fanams or at 4 fanam to the rupee 90,000 rupees at the Commissioners having no other information of the state of its resources allowing a deduction of 10,000 rupees for the charges of collection, and maintenance of the rajas family settled with him in the month of July, for the remaining Jumna of rupees 80,000 for the ensuing years 968 commencing in September of the above English year. A few days after the conclusion of the settlement, Powney⁹² sent in a statement of the *jumna* of Palakkad,⁹³ and other districts in Tipu's time obtained from one of his writers as shown underneath making the net Jumna 1, 05,000 Sultany Chakram⁹⁴ to be 1/3 rd of a rupee instead of being worth three of the latter and consequently that the sum in Powney's statement was less than *Achan* had agreed to pay.⁹⁵ The agreements with him were executed and the Rajah invested with all the rights of the Government over these districts. The account as given by Powney of the Jumna bandy of Palakkaducherry including those districts formerly belonging to Calicut and four (4) villages separated from Cochin was as follows.⁹⁶

⁹² Powney is the Resident representative of the English power.

⁹³ jumna means the total amount of land revenue the Government demands from a village, taluk or district. Hence the term 'Jumna' bundy i.e. settlement of the demand.

⁹⁴ *chakram* is Cochin term for coin, what was called in Calicut is Hoon.

⁹⁵ J Smee, J.Spences, A.Walker, *A Report on the Administration of Malabar*, dated 28th July 1801, Collectorate Press: Calicut, 1910, pp. 14, 15.

⁹⁶ J.Smee, J.Spencer, A.Walker, *A Report on the Administration of Malabar*, dated 28th July, 1801, Collectorate Press: Calicut, 1910, p. 14.

Table 2.3.1

Talook of Palakkadcherry	Sultan Chakram	Sultan Chakram	Sultan Chakram
Duties	40000 -15000	35000	
Cadeway of Kurwye Duties	20000 5000	25000	
Kollengode or Colungour Duties	11000 2000	13000	
Mungarah or Mungary Duties	1000 9000	10000	
		7000	110000
Sultanchakram	5000 (defunct charges)		
Net Sultan chakrams			105000

The accuracy of this was corroborated by a proposal of the Cochin rajah to lease the whole for three years at three lakhs of rupees per annum. This proposal could not be accepted, as the settlement for the *cusbah* was already executed and it is not considered correct to rent the lands to any other than their proper owner and also because the Commissioners were limited to one year in making their settlements.⁹⁷

The Mysoreans understood the importance of the most influential territorial unit of organization i.e. '*tara*,'⁹⁸ which they tried to develop and keep alive as villages with hereditary head.⁹⁹ This *tarasystem* was abolished by British in the later period and *hobli* system was instituted.¹⁰⁰ Actually the British administration had to be built upon the foundation of the

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ *Tara* is the lowest administrative unit

⁹⁹ William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, Asian Educational Services: Delhi, 2010, p. 88

¹⁰⁰ William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, 2010, *Ibid*, p. 89.

Mysoreans.¹⁰¹ Feudal chiefs showed great reluctance to embrace the changes and challenged the Mysorean administration. They refused to accept the end of the old privileges and rights enjoyed for ages, and it was very harsh on them and they refused to reconcile to their situation. A parallel can be seen in Travancore, where the rulers ruthlessly crushed the nobles and established their supremacy.¹⁰² The Rajas were reinstated on the condition that they pay the tribute every year, but many refused the payment. Madanna was entrusted with the administration, followed by Haider himself by about 1773. And he conducted the first land survey in the history of Kerala and fixed land tax on the basis of produce. In 1782-83, Arshed Beg Khan the Governor of Tipu Sultan, on the receipt of the complaints reduced the *jama* (demand) on wet lands and garden, but left the distribution of this reduction on individuals to be carried out by, subordinates'. Tipu replaced the ancient coinage and the collection of the revenue was done in this. This was of higher value .The substitution of *sulthani fanams* for old *veeroy fanams*¹⁰³ had the effect of raising the revenue at least 12 ½ % on wet lands, gardens and miscellaneous lands .¹⁰⁴ The land system was very peculiar to Kerala as the Mysoreans understood it. In other parts of the country the rulers were owners of the land, but in Malabar the janmies had the ownership with no taxes.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ C.K.Kareems *Kerala under Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan, Opcit.*, p 139

¹⁰² A reference is made to the Travancore ruler Marthanda Varma. His stringent policies towards the rebellious chiefs have won much acclaim(.P.Shankunny Menon, Nagam Ayya, E M S Namboothiripad, K M.Panikker etc. For details refer C K Kareem, Kerala under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, pp. 139 – 142. J.Spencer, J Smee, and J Walker in *A Report of the Administration of Malabar*, p.32.)

¹⁰³ *sulthany fanam* is Tipus coin . *veeroy fanam* is existing coin of samootiri.

¹⁰⁴ William Logan, *Malabar Manuel, Ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 648.

¹⁰⁵ Major Wilkes, *Report on the Land Tenure of Malabar, 1801*, p. 3. (Buchanan also details this in his work, vol. 11, pp. 358 – 380).

The Mysorean control of Malabar completely shook up the socio – economic set up of the area. They took as the Government land revenue a proportion of the *pattam* varying in different types of land. The Mysoreans made their land revenue settlements with the *kanskrar*, since the traditional land owners (janmies etc) had fled from this region to return back only after sometime. They eliminated the intermediaries between the Government and the cultivator; lands were surveyed and Government share fixed on the actual produce; and above all the Government established direct relationship with the tenants, all settlement was made directly with the *kanamdars* and not feudal chiefs.¹⁰⁶ In fact the Joint Commissioners reported in 1792 and 1801 that the British were able to realise the revenue on the basis of these settlements made by the Mysoreans. Tipu was often portrayed as a firm rock stemming the foreign expansion in South India.¹⁰⁷

Some of the British writers had painted both Haider and Tipu very bleakly which the later generation was to believe.¹⁰⁸ It was said that Haider was not an innovative ruler, only followed the established practices and respected the local customs and laws of each region under his sway. But it was argued by the author that Haider was not devoid of any innovative mindset and he initiated what was called as ‘proto – modernization’.¹⁰⁹ Irfan Habib also opined that these ‘regimes were untouched by other efforts to

¹⁰⁶ C.K. Kareem, *Kerala Under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, Op.cit.*, pp. 147, 148.

¹⁰⁷ *Authentic Memoirs of Tipu Sulthan* written by an Officer in the East India Service, (ed.,) with an introduction by G.N. Dhar, Takshashila Hard bounds; 1979.

¹⁰⁸ See details A. P. Ibrahim Kunju, *Mysore Kerala Relations in 18th Century*, Kerala Historical Society: Trivandrum, 1975.

¹⁰⁹ Kaveh Yezdani, *Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan: Mysore's 18th Century Rulers in Transition*, www.academia.edu. Narendra Krishna Sinha's view on HaiderAli quoted in the article, accessed on May, 20th 2016.

develop technology and commerce on modern lines'.¹¹⁰ Mohibbul Hasan comments that Tipu was an enlightened and tolerant ruler, but for the wars he would have brought industrial revolution to Mysore. Yezdanis' paper further argues that Haider and his son Tipu were transitional figures who were neither predominantly modern nor pre modern. Thus we see contradictory opinions regarding them.

It seems, they have done many atrocities and savageries like destruction of temples, breaking of idols, looting, razing to grounds many buildings, assassinating many etc etc. There are many arguments in favour as well as against this. In one of the article it was remarked that but for the discovery of the records of the Sringeri matt, we would have believed him to be a religious fanatic. Certain documents about the various grants made by Tipu to the holy temple were also got.¹¹¹ Certain other evidences bring to light regarding the liberal grants of the Sultan.¹¹² Contemporary British authors as well as Tipus own chroniclers were responsible for portraying of Tipuas a fanatic. His behavior towards Canarese Christians as well as Travancore Syrian Christians was condemnable. But the scholars argue that the reason why Tipu was enraged towards the Canarese Christians was that, it was not because of their religious belief but because they helped the

¹¹⁰ Irfan Habib, *In Confronting Colonialism, Resistance and Modernization*, Tulika Publication: in Kaveh Yezdanis article on HaiderAli and Tipu Sultan, p. 233.

¹¹¹ See details (1) Contemporary British writers were Colonel Wilks (1810) and W. Kirkpatrick (1811) Bhupendra Yadav, in *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.25,no.52,December 29th , 1990, accessed on 10.30a m, 11.8.2016 , infliibnet. (2) Dr.A.K..Sastry in his book ' *The Records of the Sringeri Dharmastana*' translated and commented upon 47 letters sent by Tipu to the then Sankaracharya Sri Sachidanta Bharathi iii (1770-1814) (3) The Seringapatam Times posted on 17th February 2013,accessed on 11.8.14, 4 p m.)

¹¹² (1) Seen in *Mathrubhumi Supplement*, dated 24th September, 2014.(2) *The Seringapatam Times*, posted on 17th February 2013, accessed on 11.8.14, 4 p m(3) C.K.Kareem, Palakkad, Gazetteers, Paico Publishers: Ernakulam, 1973.

British in the Second Anglo Mysore war against the Sultan.¹¹³ As for his religious outlook, it was said that in the Portuguese records at the Pangim archives reveal that he had requested the Archbishop of Goa to send a Catholic priest for his Catholic subjects.¹¹⁴ This can be considered as his testimony of his religious attitude. As far as Kerala was concerned an article entitled '*Tipu Sultans' Padayottam in Kerala*' describes about the series of attacks Tipu made on the Kerala coast.¹¹⁵ Many reasons were attributed to the wrath of Tipu Sultan towards the Syrian Christians, first and foremost was that the Christians supplied gun man to the Cochin Raja and thus the Syrian Christian militia played a prominent part along with the Nairs. Not only that Christians helped the native Government but also advanced money to the rulers. Many churches in Malabar and Cochin were damaged. For example the Mosobor church at Akaparambu and Martha Mariam church attached to the old church in Angamaly, a church at Palayoor was set afire and another one attacked. Arthat church at Ambazhakkad seminary was destroyed.¹¹⁶ Thus it was believed that the Sultans full wrath fell on the Syrian Christian community and religion has nothing to do with this.

2.4 The British takeover

The British power with their superior planning and techniques were able to subdue the challenging rulers. One of the tough powers they had to

¹¹³ Bhupendra Yadev, *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 25, no.52,December 29th 1990 accessed on 11.8.2016, inflibnet,10.30am.

¹¹⁴ Bhupendra Yadav, *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.25, no 52, December, 29th 1990, accessed on 11.8.2016,10.30 a m, inflibnet.

¹¹⁵ The article seen on *The Serigapattam Times* posted on November, 8th 2012, accessed on 14.8.2014, 11 p m.

¹¹⁶ *Seringapatam Post*,<http://toshkhana.wordpress.com>. Tipu thus became infuriated as the Christian soldiers refused to fight for him and also they advanced huge amounts to the British General Mathews and helped him in his war efforts. accessed on 14.8.2014, 11 p m.

face was Haider Ali and his son and successor Tipu Sultan. The districts of Salem and Kisnagherry and the provinces of Dindigal and Malabar were ceded to the company by the Tipu Sultan under the peace concluded at Seringapatam on 18th March 1792. The Malabar region was at first placed under the charge of Bombay Government and continued until 1800. Before the taking over of the British, the land was mostly in the possession of Nairs, a description of Hindus, mainly a military class, it was said that the atrocities of the Mysorean rulers and their officers, led many of the local rajahs to seek asylum in distant regions. One of the first acts of the Bombay Government was to reinstate the rajahs and Nairs to their former places and to divide the province into three districts, which were placed under a Supervisor and thus Superintendents by whom an annual settlement was formed with the rajahs and Nairs. The next settlement was appointed to superintend the affairs of the provinces. This settlement was for a period of five years, but the failure of rajahs in their engagements, led the Government to assume the collection of the revenues, before the leases were expired. A large balance was accrued. They were founded on no better data than fabricated estimates, prepared by native interpreters, who acted in unison with the servants of rajahs and Nairs.¹¹⁷

In 1799, the offices of the Superintendant were abolished, and the province was formed into twelve circles or Collectorates to which company servants were appointed. The office of the Supervisor had been previously discontinued on the appointment of Joint Commissioners from Bengal, Bombay in lieu of former Commissioners of Bombay Government. The duties of the Commissioners extended to a general control over every department

¹¹⁷ *The 5th Report from the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company*, vol.11, Madras Presidency, London, 1812, J. Higginbotham: Mount Road, Madras 1816, pp. 57- 59.

connected with civil administration of the province. The reinstated rajahs continued their misrule as no rules were changed.

In the early 1800, Bengal Government issued instructions to the Bombay Government to transfer the province to the charge of Madras Presidency; directions were also issued to establish 'Good Government and Order'.¹¹⁸ In early 1801, it was recorded a separate minutes after having obtained information from the Commissioners and the Collectors in the district.¹¹⁹

In Malabar there were not much *cirkar* or Government lands, individual proprietary rights generally prevailing throughout the province. The tenures were described to be of two kinds, the *janmam* or immediate rights of property resembling the free hold tenure under the feudal system and *canum* or usufructory property acquired by mortgage in which the greater part of the land was held without any written documents.¹²⁰

In fact several modes of land tenures existed in Malabar.¹²¹ In about 1803-4, Thomas Warden took charge of the District as the Collector. It was said that the records of the province teem with the excesses committed in this district during this period. The ruler being Itty comby (K) Achan,

¹¹⁸ Letter from Bengal to Madras dt.26th May 1800, letter from Bengal to Bombay dated 26th May 1800. Revenue letter to Court of Directors dated 18th March 1801.

¹¹⁹ About the extent of the authority of the Company as established in Malabar, nature of Government which had been introduced for the administration of its affairs, the Commission to be dissolved as it was not successful in maintaining British supremacy or to get revenues. Functions of criminal court suspended. Collector and Subordinate Collectors continue to administer justice in civil cases.

¹²⁰ *Extract from General Report of the Board of Revenue at Fort St.George dated 31st January 1803, p. 440, RAK.*

¹²¹ *Jenmam is the Property rights, patam – single rent or lease, kannam patam – tenure by mortgage, kuzhi (cuy) kannam – tenure by labour, usufructory tenure by which the jenmmkar gives some land to a person, who will fence it with productive trees, for a specified period of 12 years free from all charges.*

underwent a trial and he died in confinement, after which some sort of tranquility and peace was established in the districts. The new administration began to devote utmost care to secure peace in this district. Slowly the influence of the Achan was reduced. In an account of the ruler's family, it was said that it consisted of eight edoms or houses, equally divided into two branches south and north. The member of the edoms are called Achanmars five of whom very old have the title of rajahs under the denomination of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th rajahs ranked according to their age, the senior being the first and thus the eldest rajah being very old, it was customary to entrust the ministry of the affairs of the country to one of the Achans chosen by the rajah. This was how Itticombi Achan came to power. The eight edoms of ruling family multiplied so much that they divided and formed themselves into separate edoms. These Achmar were enormously powerful. It was said that ryots did not complain, as the company servants were powerless and the frequent changes in the company top administration, forced them to bear all the pressures.

The British officials quickly evaluated the situation and determined that the sole management of the district should be in the hands of their own immediate officials. The authority of the Achan was therefore subverted and the ryots quickly adjusted, to the new authority, paying their revenues and receiving their portion of 1/5th of the revenue (allowed to the family). As there was peace and order now, the revenue was easily realised and recoverable balance out stood in this district, amounting to *hoons* 5737 (Rs.17211) the sum of 3395 Hoons (Rs.10185) have been since recovered.¹²²

¹²² Report of Thomas Warden, Collector, dated 19th March 1801, *On the Condition of the Palakkad, Congaad, Mannoor, Edatharrah, Kavilpareh, Narnottum Divisions of the District of Malabar*. RAK.

In Palakkad, Congad, Manoor and Eddatterreh were three divisions called as Hoblies.¹²³ A Nair chieftain with the title of “Naadwarie” would act as the head of each. These Naaduwaries were originally dependent on or subordinate to the authority of the Veletee rajah. Each year, they had to pay a stipulated amount of animal jumnah for the divisions in three installments, of which they would receive twenty percent as an allowance for being lords of the country. These Nayars were regular in the fulfillment of the terms of their agreement, so it was decided to continue in the management on the same basis. The Nayar families were divided into houses similar to those of the Achans of Palakkad, and the mode of succession was also same. As long as they were regular in the payment of taxes and did not oppress the ryots, they were allowed to continue. The practice of paying them twenty percent allowance was discontinued; they now paid the whole amount of the *jumna*,¹²⁴ into the treasury and received their allowance from there.¹²⁵

The province was divided into taluks which was being divided in hoblies, hoblies into tara(h)s¹²⁶ or des(h)ams and they again contain several parambus and fields which are assessed to the public revenue.

The entire tara(h) or des(h)am¹²⁷ was assessed and the Zamindary was to be held responsible for the permanent assessment which was fixed. As far as the Government revenue was concerned the whole property in a Zamindary was attachable to realise it. In the same manner, if the actual

¹²³ *Hob (b)lies* are a group of (revenue) villages constituting a sub division of a taluk.

¹²⁴ *jumna* is the The total amount of land revenue the government demands from a village, taluk or district. Hence the term Jumma bundy ie. settlement of demand.

¹²⁵ Report of Thomas Warden, Collector, dated 19th March 1801, *On the Condition of Palakkad Congad, Manoor, Edaterrah, Kavilpareh, Narnottum Divisions of the District of Malabar*.

¹²⁶ tara(h) s are properly tara(h) the old name of a deshams. Des(h)am – Subdivision of an ams(h)omes of (revenue) villages.

¹²⁷ des(h)am is the subdivision of amsam. Amsam is the lowest administrative unit.

assessment on each separate field or *paramba* cannot be realised as they had become less productive or neglected than when the existing assessments was first put on.¹²⁸

2.4.1 British Revenue Collection in Palakkad

Malabar was divided into six divisions and ten taluks.¹²⁹ Palakkad division includes the two taluks in the south – Palakkad and North - Ponnani. British Cochin forms a division of less than two square miles. Divisional officers of Tellicherry, Malappuram and Palakkad were ordinarily members of Indian Civil Service (ICS), other three division's officers and officers in charge of Treasury are Deputy Collectors.¹³⁰

The brief sketch of the early history of the district indicates that the rates of the last settlement of 1894 to 1905 succeeded in the case of garden lands but an antiquated set of rates prevailed in the case of wet lands. In Malabar, the ryots regarded the dry crops as comparatively unimportant simply adjunct or supplementary to wet and garden cultivation. The only dry crops that were assessed upto 1870 were *modan* and *ponam*¹³¹ paddy and gingelly.

Around 1826, the Collector of Malabar introduced a system that remained in force until 1861.¹³² This provided for a Government demand of 1/5th of the gross produce as ascertained after yearly measurement. In 1861

¹²⁸ B/320, Thomas Warden, Collector of Malabar, *Report on the Land Assessment in Malabar* dated 20th April, 1815, Printed at Collectorate Press : Calicut, 1916.

¹²⁹ T/24, The 5th Tour of Arthur Lawley, Governor of Madras, Malabar, September 13-24th, 1907

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 27-28.

¹³¹ *modan* and *ponam* are the name applied to the cultivation of particular kinds of paddy planted in terraces, hills, and parambus.

¹³² Sheffield became the Collector of Malabar on 28th February 1826 and undertook detailed survey of the land.

Government introduced uniform average rates for modan, ponam and gingelly, but these schemes did not consider the labour and expense of yearly inspection. To avoid the difficulty of yearly inspection the Government introduced a flat rate of six (6) annas an acre for the above mentioned crops. But it met with little response. From 1870 onward ten of the principal dry crops, in Palakkad taluk alone were charged at an average rate. There was a proposal to extend this scheme to other taluks of the district, but it was given up after some discussion.¹³³

The survey of Palakkad was taken up in 1888, during which the committee understood that only some selected dry crops has been assessed and taxed. It was decided to encourage the permanent occupation of dry land by introducing two new and low rates of four and two *annas*. In 1892, Stuart submitted proposals for the settlement of Palakkad, which the Board described as inadequate.¹³⁴ Widespread fraud was seen as the surveyed area being excess of the revenue area by over eighty percent.

In 1894 Moberly submitted a scheme for the settlement of both wet and dry lands of Palakkad, Walluvanad, Ponnai and Kurumbranad, that used a 'Grouping' system based on an almost complete survey of the area except certain jungle tracts. Group 1-3 was assigned to each *desam*, a 'group' according to usual considerations, the accessibility of markets, communications and relative fertility of soil, local peculiarities such as liability to fever and damage by wild beasts. Paddy was taken as the standard crop and the average production was estimated for each sort of soil after a number of experiments. This estimated production was converted into

¹³³ R/324, A.R. Maceven, Special Settlement Officer, *Report on the Re-settlement in Malabar District in Eight Plain Talooks*, 1930, p. 42.

¹³⁴ Resolution No. 106 – A, dated 15th March 1893, RAK.

money at a figure based on the average of prices of twenty non famine years ending with 1892 – 93, from which a reduction of fifteen percent was made to allow cartage and merchants profits. These calculations resulted in the commutation rate of rupees one twenty five (Rs.125/-) for a grace of three thousand two hundred (3200) Madras measures. From this figure, they further reduced the commuted out amount of 15% for unfavorable seasons and unprofitable areas and cultivation expenses were deducted on a scale ranging from (Rs.12-8-0) for the best lands and rupees four for the worst lands, Of this residue 1/3 rd to cultivator and 6/10th of the remainder as due to the Government according to Wardens proclamation. Land that was regularly cultivated with two wet crops was registered as double crop at one quarter over the single crop assessment, and a change of ½ of the single crop assessment was laid down for occasional '*magaram* cultivation'¹³⁵ on single crop land. No charge for any third crop or for a dry second crop.¹³⁶In deciding on these wet rates, the Government was particular about the leniency of the commutation rates taking into account the unpredictable seasons and unprofitable area. The Government also noted that, with the scientific mapping of the cultivated area in Palakkad, the wet area showed an increase of 34.8% over old revenue area.¹³⁷

In Palakkad, Moberly's report of 1894 elaborated on the numerous small tanks in the fields in which the ryots stored water for the second crop, they were subdivided and treated as unassessed. The Malabar ryots never

¹³⁵ *Makaram* is the malayalam harvesting month.

¹³⁶ R/324.A.R.Maceven, Special Settlement Officer, *Report on the Re-settlement in Malabar District* in 8 Plain Taluks, 1930.

¹³⁷ GO.NO.883, Revenue dated 29th August 1900, RAK (Regional Archives Kozhikode).

faced a bad season during the time of *Kanni*¹³⁸ or first crop, in the rare event that rain failed, its effect was felt in second crop only.

Moberly informed the Board that he had taken into account the point that he had included the nature of soil estimate for Palakkad and Walluvanad. *moden* was taken as a standard grain, and the calculation followed those for wetlands as described under 'Prices' the cultivators supplement their living by using *moden* from the market. The merchants were allowed a profit of ten percent and five percent below that of wetlands, Moberly proposed to assess permanent occupation in dry lands at favourably low rates. But usually the rates recognized by Government for dry lands ranged from rupees two acres for the best lands to four annas¹³⁹ per acre for the worst lands.

Moberly's scheme for garden lands was based on the old tree tax system and he proposed a descending scale of tree-rates: ranging from *anna* three - six to 9 pies for bearing coconut trees, three *annas* for bearing and jack trees, and six pies for bearing areca nut trees. Thus the rates were based on a commutation rate of rupees twenty per thousand meters. At first board agreed but later opted for changes. In the analysis of final results we see that there is an increase in the revenue for the district from 9Rs.17,55,271) rupees seventeen lakh fifty five thousand and two seventy one to Rs(.31,09,101) and increase of seventy seven percent.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ kanni is the Malayalam harvesting month.

¹³⁹ *annas* is the lowest denomination of the coin

¹⁴⁰ A.R.Maceven, Special Settlement Officer, Report on the Re-settlement in Malabar District in 8 plain taluks, 1930, RAK.

2.4.2 A Note on Grouping

Palakkad was the subject of Stuarts report. He divided the wet lands into three groups, based on the 'productive capabilities of the soils'. However, the Board did not fully accept this grouping; due to their proximity to markets and communication, some regions were considered more favorably situated and were therefore placed in first group. Moberly examined these earlier groups and reported that the existence of markets and communication was fully ignored. Moberly's his final report on the four southern taluks was accepted the 'Board', which raised Palakkad taluk from the third group to the second group based on the superiority of its land when compared to Ponnani and Kurumbranad. At the same time the Board ordered such modification to be made in the classification as would leave the existing rates per acre unchanged; but here, it was meant that for example land classified as 7-1 in the third group desam was to be lowered to 7-2 when the desam was raised to second group. Thus the original grouping proposed by Stuart was accepted with these modifications as the basis of assessment of Palakkad. Due to fertility, soil in Palakkad and Walluvanad areas, his divisions into three groups were maintained. But in Ponanni and Karumbranad the original scheme was modified later. In short Palakkad, Walluvanad and Ernad contain dry lands in all three groups the other five taluks contain only second and third group lands.

The old calculations in the existing wet rates, for single crop land range from a maximum of rupees six for the best loamy land in the first group of desams to twelve *anna* for the poorest soils in all the three groups. One important factor to be noted was that the original enquiries were based on examination of very best lands in western Palakkad and Valluvanad.

Stuarts report only covered Palakkad. But Moberly took into account four taluks of Palakkad, Walluvanad, Ponnai and Kurumbranad.¹⁴¹

Moberly wanted to reclassify of Palakkad, as he considered Stuarts grouping systems unfeasible. However, the board agreed that the classification should remain, with one modification of the abolition of third group in the taluk. It did not effect any change in the tax rates. The Board opined that changes should be effected in such a way that the rate per acre, as suggested by Moberly, should remain unchanged. As per the Boards direction, the 'productive capabilities of the soil' as well as its proximity to markets and communication should be considered while establishing the groups. In his report, Moberly had deliberately omitted the question of markets and communication in Palakkad.

Good communication and markets were available throughout in this Palakkad region, but they have little to do with the grouping imposed on the area. In fact, in the examination of several amsoms in the first and second group, we fail to detect any substantial differences. In Erimayur (a second group amsom,) the best wet land is only slightly inferior to those of first group. In Kunisseri, Mangalam and Kalappathi which are in second group, no much difference is found with Koduvayur. Similarly in the Pudusseri probably the largest in the district that runs from Coimbatore border to Palakkad town we find good wet lands paying annually low rates. But if the work were to be redone, the whole of the middle block of the taluk would have to be put in the first group and it would be more feasible if bigger desom for eg. Pudusseri and Kadukkamkunnu had been split into two or many parts. This huge task of restructuring or regrouping was next to impossible, and there

¹⁴¹ A.R.Maceven, Special Settlement Officer Report on the Re-settlement in Malabar District in 8 plain Taluks, 1930, pp. 45-47, RAK.

exist no cases of over assessment, only underassessment. So it was thought to be left at that, a fragmentary correction is not enough. Another fact is that in the nearby regions of Tenari and Elapulli, not far off from Para traveler's bungalow, a few private anicuts were built on jungle streams by private enterprise, owner charging ten *paras* an acre for watercharge to the holders of wet land. This '*nirvaram*'¹⁴² was an extra charge of about seven and a half rupees a year. There was also a fair degree of rainfall and also small ponds existed. The ryots almost pay twice as much again on the Government assessment, for the supplementary supply. The dry rates: As in the case of wet rates the dry grouping of Palakkad is also quite indecipherable or confusing to an observer. The grouping plan shows that there are three patches of the first group villages - two in extreme east and one in the extreme west and those four desams – Kilakkencheri, Mudalamada, Kadukamkunnu and Akathethara – were put in third group. The grouping of the last four desom does not call for any comment as large part of their dry cultivation is nearby jungle area. It must be noted that, while the Board decided to abolish Moberly's third group for wet lands, it decided to retain the third group for dry.¹⁴³

Moberly reported that he had divided the four original taluks into groups on consideration of their communication, cost of cultivation etc and also the relative fertility of the soil of Valluvanad and Palakkad area.¹⁴⁴ One of the important questions pertaining to the grouping in Palakkad region was why certain areas were divided into first and second groups. For example Puthusseri, was exchanged from the first group because of inferior communication it was to be highlighted that this area was on the main line

¹⁴² *nirvaram* is a tax on water.

¹⁴³ G.O.NO.883, Revenue dated 29th August, 1900, RAK.

¹⁴⁴ G.O.NO.883, Revenue dated 29th August, 1900, RAK.

of railway and road communication. Thus to conclude it was remarked that the large portion of Palakkad have been under assessed.¹⁴⁵

The Commissioners state on the information obtained by Mr. Farmer, the Supervisor that *patum* which the *jenmakers* received from their *kanamkar*,¹⁴⁶ before the period of Haiders invasion was equal only to about 1/3rd of the gross produce and Arshed beg's Jamna was about 6/20th of rice and half of other products. Warden, the Collector of Palakkad has stated in his report to the Revenue board of 25th March 1801 that '*patum*' was generally limited to 1/3rd of the produce. That the highest produce in this district was fifteen fold. There land was given out in simple *patum*, he further says that it was customary to allow the tenant 4/5th of the *patum* to discharge the revenue and the proprietor receives the remaining 1/5th as his rent.

The district of Palakkad was a large principality belonging to the Palakkad rajah who were commonly called *Achanmar*, which it seems became dismembered by usurpations of the Calicut Samoory Rajah, the Cochin and the Vellatra rajah. To prevent the further encroachment of these neighbors, the Palakkad rajah put himself under the protection of the Mysore rajah who stationed a force in this territory and for which it was agreed a payment of two thousand gold or twelve thousand old *veroy fanam* per annum under the name of Raksha Bhojam, implying a money paid for

¹⁴⁵ R/324, A.R.Macewen, Special Settlement Officer, *Report on the Resettlement in Malabar District in Eight Plain Talooks*, p.930, RAK.

¹⁴⁶ *jenmaker* are usually called *janmi*, *patum* is a lease, *kanamkar* is the one who hold a *kanam*.

protection and from henceforth he was a tributary and ally of the Mysore Government.¹⁴⁷

This has been imposed upon the hoblies of Peruvambu, Teincorruchy, Palayur and Koduvayur now belonging to Palakkad and the hoblies of Konnysheri, Koilmannam, Mangara, Tekengara, Vadakangara and Panagatery now belonging to Temmalepuram which then belonged to the Naduvattom division which had fallen a few years before into the hands of Samuthiri raja.

The rate of assessment continued for seven years, when Itty Kombi Achan a nephew of Palakkad rajah and employed as an agent of Haider Ali when he invaded Malabar in 1765 – 66. In 1773 – 74, Dorogha Sahib the Dewan of Haider raised the assessment to one and a half fanams, the local parah (para) but understood that this was too high, and that it should be applied to a certain maximum, which was that of land yielding five (5) parahs of patum, it would be reduced in the proportion that yielded less *patum*, but the rule of his arrangement ie. 1(one) parah of seed = (1 ½) one and a half fanam of assessment was preserved. In the time of Darogha Sahib, it was established by Itti Kombi Achan that there should be Parputti Menon and two or three *kolkars*¹⁴⁸ for each des (h)am according to the size of the des(h)am for the collection of the revenue and for his pay an additional tax was imposed on the country of half (½) in ten times and less in some places. Under the name Shellavary it continued for some time and later the company Government increased it to one in ten. Under the Mysore Government there was no assessment on *Moden Hill Rice* and *Yellu* (sesamum). In 1801– 2, Major Macleod for the first time introduced a tax of

¹⁴⁷ William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2010, vol.1, pp. 660-661.

¹⁴⁸ guards

one new veroy fanam for eight productive coconut trees, one fanam for twenty four productive beetle nut trees and one fanam for four productive jack trees and three fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) new *veroy fanam* for every pepper vine and ten percent was added as charges collection. Commissioners Duncan, Page, Boddam and Dow reports that the Jamebundy of the hoblies in the Palakkad district was calculated at a low relative rates of only one and a half ($1\frac{1}{2}$) fanam on *a para* of seed which was only about half the medium rate of Arshad Beg's assessment.¹⁴⁹

The Bengal and Bombay Joint Commissioners in 1792 – 93, were misled by a Brahman called Jinnea, who was a prominent officer in the Arshad Beg Khan's time. They were made to believe that settlements were more 'orderly and systematic' but the reality proved it to be otherwise. Believing Jinnea, the Joint Commissioners judged that the Mysore settlement had been fixed at certain money rates per measure of seed sown and per fruitful trees, which rates were ascertained by dividing the total revenue from wet lands and the total revenue from garden by the number of measures of seed sown and by the number of trees bearing fruits. Graeme with the help of a chart pointed out the errors of the Mysorean accounts.¹⁵⁰

In another report we find a proposal to tax rice grounds according to their produce. It was suggested that rice ground or area should be taxed by its produce as a more viable mode than continuing to assess it by the parah of seeds sown. The Inspectors in several districts commenced their survey under the direction of able overseers who gave instructions on how to conduct the survey, to ascertain the number of parahs each owner annually

¹⁴⁹ 251/B H.S.Graeme, *Report of the Revenue, Administration of Malabar*, Superintendent, Trinity Press: Malabar, 1898, p.96, 97, RAK.

¹⁵⁰ See for details William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2010, pp. 628, 629, 630.

required for sowing at one or more harvest. This was done in the presence of farmers and attended generally by ryots and the concerned, they were also to refer to *patam* bonds and title deeds, but they were rarely produced, farmers, declaring that time and other casualties had destroyed or that they were deprived of the original deeds. The next step in the survey consists of examining the quality of soil to adjust the annual average. Much difficulty was experienced in carrying about this type of survey and assessment. The difficulty that was inferable against the deciding with any moderate degree of precision was not possible. The people here it was said never wanted any improvement in the estates. This was due to many reasons, as it was *kanam* tenure, an important obstacle was that, as the proprietor or the owner at any point of time, have a right to redeem or get back his land on repaying the sum advanced to him by the *kanamkar*. The *kanamkar* on the other hand, was of the view that, the chance of enjoying the results of his work depends on the whims and fancies of his landlord. So he was also not to be bothered. Thus in effect no one was interested in the betterment of the yields. As per the instructions in the survey of estimating the rice produce considerable leniency was shown to the interests of ryots, and in case of difference of opinion, further scrutiny was to be done. Cattle was also considered by the people as equitable allowance, remaining was regarded as rent which the Government has the right to extract and to value according to the annual average price current to that article during reaping seasons of *kanny and makaram*. Revenue was not fixed on grain produce according to an average monthly price current, but choosing in preference to a standard more approximate to the value of that article when sold to *Moplah*¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ *moplah* are muslims.

merchants who are known to engage in nearly the whole of Malabar trade.¹⁵²

2.5 Conclusion

The region of Palakkad which was under the control of the Palakkad rajas, were rapidly sidelined by the Mysorean rulers in their brief period of domination. The Mysoreans achieved a level of order in the administration and were able to initiate many things especially in the revenue administration, transport and communication, social set up and so on. They set forth a platform from where the British people were able to make much head way. The Mysoreans posed a very strong challenge to the British domination and they had to muster all their resources against them. In the course of the series of battles fought between the British on one side and Tipu on the other side, in the Second Anglo – Mysorean war the British had to suffer a very serious setback which Sir Thomas Munroe was to describe as a ‘severest blow, the English ever sustained in India’.¹⁵³ He was one of the few persons who had the strength and audacity to fight back the English. The Palakkad fort constructed by Haider and completed by Tipu is a standing acumen of their shrewd leadership and political insight. After the takeover of the control of the Palakkad region they introduced a series of reforms and Acts through which they tightened their reins of control. Hence onwards they put forth a systematic form of administration through which they tried to increase the revenue they get from this region. It was also a period of many rebellions and out bursts from the part of the people. The many sided exploitation and hardships which the peasants had to suffer was the reason

¹⁵² For details refer Malabar Records, Report on the Survey and Assessment of South Malabar by J.Smee , Printed at Government Press: Calicut, 1871, pp.2-10, RAK.

¹⁵³ It is the opinion of Shireen Moosvin her paper titled ‘*The Truth about Tipu Sultan*’ on m.indiatoday, Wednesday, November, 18th2015, accessed on June 3rd 2016,10.20am.

for these out bursts. Army was used to suppress these effusions. The further refusal of the ryots to pay the taxes to the land lords prompted the Company to take over the administration of Malabar as a whole and thus Malabar came under the direct control of the British power in India. From then onwards started an era of whole scale exploitation, oppression and enslavement of a country for a long time to come. In the coming chapters we come across how the British Raj took over the administration of this region and the different works undertaken by them which helped this region to inch closer towards being an urban city scape.

Chapter 3

Geography and Demography

3.1 Introduction

This chapter tries to explain the transformation of Palakkad after the establishment of British hegemony over this vast region of Malabar. In the year 1792, the Treaty of Seringapatam was signed between Tipu Sultan and the English and their allies, the Nizam of Hyderabad and Peshwa of Maratha. The British and the allies stood to gain on all accounts from the terms of this treaty, especially in the extension of their boundaries. The English secured large chunks on the Malabar Coast from Cannanore to Ponnani River, with Coorg (in the present --day Karnataka) acting as a hinterland. They were also given control over Dindigul, in the present – day Tamil Nadu.

The early 1760s was an age of political unrest and disorder in India, during which period there was a large growth in English power throughout the subcontinent, in the South also the situation was not much different.¹ Before the establishment of elaborate administrative machinery in a direct manner in Malabar, a British Proclamation stated that, in the provinces ceded by Tipu Sultan and subordinate to Bombay Presidency, the people can trade freely in any article except pepper.² This led to considerable economic gains for the English power in Malabar and by this Proclamation they technically had complete control over the pepper trade on this coast.

¹ J. Van Lohuizen, *The Dutch East India Company and Mysore*, Springer-Sciences + Business Media.B.V.1961, pp. 1, 3 , e-copy google books, accessed on 3.12.2015, 10.30 a m.

² William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, vol.iii, Gazetteer Department, Government of Kerala , 1998, p. 171.

In a letter addressed to the *samoothiri* of Kozhikode it was said that there had been no revenue system in these regions and that the Nairs, Brahmin and other land holders did not pay any tribute to the ruler. Rather, on festival days like Onam and Vishu, the Rajas would take presents from the landowners. According to this report, Tipu Sultan had done away with these systems and imposed taxes on lands, but in some places ancient customs of giving presents to rajahs persisted. The British had decided to put an end to this ancient practice, and declared that if any such instances were known they would be severely punished.³In another part we come across the agreement of Itty Comby Atchin (Achan), about giving up his criminal jurisdiction, without the previous reference and consent of John Williams Lankhat who was the Provisional Collector of Palakkad. This deal was signed by Palakkattucherry Raja.⁴

The British administration was determined to control the local rajahs as well as to extract maximum revenue from them. For these purposes a series of declarations, treaties etc were made and a sense of fear was inculcated in the minds of the rajahs and chieftains daring to disobey them or violate these declarations, tends to invite the wrath of the company.⁵ The rajahs in a humiliating fashion were ready to obey them. The main strength of the company was the colonial army with which it was able to suppress Tipu as well as other minor rebellions in Kerala. The English first got the support of the local rajahs in all their endeavours and fights and later

³ The letter here is addressed to Samoothiri but it is binding to other small rajahs as well as Achan of Palakattucherry and Kovilparah Nair.(see details Diary of the Malabar Joint Commissioners, dated 9th January 1793 in William Logan 's Malabar Manuel, vol.iii, p.173)

⁴ John William Lankhat was the Companys Civil Representative at Palakkadcherry.

⁵ See for details, Logan, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and other Papers of Importance Relating to British Affairs in Malabar*, Gazetteer Department: 2001, pp. 171—173.

charged these local powers with huge amounts for the maintenance of the army. These dealings with the local powers were just an example of the British way of dominating the whole of India. With their superior weapons and techniques they were able to stamp out any opposition effortlessly. Meanwhile in the year 1798 a notice prohibited the rajahs and others to collect what was termed as '*mugma*'⁶ from traders or others in any part of province and also warned those at *koorayur*⁷ to immediately desist from stopping traders if they value the company protection.⁸

The land holders and the ryots made frequent representation to the Commissioners about the present inequality of the revenue system and stated that they were unable to make the contributions demanded from them. In response the Commissioners decided to appoint John Smee, a member of the Commission, to get an accurate knowledge of the available resources, right of individuals, and present rate of taxation in the region. It was also noted that Smee would give much attention to prevent the taxation from becoming too burdensome. The ryots as well as proprietors were asked to give all details and not to conceal anything in the time of assessment, as the desire of the company was the promotion of the welfare and happiness of the people.⁹

3.2 Survey and Geography

The soil of the district was either of red ferruginous series or of

⁶ *mugma* is tax levied on traders

⁷ koorayur is koduvayur, an amsom in Palakkad.

⁸ From the Diary of the 2nd Malabar Commission, dated 28th January, 1798 in William Logan, *Malabar Manuel*, vol. 3, p. 296.

⁹ The proclamation signed by John Spencer, James Hartley, JoshnaUhtloff, John Smee on 31st August 1798 in William Logan, *Malabar*, vol. III, pp. 308-309.

arenaceous series with the former largely predominating.¹⁰ The sandy soils were confined to a narrow strip along the coast and in the interior it was red loam. In the census records it is stated that in the Palakkad region paddy and other crops are most extensively cultivated and also has a large cattle population.¹¹ This remark indicates the fertile nature of the soil. There existed no systematic survey or assessment of lands and hence the disproportionate calculations at the time of tax collection. To alleviate this defect, an objective, methodical and efficient survey was undertaken by the colonial Government. It was in 1905 that these revenue settlements of the taluks of Malabar were effected.¹² These records contain details on the location of the region, private janmam, government occupied lands, religion, the details on the inhabitants, etc. The geographical location of the Palakkad municipality, was to the south eastern district of Malabar, and was divided into two divisions, known as Tenmullapuram and Wu(a)damullapuram and having the districts of Cochin on the southern side.¹³

The settlement was located in the Yakkara amsom was situated about one mile south of Palakkad and the area of the desam by settlement was one thousand four hundred and forty three (1443) acres, thirty three (33) cents. This *desam* along with Kannanur and Karinkarapulli *desam* formed the old revenue amsom of Yakkara. Under the private janmam the wet land covers about eight eighty five (885) acres, six (6) cents and garden land sixty six (66) acres and ninety one (91) cents.

¹⁰ Ferruginous, containing iron oxides or rust. Arenaceous, meaning containing sand or sandy particles.

¹¹ C/142, Statistical Atlas, RAK

¹² See for details, 1. Ward and Conner, *A Descriptive Memoir of Malabar*, Government of Kerala: 1995, pp. 195 – 216(.2). William Logan, *Malabar*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, vol. ii, pp, 300-310.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

Government janmam lands almost come to two hundred and fifteen (215) acres and nine (9) cents.¹⁴

This *desam* contains two thirty eight (238) survey fields. The demarcation marks erected and standing are noted as boundary stations which is one hundred and thirteen (113), division stations comes to about fifty six (56), there are about one thousand five hundred and twenty five(1525) stones, The amsom officials had given receipts for them and the ryots are responsible for the maintenance of the survey marks. It is the duty of the village officers to safeguard these. The chief crops usually cultivated were paddy, gingelly, pulses, horsegram, plantain, coconut, arecanut, jacktree.¹⁵

Table 3.2.1

	No. of Inhabited houses	Males	Females	Total	Religious			Occupation				
					Hindu	Muhammadians	Others	Agriculture	Labourer	Weaver	Others	Pop/acre
1891	6810	19128	20353	39481	32858	5527	1096	7620	3999	294	27568	711
1901	7262	21673	22504	44177	37285	5535	1357	1704	2444	70	39959	797

¹⁴ Fasli means harvest, derived from the Arabic term, which in India is applied to the grouping of seasons, a chronological system introduced by Akbar in North India. Fasli year means a period of 12 months from June to July. Adding 590 to fasli year comes to the Gregorian calendar (Wikipedia).

¹⁵ *Descriptive Memoires of Yakkara Desam*, No. 77 of the Palakkad Taluk ,RAK.

In the above report, we find increase in the number of inhabited house, population etc., but sharp decrease in the labourers as well as the weaving class.¹⁶ A detailed explanation is got from the settlement registers.

Water for the cattle was obtained from rivers, channels, private tanks and wells. It seems that availability of water was not a problem as far as Palakkad was concerned. There existed plenty of it and the common man did not find it difficult to access water. As per the registers maintained there were one thirty one(131) carts, three thirty one (331) ploughs, three (3) oil mills, two (2) cotton weaver looms in the amsom.¹⁷ Yakkara has a good number of public facilities under government ownership, such as roads, ponds, streams, lakes, *todus*,¹⁸ footpaths, and burial grounds.

There are several groups of Muslims living in Yakkara. The Ravuthans, were engaged in trade and business. Near to their settlement was a Muslim *Palli*.¹⁹ In another neighbourhood, *Pattaniveedhi* (street), near the Municipal area, Pattani Muslims live. Pattani Muslims were an immigrant group that moved into the area during Tipu Sultan's inroads into Palakkad. The Pattani Muslims also have a mosque. AsanarRauvther donated the whole lot of land, known as the Pallistalam which was a dry area. Adjacent to this we also find AppavuSettiyar, the owner of Vithunni Devaswom. His was a rich family and another name seen in the settlement registers very prominently was that of Thottungal family which owns much lands. The ruling family of the Atchenmars were also a rich propertied class. Nurani, located close to the town, was the Brahmin settlement. The next plot belonged to a person by

¹⁶ The regions of Yakkara, Vadakkunthara, Puthur, Koppam, parts of Kavelpad form the Municipal Region in Palakkad, RAK.

¹⁷ Revenue Settlement Register, printed at Scottish Press, by Graves, Cookson and Company: Madras, RAK.

¹⁸ *Todus are streams*.

¹⁹ Muslim mosque.

name Kennath Ramankutty, the land was a *devaswom* land owned by the Brahmins.

The *Kotamaidan*, where Palakkad Fort was located, was also within Yakkara amsom. Some parts of the Kota maidan had been encroached upon; instead of engaging in litigation, the Government decided to give quitrents and take over the area. As it was the hub of governmental activities, the report states that the home of an English road contractor (Dupen), Magistrate court, governmental offices, Abkari office, sub jail, police station, jail store room, jail kitchen, sub registrar's office was all located in the Kotamaidan area. So in this cantonment area we here also come across a '*maidan*²⁰' at Palakkad also. In most of the colonial towns we see this aspect. Along with the fort this *maidan* also symbolises the British power in this region. As early as 1867, a reference was got on the agricultural – industrial exhibition conducted in this *maidan*.²¹ Adjacent to the Kota *maidan* was the neighbourhood of another trading class, the Chettis or Shettis. Based on the proximity of a Mariamman kovil to their neighbourhood, the Chettis might have come from neighbouring Tamil Nadu to carry on trade. The area of the Vadakkanthara desam is nine hundred and twenty (920) acres four (4) cents, and with Pirayiri and Kallikat desams forms the old revenue amsom of Vadakkanthara. Settlement was introduced into Vadakkenthara desam, located within the Palakkad town limits in 1900AD. The private janmam land of Vadakkanthara was four twenty four (424) acres, twenty six (26) cents, and the Government janmam land was about fifty eight (58) acres and thirty two (32) cents. Here much of the landed property belongs to the Brahmins

²⁰ *Maidan is open ground.*

²¹ See details on File Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition, 1867, RAK.

and Nairs. A number of Pattars and Nairs were having the ownership of vast acres of land.

The Pattar gramams were Nellissei, Aadhithyapuram, Vadakkanthara gramams. The burial ground of the Basel Mission was also seen here. We come across Thirupuraikkal Bhagavatitemple, an important deity of Palakkad, the land was supposed to belong to the Goddess as Devaswom lands, and the Uralan was RavunniKharnavar. In a neighbourhood called Moothanthara lived a group called the *Moothans*, who were considered to be a prosperous business class engaged in lending money and trading. Nearby that settlement we again come across the dominance of the Brahmins and Menons. Another *parambu* belongs to the Tharakans who were also engaged in small time business.

A small area occupied by carpenters or *asaris* are to be seen. Thus this settlement inhabited by *asaries*, *thattan*²² etc belongs to the *ainkudikammalars*.²³ The *chakkanmar* were another group engaging in small time trade, who extracted oil from dry coconuts. There was also a *Gramaveedhi* or street, *kinar* or well, school, Ayyappan temple. Some sixty eight (68) cents of Vadakkanthara were occupied by the Railway and therefore belonged to the Government. A further seventeen (17) cents belonged to the B class railway. The old Munsifs court was also located in this *desam*. Kalpathi Viswanathaswamidevaswom Pangi Achan bought many lands. Some more lands for railways as well as Parakunnam School were also in the vicinity.²⁴

²² *thattan* are those engaging in metal works like iron ,copper, gold etc

²³ Five specialist craftsmen like carpenter, goldsmith, blacksmith etc.

²⁴ Village Settlement Register, Vadakkenthara Amsom, Palakkad, RAK.

The Puthur desam was owned by the Municipality, such as schools, burial grounds wells, roads etc., *tenginthottam* or coconut grooves are mentioned, A kovil or temple of the Mariamma many lands owned by Sekharivarma Valiya Raja .Nearby we find the houses called *Cherumakudies*, *Cherumachalas*, *Kavarakudis* mentioned, indicating the working population.²⁵ Konikkalidom PanghiAchan was the manager of the Visvanatha Swami devaswom and he owns vast properties. Again a *vellachal* or a small stream was in the Government land. Many *cherumachalas*²⁶ were seen in twenty cents of lands nearby and most probably working in the adjacent fields. One *althara* or the banyan tree premises is mentioned near a temple belonging to the Krishna Pattar.

Large number of buildings and other lands were under the control of the Government, such as Protestant cemetery, a police Assistant Superintendent's residence, local fund engineer's office,a reading club in governments land and the Municipal Office.A letter from 1868 requests the creation of a reading room at Palakkad. The reasons cited for having a reading room at this site include, was that, there was a provincial school nearby and hence there would be many subscribers, the site was near, where the *exhibition* was held, considered to be very suitable, and being at a vicinity of fort glacis open on all sides and centrally situated.²⁷ In 1890, there was reading club functioning here, which was in a ruinous condition. Reading club indicates the reading habits of the urban population. The

²⁵ *The Village Settlement Register*, Puthuramsom, Palakkad, RAK. These indicated the settlement area of the working population.

²⁶ houses of the working population.

²⁷ Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 16th June 1868, from Collector of Malabar to the Secretary Board of Revenue dated Calicut 21st April 1868, RAK. In 1867, an industrial and agricultural exhibition was held at Palakkad in this place.

subscribers were not able to undertake necessary repairs and so they took advantage of the proposal of the Jubilee Committee to erect a building for public library, handed over the reading room, with all its furniture to the jubilee committee on condition that they would erect a building suitable for the reading room subject to the payment of arrears not exceeding rupees hundred. The Jubilee Town Hall Committee were requested to notify their acceptance or otherwise of the offer not later than 1st March 1890. The collector asked the government to turn over what was known as reading room compound to the municipal committee on the understanding that a reading room will be erected in one corner of it. It was also further proposed that the difficulty of providing land for a new Municipal office could be overcome by renting out the old Munsiffs court to the council for that purpose. This building was used as a forest office by the forester, which was somewhat large for its use. Council need make only certain small alterations to the Vakils chamber. Land was now needed for the erection of 1. Vakil's chamber 2. Municipal office 3. Library. After consultation with the Sub Judge, Palakkad and the Municipal Chairman, the Head Assistant Collector recommended that the site proposed by the District Judge be utilized for the construction of Vakils chambers and that the Municipal office to be located at the site proposed to be given in exchange to the jubilee committee.²⁸ It was further stated that if the land proposed for exchange was not wanted by the council, it must be relinquished to the government.²⁹

Coming up of library and reading rooms mark an important aspect in the social urban space of Palakkad. Most of the governmental buildings were located in and around cantonment area. Some sort of encroachments was

²⁸ No. 5020, Revenue folder, Revenue Department, RAK.

²⁹ G. O.No1868, 18th November, 1894, Revenue Department, RAK.

also to be seen but the Government paid the quitrent and acquired it.³⁰ Some bungalows were also under Government ownership as well as the Municipal Hospital.³¹ Some plots were occupied by the Chetties and Ravuthans. A printing press was seen here, which denotes the coming of the print culture in the urban space. Many buildings occupied by the Basel Mission bungalow, school etc can be seen. A public utility work like a public latrine was built on a donated land by the son of Lakshmanachettiyyar, VengittaChettiyyar. Thus from the above mentioned description it can be understood about the particular geography as such. The land was fertile and in many places yielded double crops. It was also a pointer to the settlement pattern and how people belonging to same profession settled together. Another point to be stressed was that the superiority enjoyed by the temples and these factors together led to the development of a town scape in Palakkad

3.2.2 Municipal Boundaries, Palakkad

Municipal boundaries determine the town limits of this region. In the northern side of the municipal area there was the railway that stretches from the level crossing to the west of Olavakkode railway station to the Olavakkode railway station compound and another railway line to the east of the station, up to the level crossing on the Akathethara road. Due to these rail connections, northern part of the city became a place of intense rush, with many trade activities occurring there. Through the eastern side, here

³⁰ Instructions were given to the Tahasildar to compare the present cantonment boundaries with those given in the Government notification in p.1234 of the Fort St. George Gazette, 4th December 1849, and to report the encroachments. Usually a quit rent of 6 or 12 *annas* were proposed by the British Government. Government not interested in litigations as, it would bring to light the unauthorized British occupation of the lands. Correspondence Files, RAK.

³¹ Village Settlement Register, Koppam Amsom, Palakkad.

the road from Sultanpetta to Kadukankunnu crosses the Kalpathy river, the road from Sultanpetta to Puthur where it meets the South western boundary of Kottekad road up to south east corner. Kottekad road up to north west corner of Ward III, Ward up to Kannady river on the south east corner of the Municipality. The southern boundary of Palakkad was formed by the northern bank of river Kannadi, from the above point to the western boundary; we find paddy fields upto the south In the West, a line from the Kannadi river where the railway line crossing the west of Palakkad was seen. These places shall be "united for the purpose of the Towns Improvement Act of 1865, by the name of "Town of Palakkad" and be the inhabitants of this town."³²

Some more additions were made and a revised boundary map of the Municipality was published in the Fort Saint George Gazette as well as in Malabar District Gazette.³³ As per this revised order, Kongad level crossing, Olavakkode railway station compound, the railway line up to Agethethara level crossing were included in the northern side. In the eastern side, a line starting from the Agathethara level crossing up to Kalpathy River was included. Afterwards these places of Kottekad, Puthur, and Kallepully desoms were included.³⁴ Later the Government approved certain extensions to the limits of the Palakkad Municipality.³⁵ This extension of the limits of boundaries is a clear indication of the growth of town life. Through this process, more and more places were brought under the direct control of the Government.

³² Notification in Fort St. George Gazette, July, 2nd 1866, RAK. (2) LSGD, G O. No. 2243, L&M, dated 15.11.29, RAK.

³³ LSGD, G O. No. 3266, L&M, 26th August, 1927, 16215/27, RAK.

³⁴ LSGD, GO. NO.3266, L&M, 26th August, 1927, 16215/27, RAK.

³⁵ LSGD, Mis. Series, G.O. No. 5070, L&M dated 9.12.1935, RAK

In 1849 itself a proposition was put forward by the Collector of Malabar to establish a village in the midst of Walayar forest as it was considered as a desirable measure from the British point of view. At the same time he also raises a doubt if the actual owners would be agreeing to this. Of course this was considered very beneficial to the public but the question still remains that if the Government or its officers can legally interfere with this private property. It was also pondered by the officials concerned that how far the reclamation work of Wallier (Walayar) jungle could be carried out without interfering with the lands at present under litigation in the civil court.³⁶ At last it was decided that no part of the village was to be built on the ground under litigation and the improvements must be confined to the other lands in the vicinity of the villages and the Collector was to expend Rs.500/, which he had applied.³⁷

In order to extend the town limits and make the region communicable, it was said that some clearing work was needed. For this reason local people (called *coolies*) were engaged in the clearing of the *Walliar* jungle. It was said that, they have cleared a further distance of 1 ½ mile since 1st August 1854. This report complained of heavy, continuous rainfall which makes it impossible to level the region.³⁸ The Walayar jungle was situated between Coimbatore and Palakkad, forming one of the main routes through which brisk trade could take place. Even though the work

³⁶ Madras Correspondence Files, Revenue Department, Extract from the Minutes of the Consultation, 20th January, 1849, RAK. The place refers to the present 'Walayar'. The *coolies* were local native people who were engaged in hard manual work. The British officers just supervised them.

³⁷ Inward letters of the Revenue Department from January – April 1849, Extract from the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 22nd March 1849, RAK.

³⁸ R/305, Selection from the Records of the Madras Government, Report on the Railway Department for 1854, printed by D.P.L.C, Conner at the Christian Knowledge Society Press: Church Street, Vepery, 1855, RAK.

was commenced and there was much difficulty to get people from Coimbatore to Palakkad as it was considered to be one of the most difficult terrain of the country. The persons engaged in work are Gale and Ross. (J.W.Gale was the resident engineer, 14th division Malabar) (Ross was also another engineer entrusted with the work). Thus the two engineers had been employed, a total of some thirty (30) miles was to be cleared, the only difficulty which was found in ten miles of the jungle. The earthwork near Coimbatore had just been commenced. They had to suffer much hardship, as one of the Engineers was constantly laid up with fever and the other prevented from working due to heavy downpour. It appears that much depended upon the speed with which the jungle would be cleared. The total expenditure including Engineers pay have been rupees eight thousand four hundred sixty nine. By about 15th September, 1854, the jungle had been cleared a further distance of two miles and three forty four (344) yards, ground very broken and rocky but more favourable than on the south side of the trunk road.³⁹ In the ensuing weekly and fortnightly reports between the Resident Engineer (Mr. Gale) and T.T. Peers Consulting Engineer for railways a further distance of two meter and thirty four (34) yards of jungle was cleared. Again reporting the progress in earthwork, three miles of jungle have been cleared and they have got a huge quantity of firewood, which was to be carted off to brick kilns.⁴⁰ Again it was reported that the cutting through the jungle on line north of the trunk road was completed and the distance cut exclusive of deviations and cross sections during the past fortnight was seven hundred and four (704) yards. In addition to this a

³⁹ A letter from Walter Gale, Resident Engineer 14th Division, Malabar, to George Grace, Chief Engineer on 15th Septembe, 1854, RAK.

⁴⁰ Fortnightly Report, Coimbatore, 2nd Feb. 1854, RAK.

considerable distance of the clearing between *conjecode*⁴¹ *chuttram*⁴² and Palakkad has been widened for the permanent survey.⁴³

This region, the Walayar jungle was situated in between Coimbatore and Palakkad route and forms one of the areas through which brisk trade can be carried on. Hence the urgent nature of the work, a very laborious task with the adverse climatic and geographical conditions, the workers were able to complete it. Thus we find inch by inch progress being made despite the harsh weather, thorny under wood which the coolies found it very difficult to cut through it. The extension of township was achieved here through the clearing of the jungles leading, to the formation of markets, fairs, transport and communication, trade and overall expedition in the process of urbanisation in the town scape of Palakkad.

3.3 Hegemony over the Town landscape

In a letter dated the 23rd October, 1835 and addressed to the Principal Collector⁴⁴ of Malabar, the Commissariat Office, and Trichinapoly states that it has reason to suspect that the native servants of this department at Palakkadcherry and Ootacamund are in the habit of overcharging almost every article of supply in their accounts. It was therefore required to furnish a current monthly price list to enable the government to check the expenditure of the native servants. It was also added that the local price current lists should reach this office by 10th of the month, so that they could prepare the accounts which are to be forwarded to the Presidency within a

⁴¹ *conjecode* refers to present day Kanjikode.

⁴² *chuttram* resting place.

⁴³ Fortnightly Report from J.W.Gale, Resident Engineer to George B. Bruce, Chief Engineer, 2nd December 1854, RAK.

⁴⁴ F.Clementson was the Principal Collector and Magistrate of Malabar.

month.⁴⁵ This above mentioned remark is a pointer to the fact that some type of malpractice was happening regarding the keeping of the accounts and money.

The British Government in order to make the administrative functioning very smooth decided to introduce a number of Acts. Leaving out the town of Madras, Municipal action in the rural parts of the Presidency dates from the passing of the Act of XXVI of 1850, which amended the provisions of the Act of Bengal, India No. X of 1842 and applied them to the Madras Presidency. Section 2 of the Act provided for its introduction wherever it appeared to the Governor in Council that the inhabitants of any town were “desirous of making better provision for making, repairing, clearing, lighting or watching any public streets, roads, drains or tanks or for the prevention of nuisances or for improving the town in any other manner” and the act may be introduced if the inhabitants so wished.⁴⁶ The Commissioners consisted of the Magistrates and such of the inhabitants as the Governor in Council might appoint and they may be removable at pleasure. The raising of necessary ways and means, the definition and prohibition of nuisances and the fixing of the penalties up to rupees fifty as well as matters connected with the establishment necessary for carrying out the purposes of Act, were to be provided and the bye laws were framed by the Commissioners and approved by the government, finally the Government was empowered to suspend the operation of Act in any town and to appoint any person to examine into and report on the conduct of the Commissioners in carrying out the Act. Furthermore the Act could only be

⁴⁵ Madras Correspondence Files, No. 4881, RAK.

⁴⁶ *History of Moffusil Municipalities in this Presidency*, p. 225, RAK.

introduced in the first instance in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants.

There also sprang up many Voluntary Associations subsequent to this without any legislative act, purely voluntary in nature for sanitary and other purposes. These associations were assisted by the government grant- in- aid equal to the amount, to the sum raised by the private subscription.

The next was the Town Improvement Act, Madras No. X of 1865. This had much wider powers. The government has been viewing the fact that the rich and the trading classes who resided and carried on their business in towns did not pay their fair share of taxation and it was only for smaller proportion when compared to the general revenue than the inhabitants of the rural districts. Thus the State had to put up with high maintenance cost (police). Due to paucity of space, the town limits were also to be expanded and so crimes were frequent. Owing to the density of the population in the towns it was prone to crimes and hence expenses were more.⁴⁷

Thus, the expenses incurred for police protection was more here than in the country places. The government was also pondering on ways and means to increase the income from these places. The original intention was to make compulsory only that part of the taxation which was required to defray police charges while the raising of a rate for the purposes of conservancy or other purposes of local improvement was left optional with the tax payer as under former act. Eventually it was decided that funds are to be made use of not only for the police force but also to the construction, repairing and cleaning of train, roads, keeping of the roads, streets, cleaning tanks and generally everything to preserve the public health.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.225-230.

This was the real intention of the British in introducing the acts. Thus the whole responsibility fell on the shoulders of the Municipalities for their own upkeep. The District Magistrate appointed Vice President of all Municipalities within the district. The Commission were to consist of not less than five inhabitants of the town appointed by government and the term of the office was limited to one year subject to reappointment. The Act was not generally introduced until the end of 1866, at which time it was brought into force in twenty one (21) towns. Palakkad was one among them. The number rose to forty one (41) in 1867-68. In 1869, three other towns were added to the list.⁴⁸

There occurs a change in the attitude of the native people towards all their administrative change. At first they disliked the increased taxation, while they to a very little extent understood the necessities of town Government. Since 1865 Municipalities had always introduced taxes on the recommendation of the Collector. Eventually a new Act known as Towns improvement Act, No. III of 1871 was brought about by A.J. Arbuthnot.⁴⁹ In these proposals, it was stated that number of Municipalities should be largely increased and every town of ten thousand (10,000) inhabitants and upwards should be the Head Quarters of a revenue officer of not lower grade than Deputy Tahsildar. In larger towns, a Vice President should be elected by the Municipal body. The executive power of Chairman is to be enlarged and his position improved. In addition, the proportion of elected Councillors was increased to 3/4th in the towns. In which the elections were

⁴⁸ History of Moffusil Municipalities in their Presidency, p. 226, RAK.

⁴⁹ He was the Collector of Malabar.

initiated, and the number of Councillors was increased for all towns, as shown below in Table 3.1.⁵⁰

Population	Number of Councillors
20000	12 -16
20000 - 30000	14 - 18
30000 - 40000	16 - 20
40000 - 50000	18 -22
50000 and above	20 -24

Table 3.3.1

Number of Councillors per population of the town

District : Malabar	
Municipalities:	Population
Calicut	57085
Cannanore	26386
Cochin	15698
Palakkad	36339
Tellicherry	26410

List of Mofussil Municipalities in the Presidency⁵¹ Table 3.2

⁵⁰ History of Mofussil Municipalities in their Presidency, p. 226, RAK.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13, RAK.

These districts under the Madras Presidency as well as the number of municipalities under them were also noted herewith. Ananthapur, Bedlery (2), Chinglapet, Coimbatore (3), Cudappach, Ganjam (2), Godavary (3), Kisna (2), Kurmool, Madhura (2), Malabar (5), Neilgherry (2), Nellore (2), North Arcot (2), Salem (2), South Arcot (2), S.Canara, Tanjore (5), Tinrevelly (2), Trichinopoly (2), Vizhag (3) – 21 districts. - 47 municipalities.⁵²

According to the new Act, which was known as the Towns Improvement Act, No.III of 1871, funds were raised under the Act should ordinarily be made applicable. At the same time the Government withdrew the grants in aid of twenty five percent of the compulsory expenditure which under Sec. 27 of the Act of 1865, it was bound to contribute. To compensate for this, the Municipal funds were no longer used to the pay the town police and a slight revision of the taxation schedules were made so as to increase the resources available to the Commissioners. However, in many places the collection of tolls remained the only source of revenue. In many places it was merely a transit duty, it was brought under by the government control. By these changes government infact had an annual savings of a lakh and ½ rupees annually while discontinuing with the Municipal contribution to watch and ward. At the same time the municipal taxes increased to pay for new services including education, vaccination, sanitation, inspection, hospitals, dispensaries, registration of births and deaths, census etc.⁵³

Changes were made in the constitution of the boards. There was usually the presence of at least one European officer as a working member of the Commission since their presence was believed to improve the efficiency. This was allowable because the Act permitted the government to

⁵² Historical Sketch of the Development of Moffussil Municipalities, p. 7, RAK.

⁵³ *Ibid.*,p.7

appoint anyone as Commissioner regardless of whether they were an inhabitant of the town. The required qualification were made more elastic, the term increased from one to three, the number of ex-office members was reduced from three to two, the Collector was substituted for the District Magistrate as President, the local Revenue Officer took the place of local Magistrates and the Range Officer of the department of public works, and the appointment of Vice President was taken out of the Presidents hands and vested in the government. The Section 27 and 28 of the Towns Improvement Act of 1871 was not re enacted as there was no contribution of twenty five percent (25%) to expenditure and there being no police charges to provide for. However, in practice the government retained the right to fix the amount of taxation.⁵⁴

In the year 1905, the propriety of permitting the election of Commissioners was considered. Strong representation in favour of it was made by Ballard, the then Collector of Malabar. The real working executive officer was the Vice President and he was either elected by the Commissioners where government here granted the right as he was appointed by government (Sec.10) on the recommendation of the President. In 1871, immediately after the passing of the Act, the Governor in Council resolved to give widest effect to the provision of Sec. 10 which authorized to permit the election of Vice President in G.O. No. 609 dated May 1871 allowing electing their Vice President, if they wish to do so. But the majority of the Municipalities refused this offer, preferring that Vice President be continued to be appointed by the government. Twenty one towns appear to have accepted the responsibility, three others were also added – twenty one out of forty seven Municipalities enjoy their right. It was also a fact that no

⁵⁴ Details in the Historical Sketch of the Development of the Moffusil Municipalities, RAK.

less than seventeen of the twentyfour towns were empowered to elect their own Vice Presidents have chosen officials for the post, while in only seven cases they chose a non-official.⁵⁵

Table 3.3.2 Towns and the elective system

Cannanore	26307
Coconadu	28856
Coimbatore	38967
Congeevaram	37275
Ellore	25092
Masulipatam	35050
Nellore	27505
Palakkad	36333
Tellicherry	26416
Vellore	37491
Visagpatanam	30291

The system was to be extended to all towns with a population of twenty five thousand (25000) persons. This would include the following eleven towns containing together a population of thirty four lakh nine thousand and six fifty seven (34, 9657), as shown below in Table 3.2. As of was, there were eligible for the introduction of the election system.⁵⁶

In towns where the elective principle prevailed, one half of the Commissioners were chosen by election and one half was nominated by Government. It would have been better if all the Commissioners were elected as there was a feeling that nominated Commissioners are bound to

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.15.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

support the views of the Government and to the Collector to whom they owe their appointments and as there were elected and nominated Commissioners being equal or nearly so, they often take opposite views, and will lead to constant opposition to each other. It was said that native gentleman often preferred nomination rather than election, since it was an honour to be nominated by the Government. For this reason, many of the respectable citizens kept aloof from election and relied on nomination.⁵⁷

This shows our subservient attitude to the colonial rulers. The attitude of the Indians, preferring the nomination to election and thereby openly acknowledging the domination of the English people in matters of administering their own areas is amply reflected here. It also demonstrates the fact that the rulers were the dominant power structure rather than the elected officials. Through a series of ACTS the administration and dominance of the British in the urban sphere could be seen here.

With reference to the qualification of the electors, it was argued that the limitation on voting was too narrow. The franchise was therefore to be extended and it was to include not only all who pay direct taxes, but also persons in receipt of pensions or salaries or from the payment of a high rental. It was presumed that the men who fit these qualifications were persons of respectability and property who were entitled to a voice in the administration of the Municipal affairs.⁵⁸ By this it was assumed that more people would be associated in matters of administration.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.41-42.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.41-45

3.3.3 Local Funds and Self - government

The idea of local fund actually originated in 1853 when Edward Meltby, the Collector of South Arcot in the present day Tamil Nadu recommended a temporary reduction of land assessment in his district, pending its survey and settlement. He remarked that there was no district road in this district's 5000 sq.miles of the area, and the public treasury could not finance the construction of one.⁵⁹ Instead, he requested that a small fraction of the land assessment be retained as a District Road fund. The rate suggested was one anna per cawny (1.32 acres) and it was proposed that the fund should be expended on the district roads by Collector and District Engineer under the sanction of the Board of Revenue. The main lines and larger bridges would be constructed and maintained by the Government from general revenues. This suggestion was approved and sanctioned by Government in 1854 and it was extended to North Arcot and other districts. In Malabar the low land cess of one *anna* per rupee dictated by the Act of 1871, was inadequate to support the local needs. As a result land cess was raised to two annas per rupee by Act I of 1878.

One of the important changes made in the independence of the local bodies' was effected in 1878-79 by the transfer of all locally funded public works from Government establishment of Engineers to the local boards. As per the old Road fund Act, the repair of roads was in the hands of District Engineer, the Act of 1871, section 25 explicitly provides for its continuance of this arrangement. The framers of the Act no doubt desired to grant complete independence to the Boards in local matters, but practical difficulties of securing efficient and professional agency was such that they were forced to

⁵⁹ Letter from the Collector of Arcot to the Board of Revenue, 17th December 1853, no.101, RAK.

fall back on the existing establishment. In reality, the public works officers were in a very awkward position, they had insufficient power over the former; they were also compelled to pay twenty five (25%) on the actual outlay on works to cover the cost of establishment. The budgets were framed by local boards and not public works department, which in fact they had little to do with the review of the budgets, since that responsibility belonged to the financial department. The local funds administered by the Board consisted of .1. Taxes raised under the Act, 2. Grant from general revenue, 3. Special funds allotted by Government, 4. Endowments, 5. Miscellaneous item refer to school fees, contribution from Municipalities, travellers bungalow fees, sale proceeds of books, fines and penalties, market rents, sale of materials etc.⁶⁰

Certain proposals were mooted for the extension of local self-government in the rural tracts. Unlike in the towns there were limited opportunities for people in rural areas who had an active interest in local public affairs and who are capable of taking a prominent and independent role. One proposition was for the constitution of unions dedicated to the administration of local affairs. Since it was desired that units of administration would be smaller and represent more localised interests, it should be possible to make use of the existing indigenous organisms and units of administration – i.e. village community or unions. It was therefore proposed that each revenue group of villages would be constituted as a rural sanitary district, which would be endowed with some means of providing for its own sanitation and all minor matters of the village. In the constitution of a union, the governing body was to be appointed by the Taluk Committee, consisting of a village headman or manager and at least three others who

⁶⁰ Historical Sketch of Moffusil Municipalities, RAK.

would form a standing Panchayat or committee of five men. The *karnam* or village accountant would act as their clerk. The headman should be ex-office member, a hereditary headman and not an official in any sense of the word, and to form a Panchayat without him would be impossible. In the course of extending local self-government to the rural tracts, an issue arose when the District Board, Malabar, taluk Palakkad were contemplating the creation of a village Panchayat in Kollengode and nearby areas. The proposal suggested that the villages of Alampallam and Ramanathapuram were also to be included in this proposed union of Kollengode, but the Alampallam and Ramanathapuram units protested vigorously against such move.⁶¹ The Brahmins, who resided in these areas, feared that if a union was formed, then the sweepers and other persons belonging to the lower strata will also enter the villages leading to a problem. In the absence of an immediate response from the Government, the Brahmins community of Kollengode continued to petition, again approaching the Government and sending telegrams to the Secretary, stating their grievances and urging the exclusion of the villages from the proposed union.⁶² Later this was referred to the President of Malabar District Board for remarks and the President of the Board replied that this proposal was still under contemplation and final decision was yet to be taken.⁶³ Thus, the grouping of villages in every district was contemplated for the purpose of revenue collection. This grouping of

⁶¹ Letter dated 9.9.20 to the Secretary to the Government, Madras in G.O. No. 1494, L & M, Mis. Series, dated 24.2.22, RAK.

⁶² Telegram dated 29.6.1921 in RAK G.O. No. 1494, L & M dated 24.8.22, RAK.

⁶³ Office of the Registrar General of Panchayat, FSG, 19th Aug. 22, in G. O. No. 1494, L & M, dated. 24.8.22, RAK.

villages should in no way interfere with the existing village limits and this was purely for revenue collection only.⁶⁴

3.3.4 Taluk Committees

Superintending these unions and charged with the care of these matters would be Taluk Committees, representing all parts of the taluk and for the most part elected by the taxpayers. These committees would in turn be subordinate to the District Board which would be charged with the duty of attending the districts as a whole and of supervising and guiding the taluk committees. This would be very effective and popular since the local committees would be armed with local knowledge and interest.

When dealing with extension of the Municipal system it was stated that in 1875 government proposed to endow all towns of over five thousand (5,000) persons with privileges and responsibilities of Municipal life, but it was recommended that it should be fixed at ten thousand (10,000) inhabitants and that residence of an official of not lower grade than a Deputy Tahsildar should also be necessary condition for the formation of the full grown Municipality under Act III of 1871 and that town of smaller population or which might be unsuited for the higher Municipal organization should be formed into major unions with a less complicated constitution, lighter taxation and less overdues duties. Collectors of many of the districts like Salem, Madhura, Tirupattur etc. supports this proposal. The formation of taluk circles under the Act IV OF 1871 was not considered feasible, as it would entail a great increase in the number of local fund circles. These taluk circles would multiply enormously the number of separate accounts and

⁶⁴ *Report on the Revision of Revenue Establishment in the Madras Presidency*, J.H.Garstin, Government Press: 1883, RAK.

budgets to be dealt with, creating immense paper work and expense. Available resources would not be enough as there were many poor taluks leading to the overtaxing. All these measures would not have the needed result also. A thorough revision of village establishment in order to increase their efficiency, which could be achieved only by insisting that only eligible persons who could read and write well are to be appointed. Under the Regulation of V1 of 1831, any person claiming to be the heir to the last holder of a vacant village post or claiming to be the close relative to some former holder should be discouraged.⁶⁵

This defect could be overcome if the Taluk Committee were partly subordinate to and in partly independent of the District Board, which would be the administrative centre of each district.⁶⁶ Constitution of taluk committees, the taluk committee was best suited to the wants of this Presidency in the one suggested by the Government of India.⁶⁷ Each taluk Committee included at least twelve members exclusive of the Collector, President and Vice President (usually be a Divisional Officer). The members of the Taluk Committees were either all nominated by the Government, or alternatively 1/3 nominated by the Government and 2/3 elected by tax payers. Even when there were a majority elected members, the government continued to nominate a certain number in the attempt to secure the assistance of its professional officers. The number of officials on each committee should not exceed 1/3rd of the whole number, but if a member were elected by the people, being an official should not disqualify him.

⁶⁵ *Report on the Revision of Revenue Establishment in the Madras Presidency*, J.H.Garstin, Government Press: Madras, 1883. J.H.Garstin was the 2nd member, Board of Revenue on special duty to the Secretary to Government, Proceedings on 23rd February 1883, No. 531, RAK.

⁶⁶ *History of Mofussil Municipalities*, p.91, RAK.

⁶⁷ Circular H. No. 3515 of 10th October 1881, pp. 91-92, RAK.

It was also stipulated that twenty five percent (25%) of the Road fund raised in the taluk should be expended in it, but in practice, the rule was ineffective, because the proposition spent has always been greater. At least half of the general funds collected by the taluk were supposed to be spending within its jurisdiction, with the exception of tolls and ferry rents, which belonged to the District Board and were for the use of district as a whole. The taluk also had the right to use assignments made to it for special or general purposes by the District Boards as well as the contributions or endowments made over to it by private parties. The chief difficulty in the organizing of these committees was to adjust the powers and functions of the District and taluk board to preserve the financial interdependence of the whole, it was necessary to retain the supremacy of the District Board, while conceding some power and freedom to the subordinate committees. It was also considered that the taluk committees should exercise much the same powers as District Committees regarding education, hospital, dispensaries, vaccination, sanitation, minor roads within the taluk, drawing from the local fund. They were also given powers to sanction all estimates for new works of lesser amount without reference to the District Board. The taluk committees were in charge of all roads not classed as district roads by the District Boards. When sanctioning the budget for the following year, they were given the power to sanction transfers up to fifty percent (50%) of their allotment of their own budget and also to appropriate any savings which might accrue therein. However, the overall supervision of the taluks continued to be in the hands of the District Board especially in the matters of general policy and principles of administration in sanctioning or modifying taluk budget.⁶⁸ Between the village establishment and the taluk office the

⁶⁸ Historical Sketch of the Development of Moffussil Municipalities, RAK.

connecting link of officers are known as Revenue Inspectors, who had to do all the work in the department. It was recommended that the government should take steps to improve the status of the revenue officials and well educated men should be appointed.⁶⁹ Garstin also proposes certain changes in the different revenue departments. He stressed the importance of simplification and reduction of work in various offices and recommended the abolition of taluk sheristadars posts, to be replaced by the officers having no magisterial powers. Deputy Tahasildars and sub magistrates were to be appointed to give the Tahasildars some relief of work. Departmental tests recommended for the Revenue Inspectors as knowledge of surveying, plotting, and calculating areas and measurement of maps would be useful to them in their work.⁷⁰

This segment mainly concentrated on how the English power consolidates their dominance over this region of Palakkad through the introduction of various acts to sustain their power and certain means and methods experimented to make their administration more efficient. The next section is on Census and what all changes it was able to bring forth in the urban space of Palakkad.

3.4 Censuses in Palakkad

The British were very meticulous in administration, for this they collected data pertaining to the minutest detail in the region they ruled. In the year 1871, the first enumeration of Palakkad's population was taken. The total population was thirty one thousand one hundred and fifteen (31115),

⁶⁹ Report on the Revision of the Revenue Establishment in the Madras Presidency By G. H. Garstin, Government Press, 1883, p. 5.

⁷⁰ Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, GO dated, 18th March, 1884, No.396, Revenue (Misc), RAK.

and the total area in acres was five thousand six hundred and seventy one (5671), assessed as well as unassessed, cultivable and non cultivable. Total number of houses was six thousand five hundred and ninety nine (6599). This statistics pertain to town area. We also find the population under each caste, area occupied for cultivation; persons employed other than agriculture and also the female and male population under ten years.⁷¹

The census of the 17th Feb 1881 was the first synchronous enumeration in various provinces and state have effected at different times by independent agencies, no attempt was made to secure uniformity in the arrangement of the statistics thus obtained. In the British provinces, the things were different and it was done directly under the government of India by various local administrations.

From these census reports we get an idea of the houses of the natives as well as European and also wealthy natives, were thatched. Gazetteer of India gives some particulars of west coast, *paramba*⁷² was in the majority of buildings on this coast, wood was largely used as its cost was less and affords neater workmanship. It was described that houses were not that big or lofty or spacious but was neat. The Nair habitation was generally in the centre of a large and spacious compound, thickly planted with coconut, jackfruits, areca nut, and plantain.⁷³ The population at the Palakkad town was thirty six thousand three hundred and thirty nine (36,339) in 1881.

⁷¹ *Statement of Population 1871 in each Village of the Malabar District arranged according to Area, Caste and Occupation*, Madras: Printed by E. Keys, Government Press: 1874, RAK.

⁷² *Paramba is ground.*

⁷³ C/1, 1682, *Report of the Census of British India taken on 17th February 1881*, vol. I, London, Printed by Spottis woods: 1883, RAK.

Here we find the classification of the towns and villages throughout India with reference to the number of inhabitants. The population for most part was purely rural and the number of towns small. Towns with twenty thousand to fifty thousand (20,000 to 50000) inhabitants numbers one hundred and twenty three (123), of which Madras has twenty one (21), in which Palakkad was included.⁷⁴

The census enumerators were also directed to ascertain what persons 'were under instruction or were not under instruction' but able to read and write or were not able to read and write. What was the percentage after excluding the infantine population under five. In Madras the uninstructed was eighty four point two percent (84.2%) and instructed fifteen point eight percent (15.8%). This figure shows how very weak the opportunities for education were at that time. Allowing for the infants who are too young to be at school, out of every thousand (1000) males only one hundred and four (104) were able to read and write or under instruction. Percentage on total population of males not under instruction and unable to read and write in Madras was eighty six point two (86.2.) The situation of female education was even more deplorable, it was at its lowest ebb. As far as the movement of population was concerned in the Madras region an annual decrease was 13%. The numbers have decreased instead of increasing. It has been concluded that the marked increase everywhere in the case of the feudatory state explains that certain figures of 1873 censuses were defective and that population was not correctly enumerated.

An unexampled tide of prosperity and the growth in population that is evident in the records of 1871. It is remarked that Madras Presidency was

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 271, RAK

not 'stationery or retrograding' in prosperity and population before the great calamity of famine fell on the people. In addition to the public revenue, it must be noted that of recent years local and municipal expenditure were raised. The census cost of 1881 was Rs2779730/ 5anna 5 *paisa* and there was much economy as such.⁷⁵

The table gives us a view of the population belonging to different communities in Palakkad. There was a steady increase in the urban population regarding all groups.

Table 3.4.1 Number of people from each religion during each census year

Religion	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921	1931
Hindu	27430	36339	32858	27285	36236	37025	39521
Muhammedans	3628	4854	5527	5535	6758	7276	8223
Christians	57	1061	1083	1342	1317	1174	1309
Jains	-	--	13	15	3	15	11

Table 3.5 Total variation of population in Palakkad between census 1881-1931=12725.⁷⁶

Year	Population	Variation year	Decease / Increase
1931	49064	1921-1931	+3577
1921	45487	1911-1921	+1168
1911	44319	1901-1911	+142
1901	44177	1891-1901	+4696
1891	39481	1881-1891	+3142
1881	36339	1872-1881	+5587
1872	30752	-	-

⁷⁵ *Report of the Census of British India taken on 17th February 1881*, vol.1, London, Printed by Eyre and Spottiwoods: 1883, pp. 227- 459, RAK.

⁷⁶ *Census of India –1891*, General Tables for British Provinces and Feudatory States, London, Printed for the Indian Government, By Eyre and Spottiswood: 1892, pp. 56-57, RAK.

There was a steady increase in the population from 1872 to 1931 in the town space of Palakkad. Population was increasing, leading to the extending of the limits of the Municipal boundaries as well as reclamation of land to accommodate the growing population.

In the 1911 census, the definition of town was the same as in 1901. It was used to include (1) every Municipality (2) all civil lines. Not included within Municipal limits. In Madras residency the urban population has risen since 1901 by only fifteen percent (15%) against twenty five percent(25%) in the previous decades. Favourable agricultural condition have enabled the labouring classes to obtain employment near their homes and fewer found it necessary to seek a livelihood elsewhere. It was said that apart from migration, the growth of the population was determined by the relation which exists between the birth and death rates and of this again depends partly on the racial characteristics and social practices of the people and partly on external conditions such as material well being and state of public health. Birth rate higher among Mohammedans and animists than Hindus, the Hindus have a large proportion of widows at the child bearing age.⁷⁷ Variation since 1901: The proportion of the urban to the total population has fallen during the decade from 9.9 to 9.5. Plague, famine could be considered to be the main reasons for the decrease in the population.⁷⁸

In the case of education, total number of literate persons in the Madras Presidency was 3.1 million or 75/mile. The Jains in larger proportion were able to read and write. Next comes the Christians. Their literate rate was two hundred and four (204) male and eighty five (85) females. The

⁷⁷ E.A.Gate, Census of India 1911, vol. I, India – Part 1, Report Calcutta, Superintendent Government Printing: India, 1913, p. 35.

⁷⁸ E.A.Gate, Census of India 1911, vol.1 India – Part I, Report, Calcutta, Superintendent Government Printing: India, 1913, pp. 29- 56,RAK.

Mohammedans come next with one sixty one (161) males and eleven (11) females and then the Hindus with one thirty five (135) and eleven (11). Moreover special efforts were made to promote education among the Muslim Mapilas of Malabar. As anywhere else, the standard of education varies greatly among the Hindu castes. The Brahmins have been more than three times as large proportion of literate males as the Indian Christians and a slightly larger proportion of literate females. There were numerous variations among the sub castes. The Tamil Brahmins had the largest proportion of literate males. Next to the Brahmins come the Komati, a trading caste with its half of the males literate and then the Nayars. Remarkable thing about the latter was its high proportion of literate females' viz.(namely) one hundred and fourteen (114) per mile. The depressed classes were very backward in this respect; the *Parayar* have only fourteen (14) persons per mile who are literate, the *Holayar* only two (2). English education was practically confined to males and of them only 12% per mile are able to read and write this language. Christians naturally lead with seventy one(71) per mile. As a spoken language English was more widely diffused but of this we have no statistical measure. There was an absolute increase in the number of literate persons, twenty six percent in the case of males and fifty eight percent in the case of females. The number of persons literate in English has increased by forty four percent.⁷⁹ In many of the Government run schools as well as in aided schools English education was given more importance.

The Fifth Census of India was taken on the night of 18th March 1921. There were slight shows of non-cooperation from the part of enumerators,

⁷⁹ E.A.Gate, *Census of India 1911*, vol.1, India – Part I, Report Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing India: 1913, pp. 305, RAK.

as they were not well paid. The offer of certificates for good work was not an ample inducement for men who sacrifice their leisure and some cash. In other regions they tried to obstruct in some other ways .1)By refusing to act as census officials 2)refusing to act as heads of families to give information necessary to enable the schedule to be filled up.⁸⁰ One innovation was to alter the definition of a house. For demographic purposes it means the independent dwelling. As far as the public attitude was concerned much apprehension was there as the Civil Disobedience was going in full swing. Barring some minor incidents no much trouble was there. Notices were put up in the village *chattrams*⁸¹ in vernacular and also in third class carriages on railway platforms giving the main fact about Census stressing the importance of secrecy and also as the duty of all concerned and also the obligation on the citizens to answer the questions.⁸²

Palakkad's apparently slow increase was explained by the fact that the Municipality shed much of its outlying area population during the decade. Variation in the population of the town came in for about 12%. This was below that of the Malabar district BUT above for Palakkad taluk which was eight percent. This taluk was half way house between Coimbatore on the east and the true West Country regions and the approximation of both taluk and town increase to the eastern regions is noteworthy. As far as origin and growth of towns are concerned, towns take up their rise in many ways. When the rule was certain, it leads to earliest rural aggregations. Trade routes and markets seek protection and consequently communication grew towards such places, which acts as nodal points. It was said that in these rising urban

⁸⁰ J.T.Marten, Census of India 1921, vol.I, India, Report, Calcutta, Superintendent Printing Press: India, 1924.

⁸¹ Village resting place.

⁸² Census of India, vol.xiv, Madras, Part IV, Superintendent Government Press: Published by the Government of India, Calcutta, 1931, RAK.

areas labour was more easily available and communications was favourable to the industry and later on when industries came up they also preferred these places. The Dindigal-Pollachi line has made these places into a railway junction of much importance leading to much change in the near by areas. Another thing mentioned was that Palakkad Gap through which communication definitely took place. The advent of bus also supplemented or augmented the communication system greatly. These things must have attributed the growth of an urban element in the past decade.⁸³

Meanwhile in the Municipal Council a Minute of Dissent was noted. S.K.Ramaswamy moved a motion that four seats shall be reserved for the Mohammedans and the council was equally divided. And by the casting vote of the Chairman the resolution was lost. Then the Chairman moved a resolution that three seats were to be reserved to the Muhammedans. As a protest against the unjust, unfair and arbitrary attitude of the Chairman many Councillors did not participate. Public meetings of Muslims were held on 20.2.31 at JumaMasjid Pallistreet, Palakkad. There was a large gathering of the Muslims and the following resolution was accepted."The Muslim community of Palakkad assembled in a public meeting, viewed with grave concern and alarm the attempts made by the Palakkad Municipal Council to reduce further the number of reservedseats proposed for Muslims by the Chairman and accepted by the Council.This meeting requests the Inspector of Municipal Council to decide the matter after local enquiry and direct the Chairman to stop further reconsideration of the matter by the Council

⁸³ M.W.M.Yeatts, *Census of India*, vol. xiv, Madras, Part 1, Report, Printed by the Superintendent, Government Press, Central Publication Branch: Calcutta, pp. 10,63,64,65, RAK.

in order to avoid ill hatred and rancour between two great communities".⁸⁴ This shows that the number of the Muslim population was increasing and they were demanding more political rights in the Municipal Council.

In a GO issued by the government, the Municipalities were to provide at their own cost all the necessary agency for the enumeration supplemented in such a manner as the local government may direct by the loan of government officials to act as census officials. They would also meet some contingency charges. The government would supply to the Municipalities free of cost including carriage from the press, the schedule and enumeration books. The abstraction and compilation will be carried out by the Government agency, Municipalities contributing funds, the amount etc.⁸⁵ There appears to be considerable doubt in the rural parts of the country regarding the extent to which the Census was backed by the law etc and so all Collectors are required to publish with the village sheet of the District Gazetteer circular explaining the main points of the matter.⁸⁶ Here we get an idea of the changes in the urban population in general in India and Palakkad in particular.

3.5 Conclusion

In this segment, an attempt was made to understand the political as well as administrative measures undertaken by the British Government to dominate the region of Palakkad and also of various acts put forth to continue and sustain their dominance. In order to extend the town limits the

⁸⁴ Letter from Sheik Rowther, President, Muslim Public Meeting, Palakkad to the Inspector of Municipalities, Madras on 20.2.31, RAK.

⁸⁵ GO NO.1752, M, 17th November 1900, RAK.

⁸⁶ Letter from W.Francis, Superintendent of Census Operations, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department on 9th October, 1900, N. 359 In G O NO. 1925 M, 15th December, 1900, RAK .

municipal boundaries were stretched by undertaking the clearing of the jungles so that much communication can be undertaken here. Geography and survey of the region of Palakkad was undertaken so as to get a complete idea of the land, soil, people, settlements etc. The Government then establishes its hegemony over this region through a series of Acts. The Census of Palakkad, also undertaken to know about the minutest detail. All these processes expedited the urban development of the region. In the next chapter discussions are on the technological developments that completely changed, physically transformed the urban environment of Palakkad.

Chapter 4

Communication and Technology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the technological changes brought about by the British, including new forms of transportation, town lighting and communication and the impact it created on the urban life of Palakkad. Some of the themes discussed in this chapter are, the development of roads and how they were maintained, the introduction and influence of railways, the introduction of electricity and how each of these technological changes altered and transformed the urban life here.

4.2 Transportation

The colonial rule introduced new kinds of transportation and it transformed the urban life of Palakkad. In modern times, the advent of motorbus and lorry had a striking effect on the daily life of the people. Its plying could be seen on every road small or big in Malabar and the number of motor vehicles in the district was ten times of what it was in 1920, when the use of buses was in its infancy in South India. For many of the well-to-do janmis, there was no longer the need to keep a private *bandy*¹ for his use – he finds that bus service gives him all the benefits. Thus all section of the public have found travelling and shipping of goods to be easier and increasingly large number of lorries were hired on two or three in the main roads of the district.

Earlier, the mechanical means of transport were supplemented by

¹ *bandy means* carts or carriages.

human labour. *bandies* were used in passable tracts, but due to the plentiful supply of rainfall, the region of Palakkad, was so broken up with the deep water that the use of *bandies* was strictly limited to constructed roads. For this reason, much of the burden of people or goods had to be carried by the coolies up to the destination or to the nearest point on the road or to a waterway. Dr. Buchanan in his Journeys had noted the deplorable roads², with chain of bullocks coming down from the neighbourhood of Mannarghat towards main railway line and also along the road from Parli railway station to Palakkad.³ In ancient times the chief traffic of the district was carried on by water. Under the Rajas and Mysore government, boats were kept by private owners for ferrying passengers over rivers and slight contributions or fee was levied from them. In some places individuals maintained boats as a charity for the passengers.⁴ There was a lot of excitement when, for the first time in 1844, twelve bullock carts laden with goods from Coimbatore arrived in Trichur. This was new experience to the people there⁵. Later on, for the first time in Palakkad, twelve seater bus services were started by Noor Ravuther and Pappan Rawther in the 1930's. Here wood charcoal was used. The bus started from Kalpathy to Calicut, via Mannarghat, Perinthalmanna, starting at 4 a.m in the morning. They had licence issued by the British government and they were fined for overload

2. Francis Buchanan, travelled through different places in Palakkad like Kollengode, Meenkara, Palighat, Thirthalla, Cherplassery etc and remarks that the condition of the road was very bad or narrow and at places no roads at all and some money had to be set aside for its repair. He undertook these travels under the express orders of Governor General Wellesley, to know about Agriculture, Arts, Commerce etc in these dominions. (Francis Buchanan, *A Journey From Madras Through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar*, vol.2, Madras, pp. 22-116)

³ A.R.Macewen, R/324, *Report on the Resettlement in the Malabar District – 8 Plain taluks* – pp. 21-22.

⁴ Graems Report on the District of Malabar dt .January 14,1822. Quoted in C.K. Kareem, *Kerala District Gazetters*, Palakkad, p. 374.

⁵ *The Cochin State Manual*, p. 165 (*Graeme Report on the District of Malabar*).

(Rs8) of the passengers.⁶ Three months tax for the bus was (Rs 357) rupees three fifty seven when the cost of the vehicle was three thousand rupees.

4 .2.1 Roads

From the earliest times one of the strongest indicators of a society's level of development has been its road system. Increase in population and the advent of cities and communications between them and those growing population centres increased. In the earlier periods we find total lack of roads, narrow lanes existed allowing for single file passage of foot traffic. Even before, this colonial transformation took place in Palakkad, and Logan in his *Manuel* gives a detailed description of different gun roads or canon roads built by Tipu Sultan through Palakkad connecting it to Seringapatam.⁷ Even though roads developed by Tipu are for military purpose, they were greatly helpful for the development of trade. Subsequent to the construction of these, rough roads were formed connecting the military arsenals and cantonments, but no real roads for non military purposes until 1813. An attempt was made to construct roads in 1823, by the officers of the corps, which was then officered by regiments on line, but this attempt failed due to lack of professional knowledge. From 1837 – 1844 some important lines of roads were opened or improved, but it was only in 1848, when the Trunk Road Department was formed, that systematic progress in the construction of roads by the British government occurred.

South Indian roads may be divided into three distinct classes according to the nature of their construction, Ghaut road, metalled and

⁶ An article in the *Malayala Manorama*. Had talks with the grandsons of Noor Ravuther and Pappan on 7th Oct. 2015, 4 p m. Their grandfather they said was interested in the national movement and was at first a Municipal Councillor and then Vice Chairman. (Malayala Manorama, August, Friday, 24th, 2001)

⁷ See details Logans' *Malabar Manual*, Asian Educational Services: NewDelhi, 2010.

unmetalled or country track. A Ghaut road connects places in hills or mountains with one another and with the nearby plains. Much care has to be taken for the construction of these roads. Suitable places must be selected for bridges and inundated and cultivated lands must be avoided. Careful planning is a precondition for these. A metalled road in a country is different from the metalled road of a town; it varies in breadth from fifteen (15) to twenty four (24) ft. of which the centre twelve (12) ft was metalled. Tolerable unmetalled roads can be made in many parts of the country where soil was favorable, by bridging streams and attending to the drainage. If the soil was loose, a few inches of clay was placed upon it to improve it. A combination of sand and clay in proper proportions could make a fair road for moderate traffic. Of course these are considered inferior to metalled roads. In the plains, the ordinary, unmetalled district roads, with their light cuttings and embankments, small bridges and simple culverts could be constructed with only moderate expenditure.⁸

The trunk roads have now been surveyed nearly from end to end, chiefly by the *maistere*⁹ and apprentices of this department and mapped on the scale of eight inches to a mile. The drainage was not as neat as they might be. The work sanctioned an estimate for completing the road to Waniumbady, was left unfinished, as the work done by the convicts continued to do so until 1849-50.¹⁰ It was most convenient to cart, materials

⁸ M/32, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency*, vol. I, Chapter 1 – 8, printed E-Keys: Madras, 1885, p.381, RAK.

⁹ *maistere* is the work supervisors.

¹⁰ We come across a series of correspondences regarding the feasibility of employing the convicts, its was suggested that after communicating with the Officer under whose charge they are placed, about the difficulties and problems of guarding and accommodating them would counterbalance the saving which might be effected by employing them. Inspector of Civil Estimates, Madras, 16th July 1829 in the Inward letters in the Roads and Bridges Department, 1829, RAK.

in the hot season when the paddy fields were dry and direct across country path (when also want of water). Most of the time annual allowance for repairs and maintenance of a road was meager. In 1850, it was said that mere patching up of holes was a wasteful and ineffectual remedy. It was also reported that to an observer the general appearance of the road was improved for the sides having been cut down in many parts, it did not look as hollow as before. But by lowering the sides, the whole road was liable to be flooded, the turf carefully encouraged for five years. The new road from Coimbatore to Walayar was just being completed under the Superintendence of Lieutenant Chanmery. This route was considered as more important as the communication between the southern and western districts, by which cotton, tobacco, salt, betal and other products formed the main items of trade. Large numbers of carts were used for this purpose.¹¹

After the formation of Public Works Department (PWD) in 1858, the constructions of main roads were carried out using the department of Imperial funds. However these funds were found to be inadequate, necessitating the implementation of alternative methods of fund raising. District Road Cess Act of April 1866, was passed into law by which a cess not exceeding half an *anna* in the rupee on the rent value of occupied land are imposed, so as to form a fund for the construction and maintenance of the district roads.¹²

Further development of roads occurred only with the formation of local boards in 1871. In the Madras Presidency, Local Funds Boards were

¹¹ *General Report of the Road Department for 1 May*, Printed at Fort St. George Gazatte Press: Madras 1851, RAK.

¹² *Ibid.*, The amount raised by this cess, the average of Rs .684150 in 3 years, 1864 – 66. Rs. 2233379/ in the year 1867-68 and Rs 3227379/ in the year 1868 - 69. Rs. 1517097/ was expended upon the construction of district roads.

first constituted by the Local funds Act IV of 1871, which repealed the District Road Cess Act of 1866, The Local Funds Acts provided for the unexpended balance of the District Road Fund raised under the Act of 1866 being transferred to the local fund Boards. The local funds Act provided for the imposition of a cess similar to district road cess but with a maximum of one *anna* for every rupee for the establishment of tolls upon roads, 2/3rd of the cess and the whole of the money collected as tolls were to be expended on the roads. From June 1871, the former distinction between imperial and district roads was abolished. Thereafter, the total annual assignment of grants-in-aid from provincial government together with the local funds were treated as one unit, under the designation as the road fund, to be used for the construction and maintenance of all roads, including those which were formerly classified as imperial roads.¹³

In the year 1882-83, the number of local fund engineering circles was thirty and the total length of roads was twenty one thousand and nineteen (21,019) miles excluding village roads and the total expenditure being twenty eight lakh fifty two thousand and eighty three (Rs. 28,52083/-) or forty seven percent (47%) of the whole of the local fund expenditure. The most important road was Grand Trunk Road from Madras to Calicut and Ghaut roads leading from Neilgharry (Nilgris) to the Malabar Coast and Mysore plateau. Towards the end of the year 1883, the committee (for considering the best method of connecting the centres of production and consumption with the main arterial protective lines) submitted the report in which

¹³ M/32, *Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency. Records of Governments and the Yearly Administration Reports*, vol. II, E.Keys Government Press: Madras, 1885, RAK.

Palakkad – Dindigal lines surveys, orders were issued for surveys. The recommendations were generally approved by the government.¹⁴

4.2.2 The problem with carts

We come across a letter from the District Engineer to the Collector recommending that ryots on Trunk Road should not be allowed to encroach on the Trunk road and that camping ground for bandies and bullock carts should be formed. These camping causes several damages to the road and it was often found that side channels filled up by the embankments of the ryots which have fallen down and was allowed to remain so. The practice of encroaching on a road and throwing mud from the field on to it was common and for example the road from Palakkad to Kollengode was much damaged due to these methods. The ground should be railed off for *bandies* on the Trunk Road due to the traffic. A space has to be set apart for them, the District Engineer wrote, since they will be halting in two rows and cooking rice on it. They also leave behind much litter on the road, and also choke the side drains. As a remedy for this it was proposed that in each hamlet or accustomed halting places for bandies, a piece of land would be allotted, where these people could camp. Any one violating this arrangement would be liable to be fined. Instruction boards were also provided, furnishing the names and various encamping spots written in three or four vernacular languages, to be struck up or at bridges over stones, and usually these *bandies* generally camped near bridges near water.¹⁵

Another report pertains to the condition of the road i.e. part of Mannur road, adjoining the trunk road was used by bandies or bullock carts

¹⁴ M/32, *Manual of Administration* of the Madras, RAK.

¹⁵ File No. 706, Inward Letters in the Roads and Bridges Repair II – from Aug – Dec. 1859, RAK.

conveying rice and wood. It appears that the people come all the way from Coimbatore to that part of the district to buy rice. Because of this heavy traffic, the trunk road into Palakkad from where the junction with the Mannarghat road joins was very much want of repair, *adhikarikal*¹⁶ are being blamed for their lack of attention.¹⁷

4.2.3 Roads in the Palakkad Region

Within the Municipal limits, the trunk road follows the Great Western road, Olavakkode, Big Bazar and Kongad road. From Olavakkode to about a furlong beyond the tile factory, the road was bad. A maximum grant of rupees four thousand and two fifty (Rs. 4250/-) was sanctioned to the Palakkad Municipality for the maintenance of a section of the Madras – Calicut Trunk road, measuring four (4 meter), two (2furlong) zero (0 yards).¹⁸

Table 4.2.4 Expenditure on Trunk Roads of this Municipality – 1920-21.¹⁹

Name of the road	Cost of Material Rupees-anna-paisa	Labour Rupees- anna- paisa
Great western Road	143 – 15 – 5	1482 – 9 – 6
Olavakkot Big Bazar road	1455 – 1 – 8	805 – 9 – 5
Kongad Road	49 – 12 – 11	42 – 7 – 5
Total	3648 – 14 – 0	2300 – 10 -4

Between Madras and Calicut, there are two rivers preventing easy construction of the Trunk Road, one at Navakkari in Coimbatore District and

¹⁶ *adhikari* means government official.

¹⁷ File No.708, Inward Letters in the Road and Bridge Department upto December 1864, RAK.

¹⁸ Extract from the Inspection Notes of the Executive Engineer, *West Coast* on 4.5.21, RAK.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

the other at Naragampully between Palakkad and Walayar in Malabar district.²⁰ In 1923, immediate sanctioning of rupees ten thousand (Rs. 10,000/-) was requested to improve the Palakkad- Walayar section of the Madras – Calicut Trunk road. The situation of the road was worsened by the lack of a bridge and by heavy traffic between Mannarghat and Walayar forest. However the money was not sanctioned.²¹ Again the condition of the Palakkad-Walayar section of the road became very bad and required complete restoration. Heavy rains made things difficult and if no restoration work were done, a huge amount would be needed the next year as well. However, before this work was taken up, the Superintending Engineer, 4th Circle Coimbatore noted that road was still blocked by two unbridged rivers and if the Government wanted to retain the Trunk Road, completion of the bridge was immediately required.²²

As per the Administrative Report of the Malabar board, 1928-29, the total length of roads maintained by the local boards in the district increased from one thousand five hundred and eighty seven (1587) to one thousand six hundred and nineteen (1619) miles which included one hundred and fifty three miles (153) of the Trunk Road and about twenty four (24) miles of newly opened roads. Of the total mileage nearly, one thousand two hundred and fifty (1250) miles were metalled. The next year Collector reported that, even though they had been recently improved, the condition of the roads was not very good and much work had to be done in this area.²³ The condition of the road from Trippalur bridge and Vadakkencheri, for example, was found to be unsatisfactory and the local officers report that only patch

²⁰ LSG D, G.O. NO.2271, RAK.

²¹ L S G D, G.O. NO.1846, L&M, 21.8.1923, RAK.

²² B: 8, Sl. 12, RAK.

²³ LSGD, M. Series, G.O. NO. 2605, L&M dated 2.7.1930, RAK.

work had been done in these places. The Yakkara – Alathur road, another important trade route linking Palakkad, Alathur and Trichur, also had great deal of traffic. The Inspecting Officers cannot believe that rupees fourteen thousand and five hundred (Rs. 14,500/-) was spent on twenty two and three-fourths (22 $\frac{3}{4}$) miles or even half that sum. The traffic over this road in 1928 – 29 increased to the extent of sixty six percent (66%), over that and this year it had gone up to hundred and five percent (105%) over that of 1927-28. This heavy traffic and the lack of the maintenance for some years resulted in the unsatisfactory condition of the road's surface. The conditions of roads in Pudunagaram, Kollengode, Palakkad were found to be unsatisfactory and if the Government was prepared to sanction the full amount of eight thousand two hundred (Rs. 8,200/-) the work could be executed and the roads could be maintained in good condition. It seems the Government was not prepared to give full amount for the metalling of roads.²⁴

Table 4.2.5. Expenditure of trunk roads within the Palakkad Municipality, 1926.²⁵

Roads	Total expenditure incurred excluding charges under estimates tools and Plants ; rupees, anna , paisa	Net expenditure rupees, anna, paisa	Additional % charges rupees, anna, paisa	Total grants payable rupees
Kalmandapam	983 – 10 – 8	983 – 10 – 8	113 - -	1000
Kalpathy – Fort road	971 - 7 – 5	971 – 7 – 5	111 – 11 – 5	1000

²⁴ LSG D, Mis series, G.O. NO. 4157 L&M dated 11.9.29, 8061, RAK.

²⁵ LSGD, Mis series, G.O. NO. 2946, L&M dated 10.7.26, RAK. (It is in rupees ,anna, paisa)

Parakunnam Road	500 -- --	500 - -	57 – 8 -	500
Olavakkode	1202 – 13 – 10	1175 -10	135 – 2 -	1250
Kongad	250 -- --	250 -- --	28 – 12 -	250
Sign posts	229 – 2 – 6 4137 – 2 – 5	229 – 2 -6 4109- 5 -5	- -- 466 – 1 – 5	-- 4000

An advance grants of rupees three thousand one hundred and eighty seven was received from the Treasury officer, balance of rupees eight hundred and thirteen was later sanctioned.²⁶ We come across the reports on the expenditure on repairs of roads in Malabar during the first half and gave an amount of rupees three thousand and three forty five as an additional amount.²⁷The road communications of the Presidency was now almost managed by the boards with the local funds. Funds were provided for their construction and maintenance from the revenue.²⁸

From the Palakkad Town Map, it was evident that the town market lies along the stretch (Coimbatore) of the road recommended by the Chairman and several minor roads lead on to it. This portion would have a large amount of the traffic converging to this portion and it would be difficult to maintain its efficiency. In 1923, an idea was put forth, to change the alignment of routes which was supported by the Superintending Engineer, that the nearest and the most direct and route for trunk road to follow was that the road crossing the river by the railway bridge in Parakunnam road and skirting the town and to avoid the big bazaar. The proposed alignment was two furlongs short. But the Municipal Chairman insists on the retention of the old routes, but the Government approved the proposal of the Executive

²⁶ LSG D, Mis series, G.O. NO. 2946, L&M dated 10.7.26, RAK.

²⁷ Extract from the Minute of Consultation - 18th January, 1859, RAK.

²⁸ The main amount from land cess with some provincial aids.

Engineer that the alignment of Madras – Calicut Trunk road passing through the Palakkad Municipality should be along Parakunnam road instead of big bazaar and Kalpathi road as at present.²⁹ As a result a great deal of commotion ensued, regarding the alignment of route and the Municipal Council very strictly addressed the Government to maintain the existing arrangement. The above mentioned road has been in existence for many years and the road through which it passes was a very important one, having heavy traffic, while the one it was proposed to pass was comparatively insignificant road and in some parts the Parakunnam road was narrow. So the existing routes are to be maintained as it was in usage ever since the bridge over the Kalpathy river was constructed some forty years back. It passes through important business centres of the town viz Sultanpet, Palakkad Railway station, Big bazaar etc. All heavy traffic was carried on from Coimbatore, Pollachi and other places to the adjacent taluks through this existing route only and the proposed new alignment i.e. the Parakunnam road was practically insignificant and does not stand in need of any Government allotment to maintain it in good condition.³⁰ On 10th August 1923, the Municipal Chairman Sekhara Menon requires the Secretary to Government of Madras, local and Municipal to sanction the amount for the maintenance of Trunk Roads within the Municipality and questioned the delay. The sum was delayed as the Superintending Engineer's inspection note has not been received. PWD was to issue a telegraphic instruction to the Superintendent Engineer to submit the report. Three fourths of the grant i.e. rupees three thousand one hundred and eighty may be disbursed to the Municipality and the balance rupees one thousand and seventy to be

²⁹ LSGD, Misc. Series, G.O. NO. 2401, L&M, dated 29.10.1923, 23559/23, RAK.

³⁰ LSGD, Ordinary Series, G.O.NO. 2022 L&M dated 13th September, 1923, RAK.

paid after repairs and also as reported by the inspection notes.³¹

The government excluded, roads and battis not maintained by local boards from the operation of Madras local Boards Act 1920, since these local bodies did not have the necessary staff to watch encroachment, on cart tracts, village streets etc.³² By 1927, the Taluk Board has control over about one seventy (170) miles of road. A sub overseer was appointed to look after roads and footpaths and these cases were dealt promptly.³³ New sign boards were also put up almost at the same time, for example near Mankara Police station, absence of it was seen in the junction of roads of Pattambi and Ottapalam.³⁴

The road for maintenance in the Elapully desom of the Palakkad taluk passes through twenty survey numbers of which seventeen stands registered in the name of government. The road was to be reinvested in the taluk board for maintenance by cancelling the notification issued and revenue department has presented a new procedure for the reverting of unmaintained roads in local board's road above was approved and Collector of Malabar was required to publish it in Fort St. George Gazette and in Malabar District Gazette.³⁵

Revised boundaries of the Palakkad Municipality were to be published in English in Fort St. George Gazette and in English and Malayalam in Malabar District Gazette.³⁶

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² G.O. NO, 4780, L&M, dated 10.11.21, RAK.

³³ LSGD, Mis series, G.O. NO. 4433, L&M dated 15.11.27, 382, p.7, RAK.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ LSGD, Mis series G.O. NO. 4647, L&M, dated 15.10.1929, RAK.

³⁶ LSG D, G.O.No. 3266, L&M, 26th August, 1927, RAK.

In 1941, the government sanctioned some money to provide a dustless surfacing to Gandhi Bazar, Alathur, Sultanpet, Chetty memorial roads.³⁷ Government has also sanctioned most of the grant for providing dustless surfacing to the Chetty memorial to fort road. A gap will therefore have to be left between these two for a length of five eighty feet. In case the grant sanctioned on two or more schemes in the same local body, it will be allowed to utilize the sanctioned grant on any one or more of the schemes. There was a saving of an estimated amount of rupees one thousand and ten in Alathur road and this savings was to be utilized up to rupees nine eighty to complete the Sultanpet - Chetty road. So, the government was requested to permit the utilisation of the amount sanctioned for Alathur road to complete the full stretch of Sultanpet- Chetty road.³⁸ The government approves the execution by the Palakkad Municipality of the work of bitumen semi grout surfacing the Alathur road from the junction of the Gandhi bazaar road to the Mission school four (4) furlongs and from Sultanpet junction to Chetti memorial road (3 furlong and 120 feet) at an estimated cost of rupees five thousand four hundred (Rs. 5400/-) and rupees two thousand five twenty (Rs. 2520/-) respectively.³⁹ Utilization of savings in grant was sanctioned for Alathur road works.⁴⁰ Special officer recommended government to sanction half the amount as grant and the other half from the toll compensation due to the council.⁴¹ Some cementing and concreting the surface of the Gandhi bazaar road was not completed. The Chief Executive (communications) has reported that about thirty tons of cement was required for a length of Gandhi bazaar road. As cement was not easily

³⁷ G.O. N O. 1232, dated 6.5.41, RAK.

³⁸ G.O. N o.,3046, dated 7.11.41, RAK.

³⁹ G.O. No. 1232, LA dated 6.5.41, RAK.

⁴⁰ LSGD, Mis series, G.O. NO. 67, dated 7.1.1942, RAK.

⁴¹ G.O No. 2176 LA dated 22.7.1942, RAK . (financial strigency is followed)

available, he has suggested that the provisioning of the cement concrete surface to this surface may be postponed for the present. But this was an important portion of road, one of the busiest, and maximum motor and country cart traffic, if completed it would be a great relief to the Bazar people.⁴²

4.2.6 Important routes connecting Palakkad to the neighbouring areas:

We find the mention of routes, its number, to, by distance.

	No. of the route	To	By	<u>Distance</u> ⁴³ M(miles) – F(furlong) – Stages
(1)	199,250, 247	Nagapatnam	Maliyapuram PGT – CBE, Trichy, Tanjor	333-4 – 33
	199, 249, 252	Palamcottah	PGT, Dindigal, Madhura	323 – 2 ½ - 30
(3)	196	PGT	Ariakode, Manjeri, Angadipuram	93-1-9
(4)	197	PGT	Tanur and Tritalla	86-6-8
(5)	198	PGT	Kondotti, Manjeri, Angadipuram	83 --6-8
(6)	199	PGT	Maliyapuram, Angadipuram	84 -- 4-8
(7)	200	PGT	Manar Maliyapuram	86-4-8
(8)	199,140,136	Salem	Palakkad,Coimbatore Erode,	214-0-22

⁴² L.A. (1942) G.O. NO.3787, dated 15.12.1942, RAK.

⁴³ Book No. R. 419, S. No. 2955, Routes in the Madras Presidency Compiled in the Office of the Quarter Master General of Madras Army, revised edition, Quarter Master General Office, Fort St. George, 1st Oct.1879, E-Kays, Government Press, 1879, RAK . (PGT – Palakkad), (CBE – Coimbatore).

(9)	199,140,136	Salem	Maliyappuram, PGT,CBE, Bhavani	215-7-23
(10)	199,250,247	Tanjore	Maliyapuram,Palakkad, Trichy	281-4-28
(11)	199, 250	Trichy	Maliyapuram, PGT, Udumalpet, Karur	246-6-24

From Madras

<u>No of the route</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>By</u>	<u>Distance</u> M – F – Stages
140,52	Cochin	Ranipet, Salem, Coimbatore, Palakkad and Trichur	424-8-42
140 & 199	Calicut	PGT and Trichur Maliyapuram	422-41-41

From Palakkad

<u>No of the route</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>By</u>	<u>Distance</u> M – F – Stages
196	Calicut	Angadipuram, Areekode and Route No. 40	93 -1 - 9
197	Calicut	Ponnani, and route No. 204	86-6-8
198	Calicut	Route No. 196, to Manjeri and Ferrokabed	83-6-8
199	Calicut	Route No. 196 to Angadipuram and Maliyapuram	84-4-8
200	Calicut	Manar Angadipuram & route No. 199	86-4-8

Route No. 196 from Palakkad to Calicut was metalled throughout and it was bridged, some ferries were also used. It was a circuitous route and would not be used unless the more direct ones (No. 198 and 199) happened to be closed.

From the Fort, considered a strategic point, militarily as well as commercially connects Lakkidi, Vetaipalayam, Cherplacheri, and Angadipuram and at the junction of Parali one finds a railway station.⁴⁴ From Palakkad to Calicut route No. 196 to Angadipuram and Maliyapuram. This was one of the best routes between Palakkad and Calicut, the road being good at all seasons and ferries are there at unbridged rivers.

1938 - 39 – Palakkad.⁴⁵

Table 4.2.7

Sl. No.	No and Section	Name of the road	Length Mile – furlong	Condition
1.	134 - 1 and 2	Palakkad – Vaniampara	24 -- 5	Generally fair, culvert bad
2.	135 – 1 and 2	Palakkad – Mankara	20 - 0	Generally fair, heavy traffic
3.	136 – 1 and 2	Kollengode – Mangalam	12 – 3	“ “
4.	138	Palakkad – Erattakulam	7 – 4	Full of deep ruts
5.	--	Koonathara – Kootiyal	-----	Satisfactory
6.	7 – 1 and 4	Palakkad – Pattambi	32 – 3	Deep ruts
7.	101 – 1	Ottapalam – Cherplassery	10 – 0	Deep ruts because of bad traffic

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 276-277, The above mentioned areas are important places near Palakkad having facilities like post office, public bungalows.

⁴⁵ L.A. (1940), Dept, Mis Series G. O. NO. 789, dated 1.3.1940, RAK.

8.	102 – 2	Cherplassery – Parli	10 – 1	Fair
9.	--	Kattikulam – Tolpathy	-----	Road narrow, heavy motor and timber traffic, culvert

The Palakkad gap also facilitated easy means of communication between east and west. The most striking feature in its configuration was the extensive gap historically known by the name Palakkad gap, remarkable opening with the lofty Nilgiri hills and Anamala on either side, overtopping the ranges by several thousand feet (1000 ft). Heavy forest areas, private property except two. 1. Chenat Nayar, 2. Walayar reserves. The Government purchased them with the object of supplying the Madras railway company with wood fuel.⁴⁶ As far as II class roads were concerned, an estimate amounting to rupees ninty four thousand and two hundred (Rs. 94,200/-) was drawn up for repairs to the road from Palakkad to Alathur, minimum amount required for this work. These works were to be done by the District Board works. As the amount exceeded one lakh (2 projects) the estimate required the sanction of the Government and it was not approved.⁴⁷

Another estimate provides for twenty six masonry tunnels on the southern portion of the road, from Palakkad towards Malliapooram and Calicut direct for which the original estimates of that provided very imperfectly and over which in consequence the drainage of the country passed at the proposed sites. It would be beneficial to bring this line into a higher state of efficiency, as the railway feeder of some consequences and

⁴⁶ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Asian Educational Services: vol. II, 2010, pp. 50-51.

⁴⁷ Letter dated July 16th 1930 from R. 7 Stney, Chief Engineer, PWD to the Secretary to Government, Public Works & Labour Department, PW & L (1930) Dept. MS. Series, G.O. No. 2508 L dated 5.9.1930, RAK.

portion of one of the main communications of the district. The estimates submitted amounts on the aggregate to rupees one thousand two hundred for bridges and tunnels on Trunk road No. five and on the road from Palakkad to Mundur in the Malabar District. This was sanctioned from the reserve fund of 1865-66.⁴⁸

4.3 Bridges

No doubt the rivers acted as the main medium of transport and communication in the ancient times. It was also considered as one of the cheapest means. The British built many bridges to connect important trade routes providing an impetus to trade and commerce that in turn leading to the growth of towns and cities. Old and new Parali bridges, Kannadi river aqueduct near Karingarapully, Naragampully bridge, Rail bridge in Kalpathy, Puthiyapalam bridge are just a few of those the bridges built in the colonial period and which transformed the urban space of Palakkad.

Many things have to be looked into before the construction of a bridge in South India, where rivers were not navigable and run dry for most part of the year but flood at other times. In general, a wide space and superstructure were not needed. There was difficulty in determining the amount of opening or waterway to be given to the bridge. Too little a space would cause problems in the rainy season, but economy was also required in their construction.

The portion between Walayar and Ponany (i), a distance of seventy (70) miles has been of much importance, a bridge of five (5) arches of thirty

⁴⁸ Proceedings of the Madras Government, PWD, 18th May 1864, Inward Letters in the Roads and Bridges Department from May 1864, Correspondence Files – 715, RAK.

nine (39) ft. over the Naragampully was to be constructed.⁴⁹ It has been noted by Grame, 1822 Jan 12th that in the history of communication in Palakkad, one of the first bridges to be constructed was the Naragampully bridge in the Pudussery, Palakkad. The first bridge was built on red bricks, but later in 1920, this structure was washed away in the floods, according to the nearby inhabitants living nearby. The ruins of this old bridge can still be seen here. Much of the road transport during the colonial period was through this bridge. One of the major trade links between Madras and Calicut, the main obstruction for this was the two rivers, one in Coimbatore and other in Puthusseri. As a solution to this a bridge over the Naragampully was completed. After renovation in 1923 it was inaugurated by C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer in the presence of the Malabar District Board President V. Madhavaraja. The whole iron work was undertaken by Howrah Iron Works Company and its details are recorded in the iron railings of the bridge.⁵⁰

Erimayur bridge on the road from Mathoor to Palakkad can be considered as an important route. In the year 1843 or 1844, one of the correspondences, included a list of labourers, materials used, the rates charged and noted that the prices would be lower in Palakkad taluk, excluding the conveyance charge which was to be determined with reference to distance from where the article was brought and the rate payable to the coolie was one copper pice for every mile.⁵¹

The Parli bridge, located where the Kalpathy river merge with Kannadi river to form Bharatapuzha river was also one of the oldest bridges in

⁴⁹ General Report of the Road Department for the 1 May. Printed at Fort St. George Gazette Press, Madras, 1851, RAK.

⁵⁰ *Mathrubhumi*, Friday, December 11th 2015, p. 11.

⁵¹ 7454, Outward Letters in the Roads and Bridges Department, 1843-44, Madras Correspondence Files, RAK.

Palakkad. It was constructed during the period of A.B. Robinson, Collector of Malabar in 1852 A.D. During the colonial period much of the traffic was conducted through this bridge, which was currently in a dilapidated condition now.⁵² The Ootara Bridge, constructed by the British Presidency of Madras in 1940, the narrow bridge connects Pollachi to Palakkad, Chittur, and Koduvayur and Nemmara town.⁵³ These regions are known trading places in the outskirts of the Palakkad town and connecting it with bridges leads to more active trade.

In 1941, the construction of a bridge over the Bharatapuzha River, a series of discussions took place regarding the best and an exact position where the bridge could be built. In these discussions three places were suggested. i.e. Codacel, Kuttipuram and Thrithala. The Codacel site was located at one of the widest points of the river and was not directly linked through any road. Because of the necessity for a wider span and the need to build two and a half miles of road, the cost of construction would be greater at this location. At Kuttipuram, the river was narrower. Here the river has taken a curve because of the rock formation on the bank. But the construction of a bridge here will necessitate three extra items of expenditure. (1) Building of a revetment wall for about two miles on the Edappal – Tirunavaya road, as the river has cut into the road at various places, rendering it unfit for traffic. Secondly the approved road from Kuttipuram railway station to the bridge site will have to be raised, so as to bring it above maximum flood level. Thirdly there was another river joining the Bharatapuzha above Kuttipuram would have to be bridged as well. At Thirthala the river was slightly narrower than at Kuttipuram but the roads on

⁵² palakkad walks.blog spot. accessed on February 10th 2016, 4.30 p m.

⁵³ *The Hindu*, 29th December 2015, Palakkad.

either side however do not run at right angles to the river or if the existing roads were taken as the connecting approach roads, the bridge would have been slightly askew. Consequently the approach roads would have to be diverted so as to straighten up. Both the approach and marketing roads were in a good condition. From the point of view of economy Thirthala would be first choice Kuttipuram second and codacal third.⁵⁴

The three sites were then considered in reference to commence and trade. To the east of all these sites there were Walluvanad and Palakkad taluks, through which active trade was done. The road to Thrithala – Pattambi was a main marketing road and after the river was crossed, it joins the main Pattambi – Palakkad road leading to the important market of Vaniamkulam near Pattambi. It follows that a bridge at the Pattambi crossing would accelerate and help the means of transport to the Valluvanad and Palakkad taluks, and also a greater portion of the Nilgiris and Coimbatore, for which Ponani was the nearest and cheapest port. Moreover, the two marketing roads of Ponnani taluk were the Ponnani – Palakkad road and the Chowghat – Pattambi road. The Thirthala site at the crossing of these roads was therefore proposed as the site for the bridge.

Estimates were to be prepared and out of three probable sites, it seems that the Senior Superintending Engineer (communications) has been asked to submit proposals for a bridge at Kuttipuram site. It has been asked to get estimate ready for the above work and District Board Engineer, Malabar has applied to the President, District Board for a Special Overseer for the purpose. But it was not desirable to get the approval of the government to the Kuttipuram site as there has been much controversy over

⁵⁴ G.O. NO.1703, dated 23.6.1941, Mis. Series, RAK.

the site of the bridge. The government in the end responded to defer the construction of the bridge across Bharatapuzha in Malabar until after the war. The approval of the provincial Board commissioners to this proposal was to be obtained in due course.⁵⁵

4.3.1. Railways

The core of the pressure for building railways in India came from London in 1840s. For a century thereafter the basic politics and ultimate orders regarding the management of the Indian railways were issued from London. The British built railways in India in order to interweave the economics of the two countries. The building of railways in India brought about the unintended as well as hoped for consequences in economic, political and military front. It held different parts of India together more closely than before.⁵⁶ They absolutely had no idea of converting these dominions into an industrial area.

The first proposals for the establishment of a railway company emerged from the Presidency of Madras in 1832, much before the similar proposals in Bombay and Bengal Presidencies.⁵⁷ In 1836, an experimental line was laid near Chintatripet. This was followed by three and a half mile long rail line south west of Madras, connecting Red Hills and the stone quarries near the little mount in 1837. This line was used for private purpose.⁵⁸ The first proposals for the construction of railways in India were presented in 1844 to East India Company in London by (a) East Indian Railway Company lead by R.McDonald Sleptenson (b) Great Indian Peninsula

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *History of India Railways*, railindia, irfca.org. retrieved on 15.12.2015,4.00 p.m

⁵⁷ K.S.Ramaswami, *Transport in India*, Madras, Amutha Nilayam: 1957, pp. 87–89 in shodgangainflibnet, accessed on 20.2.2016, 4.30 p m.

⁵⁸ C.D.Macclean, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency*, vol. I, Part II, Madras Government Press: 1885, p. 420, RAK.

Railway Company.⁵⁹ Thus the Madras Railway Company was found in 1845, but dissolved it in 1847. The serious efforts of shareholders as well as the people brought the approval of the Court of Directors of the East India Company on 25th May 1852. Then a new firm with the name Madras Railway Company was registered in London on 26th July 1852. There were no Indians in its board of members.⁶⁰ The railway age dawned in India on 16th April 1853 when the first train ran from Bombay to Thana a distance of twenty one (21) miles.⁶¹

Dalhousie, the Governor General of India, played an important part in this job of connecting cities through railways. In his minutes of 4th July 1850, he issued a timely directive concerning the ground rules that the railways were to follow in India. It was Dalhousie who developed a vision of the railways as a single, rational work or project since he wanted to avoid the mistakes of the British railway experience, which had multiplicity of gauges which was to be avoided and advocated the universal adoption of a single gauge, which was to be wider than 4ft. 8 ½ inches. Dalhousie advocated 5 ft. 6 inches gauge.⁶² The constitution and working of the railways was undertaken by private companies. Land for construction of lines was provided free of cost by the government which also recruited local labourers.⁶³ Often this led to clash between existing communities and the

⁵⁹ *History of Indian Railways*, railindia.irfca.org. accessed on 15.12.2015, 4.30 p m.

⁶⁰ K.S. Ramaswami, *Transport in India*, Madras, Amutha Nilayam: 1957, p.89 in shodganga infliib net, 20th February, 2016, accessed on 14.12.2015, 4 p m.

⁶¹ *History of Indian Railways*, railindia, irfca.org, accessed 15.12.2015, 4.30 p m.

⁶² O.S. Nock, *Railways of Asia and Far East*, Allied Publishers: Pvt. Ltd., 1978, in *Our Indian Railway*, Themes in Indian Railway History, ed., Roopa Srinivasan, Foundation Books: Delhi, 2007, p. 9, Taluk Library, Palakkad.

⁶³ Laxman D Sathya, *British Imperial Railway in the 19th century South Asia*, Economic and Political Weekly, vol.43, No. 47, (Nov.22 – 28), pp. 69–77 in Paroma Sen, *Land Acquisition Act, 1894, Colonial Beginnings Unclear Since* in Research Analysis Commentary Essay (RACE), accessed on 15.12.15, 3 p m.

colonial administration. In the abstract of the article, the author rejects the dominant notion of the trouble free transfer of land. Based on the analysis of individual and villagers reactions the author suggests that the opposition to the land acquisition drive for early railways has been location based and class specific. Here the author quotes the model of Bengal.⁶⁴ It was further elaborated that the intensity of the opposition forced the government to follow a conciliatory approach.⁶⁵ The government changed its stance, and regarding the realignment of railroad, exclusion of sacred areas, sites, location based value liberal compensation etc. Examples of the governments changed stance, in Palakkad also we find parallels. We also find the residents of the town area filing case against the government relating to the takeover of lands as the demolition of the buildings.⁶⁶ The British government passed the Land Acquisition Act in 1894; a colonial Act emerged out of the need for land for developing railways.⁶⁷

While the initial contract with the company had been entered into by the English East India Company, following the 1857 mutiny, they were taken over by the government of India. The contracts usually ninety nine (99) years leases and specified the standard and details of construction etc. Fifty percent of the profit earned after the line were in operation were to be used to repay the government for any sums which it had invested to supplement to make good the guaranteed interest to the company share holders.⁶⁸ Some early attempts were made to secure funds for railway construction in India,

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 1–3.

⁶⁶ elaborated in another part of this chapter.

⁶⁷ The first land acquisition act by the British Raj was in 1824 and it underwent many changes and Land Acquisition Act came into existence in 1894.

⁶⁸ Roopa Srinivasan (ed.), *Our Indian Railway, Themes in Indian Railway*, Foundation Books: Delhi, 2007.

on terms more favorable to the government than those of the contracts with the original guaranteed companies in 1863, when a subsidy but not a guarantee was granted to Indian Branch Railway Company which make feeders to the trunk lines in Northern India.⁶⁹ 'The government of India has for several years been striving to induce capitalists to undertake the construction of railways in India at their own risk and on their responsibility with minimum of government interferences'.⁷⁰ But the attempt has entirely failed it has become obvious that no capital can be obtained for such undertaking other than under a guarantor of interest fully equal to that which the government would have to pay if it borrowed directly on its own account". This was how Sir John Lawrence summed up the result of the experiment of the construction of railway by unguaranteed companies.⁷¹

How ever the financial condition of the railroads depended on the financial condition of the government in Britain and India. Whenever and wherever Britain was engaged in a war, the affairs with India and the money matters were kept pending. This was very true in the case of Palakkad, as and when the British authorities in India faces a financial layoff the developmental works ,repair works etc comes to a standstill.

In the South the first railway line was opened on 1st July, 1856 by the Madras railway company. It ran between Vyasrapadi Jeevanilayam and Walajah road (Arcot) a distance of sixty three (63) miles. Many small beginnings were made in different part of India.⁷² The second line was from Beypore now defunct to Tirur in Kerala on March 16, 1861 by the South

⁶⁹ *Almanac and Directory of Madras, South India, Asylum Press: p.164, RAK.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Indian Railways, Life Line to the Nation, Soalsteer website, accessed on 24.10.15, 4 pm.*

Indian railway.⁷³ Beypore - Tirur line, nineteen (19) miles was opened on 12th March 1861, Tirur- Kuttipuram nine (9) miles on 1st Jan. 1861, Kuttipuram Pattambi twelve (12) miles on 23rd Sept. 1861 and Pattambii Podanur on 14th April 1862, and with this direct railway connection was established between east coast and west coast. On 9th Feb. 1880, a public meeting was held at Calicut and resolutions were passed in favour of extending the railway line from Beypore to Calicut only seven (7) miles distant from the terminis. Extension to Calicut was opened on 2nd January 1888.⁷⁴

4.3.2 Intended and Unintended Results

Pre colonial India was largely a nation of people who relied on the environment, a diverse of biological resource and who had developed a variety of cultural practices leading to prudent resource use. However a whole scale transformation came when the lands controlled by the community were taken over by the state. In particular, the laying of railway lines lead to a great demand for timber which caused large scale deforestation in this subcontinent. The non-cultivated lands of India suffered when the British began to lay down the railway lines, leading to great demand for timber, specific reference here made to Palakkad, Shavrai hills and the north Arcot hills, in there the woods were cut down to meet the demand for timber.⁷⁵

Studies have shown how the railway brought about equalization in the prices of food grain and other agricultural items in regional markets.

⁷³ Dr. Shadaksharaiah, Endowment Lecture on *A Critique on the Policy – South India*, South Indian History Congress, February 2013, p.4.

⁷⁴ Balan Kaideri Puthedath, *History of the Railways in Kerala 1861 – 1941*, unpublished M.Phil dissertation, Kerala University, 1997,

⁷⁵ Madhav Gadgil, *India's Deforestation : Patterns and Processes, Society and Natural Resources*, vol. 3, pp 131-143, e-copy, 21st February, 2016, 11 a.m.

Trade thus gained a major impetus, with the regional Indian markets becoming linked with each other and with the international markets for manufacture of goods and raw materials, thereby enhancing its quality. India was a vast region, mostly dependent in riverine modes of movement, an impossible task during monsoons. Bullock carts were somewhat slow, unreliable and expensive; a gap amply filled up by railways. There were also discussions as to a development in Indian rail roads led to the decline in food grain average under cultivation and that this has led to the decline in production.⁷⁶

In one of the articles the economic role of railways in British India was analysed. It had been recognized that railways could be considered as an important infrastructure development in India from 1850 to 1947. In term of economy, railways played the role of integrating markets and increasing trade. Politically the railroads also shaped the finance of the colonial government and princely states. Railways were partly nationalized between 1880 and 1908 as the government of India assumed a majority ownership stake in the former guaranteed railway companies. In the study, the previous views were taken and also a third view suggested by Andrabi and Kuchlwein (2010) that railways can explain only 20% of the overall sixty percent (60%) decrease in the price dispersion between 1860's and 1900. They conclude that the effects of railways on market integration were over stated. In an innovative study of Dodson, however, he says that inter district price difference in salt were equal to trade costs because salt was produced only in one district and consumed in other districts. He then empirically measures

⁷⁶ M. Challe Burge Mc. Alphin, Railroads, *Cultivation Patterns and Food Grains Availability in India, 1860-1900*, Indian Economic and Social History Review, vol. XII, No. 1, Jan – March, 1975, p.48 in Roopa Srinivasan ed., *Our Indian Railway, Themes in Indian History*, Foundation Books: Delhi, 2002, Taluk Library, Palakkad.

trade cost, concluding that the arrival of railway significantly reduced trade costs thereby increased trade flows.⁷⁷

Every empire creates its own buildings. In British India, railway architecture became a unique style that represented the reach of the imperial Government. The most prominently seen was the design of station buildings, ranging from Gothic to Classical. With the increasing penetration of railways into the Indian country side, this architecture evolved into building railway colonies. The railway colony can be seen in Palakkad urban area too. These colonies began the tradition of public housing with different types of buildings depending on the level of employee in the hierarchy of the organization. The climatic conditions were considered, high ceilings, thick walls, verandahs etc. could be found. In India in the colonial context, the railways were to satisfy the demands of the colonials and so it was very clear that for them, the development of domestic economy was not a prime motive. Moreover the Indian industries or manufacturing took a back seat, triggering off a process of deforestation.⁷⁸

The government had to face strong criticism for giving preference to railways, if trade and industry had developed alongside the railways the latter's extension could be welcomed. When the funds allocation came up, total government expenditure for irrigation with the end of 1902-03 was only nearly forty three (43) crores of rupees where as for railway it spent

⁷⁷ LSE blogs.ac.uk/south asia/, accessed on 15th March,2016, 8 p m. London School of Economics and Political Science , Dan Bogard, and Latika Chaudhery, *Railways in Colonial India : An Economic Achievement*, has in detail executed this question –(LSE blogs), accessed on 15th March, 2016, 8 p m.

⁷⁸ Roopa Srivastav (ed.),*Our Indian Railway: Themes in Indian Railway Histoy*, Foundation Books: Delhi, 2006.

three hundred and fifty nine (359) crores.⁷⁹ Many newspapers including *Kesari*, *Hindustan*, *Kaisarihind*, *Gujarati*, in strong words criticized the government for unwise spending. This preference for the railroad became all the more glaring and all the more evident in the famine times. But the Indian political agitation and writings had little effect on the British policy but it greatly influenced the urban masses to formulate their opinions.

4.3.3 Railways in Palakkad

Around 1856, the Madras railway expected to encounter difficulties, both in Palakkad and in working through to Walayar jungle. The work was strenuous but progressed in a very slow pace. The season and disease hampered the work. But by substituting some European appliances for the crude native methods some work was able to be completed. Some buildings needed to be constructed for the engineer as well as workers who were engaged in work here. The climate was very damp and it had to be considered when constructing on houses. The estimate of the engineers' bungalow gives an understanding of how money was spent.⁸⁰ Some money was spent for constructing as well as altering two bungalows at Kanjikode. Regarding the engineer bungalows at Palakkad, the work was done personally by the department. In a damp climate like Malabar, it would be utterly impossible to construct building of three rooms and render it habitable for summer. The cost of Inspectors bungalows has been very high, but they were built according to the plan. A platform has been raised six ft. from ground, otherwise, it would be almost uninhabitable due to heavy rain.

⁷⁹ Railway colonies refer to series of buildings built by the Government for accommodating the people working in the railways, in a hierarchical official status (Imperial Gazetteer of India, (1908), vol.iii, pp.332-336).

⁸⁰ Selection from the Record of the Madras Government, N O XL, *Report of the Railway Department for 1855*, printed and published by H. Smith, Fort St. George Press: 1857, Madras, pp. 61-62.

Since the health of the railway officers were to be considered, a slightly expensive method of using burnt bricks for floors and *chunnam*⁸¹ was used.⁸²

In 1858, the land were authorized for railway stations at Cunjencode, Parly and Lakady and it was pointed out that no further delay should occur leading to the reply from the agent and manager of the railway company tracing out extra land for the above mentioned stations with little interference in land under cultivation.⁸³ However, the people did not agree with the acquisition of land for the railroad. At one place that had been marked out as the site for a station, for example, there was a village of weavers. It was decided that a new site would be found for their residences before taking their present land away from them and thus the acquiescence of railway land was therefore postponed.⁸⁴

In a letter from the same year, the Resident Engineer requested a report on lands outside the railroad limits, which could potentially be used as sites for bungalows, fields etc. To make separate surveys of these detached portions of highland and detached dry cultivated land would take some time he wrote, care should also be taken not to injure or destroy paddy fields. Some side ditches are to be made in the valuable paddy lands, all the embankments between as Mank (g) ara and Shoranur had to be constructed from either neighbouring high land or by lowering a paddy field to the level of the one next to it. When the embankment was made from high ground, it

⁸¹ *chunnam* means lime stone

⁸² Selection from the record of the Madras govt. NOXL, Report of the Rrailway Department for 1855, printed and published by H. Smith, Fort St. George Gazette Press: 1857, Madras, pp. 61,62.

⁸³ File No. 767, Letter from the Officiating Consulting Engineer for Railway to the Acting Collector of Malabar on 30th June 1858, RAK.

⁸⁴ File No. 767, Letter from the Sub Collector, Palakkad to Grant, Acting Collector of Malabar on 5th Nov. 1858, RAK.

could be converted into wet cultivation land. If there was land required to build bungalows or barrack fields, a small survey report was to be sent to the Collector. In some instances the owner of the land entered into contract to make the railway barracks with the materials from his own land.⁸⁵ In another file, there was a statement of compensation paid for railway land in Kavalpad, Mank (g)ara, and Pudurseri amshoms of the Palakkad taluk. The land had been acquired for constructing houses for the use of railway people, to dig a canal, divert a road, to build railway station house at Walayar and so on. The lands include *parambu*, including some trees, *periapadam nilam*⁸⁶, wet lands etc.⁸⁷

In 1869, a letter from the Railway Chief Engineer indicates that he had consented the removal of the crossing gate at Kanjikode station and to the construction of a culvert at the expense of one Sivarama Iyer and procures a document from him to guarantee that he would pay the expenses of the building the culvert and removing gate, erecting site drains etc.⁸⁸

A letter to ascertain as far as possible the feeling and wishes of the natives with regard to the provision of carriages or compartments for the separate and special use of ladies in the upper classes of native society who wanted to travel. Attention was habitually given to the application for received accommodation.⁸⁹ Some B class lands, it was pointed out that, were

⁸⁵ File No. 767, a letter dated 8th April 1858 from Resident Engineer, 5th Division to the Acting Collector of Malabar, Calicut, RAK.

⁸⁶ *periapadam* means the fields

⁸⁷ File No. 766, Quarterly Statement of Compensation Paid for Lands Taken for Railway Purposes – 1862 Aug. 1868, RAK.

⁸⁸ Railway Proceedings 1867 – 1873, Letter from the Resident Engineer, 4th Division, to the Collector of Malabar, 9th December 1869, RAK.

⁸⁹ Letter from Steward, Consultant Engineer for Railway to the Collector of Malabar dated 23rd April 1869, File No. 509, Railway Proceedings, 1869 – 79, RAK.

rendered waste by the removal of earth for railway purposes and the rent due for it was payable by Government and not by the railway company.⁹⁰

A major railroad project undertaken by South Indian Railway, the precursor to the present Southern Railway was nine hundred and five (905) km (562 miles) along Madras – Mangalore line. On 23rd September 1861, the first steam locomotive train pulled into the newly built Pallipuram (near Pattambi) railway station in Palakkad. Though the village was connected by railway in 1861, viable road transport did not take off. There were only unpaved roads during the British period connecting Pallipuram near Pattambi with Thirthala.⁹¹ On September 1842, British Civil Engineer, Charles Blackner Vignoles submitted a report on a proposed railway in India to the East India Company. By 1845, two companies operating one from Calcutta, Eastern Indian Railway, the great India peninsula railway GIPR, from Bombay. The British government encouraged the setting up of railways by private investors under a scheme that would guarantee an annual return of five percent (5%) during the initial years of operation. Once completed the company would be under the government owned railway.⁹²

A proposal to connect Dindigal to the South India railway with Palakkad on the Madras railway by a line on the meter gauge was brought for consideration during the famine of 1877-78. The Collectors of several districts interested have reported on the prospective traffic on the line and a survey was done. The length of the proposed line was one hundred and four (104) miles.⁹³ We come across another G.O. requesting the Municipal

⁹⁰ Railway Proceedings (1869-1879) File No. 509 from Consultant Engineer for Railways to the Collector of Malabar, RAK.

⁹¹ [http://en : Wikipedia.org.wiki](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki) accessed on 30.9.15, 10 a m.

⁹² wikimapia.org. accessed on 30.9.15, 11 p m.

⁹³ *Manual of Administration of Madras Provinces*, vol.I, p. 435, RAK.

Council to submit their opinion about the feasibility of the construction of a railway line from Pollachi to Podanur, as proposed by the Coimbatore District Board. The Council has no objection to the construction of this line from Pollachi to Podanur provided that the proposed construction of the line from Palakkad to Dindigal did not happen. In 1886–7, the goods traffic demonstrated a steady improvement. A new branch line from Palakkad station to the town, which was predicted to create an increase in traffic, had been commenced. At the time, Palakkad town was two and a half (2 ½) miles from the train station and a great deal of merchandise was instead carried by cart to Coimbatore.⁹⁴

In 1886, the Government had plans to make provincial surveys in Palakkad – Dindigal line, to connect Palakkad on the Madras railway with Dindigal on the South Indian Railways. The preliminary survey and plans have been completed and the estimate was to be submitted during the current year. The length of the line would be about one hundred and seven (107) miles via Dharapuram or hundred (100) miles via Palni.⁹⁵ Even in 1889-90, Palakkad Dindigal lines were in abeyance and awaiting future consideration.⁹⁶

In 1881, the Board wishes to draw the attention of the government to the fact that if there was a reduction of rates for goods and if the numerous complications were abolished, if the tariff was kept simple, uniform and

⁹⁴ *Administrative Report of PWD Railway Branch in Madras Presidency – 1886-87*, Madras, printed at Government Press: 1987, p. 4, RAK.

⁹⁵ *Administrative Reports of the PWD Railway Branch*, Madras Presidency – 1885 – 86, Madras, Government Press: 1866, RAK.

⁹⁶ *Administrative Report of PWD Railway Branch in Madras Presidency – 1889-90*, Madras, printed at Government. Press: 1890, RAK.

low it will tend to attract a lot of people towards railway.⁹⁷ A clarification was issued by the government and it was remarked that -

“Government has always been in favor of simplicity of clarification and with regard the proposed general reduction of goods rate and it was required to show whether the railway obtains its full share of traffic which already exists and the probable effect of such reduction on the earnings of the line, the stimulation of production and the improvement of trade. The Consulting Engineer (R.E. Hamilton) was to take up these points in communication with the railway and revenue authorities and the Chamber of Commerce and was to report for the consideration of the government.”⁹⁸

Also in 1881, the Resident Engineer, 4th Division filed a complaint that the railroads wire fencing had been undermined in several places by ploughing of the ryots who cultivate plots adjacent to the railroad. The fencing originally consisted of the existing mound (on which trees were also were planted) and a continuous ditch the outer edge of which was eleven (11) ft. three (3) inches from the centre of the mound and the ditch was gradually filled up, the boundary of the land in possession of the railway remains the same eleven ft and three inches outside the line of wire fencing and the cultivators were encroaching beyond this limit. In the adjoining district of Coimbatore, the revenue officials acknowledge this line of boundary and also the same should be done as it will ensure that injuries could be prevented.⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Extract from paragraph 26 of letter No. 674 dated 4.2.1881, from the Board of Directors, Madras Railway Company, RAK.

⁹⁸ Extract from G.O. dated 17th June 1881, No. 418, RAK.

⁹⁹ Letter dated 26th Aug. 1881 from the Madras Railway Company to the Collector of Malabar, File No. 508.A clear case of encroachment is reported here.

There was also a notice given to Tahsildar of Palakkad by the Municipality for rupees three and fourteen annas - , being the Municipal tax for 1881-82 on sixty (60) *paras* of paddy land recovered from Railway Company in Akathethara amsom, within Municipal limits. The land in question had been given on *pattam* on simple lease and the tax to the Municipality was to be recovered by the Railway Company.¹⁰⁰

This particular insight shows the vigilant and alert action of the Municipality of urban Palakkad in the tax matters. There were at regular intervals, some waste lands cultivated with *punccha* crops and the Tahasildar enquires for some instructions as to how they should be assessed for the purpose of calculating local fund cess to be levied from the railway company.¹⁰¹

A newspaper article pointed out that the proposed Palakkad – Dindigal railway was likely to be lucrative and for that reason, many a private firms had applied to undertake its construction, and the Madras Government recommended, Messers Binny and Co. for the same which led to protests saying that it was improper and contrary to the established rule and that District Board should be allowed to construct branch lines within their jurisdictions and that it would not be difficult for the three District Board concerned to raise the amount necessary for it and further hopes that the government of India will duly consider the matter and they would not take any action which may tend to destroy the liberties of the District Board.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ File No. 508, letter dated. 3rd November 1881, from Acting Head Assistant Collector, Palakkad to acting Collector, Calicut, RAK.

¹⁰¹ File No.506, Correspondence Files, letter dated 19th March 1879 from the Acting Head Assistant Collector, Palakkad to the Collector of Malabar.

¹⁰² *Kerolodayam* reported in very strong words voiced the interference of the Madras Government in the liberties of the District Board. (NNPR, *Keralodayam*, Trichur, December, 22nd, 1914, TSA.

This infers that many private firms were in the race for the building of the railways as it was considered to be a very profityielding business. By about 1887, the purchase of some additional lands was necessary for the extension of railways in the Palakkad area. The net amount of compensation was approximately about rupees sixty one thousand – twelve annas- eleven paise (Rs. 61,000/- 12 - 11.) Out of which ten thousand (10000/) was with the Acting Assistant Collector, Palakkad. In a letter he requested that the rest of the amount be made available as soon as possible. He was informed that rupees thirty two thousand two hundred and fifty (Rs.32250/) was made available in the current year's budget to meet outlay on land for Palakkad branch and, to utilize it, certain procedures suggested should be followed. The money was in excess of the amount originally estimated, and Government of India was to be asked to make more allotments. A query was also there regarding whether any savings could be effected from the allotment of rupees thirty thousand and also about the probable amount of sale proceeds. The acting Head Assistant Collector requests the Collector to issue necessary orders to the Sub-Treasury to pay his cheques for compensation.¹⁰³ Meanwhile the Tiruvalathur *adhikari or karyastan* had given consent for laying side ditches, it was also recorded.¹⁰⁴

In another letter one finds, requesting the acquisition of land for side ditches, it appears that only a few lands were available to fill a gap between the station and main lines of the Palakkad extension. The land required for the railway station in Palakkad was measured and the total extent required was three acres and nine and a half cents. Two acres thirteen cents and

¹⁰³ File No. 513, Correspondence Relating to the Palakkad Railway Extension from July 1887, vol. II, from G.W. Dance Acting Assistant Collector, Palakkad to Logan, Collector of Malabar, dated July 5th 1887, RAK.

¹⁰⁴ Letter dated 26th July 1887, RAK.

fifteen yards belong to one jenmi and four acres eleven cents and seven and a half yards to another. Although, they have no objection to their lands being taken for railway purposes, the former janmi demands rupees six thousand and the latter rupees two thousand and hundred for a total amount of rupees eight thousand one hundred. The prices were exorbitant, the Engineer reported and so it was recommended that lands were to be acquired under *the Act*. In the same letter, the Engineer also reported that the amount realized from the sale of the proceeds of few trees owned by the railway was rupees one hundred and seven and eight annas which had been credited in the treasury. He also noted that the land acquired for the railway consisted of paddy fields and a few barren parambus.¹⁰⁵

A letter to ascertain as far as possible the feelings and wishes of the natives with regard to the provision of carriages or compartments for the separate and special use of ladies in the upper classes of native society who wanted to travel. Attention was habitually given to the application for received accommodation.¹⁰⁶ B Class lands – lands rendered waste by the removal of earth for railway purposes - comes under class B and therefore the rent due for it was payable by government and not by the railway company.¹⁰⁷ In 1890, an officer wrote to request permission to cut down trees near the railway tracks, as they are likely to endanger the running of trains. At least it has to be removed twenty feet back over, it was also

¹⁰⁵ A letter from G.W. Dance. on 2nd Aug. 1887 to William Logan the Collector of Malabar, RAK.

¹⁰⁶ Letter from Steward, Consultant Engineer for Railway to the Collector of Malabar dated 23rd April 1869. (File No. 509, Railway Proceedings, 1869 – 79, RAK.)

¹⁰⁷ Railway Proceedings (1869-1879) File No. 509 from Consultant Engineer for Railways to the Collector of Malabar, RAK.

pointed out that trees with few exceptions, these trees only grew after the formation of railways.¹⁰⁸

4.3.4 Statement showing the amount of local funds cess due by the Madras Rail Company for fasli 1292 (1882 AD).¹⁰⁹

PALAKKAD TALUK	AMOUNT OF LOCAL FUND CESS Rupees-anna-paisa
Puthusseri amsom	6 -- 12 -- 11
Akathethara	10 -- 7 -- 11
Kavalpad	9 -- 12 --- 3
Mundoor	4 --- 3 -- 8
Edathara	5 -- 1-5
Mankara	7 - 5 --- 2

The acquisition of some additional lands was again required at Kanjikode station and negotiations for its early transfer to Railway Company, it was advised to use the Act of 1870 whenever necessary. The land in question had been relinquished by the railway company earlier and given over on simple lease. The lessee had consented to retransfer. Proportionate reduction granted in the amount of *pattam* payable for amsom for the current year. The arrangement was to be made for by the Tahsildar.¹¹⁰ The land had been given over to ryots on a simple lease with the undertaking that it must be relinquished if government wanted to acquire it again.

¹⁰⁸ Railway Correspondence Files, No. 768, letter from the Resident Engineer to the Collector of Malabar dated. 21st August, 1890, RAK.

¹⁰⁹ Fasali means period of 12 months from July to June. Adding 590 to fasali year we get the needed year. (Palghat, 19th January, 1883, To the Collector of Malabar, Revenue Files, No. 510, RAK.)

¹¹⁰ File No. 510, Railway Proceedings, 1883, March, RAK.

Meanwhile a telegraphic message to the Collector of Malabar from the Engineer for railway informing Major Sidnay Smith, Deputy Consulting Engineer for railways, proceeding to the Palakkad, Saturday evening mail to enquire into the traffic existing on the main road in the town, to also advise the local authority and give assistance in the way of returns and local evidence.¹¹¹ A communication G.O. was issued, on the proposal to set gates at local level crossings on the south Indian railway and also to choose again public roads. The Collector suggests that at all crossings a gate for foot passengers should be provided.¹¹²

In 1888, some money was sanctioned for the payment of land compensation and there arose confusion regarding the accounts and W. Dance was required to submit the accounts of the amount paid and the remaining amount to be paid.¹¹³ A detailed report was then submitted stating that the lands of Vallat Narayana Menon had been taken over by railway but returned to them. The land of Nalla Pillai was taken over. Vellat Kandan Nayer and Krishnan Nayar demanded high rates for their lands while the Tahsildar valued for lesser amount. When it was decided that the railway would proceed against them under Land Acquisition Act, they both accepted the prices agreed to the land being at once occupied by the rail way company.¹¹⁴ The Acting Collector requested Collector of Malabar to place at his disposal the amount needed to be paid to the owners of the land as

¹¹¹ File No. 510, Railway Proceedings (1869-73). A telegraphic message from the Engineer Railway to the Collector of Malabar on 14.3.1884, RAK.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

¹¹³ Proceedings of the Collector of Malabar, 31st July, 1888, RAK.

¹¹⁴ From G.W. Dance, Acting Head Assistant Collector to Dumegare Acting Collector of Malabar, dated 27th August 1888, 29th August 1888, RAK.

required by Railway Company at Olavakkode.¹¹⁵

A petition was signed by one hundred and thirty two (132) inhabitants of Palakkad requesting a permanent gateway to be opened some distance south of the Kalpathy line to provide an easier access to a bathing place and sacred garden. However, the officials thought that this request was unreasonable, as access to the river through wicket gate at the south abutment of the bridge was there and this involves heavy earthwork and other expenses which the railway company was not prepared to incur.¹¹⁶ This matter was taken up in the Municipal Council, petitioner was Arunachala Vadhiyar by name and five thirty others requesting that the railway company was asked to provide a bridge over the railway line at Chekunnimala in lieu of blocking the road leading to the bathing steps in the Kalpathi river and also to repair the damaged parts of the roads. The opening of the railway has had the effect of blocking the road which previously led to through Chekkunnimala.¹¹⁷ The matter was dropped considering the expenses involved.

In 1922, the Municipal Councils resolution requested the Government to construct a tunnel underneath the railway road at the level crossing on the Kongad road. The closing of the road for railroad shunting was causing great inconvenience, since it was a heavy portion of the Trunk road to Calicut from Kongad, Mannarghat and Dhoni. Several hundreds of carts fully laden with timber etc. will be plying on the road. Since the level crossing was on the route to the Kalpathy market, people had to wait in sun or rain leading to

¹¹⁵ File No. 513, Correspondence Relating to the Palakkad Railway Extension from July 1887 to Feb. 1889, RAK.

¹¹⁶ From the Agent and Manager of the Madras Rail Corporation to the Collector of Malabar, Calicut, 9th March, 1888.

¹¹⁷ Chairman was G.W Dance, Extract from the Proceedings of a Meeting of the Municipal Council, Palakkad held on February 1888, RAK.

a great rush when the gate opened. It was replied that it was not possible to construct a subway or overbridge at Olavakkode without causing inconvenience and even damage to the existing buildings situated too close to the road drainage.¹¹⁸ This suggestion also did not materialise.

4.3.5 Palakkad Kavapatnam – Trichur Railway line

In 1886, the government had plans to make provincial surveys for a Palakkad – Dindigal line, to connect Palakkad on the Madras railway with Dindigal on the South Indian Railways. The length of the line, it was estimated, would be about one hundred and seven (107) miles via Dharapuram or hundred (100) miles via Palani.¹¹⁹ The government considered that the cost of line was very high and that although a connection with Cochin would form a profitable extension of the Madras railway system, it should start from Pattambi or Shornur. No further funds were available at present. The chief engineer reports that by realignment the tunnel can be avoided. The question was however kept in abeyance. Some other projects that are kept in abeyance are proto Salem, Palakkad, Dindigal, Madras Bazar, Cuddalore- Pondichery etc.¹²⁰

In the next years' report, we find that Palakkad – Kurapatna survey had been practically abandoned in favor of the Shoranur Cochin route. As

¹¹⁸ Council resolution requesting Government to construct a tunnel underneath the railway road at the level crossing on the Kongad Road, 17th April, 1922, RAK.

¹¹⁹ *Administrative Reports of the PWD Railway Branch, Madras Presidency, 1885 – 86*, Madras, Superintendent Government Press: 1886, RAK. The estimate for a standard gauge line by one of these routes amounts to Rs. 1,10,23812/ or Rs. 1,81491/mile and includes the cost of a tunnel of 2 ½ miles long. The alternative route costs Rs. 9016338/ or Rs. 1,48441/ per mile and includes a tunnel 2/3 mile in length.

¹²⁰ *Administrative Report of PWD Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency – 1892-93*, Madras, Printed by the Superintendent Government Press: 1893. This was the second time that this project was kept in abeyance, (See foot note 90)

far as Palakkad Dindigal line was concerned nothing was done.¹²¹ Even in 1889 -90, the Palakkad-Dindigal lines were in abeyance and awaiting future consideration.¹²² Some measures were taken in respect to the lands taken up for Olavakkod railway station. The lands required, come under class 'A' and its total extent was two acres and twenty one cents of this area one acre and eleven cents are governments 'B' class lands and the rest one acre and ten cents was private property belonging to four separate individuals – all of them had refused to accept the Government valuation of lands and they were referred to Palakkad Sub Court for the settlement of disputes. The tenants however accept the valuation. The amount was to be paid to them. The Acting Head Assistant Collector of Palakkad (P.Rajagopalachari) to the Collector of Malabar authorizes the Tahasildar of Palakkad, to draw money for registering award for land taken up for Olavakkode station.¹²³ Thus the Palakkad Tahsildar was authorised to draw money for registering the awards, to conduct suits on behalf of the Government and also the incidental charges which occurred in between. The cost so incurred being ultimately deducted from the compensations which the court may award to the public concerned. The necessary vouchers for the total cost incurred are to be submitted on payment of various claimants in accordance with the court's decision.¹²⁴

Some extra lands were to be taken over for Olavakkode station. The lands situating in Kavalpad amsom was needed. In the first case an acre and

¹²¹ *Administrative Report of the Public Works Department Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency, 1893-94* Madras, Printed by the Superintendent Government Press: 1894, RAK.

¹²² *Administrative Report of the PWD Railway Branch in the Madras Presidency, 1889-90*, Madras, Printed by the Superintendent Government Press: 1890, RAK.

¹²³ B : 91,51:5, Revenue Folded File, RAK.

¹²⁴ File No.766, Quarterly Statement of Compensation paid for Lands Taken for Railway Purposes, 1862-1868, RAK.

thirty cents and it belonged to the wet cultivation land. The second was also the wet cultivation. But here we find statement showing particulars of land transferred to Railway Company free of cost.¹²⁵

In 1891, some more land was required at Palakkad, for lay bye, loading, bank road diversion, Station Masters bungalow etc. The owners were unwilling to part the lands for the price fixed and that they claim that compensation was not enough. Under section 6, Act X of 1870, the Governor in Council declared the land in question was to be acquired and Head Assistant Collector was appointed to perform the functions of a Collector, in the process of the acquisition of the said land.¹²⁶ A letter from three years later states that the lands taken over for Palakkad railway station had been handed over to the railway company.¹²⁷ The Town Nuisances Act was meanwhile extended also to Koduvayur, Alathur, Kakayur, Kollengode etc. These places form the outskirts of the Palakkad Municipality. In the beginning it was confined to the municipal areas.¹²⁸

Much later, authorizing Shaughrissy, Deputy Chief Engineer for construction, South Indian Railway and his staff and workmen to exercise the powers conferred by Section 4 (2) of the Land Acquisition Act of 1894. The Government requests the resident in Travancore and Cochin to take steps for the publication of a similar notification in the Gazette of Cochin state in

¹²⁵ Revenue Folded File, B: 94 Sl : 7, RAK. Letter of Head Assistant Collector (Rajagopalachari) of Palakkad and Bradley Acting Collector of Malabar, Calicut, RAK.

¹²⁶ Correspondence between Rajagopalachari, Acting Assistant Head Collector to the Collector of Malabar on August 1891, Palakkad (2) to be published in Fort. St. George Gazette G.O. 6th October, 1891 No. 2259. R – Railway – Government of (1891) Madras, Public Works, RAK.

¹²⁷ From Rajagopalachari, Acting Head Assistant Collector of Palakkad, dated 19th April 1894, to the Collector of Malabar, sent to Consulting Engineer, Madras, RAK.

¹²⁸ Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department, 1868, RAK.

regard to the portion of the proposed line which will be in the Cochin territory.¹²⁹

Another correspondence from the Chief Engineer to the Collector dated 27th October 1916 contains a revised index plan forwarded to a scale one (1) mile to one (1) inch showing the realignment as finally adopted together with a revised list of stations proposed and a plan to a scale of 400ft to 1 inch showing the proposed station sites. 1. This new alignment was selected to avoid crossing the river Papathi twice as well as its tributary Meenkarai and to obtain a lighter section, 2. To furnish the approximate value of various classes of lands through which this railway line was shown to run within Palakkad. Location at Pudunagaram was chosen as it was closer to Pudunagaram village, it was the only possible site so far as economy was concerned or else the expenditure will increase owing to geological conditions.¹³⁰

4.3.6 Revised list of stations proposed:¹³¹

Sl.No.	Name	Milage from zero	Distance apart
1.	Pollachi junction	0.00	5.10
2.	Anamalai road	5.10	4.93
3.	Dewan sahib puthur	10.03	7.99
4.	Muthalamada	18.02	3.81
5.	Kollengode	21.83	4.26
6.	Pudunagaram	26.09	7.13
7.	PGT junction	33.22	--

¹²⁹ Signed by the Under Secretary to Government, PWD, Department of Revenue, Public branch, Office of the Collector of Malabar, Calicut, No. D 1849/P 16 dated 2.11.16, RAK.

¹³⁰ Disposal No. D 395/p 16 dated 8.3.16 Collector Office, RAK.

¹³¹ Letter from Evans, the Collector of Malabar to the Deputy Chief Engineer, Trichy. The line passes through same amsom and the value is quoted in that letter. Correct spelling in English and Vernacular language is also shown. Disposal No. D 395 /P16 dated 8.3.16, Collectors Office, RAK.

Certain letters from Diwan of Cochin to the Agent, of the Governor General Madras State dated 18th September 1928, No. 125/1104 regarding the diversion of line, so as to serve Chittur, Thattamangalam better.¹³²

In a notification No. 131 p dated 13th June 1928, it was stated that the railway board had sanctioned the construction of railway line between Pollachi and Palakkad. It was expected that final location work would be started early in September and that land plans and *lock spitting* the first ten (10) miles starting from Pollachi would be completed by end of October. A special officer for land acquisition was posted.¹³³ There was also some unspent balance, some more money it was understood would be needed.¹³⁴

It was informed that the railway board had sanctioned the construction of a railway line between Pollachi and Palakkad. The length of the line was thirty three (33) miles – thirteen and a half (13 ½) miles on Coimbatore and remaining nineteen and a half (19 ½) miles in the Palakkad taluk, Malabar District. There were also two Deputy Collectors, one for each district. They had valued lands in recent acquisitions at twenty years purchase but were called upon by the Collector to explain why they departed from the district practice of capitalizing at fifteen years purchase to which an exact answer was not given.¹³⁵ It was notified that the railway board have sanctioned a traffic survey being carried out by agency of South Indian Railway administration for a line of railway from Kollengode to Trichur , a distance of forty miles.

¹³² PW&L (1929) Department Misc Series,G.O. NO. 87 Ry., dated 15.1.21, RAK. (Lock spitting – a small trench cut to indicate the line to be followed in further work, as in making a railroad).

¹³³ Revenue R Dis – Dis file 8799 dated 19.9.29, RAK.

¹³⁴ A letter from A. Vittal Bai, Sub Collector, Palakkad to the Special Officer for Land Acquisition dt. 20.7.29. D.Dis No. 8799/29, dated 19.9.29, RAK.

¹³⁵ Department of Revenue, D.R. No. 8799 – 29, dated 19.9.29, RAK.

In a very confidential letter (No. 66/91), some investigations, were conducted as a result of Cochin representation for an extension of railway from Kollengode to Trichur.¹³⁶ But the project held over on account of *the War*. The same question was taken up in 1920 in connection with the proposals for the development of Cochin harbor. A person named Izat was deputed by the Railway Board to make a detailed investigation into the railway requirements of South India with special reference to the development of the parts of Tuticorin and Cochin. In his reports, furnished to the durbar, Izat recommended the construction of certain new railway line of which Trichur – Dindigal line was very important showed detailed reports, showing the paramount importance of this particular line for the development of Cochin port, as there would be direct railway communication with the harbor. Before a proposal to extend the Dindigal - Pollachi line to Trichur was made at time when Cochin had not that development as a port. New improvements of harbor and its assurance of its success altered the situation. Cochin now began to be looked upon as a pivotal point to and from, where all commerce could naturally meet. The necessity to connect the Dindigal – Pollachi line was now recognized by the Madras Government as Cochin harbor was greatly improved. He recommended an early construction of railway for the success of Cochin harbor. The Trichur – Kollengode section would result in a much greater income.¹³⁷

The Vaniampara road along which this line would run was one of the busiest roads in the state. In 1092 (1916-17) over 1,00,000 carts passed

¹³⁶ Letter from Diwan of Cochin to the agent to the Governor General, Madras dated 10th April, 1929 – a Confidential Letter NO.66/91. The War - the First World War.

¹³⁷ Letter from the Diwan of Cochin to the agent to the Governor General, Madras dated 10th April 1929 – a confidential letter NO.66/91, RAK.

along it every year, fetching about Rs. 3,033/ . Comparison over the last 12 years.¹³⁸

Malayalam era	Year	Lease amount-rupees
M.E. 1092	1916-17	3,033/-
M.E. 1098	1922-23	8,735/-
M.E. 1103	1927-28	10,500/-
M.E. 1104	1928-29	13,820/-

Passenger traffic, it was said, that twenty buses were plying daily on the road and carrying an approximate seven fifty passengers on average. It points to the increased business activities in the urban region. It was said that the Chief Commissioner of Railway at a conference at Bolghotty on 29th 1928, pointed out that construction of this line was not actually taken up as there was a line parallel to the broad gauge railway within a distance of twenty miles. But it was said that he was made to understand that the distance between Kollengode -Pollachi line under construction and the Podanur- Olavakkot line was only twenty miles. Thus the objection was not final and matter can be reconsidered.¹³⁹ The railway board will await result of traffic investigation before proceeding further.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile efforts were being made to know the correct spelling of Olavakkode. Verification of the spelling of the names of stations both in English and in the vernacular Olavakkode, situated in the Palakkad taluk, Malabar District so that the correct names could be known. 'Olavakode – was sufficiently accurate way

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ PW & L 1929 (Dept.) MS. Series, letter no. 2572, dated 10.9.29, RAK.

¹⁴⁰ Letter from Railway Department to the Secretary to Government, Madras, dated 1st October, 1929 in (PW & L dept) ,RAK.

of spelling the name in English for railway purposes in Malayalam.¹⁴¹

In the *Kantirava*, Mangalore, a leading article published many inconveniences to which III class railway passengers were mercilessly subjected and that they were without any hope of obtaining suitable redress from the management of the rail company or the Government. The author of this article exhorts the people to be on their alert at the time of new election to vote only for the very best men, who will redress their grievance.¹⁴² A correspondent writing draws attention of the authorities to the great, inconveniences caused to the III class passengers' in spite of the increase of railway fares by 25% to the indifference of the authorities to this matter, despite loud and repeated complaint and hopes that this matter would receive immediate attention.¹⁴³ Again in 1923, *Manorama* referred to complaints regarding the extensive inclusion of paddy fields in the survey of the proposed Shornur – Nilambur railway, and stated that the construction of railway should not be done in a way that would be harmful to the people. According to this article even the existing paddy fields of Malabar did not meet the demands of the people and so cultivation should be extended wherever possible. The paper calls upon the members of the legislative council to interpellate or question the government on the subject.¹⁴⁴ In *Krishnapatrika*, it says the government would never hesitate to raise railway and postal charges in order to increase their revenue.¹⁴⁵ Thus the railway carriages were in a worst condition. Passengers to be huddled like goods, no

¹⁴¹ To the Secretary to the Government, Land Revenue, Madras, 21st December 1889, RAK.

¹⁴² NNPR, May – June 1923. *The Kanthirava*, Mangalore, 4th April, 1925, RAK.

¹⁴³ *Kerala Sanchari*, of 21st June, 1922, Calicut, NNPR.

¹⁴⁴ *The Manorama*, Calicut, 29th May, 1923, NNPR, 1923, May – June, TSA.

¹⁴⁵ Koduvayur is a place in the outskirts of the Municipal area, a brisk trading centre. The case of Koduvayur dealt here in detail. The arguments of Chittur, Thattamangalam, Pudukottam are also detailed here (Krishna Pathrika, Masulipatam, June 16th, 1913, TSA.)

roof, the terrible monsoons, and the blazing mid-day sun, the scorching iron floor were some of the grave inconveniences the Indians had to suffer.

Meanwhile, some details in the G.O. are regarding the proposed railway line between Pollachi and Palakkad, requesting for the realignment of line.¹⁴⁶ A petition was sent to the construction Engineer, Trichnapoly by the public of *Koduvayur*, for a station at Koduvayur. The points in favour of Koduvayur was that with a population of seventeen thousand (17,000) inhabitants nearly one and a half times more than Chittoor and Thattamangalam put together for whose interest the contemplated line was proposed to be removed to the further east. Koduvayur proper alone carries on commerce to the extent of thirty (30) lakhs and was more suitable place than any other place in Palakkad taluk and was very much more suitable than Chittur and Thattamangalam. As the commercial property of this place had in recent years increased by rapid strides, chief centre of tobacco, tamarind, tamarind seeds, arecanuts etc. it promises to be a big commercial centre, if the railway station was located close to it.

Thus the records preserve a series of arguments and petitions regarding the inclusion of *Chittur, Thattamangalam, Pudunagaram, and Koduvayur* in the connecting line between Pollachi and Palakkad.¹⁴⁷ It was said that the proposed line goes north to south from Palakkad to Kollengode and then runs west to east from Kollengode to Pollachi, thus skirting the Chittur taluk on its west and south sides. Chittur and Thattamangalam are really twin towns. Chittur has all the important state offices while Thattamangalam was mainly a business centre.

¹⁴⁶ GO. NO. 87 dated 15.1.1929, PW&L, (1929) Department, RAK.

¹⁴⁷ A series of petitions and letters in G.O.NO.87 dated 15.1.1929, PW&L (1929) Department, RAK.

Another correspondence deals with the Municipal office, Chittur – Thathamangalam addressed to the Secretary to the Government, PWD railways, FSG, Madras, regarding the importance of these areas and how these areas under the Cochin rule was very much interested in opening a station here. There were also it was said as many as twenty (20) advocates from Chittur – Thathamangalam practicing in the high court besides many others of that locality following other occupation there. Koduvayur cannot claim $\frac{1}{4}$ of that number. Thus the Chittur – Thathamangalam was undoubtedly more important with more population and further growing in importance.¹⁴⁸

Work of acquisition was yet to begin. Many points for and against Pugunagaram are also made. Pudunagaram was ninety percent (90%) a Mappila area, thickly populated region. Train may arrive and depart at unusual hours of the night and neighbouring population apprehend that it was not expedient that the railway station should be located in the midst of such Mapila village and it should be shifted a few furlongs to the east of the said habitation of Pudunagaram. Thus there exists a series of arguments and petitions for and against a railway line for Chittur, Thattamangalam, Pudunagaram and Koduvayur as a part of connecting a line between Pollachi and Palakkad.¹⁴⁹

The straight line between Palakkad to Kollengode passes through a place called Thekkumarakkadavu located between Koduvayor and Pudunagaram. For this reason, it was first proposed that the line should

¹⁴⁸ Number of Vakils practiced is a criterion for railway line?? – letter dated 21.12.28 from E.M.Gawne, Collector of Malabar, Calicut to the Secretary to Government, Public Works and Labour Department Madras, RAK.

¹⁴⁹ A series of petition and letters in G.O.NO. 87 dated 15.1.1929, PW&L (1929) Department, RAK.

follow that route. However, since Thathamangalam and Chittur were undoubtedly more important, the route was shifted about six and a half (6½) furlongs to the east to run through Pudunagaram bazaar.¹⁵⁰

At the time, the population of Koduvayur amsom was about 16,000 and had two centres of population – Koduvayur bazaar with about ten thousand people and Pudunagaram bazaar with about five thousand. There was much discussion about where to place a station in Pudunagaram.¹⁵¹ Meanwhile the residents of Kannara Street, Koppam amsom, Palakkad taluk had submitted a petition to the private secretary of the Governor of Madras. This petition stated that survey of the Palakkad – Pollachi railway line had marked out the demolition of at least seventeen residential buildings. Some of these are pucca buildings, tiled and having ceilings, its demolition would be a great problem to them. The compensation amount would hardly come to half the actual expense incurred. The memorialists, claimed that they were very poor people who if dispossessed, would be rendered homeless and the meager compensation would hardly be suffice (enough) to find house sites elsewhere or to set up new houses. Previously the route laid out was west across the fields and it was more convenient and less troublesome. Later on the line alignment got shifted eastwards and thus these petitioners were threatened with dispossession and that too immediately.¹⁵² The memorialists requested the government to cancel the present route.¹⁵³ We also find another letter from the Agent, South India railways reporting that

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ Report of the Sub Collector, Palakkad, RAK.

¹⁵² A memorandum signed by the residents of Kannara Street, Koppam Amsom Palakkad taluk dated 3.11.28. Palakkad, RAK.

¹⁵³ A letter from I.C. Kandaswamy Pillay Municipal Councilors, to the Secretary to Government Public Works and Labour Department dated 6.12.28, Palakkad, RAK.

not much houses were affected except four small shops, of bricks in mud having an area of about 900 square feet.

1. "2 compound walls of brick in mud with a small outhouse and the door- way of a court yard.
2. 4 small thatched mud huts.
3. 2 small walls. The cost of these was about Rs. 3200/-. For the diversion of the passenger approach road it would be necessary to demolish a small ground of buildings on the Kannara street consisting of 4 motor sheds and some shops. No large buildings were affected and demolished houses would have no difficulty in obtaining buildings sites in the locality."¹⁵⁴

On one hand the petitioners were claiming that many residential buildings have to be pulled down and on the other hand the agent's clarifying note that pulling down few buildings is unavoidable. The government replied that they had considered the matter and saw no reason to interfere.¹⁵⁵

4.4 Sanitation and buildings near the Railways

Early in the development of railways, Sanitary Commissioner stated that no village should be allowed to be built within five hundred (500) yards of the confines of any railway station, so as to prevent the necessity of Government repurchase.¹⁵⁶ However, this recommendation was quickly ignored. Then we come across documents, detailing the interest of railway in the growth of towns close to railway stations, and the immediate

¹⁵⁴ A letter from the Agent, South Indian Railway to the Secretary to the Governor of Madras, Public works and labour department, Madras, dated 21 December 1928, RAK

¹⁵⁵ Letter dated 15.1.1929, RAK

¹⁵⁶ File No. 509, Railway Proceedings, 1869 – 1873, RAK.

neighborhood of stations in such a way that well ordered towns may spring up in due course of time. The idea of forming towns near railway station was not or new one. The question was under consideration of the Government as early as 1855. The outlines of the scheme then drawn up are embodied in the Boards Order No. 192. Rules were also formed in 1857, with a view to give effect to the above scheme.¹⁵⁷ The Government passed no definite orders on this reference and the proposed experiment never carried out.

An inquiry was to be made as to the circumstances under which the houses came to be constructed on lands near the railway stations specified against the wishes of the railway authorities. In this connection, the Government considers that the prohibition contained in para 2 of the Order No. 30, to the grant of lands within half a mile of railway station should be withdrawn and that in the interest of railways and to promote convenience of the public the growth of towns near the stations should not be encouraged. The prohibition was intended to prevent the springing up of a number of insanitary huts in the neighborhood and also to retain some space for the possible extension of railway stations. Now the Government has a changed view and wanted to encourage buildings near station¹⁵⁸, but to bring such buildings under proper regulations. No land within the half a mile radius should as now be leased for anything, as the Government would have the liberty to take back the land on giving one months' notice and also without any liability for compensation. Land at the disposal of Government immediately at the neighborhood of stations, when required, should be granted only for buildings, with prescribed materials to be used and also regulate constructing. The Board of Revenue requires drafting rules on the

¹⁵⁷ Mis. No. 768, dated 1st March 1857, RAK.

¹⁵⁸ G.O. No. 5005 (Misc) (Rev.) dated 8 December, 1896, RAK.

subject and submitting it for sanction of the Government.¹⁵⁹ To prevent difficulty in obtaining land for the extension of railway station in future the railway authorities should be required to state the availability of such lands, how much was reserved for this purpose. Here we can understand the precaution take by the Government and railway authorities against possible resistance by the local people against the acquisition of lands.

The Board of Revenue forwarded to the Sanitary Board a copy of certain rules framed in the 1857 and 1859 for the formation of towns in the vicinity of railway stations. It also required an indication of its views as to how rules can be advantageously modified or replaced so as to suit the modern requirements. The rules were referred for remarks to the Sanitary Commissioner and Sanitary Engineer, the former suggests legislation which would confer on local authorities special powers of control in certain directions.

1. Complete control of infectious diseases.
2. Protection of water supply
3. Control over buildings and streets.

Railway station towns were to be governed by the provision of the District Municipalities Act or the Local Boards. They were supposed to implement following regulations, such as the location of drains, outhouses of animals in the rear of the dwelling house. These site plans would have to include the approval for drains, roads, general sanitation, water supply etc. as are necessary.¹⁶⁰ The government had determined the grant of land within half a mile of railway station should be modified so as to permit the

¹⁵⁹ Board of Revenue (L/Rev) PWD 1896. Letter from G. Stoke, Acting Secretary to Government, RAK.

¹⁶⁰ In the Proceedings, Mis. No. 768, dated 1st March 1857, RAK.

growth of towns in the vicinity of such stations for the interest of the railways and to promote public convenience.¹⁶¹ The government also called upon the draft regulations suitable for the purpose or which portion was available near railway stations, which should be reserved for the purpose of the future extension of such stations etc.

Encouraging the growth of railway towns thus has caught the attention of the government as early as 1855 but the rules of the Sanitary Board are very strict and too elaborate and unsuitable. The rules are wholly inapplicable for want of space at the disposal of government and in less important places where space was available the population will be less. And hence these strict rules of the Sanitary Board need to be revised, opines the government.

So, it was therefore decided that, whenever there was a railway station with land around it suitable for the formation of a town or village, the Collector would publish a notification in the District Gazette inviting villagers for building sites in the neighborhood of these stations. The Collector would also prepare a survey plan of the site and send it to the railway company to ascertain whether free space was required around station to meet the future railway requirements. Holders of the sites should commence buildings only after roads, drains etc were completed and arrangements had been made for general sanitation and protection of water supply.¹⁶²

In the year 1898 we find a document which shows a grave concern for the fear of the outbreak of plague in Palakkad, if the car festival was allowed from 5th – 14th November, about 10,000 people were estimated to

¹⁶¹ Mis.NO.5005, 8th December, 1857, RAK.

¹⁶² G.O. NO. 1775 – L dated 23rd September 1898, RAK.

participate in the festival coming from Bangalore, Coimbatore, Mysore, Salem Bombay etc. Many come for trade (from Bombay).¹⁶³ Three important persons connected with this festival in Palakkad were interviewed by the Government to know the matters clearly. 1. Palakkad Achan 2. The Kariyakar 3. The new Kalpathi Devaswom Manager, were the proprietors of the three cars which go in procession. The new Kalpathi Devaswom has just lost its precedence by the civil decree and would not at all object to the stoppage of the festival. The Kariyakar opines that it was better to prohibit it than take any chance of plague whereas Achan thinks that the prohibition would be a grievance because his car gets precedence in the place of a new Kalpathi car. Generally the feeling was that they would have it prohibited than run any risk of spreading plague.¹⁶⁴ Kalpathi was a part of Palakkad and Olavakkode railway stations. However it was not advisable to stop the issue of railway tickets to Olavakkode and Palakkad as it would seriously affect Palakkad town. M. Hammick who was the plague Commissioner agreed with the Collector. His recommendation was approved and following this notice to be published in Fort St. George Gazette.

In exercise of the powers delegated to him under the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, Governor in Council directs that festival should not be allowed to be held this year and that no persons from Mysore state, districts of Salem, North Arcot, Cudappah and Anantpur shall be permitted to visit Kalpathy from 1st to 20th Nov. 1898, both days inclusive. Persons proceeding to the festival in contravention of this notification will be turned back. The Collector of Malabar was requested to arrange with the Commissioner of

¹⁶³ G.O. NO.1383, (P). 26th October 1898, RAK letter from R.F, Austin, Acting Head Assistant Collector to the Collector of Malabar, dt. 14th October 1898, Palakkad, RAK.

¹⁶⁴ No. 1383 CL, 26th October 1898, A letter of an behalf of Collector by Rajagopalachari. V, RAK.

Salt, Abkari and separate Revenue and Inspector General of Police for the necessary patrol and guard to stop the pilgrims and send them back. A telegram would be dispatched to Collectors of Malabar, Salem, North Arcot, Cuddaph, and Ananthpur. Notifications were issued in Gazette extraordinary, and in every possible way that in consequence of danger of plague the car festival at Kalpathi in Palakkad taluk has been stopped and attendance of visitors at this place from 1st to 20th November has been prohibited under epidemic diseases Act. The residents of Mysore were also notified about the impending disease and the consequent stoppage of the festival here.¹⁶⁵

At the same time we find in a report relating to car festival - Big Bazaar – Palakkad. Name of the reporter was C.K.D'Sylva, Civil apothecary and date was 4th – 6th February 1898. The total number of attendees was about five thousand and the accommodation and sanitary arrangements were done in private houses holds and *chattrams*. Water supply was obtained from public and private wells. They were henkinized a few days before the festival. The sanitary *maistry* watched these wells to prevent pollution conservancy. Two temporary *tatty latrines* were put up, kept clean by *toties* temporarily engaged. Four sweepers were also at work. The general sanitary arrangements as to the removal of filth and rubbish were also strictly carried out. Four cases of cholera were reported amongst pilgrims' returning from Palni a day after the festival.¹⁶⁶

In 1923, an article in a paper relating to question of the grant of a holiday to Muhammedan public servants on the anniversary of the birth of their prophet was seen. Heads of offices were accordingly authorized to

¹⁶⁵ It is signed by Tremenhacre, Secretary to Government. G.O. No. 1383 (P), dated 2nd October, 1898, Local & Municipal, RAK.

¹⁶⁶ *Abstract of Reports on Fairs and Festivals in the Madras Presidency*, No. 2112L, dated 3rd November, 1898 -L & M, RAK.

grant under the casual leave rules, a holiday on the day in question to those Muhammedan public servants who desire it.¹⁶⁷

4.4.1 Fighting Darkness

Here it is discussed about the lighting arrangements in the town space of Palakkad and how it helped the inhabitants to fight against the darkness in the region. Lighting facilities in Palakkad urban space has a history of itself to speak of. The lighting history of Palakkad starts with the use of kerosene lamps. Later on petromax lights were introduced. Usually these arrangements were given on contract, which was to be renewed or reassigned by the Municipal Council. In 1870, it was decided to install twenty lamps.¹⁶⁸ A few months after this decision, the Municipal Government sanctioned rupees one twenty for supplying twenty four lanterns to be used in the Municipality.¹⁶⁹ The report has come from Inspectors stating that the scavengers now employed for lighting lanterns find it much difficult to carry out scavenging and lighting. The Commissioners therefore granted a sum of rupees four to be divided among those who light the lamps.¹⁷⁰

In the year 1886, some savings were able to be effected in the expenditure of the Municipality, and an additional thirty eight lights were purchased for lighting.¹⁷¹ There was a slow increase in the number of lights.

¹⁶⁷ Signed by Secretary to Government, G.O. No. 2377 L, dated 13th December 1898. Government of Madras, Local and Municipal Department, RAK.

¹⁶⁸ Proceedings of the Meeting of the Municipal Commissiones of Palakkad held on 10th Dec. 1870, RAK.

¹⁶⁹ Proceedings of a Committee of the Municipal Commissioners for Palakkad held on 17th April, 1871, RAK.

¹⁷⁰ Municipality Supplement, Sat, October 1875, 9th, RAK.

¹⁷¹ 2nd September 1886, No. 883, MO. Financial, in *Nagaram Pinnita Nall Vazhikal*, (Mal.), Palakkad Municipality, 2015.

In 1891, an increase in the amount of rupees three thousand has been allotted against one thousand four hundred. The increase was due to an increase in the number of lights from one hundred and fifteen to two hundred. At the same time the Council also proposed that the job of lighting these lamps should be given on contract and to bring new system into force from 1st February 1891.¹⁷² In 1906, V.Chinnaswamy Naidu offered to light lamps in eight areas of the southern part of the city, and deposited a sum of rupees two fifty was accepted.¹⁷³

The lighting of three hundred and ten lights on 31st March 1906 was given on contract in the Palakkad Municipality.¹⁷⁴ The Council observes that the lighting contractor, V. Chinnaswamy Naidu was quite willing to carry out any terms of contract that would be resolved up on by them and to reconsider the resolution. The contract was sanctioned and also continuance of the lighting contract for the year 1907-1908. The tender of T.K. Venkitachala Vadyar and T.P. Subramaniya Iyer were sanctioned at a uniform rate of 11 annas 9 pies per light per month and it was accepted. The duty of lighting lamps in the northern division was entrusted to T.K. Venkitachala Vadyar and the southern division to T.P.Subramaniya Iyer. Each was to deposit a security of rupees one fifty-¹⁷⁵

The person in charge of lighting the Kalpathy ward requested that he may be paid an additional sum of Rs. 6 – 8 -6 for lighting lamps during car festival together with the report of the Natesa Iyer. Only rupees three twelve annas (Rs. 3 – 12 – 0) was sanctioned as recommended by Natesa Iyer.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² B.NO.70, Serial No.6, 1891, RAK.

¹⁷³ 4th March, 1903, Malabar *District Gazette*, RAK.

¹⁷⁴ Malabar *District Gazette*, 1906, RAK.

¹⁷⁵ 10th May 1907, Malabar *District Gazette*, RAK.

¹⁷⁶ 6th March 1907, Malabar *District Gazette*, RAK.

Petition dated 1st April 1915 from petrol light contractor for 1915-16 requesting that he may be supplied with things necessary for lighting petrol lamps during 1915-16 together with Chairmans order directing the contractor to purchase them and submit bill of costs.¹⁷⁷ According to 1941, agreement with the contractor, the Petromax lights were burnt throughout night from 6pm to 6am from mid June to mid October. How long it was burnt each night was determined by the phases of moon for the rest of the year. The rate was Rs8/- per month. As the contract was for one year and the rate was same for every month, the lighting hours vary from rupees three sixty per month from 15.6.1941 to 15.10.1941 to rupees twelve a month. Some compensation charges were given on account of the stoppage of the petromax light.¹⁷⁸

The lighting of ordinary kerosene oil was done departmentally. The lighters have requested for the supply of *kumbly*¹⁷⁹ each as warm clothing against the cold rainy weather of the south west monsoon. They were paid only rupees twelve per month and so they may not be able to go for a *kumbly* especially at a time when the prices of all commodities has gone up. The cost of one *kumbly* was rupees two, eight annas (Rs 2-8-0). There were a total of nine lighters and the request seems reasonable, and so it was sanctioned.¹⁸⁰

A preliminary report on the Palakkad water supplying scheme, the Government approved of the investigation of water supply scheme for the town of Palakkad at the cost of rupees seventeen thousand. The source was

¹⁷⁷ *Malabar District Gazette*, 21st April 1915, RAK.

¹⁷⁸ L&A(1942)MS Series, GO No. 2735, dated 15.9.1942.

¹⁷⁹ *kumbly* is blanket. There was a shortage of all goods, prices shooting up and the lamplighters cannot afford to buy blankets with their meager pay.

¹⁸⁰ L A (1942) Department Ms. Series, GO. NO. 2089, dated 16.7.42, RAK,

Melar, a hill stream running to the north of the town. The site selected for the head works was above the ruins of an old dam known as Nana Pattar dam. A shallow infiltration gallery was proposed and at this site and water was to be pumped into a service reservoir to be located near the post office which was about the highest place in the town and water distributed by about hundred fountains. The pumping main was about four miles long, the bed level of the stream at the site of the head works. This scheme was to supply the ultimate population of fifty four thousand people at fifteen gallons per head.¹⁸¹

The Municipal Council had not totally condemned the water supply scheme but have resolved that there was no necessity for it at present and is considered that the partly done investigation to be completed and to prepare a detailed plan and estimate for the scheme. Thus the Government for the time being postponed the scheme of water supply.¹⁸²

4.4.2 The introduction of Electricity

In 1927, N.L. Sivarama Iyer who was a banker and contractor from Trichinapoly requested that he be allowed to provide electricity to the inhabitants of the Palakkad town. He agreed to deposit of Rs. 1500/- with the Accountant General Madras in exchange for the permission under Section 28 of the Indian Electricity Act to carry out the scheme with some alterations.¹⁸³ The following were the suggested alterations.

Alterations: “.1. A 15 B.H.P Crude oil engine with 8.5 KW Dynamowill also be installed, as suggested by electricity inspector to the Government. .2. Power

¹⁸¹ G.O. No. 220 3, M Mis.dated 14.12.11, RAK.

¹⁸² LSGD, G.O. No. 1767 M. Mis dated 28th November 1920,RAK.

¹⁸³ A Letter from N.L. Sivaramalyer to the Secretary to Government P.W.&Labour Deeparment,FSG, Madras in Public Works &Labour(1927) Department Ordinary Series,G.O. No. 1067. W, dated 13.5.1927, RAK.

house will be located in a plot enclosed. .3. Supply voltage will be 220 volts. .4. The hours of supply will be from 6 p.m to 11 p.m. .5. The rate of supply would not exceed Rs. 2, 3, 3/8, 5 & 7 for 20,30,40, 50,60, as 100 watt or C.P. lamps respectively.”¹⁸⁴

A Municipal meeting was held to discuss about power supply matter and it seems that the Council had no objection in proceeding in the matter.¹⁸⁵ Some more changes were made regarding timing, it was changed as 6pm to 11pm, Iyer was informed that sanction to the supply of electric energy accorded subject mainly that the Indian electricity Act of 1910, amended acts of 1922 etc. are to be followed. He was asked to note his willingness.¹⁸⁶

To use two twenty volts and to use the following rates as sanctioned for Mr. Vincent of Coimbatore may be substituted. It was to be noted that, Under section 28 (1) of the Indian Electricity Act 1910, as amended by the Indian Electricity (amendment) Act 1922, N.L. Sivarama Iyer, Banker, Contractor, Teppakulam, Trichinapoly was permitted to supply electric energy to a portion of the Palakkad town subject to the conditions set forth. The Government as well as the Municipal Council was in full agreement regarding this.¹⁸⁷

The following year we find Electric Power House, a request was

¹⁸⁴ BHP is Brake Horse Power. The total power produced by the engine/motor is measured in terms of Horsepower. CP is abbreviation for candlepower, illuminating power expressed in candelas or candles, which is the unit of luminous intensity. www.google.co.in

¹⁸⁵ From S K Ramaswamy, Chairman, Municipal Council to the Secretary to the Government of Madras---PW&Labour on 10th March 1927, RAK.

¹⁸⁶ P W & L Department, 26.1.27, RAK.

¹⁸⁷ Publics Works and Labour (1927) Department, Ordinary Series, G.O.NO.1067----W, dated 13.5.27, RAK.

submitted to the Government for the shifting of the power house from the small rented building to the owners own land. He was also requiring permission to facilitate the transmission of energy and minimize drop in voltage, to generate and transmit energy at four sixty volts, three wire system and supply to the consumers at two thirty volts, to more areas including Moothanthara, Pallipuram village, Pattani street, Nurani village, English church road, Post office road, Native high school, Parakunnam Road, Nellisery village, Vadakkanthara etc. He further states that to minimize drop in the voltage, two main lines from the powerhouse at Amity Hall, one to the junction of Kalpathi Road and Big Bazar road feeder lines will be taken from these two lines for supply to the consumer.¹⁸⁸

Meanwhile a clarification was asked by the Government about the present application, as it does not come from Sivarama Ayyer but from someone else – N.Z. Kunchipadam – who had signed the application as the Managing Proprietor of the Palakkad Electric Power supply company. The Government has got no knowledge as to the connection between Siva Rama Iyyer's undertaking and also the present applicant and his company.¹⁸⁹ The situation requires clarification. However Sivarama Iyer, then formally applied for the transfer to the Palakkad Electric Power Supply Company of the sanction accorded to him. Now the Government permits the new owner to transfer the power house to Amity Hall. As regards the request made for permission it was granted. The proposal to generate and transmit energy at four sixty volts cannot also be sanctioned for the present. The company could renew the request next year if it wants to.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁸ PW & L (1929) Department Mis. Series, G.O. No. 838, dated 11.3.29, RAK.

¹⁸⁹ PW&L(1929), Department, Mis.Series, GO NO.838 ,W dated11.3.29,RAK.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

Now the responsibility of maintaining the electricity supplying was sold to the Palakkad electric corporation Ltd., the business was done on partnership (S.K. Shaik Rowther Bava Rowther, Hajee Sayed Mohammed Rowther, S.K. Ahamed Rowther, K.V. Mohammed Rowther etc.) The Palakkad Electric Corporation limited, request the sanction previously accorded to Mr. N.L. Sivarama Iyer (the Palakkad Electric Power supply Company) under Section 28 of the Indian Electricity Act to supply electrical energy to a portion of Palakkad town may be transferred to this partnership company on the same terms and conditions but with certain modifications. Some points were suggested, about giving two years notice to the company before any other licensee could supply in this area, the sanction to be revoked if the owner makes default in his work for a long time. The security amount would be forfeited if the sanction was revoked by the authorities, the timing of the power supply was to be between 6 pm and 11 pm, the energy be given at a pressure of 236 volts at the consumers terminus. At least two independent sets of generating units, each consisting of an engine and dynamo and the requisite auxillary apparatus would be installed in the power house. The rates were to be modified as for twenty five watts rupees one and four annas (Rs. 1 -4 – 0) per month per lamp, fourty watts as rupees two etc. Higher wattage lamps were to be charged proportionately. At certain level the Main shall be carried at a height of twenty five feet above road level.¹⁹¹

The new owners also planned to extend the supply of electricity to far off regions. Meanwhile we find an interesting turn ie. a letter from Special Receiver in which it was stated that N.L. Sivarama Iyer the proprietor of the Palakkad Electrical Power Supply Company, who held the licence from the

¹⁹¹ PW & L (1931) Department Mis Series, G.O. No. 2273 W dated 8.9.31, RAK.

Government to carry on the supplying of electrical energy for Palakkad town was adjudicated insolvent by the Subordinate Judge, Court of Trichinapoly in IP No. 27 of 1930 and a Special Receiver was appointed, the court directing him to form a limited liability company so that with the permission of government, the said concern may be transferred to that company and the price realised. Thus the Special Receiver was able to float the Palghat Electrical Corporation whose object was to take over the above concern and develop it into concern to supply for the whole town. With the sanction of court it was requested that the electrical inspector to value the concern and (Rs. 8170/-) and that the government should sanction for effecting the transfer.¹⁹²

Special Receiver, subject to the approval of the local government, he could sell and the Palakkad Electrical Corporation limited, could purchase the concern known as the Palakkad Electrical Supply Company with all its machinery, tools, plants, posts, overhead mains, fittings, books, furniture etc. as shown in the inventory was valued by the Electrical Inspector to government, for price fixed at rupees eight thousand one hundred and seventy (Rs. 8170/-) S.K. Sheik Rowther became the Managing Director of this concern.¹⁹³

Thus S.K. Sheik Rowther got the license for supply of electrical energy to the town of Palakkad.¹⁹⁴ It was directed to inform that the government propose to extend the supply of electric power from Pykara to Palakkad by about April 1933 and that no further application for generation of power

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ G.O. No. 1067 W. dated 13.5.27, permitting Sivarama Iyer to supply energy. The permission was transferred in GO. No. 838, dated 11.3.29 to Palakkad electric power supply company of which Mr. Sivarama Iyer is the sole proprietor, RAK.

¹⁹⁴ Public Works and Labour Department GO.No.1427,W, 5th July 1932, RAK.

Palakkad can be considered. Power will be supplied by the government in bulk to the distributing agency in the town who will be granted a license to supply energy to the public. The agency selected should be in a position financially and technically to complete the distribution system before 1st May 1933. Rowther who was dealing with electric supply has been referred to the Chief Engineer, Hydro electric development, Chepauk, Madras with instructions to correspond directly with regard to the terms and condition. Now the electrical corporation was supplying electricity to Palakkad town and the desirability of installing it in the bungalow occupied by Sub-Collector was considered. The building was held on lease by the government from *N. N. Rama Ayyar avargal* on a monthly rent of rupees seventy five-. All the upkeep charges were to be met by the owner and he should be also prepared to meet the initial cost of fitting up electrical installation.¹⁹⁵ Thus, started the process of electrifying Palakkad's domestic as well as official buildings.

A statement of shares allotted in original says that the available capital of one lakh of rupees and deposit rupees four thousand on 25th October 1932, a sum of rupees four thousand was paid to Consulting Engineer and instructed them to purchase government bonds and deposit the same with government on their behalf as security deposit Palakkad electrical corporation limited reports that one thousand four hundred (1400) ordinary shares of rupees hundred each have been allotted and that application had also been received for one hundred and twenty five shares more which was to be allotted in the course of a week. The government observed that the actual amount collected was only thirty nine thousand six hundred and fifty, and one

¹⁹⁵ A letter from ARC Westlake, to C.A. Southern Commissioner of Land Revenue Settlement, dated 3rd May 1934.

thousand four hundred shares were allotted and there was some balance and it was asked to report whether the financial position of the licenses may be considered satisfactory.¹⁹⁶

The above mentioned details point to the drastic changes the urban space of Palakkad was witnessing with the coming of electricity. How the licensee company was formed, the part of the municipal council, how the shares were floated for acquiring money and how the electrification process was undertaken in the domestic consumption and official quarters. A smooth transition was seen in this process of transformation. The vigilant and alert nature of the municipal council was brought forth when they protested against the hike in the electrical charges.

Plan and estimate of one thousand one hundred fifty submitted for electric installation for the Warden's quarters attached to government Victoria College, Palakkad. The warden was willing or prepared to pay the additional rent on account of the installations. The work was to be carried out by the current year with funds available from the provision for minor works.¹⁹⁷ This company, plans to extend the line to Olavakkot but needs a reduction of retail rates, they also need extension of time by one year for the payment of the increased guaranteed minimum under the terms of the licence.¹⁹⁸ The board of revenue began taking steps to install electricity in District Forest Office, Sub Collectors Office, Taluk Office and Subjail. An amount of rupees two thousand two hundred and ten was approved.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁶ PW & L (1933) Dept. M.S. Series, G.O, NO. 58 W dated 6.1.1933 a letter from H.G. Howerd, Chief Engineer, electrical to the Secretary to the Government, Madras P.W & L department dated 12th November 1932 letter from the MD, Palakkad Electrical Corporation, RAK.

¹⁹⁷ PW (1937) Department, Mis Series, G.O. No. 386, dated 26.2.1937, RAK

¹⁹⁸ PW Electricity, (1937), GO.NO.978, dated 15.5.37, RAK.

¹⁹⁹ G. O. No. 153, dated 27.1.1938, RAK.

The case of Palakkad District Office deserves special mentions here. It was said that in six months monsoon times the days were very cloudy and work was done with great inconvenience. Rain and wind lashed all doors and windows had to be closed and the work stopped till the wind abates. Here, the draftsmen were the group that was most affected. During other times also the wind through Palakkad gap necessitates the closing of doors and windows which greatly disrupt the on going work. The efficiency was affected and this justifies the grant of electrical lights and fans to this office. During the time from March – May, the intensity of heat was so great that they have to put up much inconvenience. Thus for the first time we get reference to the constant winds blowing through the gap and the inconvenience it caused to the working.²⁰⁰

Plan and estimate amounting to rupees one seventy for fitting the Town police station at Palakkad in Malabar district with electric lights. Work continues even after dark, lights in each room except the prisoner's cells and light in the verandah. The government approved an expenditure of rupees one seventy.²⁰¹ Meanwhile an application has been made to the government by the Palakkad electric corporation limited, the licences under the Palakkad electrical license, and 1932 for the grant to them of the powers of the Telegraph authority for laying a high tension electric transmission line. It was proposed to confer upon the applicants the right which the telegraph authority possesses, subject to following conditions.

²⁰⁰ The Palakkad District Forest Officer's letter ref. no. 2355/D dated 4.11.37 to the Conservator of Forests, Ootacamund Circle, G.O. NO.153, dated 27.1.1938, RAK.

²⁰¹ PWL (1935) dept., MS.Series, GO. NO. 1547- W dated 8.7.1935. The letter dated 21st May 1935 from the Inspector General of Police to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras, RAK.

“1. The line should run as far as possible in a straight line. 2. The telephone and telegraph lines, crossing the powerline should be efficiently guarded to the satisfaction of the telegraphic authority. 3. If telephonic and telegraphic lines were to be diverted or altered at the request of the licence the cost of such diversion was to be borne by them. 4. No distribution should be effected from the transmission line.” Thus the powers to the telegraph authority were granted.²⁰²

In 1938, the Surgeon General put forward for administration approval of government plan and estimate of rupees four thousand two hundred, proposed that electricity be installed in the government Hospital, Palakkad. The government approves of this expenditure on electricity installation of government Hospital, Palakkad. The work was to be done from the current year, from the provision of lump sum for minor work.²⁰³ The Palakkad Electric Corporation Limited intimated the Secretary to the Government of Madras about certain difficulties encountered in the electric supply in Palakkad, and the minimum of rupees fifteen was raised to forty five. The estimate provided for lighting was six annas per unit. Lighting, fans, small appliances, fans and which are not less than hundred watts, five annas per unit was charged. Rupees three a month for per service was to be levied. Bazar lamps were at the rate of rupees two per forty watt lamp per month, burning five hours daily. Public street lighting amounts to two point five annas per unit, shops, office, electrical signs, public buildings, clubs, and hotels for forty five per month.²⁰⁴

²⁰² PW/Electricity (1937) Dept. MS.Series, G.O. NO.1613, dated 6.8.1937, RAK.

²⁰³ PW (1938) Dept.Mis.Series, G.O. NO. 1387, dated 2.7.1938, RAK.

²⁰⁴ Letter dated 20th Oct. 1934 to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, through the Chief Engineer for Electricity from Palakkad Electric Corporation Ltd., RAK.

An objection was raised in the Municipal Council against enhancing the electric rates from rupees fifteen to rupees fourt five as minimum. Even the rate of rupees fifteen was sufficiently high for Palakkad and only few people can afford it. Thus it was not much use to the general public. A large number of people have ceased to have electric light and instead of electric lights were having kerosene petromax lights, as it was cheaper. Thus we see the Municipal Council protesting and the voice of the common man could be heard there.²⁰⁵ According to the tender notification and the agreement entered into with the contractor, the petromax—lights were to be burnt throughout the night from 6pm to 6am from 15.6.1941 to 15.10.1941 and for other periods of the year according to the phases of the moon. The rate was rupees eight per light per month. As the contract was for one year and the rate was same for every month the lighting hours varies from three sixty per month from 15.6.1941 to 15.10.1941 to rupees one twenty per month. Thus some compensation charges on account of stoppage of petromax light can be got.²⁰⁶ It was understood in 1939, the Palakkad Municipal Council had executed a five year agreement for street lighting on 1st April 1939 for a period of five years without obtaining the necessary approval from Chief Electrical Inspector office. Later on the agreement was forwarded with certain modifications; it was a legal document binding on both parties. Any revision was possible only after the lapse of five years.²⁰⁷ In the mentioned paragraphs above we come to know about the history of lighting in the Palakkad space and the slow coming about of electricity and how it became an inevitable one in the everyday life of modern man in the urban space.

²⁰⁵ G.O. NO. 1610 – 78, dated 16.7.1935, PW & L (1935), Department, RAK.

²⁰⁶ L.H.(1942)Dept. MS.Series,G.O.NO..2735, dated15.9.194 ,RAK.

²⁰⁷ G.O. No. 1830, L & M, 13th May 1935, G.O. NO. 355, 30th January 1942, M.S. Series Local Administration. J. Kuriyan was the Chief Electrical Inspector to Government, RAK.

4.5 Water supply

In 1911, a preliminary report on the Palakkad water supplying scheme, the Government approved of the investigation of water supply scheme for the town of Palakkad at the cost of rupees seventeen thousand. The source was Melar, a hill stream running to the north of the town. The site selected for the head works was above the ruins of an old dam known as Nana Pattar dam. A shallow infiltration gallery was proposed and at this site and water was to be pumped into a service reservoir to be located near the post office which was about the highest place in the town and water distributed by about hundred fountains. The pumping main was about four miles long, the bed level of the stream at the site of the head works. This scheme was to supply the ultimate population of fifty four thousand people at fifteen (15) gallons per head.²⁰⁸

The Municipal Council had not totally suspended the water supply scheme but has resolved that there was no necessity for it at present, and investigation to be completed and had to prepare a detailed plan and estimate for the scheme. Thus the Government for the time being postponed the scheme of water supply.²⁰⁹ In 1931, a question was raised in the Legislative Council regarding the possibility of a Dam in the region of Palakkad, about its estimate, the rate of interest and the extend of land OR if it was abandoned. To which it was answered that a rough estimate was made and the investigation has been postponed till the required area was got. No accurate estimate was prepared and it was not abandoned.²¹⁰ From the *Madras Patrika*, it could be understood that an estimated amount of Rs3.8

²⁰⁸ G.O. NO.220 3, M Mis. dated 14.12.11, RAK.

²⁰⁹ LSGD, G.O. NO. 1767 M. Mis dated 28th November 1920, RAK.

²¹⁰ PW&L (1931), Department Ms Series, GO NO.992 1, dated 11.4.1931, RAK(R.M.Palat was the member who raised the question.)

crores was set apart for the construction of the Malampuzha reservoir at Palakkad taluk. In the rainy season, this region, usually flooded leads to the crop destruction. Hence it was resolved to store water and use it in times of need. This can be considered to be one of the first projects in Malabar.²¹¹

4.5 Telergraphs

The British power established its control over the large domains of India and for an effectual control of these territories they made use of technology. They were able to grasp the situations now and there and were able to act swiftly. One of the most important technological breakthroughs that the British were able to implement in India, which augmented their control over vast Indian dominions, was this telegraph.²¹² In the rebellion of 1857, these telegraphic lines are credited with a crucial role and Lord Dalhousie credited telegrams with saving India for British Empire whereas the nationalists as having said, as the wire which led to their easy defeat. Thus the telegraphic lines helped the British to collect news from the nook and corner of India to maintain their control over their vast regions. This telegraph department was controlled directly by the Imperial Government, there was no local control. The Madras Presidency has three complete telegraphic divisions called Madras, Bellary, and Malabar Coast. The telegraph offices may be divided into three classes, department offices, licensed offices equipped and maintained by department but worked by state rail ways or canals, and licensed officer equipped and maintained and worked by guaranteed railways.

²¹¹ *Madras Patrika*, Madras, 1949, March 15th vol. IV, Palisserimana, Manjeri.

²¹² The first 27 mile stretch of line was laid by the East India Company between Calcutta and diamond harbor as early as 1851. The last telegram sent in India was on 15th July 2013. Mail online, 11th July 2013, published 13:31 GMT.

4.5.1 The Postal System

On 31st March 1883 in each revenue district, the post office was termed a disbursing head office. This controls the accounts, salaries etc .of all postal officials of the district and was authorized to deal with articles of the letters and parcels, mails posted for articles of the letters and parcel mails posted for dispatch or received for delivery. The Post Office was also empowered to register articles and to insure them during transit. The officer in charge of the sub office was designated as sub-post master.

Under XIV of 1866, section 64 of the Governor General in council was empowered to frame rules for regulating the district dawks. All receipts from the postage stamps were credited to imperial revenue while all the charges remain a burden on provincial funds. Earlier, the grant was made to provincial revenue to cover the cost of the district post but in 1882-83 under the decentralization schemes, this grant was included in the lump sum given as contribution to provincial funds. The taluk stations were at first connected and between these places delivery of posts were carried out by the ordinary skill of village postman. The delivery to the outlying villages was carried out by a system called rural delivery. The rural delivery establishments consists of a scheduled postman whose rounds (beets) of the village were so arranged that they should visit the principal village in the taluk, once, twice or thrice a week or daily according to importance of the village, its accessibility and funds that are available and of village letter boxes or places of call for the postman. They were to be managed by the village official in these villages who gave their service free, or for a small stipend of rupees two per month.²¹³ Telegraph amalgamation with the post office started at

²¹³ *Manual of Administration of Madras Provinces*, vol.I, printed by E.Kays Government Press: Madras, 1885, p. 463, RAK.

the close of 1885. Telegraphic money orders were introduced in August 1885. In 1882-83, in Malabar the numbers of letter boxes was twenty-nine and the expenses of the village postman was rupees four thousand and ten. Originally, the Palakkad postal sub division which was under Madras Province was a part of Nilgiris postal Division. Usually it becomes the duty of the person bringing the letters and telegraphs, to read out the message for them.²¹⁴ About the working of the District Post lines from Palakkad to Alathur the Palakkad Tahasildar, reports favourably about the transfer of District Post to the Post Master General and remarks that letters were conveyed more speedily than before.²¹⁵ Another Notification says fee for late letters, newspapers, or parcels or registered letters must be prepared in postage stamps. The fee for registered letters should in future be paid in stamp, i.e. three annas of the fee should be paid in stamps and more in cash.²¹⁶

4.5.2 Press and Printing

At that time the owner of the printing press was asked to deposit money as the security, and also that he was to appear before the District Magistrate and make the declaration that he undertakes only jobworks and would not take up reporting any political matter. Usually the applicant may be exempted from security so long as he does undertake only jobworks and does not take up the reporting of any political matter.²¹⁷ The vigilant watch of the Government over the news and publications can be seen here.

²¹⁴ It is understood that only in 1.12.1954 the Palakkad Sub division which was under Nilgiris Postal division became independent of it and started functioning independently in *Nagaram Pinnitta Nal Vazhikal*, Palakkad Municipality, Geetanjali Offset Prints: 2015, p. 384.

²¹⁵ File no.481, Inward Correspondence of Postal Department, Letter from Acting Head Assistant Collector to Acting Collector, Malabar, dated 28th May 1875, RAK

²¹⁶ File No.415, Postal Department Correspondences, 1859, RAK.

²¹⁷ Revenue Dis.13555/20 dated 10.11.20, RAK.

Thahasildar were to submit reports that the Manager of M.V.Press belongs to a respectable family and this Krishnavilasam Press was intended mainly for conducting job works. In these circumstances it does not appear necessary that he should be asked to deposit the security. But he was to appear before the District Magistrate to make a declaration that he would not take up any political matter. The manager of MV Press intended to open a new press by name Krishnavilasam press. Another person by name Narayanan of Koppam, Palakkad District opened a new printing press at the building belonging to Chinnappalyer near Post Office on the western side of the road.

He also undertook not to print anything against the Government but only undertake job works.²¹⁸ The editor of *Morning Star*, P.V.Vergheese expresses his desire to take it up and publish it in his name. It was understood from the editor of the journal, P.V.Varghese that the necessary arrangements were made for the revival of the magazine was complete and the requisition was submitted to the District Magistrates, Malabar. He further makes a declaration under Printers and Publishers Declaration under Act v of 1867 on 8th May 1935.²¹⁹

Another editor and proprietor of the paper was T.R. Krishnaswami Ayyar, printer of the paper was Penarveetil Narayanan Nair. The paper was printed at Kamalalaya Press, Ottapalam. Another was a paper by name *Prabhatham*. It was in existence for the last six years and quite recently it was converted into a Malayalam daily having moderate circulation. It draws attention to the fact that it was not receiving any attention from the Government regarding the "editors table" Privileges i.e. request of the editor

²¹⁸ Revenue Dis . 13555/20, dated 10.11.20 ,RAK.

²¹⁹ Office of the District Magistrate, Malabar, R. Dis NO.1923/35 dated 11.5.35, RAK

for the free supply of Government publications placed at the disposal of the press.²²⁰

All District Boards, Panchayats and Municipal Councils were asked to subscribe for 'Madras Information' or in its regional language, whichever was needed. The subscription rate was rupees six for English or language editions. It was rupees three for half yearly.²²¹ Thus, we find that the Government was very cautious in allowing the press and papers, a tight control over them, or else they might print and circulate anti British news. It was very clear what all steps were undertaken by the Government to curb political activities and how a close watch was kept over printing and press. Even an enquiry was to be conducted by the Tahasildar and only after his ratification; the press was allowed to function. His recommendation carries great value.

4.6 Conclusion

By about 1866, the British administration introduced the Towns Improvement Act and Palakkad became the Second Municipality. From then onwards they instituted a series of Acts and policies which altogether changed the cityscape of Palakkad. Slowly within a long span of time, we find the transformation of Palakkad brick by brick layer by layer happening. Large tracts of land were reclaimed by them so that the route to (Walayar) Coimbatore and Pollachi can be made communicable. Because of the harsh adverse climate as well as thick forests, only slow progress was able to be achieved. On the way, seeing the large sparse of land lying vacant, the

²²⁰ The policy relating to the free or concessional supply of the Government publication is embodied in G.O. NO.874 Public, dated .7.10.1926 and also in para i(a) of GO.NO.270 Public, dtated 25.3.1933.(2.) Public (general 91933) Department Ms. Series GO.NO.932, dated 14.11.33, RAK

²²¹ Memo No.35158---3 B, 11TH November, 1946, RAK.

British thought of making settlements, which will auger well with the trade. The Palakkad pass called by writers as the Gateway of Kerala through which communication with the Coimbatore and Pollachi and from there to other regions was made possible. The fort and cantonment area, a very strategic place, rightly understood by Tipu was also understood British. They on and often made improvements on it and many Government offices, jails etc. began to function there (The fort is one of the best maintained one even to this day under ASI). By introducing the Town Improvement Act, the Government got wider power to implement more acts as well as tax the people. Money was needed for policing the people as it was said. In the beginning the Government provided 25% of the grants in aid but later stopped it. The proposed limit of twenty five thousand persons was needed in a Municipality and Palakkad had a population of thirty six thousand three thirty three. (36,333). They turned their attention towards the survey and resettlement of land. They knew that only by surveying and classifying land fixed income or revenue could be got by the Government. They had to have a correct knowledge of the various lands, crops, minerals, flora, fauna etc. In the beginning the common means of transport was the bullock carts and also water transport. Buchanam has commented on the deplorable state of roads in Kerala in his '*Journeys*'. The well - to - do jenmis traveled in palanquins. The British Government took great pain to reduce the difficulty associated with road transport. In the budget estimates of the Municipality, some money began to be set apart for the construction as well as the repairs of the road. Later on District boards began to manage it. In time of financial constraints the Government did not undertake repair works. Bridges were another means of communication from 1840's we find the Government undertaking the construction of railways. Many places have to be acquired for this purpose. It has been recognized that railways can be considered as an important infrastructure development in India. It integrated markets and

trade. But some disagree with this above points claiming that railways can explain only 20% of the overall 60% decrease in the price dispersion between 1860's and 1900 and that its advantages were overstated. Thus there is the existence of contrary views regarding railways. Thus by the introduction of technological advancement they were able to strengthen their own foot hold here. By various acts and policies the British tightened their reins over the people, ways and means were envisaged to collect more taxes and they were successful in their attempt.

A new type of town planning as well as culture began to emerge in these times. No doubt about it. Along with railways we find railway colonies coming up. Different types of building depending on the hierarchy in the organizations, one is allotted the buildings. Another architectural style is the Agraharam of the Brahmins. We also find single large houses in huge compound. One prominent view regarding railway is that economic and Indian development took a back seat. But it reduced caste restriction greatly, a feature we cannot omit in the Kerala society. The Government was less bothered about the condition of the passengers traveling the railways even though many news papers highlighted it. Along with train, telegraph can also be considered as a major technological advancement. In this chapter an analysis is done on the town transportation, communication, like roads, railways, sanitary facilities, the coming of electricity, post and telegraph, printing etc. From the beginning these developments were traced to get an understanding on how these changes were effected leading to a wholesale transformation in the urban society and space of Palakkad. So technology was utilised by the English power in India, to keep a tight rein over the Indians, their dreams, hopes and aspirations and in that process the urbanisation of this region was near complete.

Chapter 5

Culture in the Colonial Town

5.1 Spiritualism in the Urban Space

The nineteenth century urban social space of Palakkad was divided by caste restrictions and superstitions, indeed, the spiritual associations which have come up in Palakkad had a great role to play in cleansing the caste ridden society of its diverse evils. It was said that, in every part of the country there lived multitude of degraded outcastes, held down by the Hindu law.¹ With the dawn of the century the Hindu population was in a miserable condition. On the Malabar Coast, it is possible to count five different tribes from time immemorial.² Even though, amalgamated to some extent, these tribes still preserve the language and mode of life peculiar to them.³

Another author gives a very graphic description of the society with its multifarious beliefs and customs.⁴ Thus the society was divided on the basis of castes with their numerous customs and beliefs, untouchability, unapproachability, pollution to mention a few. It is elaborated by J.N.Farquher, argues that it was the British Government and the Protestant Missions working together that produced the religious awakening in India. The British Government though credited with enlightened and progressive rationalism, decided to support and patronise them as the native rulers and

¹ J. N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, Oriental: New Delhi, 1967, p. 3.

² They are Nairs, Kurgas, Tulus, Konkani and Kanarese.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴ See Abbe.J. A. Dubois, *Hindu Manners Customs and Ceremonies*, Cosmo: New York, 2007.

so they liberally advanced money to the temples, repairing or allow money for sacrifices .But they imposed a tax called pilgrim tax by which they were able to collect huge amounts of money.⁵ In the early part of the British rule, missionaries were not encouraged, but things changed and in Palakkad for example Basel Mission started its work in the field of education and so on in an effort to help the downtrodden people in the society.

It was in this backdrop the spiritualistic condition of Palakkad should be viewed. Apart from the Basel Mission during this time in Palakkad, the spiritualistic work was taken up mainly by the Theosophical Society, Brahmananda Siva yogi of Alathur, Vijnanaramaneeyaashram at Koppam,⁶ and Ramakrishna mission at Ottapalam. The question here to be raised was that what factors prompted them to intervene successfully in the urban space of Palakkad? First, the community was of a multinational one that had maintained its relations with the capitalist outlook. For trading purposes the communities constantly intermingled with one another. Second, these ashrams posed a counter space to colonialism and also of alternative spiritualism. These spiritual leaders especially Brahmananda Sivayogi and others, never attacked the Governments directly but severely criticised the existing age old customs and traditions, practices of idolatry, animal sacrifice, untouchability etc.They taught men to think, think rationally and then to arrive at conclusions.His contributions initiated a progressive religious reform movement in North Kerala. He put forth a message of Universal Brotherhood and propounds the theory that happiness or Bliss should be the touchstone of any human activity and thus he had a very crucial role o play

⁵ J. N. Farquher, *Modern Religious Movements in India*, Oriental: New Delhi, 1967, pp. 8-9.

⁶ For details see Prof. A. Swaminathan, *Swami Sureshananda*, (Mal.),Sivananda Press: Palakkad, 2006.

in the Kerala Renaissance.⁷ The Theosophical society was one such organisation in Palakkad which campaigned for the cause of the people and questioned the inequalities in the society. At Palakkad they made their presence felt, as they took part in the political conferences held at Palakkad.

5.1.1 Temple Festivals

The most important temple festival in the Palakkad taluk was the Palakkad Car festival, held on the month of November for three days. In 1868, the average number of visitors calculated to attend this festival was about 20,000, who would arrive by train, bullock carts etc. With a view to provide adequate sanitary arrangements the Sanitary Commissioner was required to submit a list of festivals and other occasions in which huge gatherings are likely to come. These can be considered to be very essential to preserve the public health of the people. Copies are to be submitted to the Indian Medical Department, IG of Police with a view to provide medical aid and also police guards.⁸ We can also see the mention of *Shuranpor*⁹ in the temples of Palakkad. In 1940, we come across the issue of pilgrim tax in addition to the charge of the railway ticket, had given rise to the difficulty, to a large number of persons leaving the place. To avoid such a position it was proposed that these taxes should be collected as part of the fare shown on the ordinary tickets if the railway administration chose to do so.¹⁰ These cultural gatherings had great effect on the minds of the people. Some of the

⁷ *The Hindu*, September 7th 2014.

⁸ R/201, *Report on Fairs and Festivals Occurring in Madras Presidency with Rules for Arrangements to be made in their Management and Conservancy*, By Surgeon Ranking, Sanitary Commissioner, Madras and the orders of Government thereon, 1868, pp xcvi and xcvi, RAK.

⁹ *shuranpore* is local festival

¹⁰ GO.NO.2817, 8th August 1940, RAK.

most important festivals celebrated and the fairs held in the taluk are follows.¹¹

Name of fairs and festivals.	Month held	No. of days held	No. of persons Attending
1.Kalpathy car festival	November	3	-
2.Tiruvalathur utsavam	November and December	9	--
3.Kotamba car festival	January and February	3	--
4.Kongad Puram festival	March and April	8	--
5.Kachamkurussi festival	April and May	10	--
6.Koduvayur car festival	December and January	2	--
7.Pudukulangara kavu vela	March and April	1	About 7000
8.Parakkattu kavu vela or Kavasserri puram	March and April "	1	About 12000
9.Tripallur navaratri utsavam	September and October	9	--

5.1.2 Grave Yards

We find references to cemeteries and burial grounds in the urban space of Palakkad. In 1890, it was recorded that the burial ground of the *Mappilas* in Calicut were being moved as a result of an outbreak of cholera there. The Council took the decision of the removal of Moplah burial ground. Nine sixty Mappilas died of cholera in three and a half months. And hence a new site was to be acquired near *Meenchanta*.¹² In 1887 – 88, a total of

¹¹ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Asian Educational Society: New Delhi, vol. II, 2010, p.cccxcix.

¹² Revenue Folded Document, 1890, RAK. Meenchanta is a place in Kozhikode.

rupees one fifty was made available for repairs to cemeteries under the charge of the revenue authorities in this district. For repairs to the Trinity Church Cemetery at Palakkad a sum of rupees fifty five was sanctioned. Rupees seven was needed for repairs to an old cemetery at Palakkad which was under the charge of the German Missionaries, but the Head Assistant Collector, Palakkad reported that in his opinion, there was no immediate necessity for the repair of the wall and that this item may be omitted from the list. However Rev. Dilger who was in charge of the cemetery, stated that the repair was of an emergency nature. The estimates furnished by the lay Trustee included the cost of certain repairs to the English church at Palakkad. This sum of rupees seven has been excluded from the budget estimates furnished to Arch Deacon whose requisition was restricted to petty repairs to cemeteries. The lay trustees were to be informed of this (He should be asked to get an estimate passed in accordance with the instruction issued by the Arch Deacon in 1881).¹³In 1890, a sum of rupees two seventy eight was made available for carrying out repairs to cemeteries under the charge of the revenue authorities in this district. The repairs primarily for an old cemetery at Palakkad under the charge of Basel Mission, a sum of rupees eight was set apart for it.

A communication was issued to all officers concerned for information and guidance about the revised ecclesiastical rules and regulations.¹⁴ A series of ecclesiastical rules and regulations were revised up to 1st October 1904 were also published.¹⁵ In the Palakkad taluk, an area of one acre land,

¹³ File no.43, *Correspondence Related to Cemeteries from August,1888—February, 1899*, RAK.

¹⁴ GO NO.29, Ecclesiastical dt.23rd February, 1898. Government of India Letter No. 213, dated 8th June1897 as amended by the Government. It is directed to be re published in the Fort St. George Gazette, RAK.

¹⁵ File No.61, *Correspondence Related to Cemeteries from April 17th1890* , RAK.

known as cantonment land on which the ecclesiastical body or Trustees of clergy men were in charge of it. The Government sanctioned rupees seven as the establishment charge or for Mali *chowkidar*.¹⁶ The estimates furnished by the lay Trustee included the cost of certain repairs to the English church at Palakkad. This sum of rupees seven has been excluded from the budget estimates furnished to Arch Deacon whose requisition was restricted to petty repairs to cemeteries. Government at times acquires certain space, as a site for burial ground, near Kannadi river used by the residents of Koppam and Yakkara, being in such a state of over crowdedness, public were informed that it should not be lawful for anyone to bury or burn any corpse in or on the said burial ground from and after 1st July 1903, those who defy are liable to be fined rupees hundred not exceeding.¹⁷ In Survey no.4328, Sub division no. 4350 we find it as marked as burial grounds (42 cents).¹⁸ The government as well as the council here takes a keen interest in the hygeinic matters. It is to be noted that some religious rites exist after death and hence the proximity to river side.

The government could also sanction the closure of certain burial grounds example, used by the Vadekanthara and Nelliseri people and the public was informed that it shall not be lawful for any person to bury or burn any corpse in these burial ground from and after 1st Oct 1906 or else, liable to a fine not exceeding rupees hundred.¹⁹ Another convenient place was approved for burial use by the government. Vadakenthara amsom Cherangode or Elangole Nilem duly authorised for which were used for

¹⁶ *chowkidar* is care taker

¹⁷ *Proceedings of the Municipal Council*, 15th November, 1899, RAK.

¹⁸ Desam Register, Yakkara Amsom, 1901, RAK.

¹⁹ Order No.1259, M Mis. Dt. 14th July 1906, RAK.

burials and burning from 1st October 1906.²⁰ In 1905, it was reported to the Municipal council that people who make use of Yakkara graveyard, experiences much inconvenience as they find no way for cart track from main road and Council resolved to provide a proper entrance for the same as well as a small shed to protect against sun and rain.²¹

In the Vadakenthara *amsom* in Survey no.19, we find the Mission burial ground. Another eighty five cents was also taken over by the Municipality. In Survey no.1, block no.4, 8 and also Survey no.1 (11) no.83 some seventy nine cents were acquired by the government. The name of V.Sammu Mannadiyar mentioned as the *uralar*²² of Bhagavathi Devaswom was also seen in connection with burial grounds.²³ Tiled shed for cinerators at Kundukad and Mattumanda and for that purpose rupees fifty six was granted.²⁴

Under the provision of the Section 36 of the Towns Improvement Act, (No. X of 1865) the Governor General in council authorizes the Commissioners for the towns of Calicut, Palakkad, Tellichery and Cochin to levy for the purpose of the Act, for the year ending on 30th April 1868, several rates and taxes. In the Palakkad Municipality, rates of houses and shops were to be levied at five percent of the annual rental. Taxes on trade, professions, tolls on carriages, carts, animals entering the municipal limits etc. are also to be levied.²⁵ William Logan was appointed as the Vice

²⁰ Malabar District Gazette, 1906, Palakkad Municipality Office, Palakkad..

²¹ (a) Proceedings of the Municipal Council, Palakkad, 2nd August 1905, Malabar District Gazette, RAK.

(b) Proceedings of the Municipal Council, Palakkad, 16th August, 1905, RAK.

²² *uralar* is temple proprietor

²³ Desam Register, Vadakentara, 1901, RAK.

²⁴ Proceedings of the Municipal Council, Palghat, 18th August, 1905, MDG, RAK.

²⁵ Malabar Government Gazette, vol.x, Saturday, 27th July 1867. (2) Public Department, FSG, July 3rd, 1867, RAK.

President of the Palakkad Municipal Commissioners.²⁶ Rupees ten and fifteen *annas* for some repairs on the burial ground at Mattumantha was sanctioned by the Municipal Council.²⁷

It was argued that a liveable city must not only care for the well being of the living, but both living and dead. As population increases this matter was not to be taken lightly.²⁸ Some writers consider it as cultural landscape. Here it was argued that cemeteries to be considered as 'collative representation', a replica of the living community in which many beliefs and values exist. And the author puts forth a model which explores the multiple meaning of cemetery as a cultural landscape.²⁹ Dispersing the dead has been a necessary public service as we live in communities opines Mumford and that burial was intertwined with spaces that human occupy and cemeteries have been provided open space to urban residents.³⁰ Urban burial grounds were considered as public open spaces in the 19th century. Thus different religions and cultures developed their own customs and traditions.³¹ Almost all scholars agree that it was the look out or the concern of the Governments to make provision for the cemeteries or the graveyards. Here also we find the Government having a notion of the graveyards and how it should be managed, setting up certain amount for its maintenance etc.

²⁶ The Malabar Government Gazette, Saturday, 15th September, 1866, vol.1X, RAK.

²⁷ Municipal Proceedings 10th January, 1900, RAK. Robinson was the Collector.

²⁸ International Science Index, *Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol, 6, No.11, 2012, waset.org/publication/13177, accessed 15th August, 2016, 6.30pm.

²⁹ Doris Francis, *Cemeteries as Cultural Landscapes*, Mortality, vol. VIII, No.2, 2003, www.d.umn.edu/~cla/jhamlin, accessed on 15th August, 2016, 7.00pm.

³⁰ Ruth Miller in *Urban Fringe*, Berkeley Planning Journal, ced.berkeley.edu, accessed on 15.8.2016, 7.30pm.

³¹ For details see webarchive.nationalarchives.gov. It was also opined that even in the case of megalithic age one finds that only the DEAD had a permanent dwelling.

5.1.3 The Basel Mission

Following the establishment of colonial dominance and supremacy of the European powers in the Afro – Asian countries, the missionaries in India established their mission centres in the far and remote areas of the colonised territories. Basel Evangelical German Missionary was one such missionary outfit which started operating in the Madras Presidency in 1834, and came to Kerala and then to Palakkad in 1858 and established centres in Vaniyamkulam, Vadakancherry Meparamba, Olavakkot, etc. The Mission engaged in a number of economic developing projects, including weaving, agriculture, printing and tile factories. By setting up many industrial outlets in addition to preaching and teaching of Christian values, they were able to instil Christian morals and values. Thus with much planning and in a calculated manner they started their missionary activities along with trading and industrial production units.

It was said that when Robinson came to Palakkad from Tellichery, he seems to have stated that if a missionary organization were to be set up in Palakkad, he would donate a yearly amount for this purpose and indicating his wish he sent a letter to Hebick missionary. At that time along with many other missionary workers he was at Muthuthala, from there he came to Vaniyamkulam and then to Palakkad and went straight to Robinson's bungalow. He donated a huge amount for the missionary purposes.³²

In the first days of the Mission, the members were mainly Tamil Christians. It was said that converted Christians had to make many sacrifices since casteism was very strong in this area. The converts were treated as

³² *History of Basel Mission (Mal.,)* by Malabar Church Council, Printed at Basel Mission Press: Mangalore, 1934 , p. 147, KTC Archives

outcastes; they were not allowed to maintain any relationship with their near and dear ones. They lost chances of employment and they now had to depend fully on the missionaries for their day to day living. In the words of J. Muller the converts were ruthlessly expelled from the rigid caste system and were thus socially and economically ruined.³³

The missionaries were left with the choice of helping these converts or leaving them altogether to their fate. The Christian fathers choose the former. It became their top priority to resettle them. Rudolf Fischer made a survey on this topic and agreed that work was necessary since these converts have got a life to lead on.³⁴ In 1852, while the members of the Home Committee were considering the appeals for help sent by the Missionaries in India on behalf of their converts, some of the influential Christian merchants in Basel come forward and organized industrial commission which had its origin in the department of the mission.³⁵ From 1882 onwards the Industrial Commission was amalgamated with the Missionary Joint Stock Company or mission trading company which enabled higher capital investments and expansion of industrial activities in Malabar Coast.³⁶

The mission did many experiments but was not successful. Then they decided to establish industries like weaving and tile factories in Palakkad region, Olavakkode. They believed that the supply of labour for industry

³³ *An Indian to the Indians –On the Initial Failure and the Posthumous Success of the Missionary Ferdinand Kittel, 1832—1903*, ed., Reinherd Wendt, Verlag, 2006, p. 155.

³⁴ Rudolf Fischer, *Basel Mission Industry in India, 1850 -1913, Recruitment and Disciplining of Workers*, Zurich, 1978, pp. 155-156, Belmetta Archives.

³⁵ E.J.Edona, *The Economic Condition of the Protestant Christians in Malabar with Special Reference to Basel Mission Church*, pp 220—221, KTC Archives

³⁶ Jaiprakash Raghaviah, *Basel Mission Industries in Malabar and South Canara (1834 – 1914)A study of its Social and Economic Impact*, Gian Publishing: New Delhi,1990, p. 28, RAK .

would not be hard to find. The history of Bombay cotton mills suggested that it was not difficult to create an industrial labour force in India. The caste system, with all its rigidity had not prevented the movement of workers into industry nor their mobility within the industry.³⁷ The tile works at Calicut and Palakkad were alluded in this report. A person named Boas who was in charge of the tile works at Codacel in 1878, had to pass through the same trial as the manager at Palakkad tile factory.³⁸ They had to face severe opposition from the local population. As compared with bazaar preaching, the Sunday school was considered as an Evangelic Agency that has many advantages. The missionaries speaking to the company of adults in the streets or at the *mela*³⁹ feels that the hearts of his hearers are prejudiced. They also cannot be openly aggressive.⁴⁰

By about 1887, the tile factory was established at Olavakode with two seventy eight employees, of which one twenty three were Christians and one fifty five were non-Christians.⁴¹ Initially, the tile factories made flat tiles, but later expanded to making ridges, sky lights and ventilated grooved spire tiles, hanging wall tiles, and so on were made. All buildings owned by Basel Mission were tiled and their products were also exported to many foreign countries.⁴² Many of Christians were employed in tile works at Olavakkode. They were considered to be fairly disciplined and the elders assisted in the mission work. The mission high school which was opened was fairly attended. In the bazaar attentive crowds gather to hear the Gospel message.

³⁷ DieBasler, *Mission Industries in India*, 1850-1913, 1978, Zurich: KTC Archives.

³⁸ B M R, 1899, KTC Archives.

³⁹ *mels* is festival gatherings

⁴⁰ Reports of the 2nd Decennial Missionary Conference held at Calcutta 1882—83, printed and published by J.W.Thomas, Baptist Mission Press: Calcutta, 1883, KTC Archives.

⁴¹ Paul David Thottathil, *The Socio Religious Impacts of the Basel Evangelical Mission in Malabar, 1839 – 1919*, Kottayam: 1995, KTC Archives.

⁴² Census of India, 1911 vol, xii , Madras, 1912, p. 205, RAK.

Majority of the new Christians live at Melparamba a compound separated by a river from the tile works at Olavakode where all of them were employed.

From the above paragraph it is clear that people belonging to different social backgrounds, were employed in factories for the same wages. We can understand that it gave a severe blow to the dominant concept of caste system. The society at that time was a compartmentalized system, unfortunately with the evils of unapproachability untouchability, pollution etc. The people belonging to lower section were not allowed to walk through certain roads and Palakkad also witnessed scenes of strong opposition against this new freedom. In fact, according to at least one report, the Mission's tile works at Calicut and Palakkad faced severe opposition from the local population.⁴³ However with the employment of all castes of people in the tile factories, social mobility became a possibility as well a reality now. The employment of people from different religious background continued. According to the statistics of 1913, out of the total number of (3633) three thousand six hundred and thirty three employees in the services of the Basel Mission industries nine fifty four(954) twenty six percent (26%) were non Christian.⁴⁴

These different ventures and establishments came to an end in 1920, when they were taken over by the British Indian Government under the provisions of the Enemy Trading Act 1916. Though the nationals of a neutral state (Switzerland) the Basel Mission trading company technically fell within the emergency legislation passed in India at the commencement of the war. In the same year (1916) Enemy Trading Act of 1916 was issued by the

⁴³ BMR, 1899, KTC Archives.

⁴⁴ *An Indian to the Indians---On the Initial Failure and the Posthumous Success of the Missionary Ferdinand Kittel (1832—1903)*, ed., Reinherd Wendt, Verley, 2006, p. 156 , KTC Archives.

Governor General in Council to prohibit and control trading by hostile foreigners. The Madras Chamber of Commerce immediately took steps to halt the operation of the Basel Mission, as they saw it as challenge to their interests in India.⁴⁵

In view of the recent war with Germany, there was extreme necessity of maintaining secrecy regarding military and naval movements, the Governor General promulgated the Ordinance prohibiting the publication of news related to the movement and disposition of the forces and the works under taken for the defence of the empire. The local co operation of the Press was also resorted to.⁴⁶

One amendment to Royal Proclamation regarding trading with the enemy was published in the Gazette Extraordinary, as a state of war exists between Britain and German Emperor, it was against law to carry on business or trade or have any commercial intercourse with any person without permission, "making aware of the duties and obligations towards the British Government."⁴⁷

In about 1920, with the approval of Governor General in Council, the Mission Trust of Madras transferred the Basel Mission property by an indenture to the Common Wealth Limited. This company was primarily formed in England for the purpose of taking over the business previously carried on by the Basel Mission Trading Company. In accordance with the terms on which the Basel Mission industries were transferred from the Mission Trust of Madras to Common Wealth Trust shall retain out of net

⁴⁵ See Jaiprakash Raghavaih, *Op.cit.*, p 42

⁴⁶ This news appeared in *The Madras Times*, Saturday, Evening, August, 8th 1914. In File No.290, BEM Related War Files, RAK.

⁴⁷ File No.473, War Files, RAK

profits a sum sufficient to provide a net fixed cumulative dividend of five percent per annum upon the share capital paid up for the time balance, handed over to the Trustees of the “surplus profits”.⁴⁸

It has come to the notice of the Government, the entry of foreign missionaries to India and stated that there was no objection to M. Jules Roschat’s being permitted to enter India with a view to undertaking missionary work in connection with the old Basel Mission.⁴⁹

Thus, the provision of work becomes necessary among other things as conversion had made them forfeit everything, their entire material and social foundation. It can be said that mission was set to experiment on establishing industries.⁵⁰

By going through the reports it was understood that Basel Mission was established in 1858 in Palakkad and important work was carried on among heathens around.⁵¹ Diez managed the affairs almost single handed.⁵² As early as 1868, we find a mention of the climate of Palakkad, which seems seriously affecting the health of the natives. Many were forced to take sick leave.⁵³ In 1869, an effort was made by the Palakkad group toward a collection of a widow fund and an amount of Rs 26/-5-8 was collected, it seems some conversion also took place.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ E.J.Edonna, *The Economic Condition of the Protestant Christians in Malabar with Special Reference to Basel Mission Church*, KTC Archives.

⁴⁹ Letter From the Government of India ,Home Department, No. 1444 C, dated 24th February, 1919,D.DIS .NO.3173/19, dt.11.3.19, Revenue(Special War) Department , RAK.

⁵⁰ Rudolf Fischer on *Basel Mission in Heindrum Bruckner’s, On an Auspicious Day at Dawn.....Studies in Tulu Culture and Oral Literature*, Verlag: 2009 , online reference, accessed on 5.12.2015,11am.

⁵¹ Basel Mission Records-----1865, Belmetta Archives.

⁵² Basel Mission Records ----1866, Belmetta Archives.

⁵³ B M R ---1868, Belmetta Archives.(Basel Mission Records)

⁵⁴ B M R, 1869, p. 8 , Belmetta Archives.

In 1875, the Mission Records note that the missionaries in Palakkad stations had to pass through many trials and tribulations from people around them. The converts at Karuvapara were assaulted, the catechists were twice falsely accused for abduction and theft and even put under arrest, and fire was set to chapel. According to the Records, the Mohammedans were the real instigators but this year the Nairs made up their mind to annihilate another outstation at Wadakkencherry.⁵⁵ Thus we find the mission activists fighting for their very existence. They have to struggle both against Hindus as well as Muhammedans. They had to endure many such difficulties at almost all their stations. They had to bear the brunt of their anger, hatred and what not.

Along with establishment of industries, the mission has also started Anglo-Vernacular school at Palakkad, which has to suffer from high school fees and rival schools. By 1886, it was attended by fifty four boys and eight girls of whom five boys and six girls were Christians.⁵⁶ As of 1880, there were about six schools in Palakkad. The number of the boys in the day school was forty one and the girls were nine.⁵⁷

According to the records of 1882, the Mission had created a group of five individuals called Colporteurs and who were paid by the Madras Auxiliary Bible Society. They were of two jobs – the one to hawk about the Christian religious books and tracts for that explicit purpose. Twelve men were paid by the mission. The others were for sale of scriptures, portions

⁵⁵ B M R,1875, p. 20,Belmeta Archives

⁵⁶ They also established Vernacular Schools at Kannani, 44 children of which seven were girls. Vernacular School at Panayur in which 22 were boys 3 girls, Vernacular School at Wadakkencherry where there were 4 Christian and 21 heathen boys, B M R 1886, KTC Archives

⁵⁷ B M R 1880, KTC Archives

and Bibles. They were five in number.⁵⁸The outstation at Karuvapara was given up and the mission property there sold in February, 1883.⁵⁹

In Palakkad taluk, preaching was mostly done in the market places and festival areas were frequented by the mission workers. For example, when there was the festival going on in Kalpathi, Kodumbu, Koduvayur, Pudussery, markets of Palakkad, Elapulli – Para, Chittur, Palathulli, Karuvapara, Puthunagaram, Valenghy, Vadakkenchery and Alathur.⁶⁰ House visits were also undertaken. The market places and festival grounds were places where a huge gathering will be there, where they can meet people belonging to all walks of life. In markets as well as festival areas these preachers had to encounter resistance on a fairly large scale.⁶¹ Lots of people gather at these places and these mission workers preached the Gospel to them.

Up to 1880, the Mission's industrial establishments were small, there appears to have been almost no problems connected with the discipline of the labour force. With the establishment of tile factories, things took a slight change and the question of discipline arose. The missionary managers or supervisors and their Indian *maisteriee*⁶² has a tiring time organizing and controlling the workforce regarding the working times, while maintaining standards of the products. In 1890 one of the factory managers, expressed that a spirit of insubordination, insolence, untruthfulness, disrespect, meanness can be seen.⁶³

⁵⁸ B M R, 1882, p. 83, KTC Archives.

⁵⁹ B M R, 1884, p. 79, KTC Archives.

⁶⁰ B M R, 1885, p. 79, KTC Archives.

⁶¹ B M R 1888, 1889, Belmetta Archives.

⁶² *maisteriee* is the work supervisor.

⁶³ Quoted by Jaiprakash Raghaviahs work from Fischer in, *Mission and Modernisation: The Basal Mission Factories as Agencies of Social Change 1850—1913*, Godwin Shiri (ed.,) *Wholeness in Christ*, The Legacy of the Basel Mission in India, Kathri: Mangalore, 1905, p.209, KTC Archives, Mangalore.

It was very clear from the above statement that tendency to revolt was strongly lurking behind the working population. Things slowly began to change. Timothy Parakandy who was in charge of the mission there finds them of less obedience and respect and was very irregular in church attendance. He shows his dissatisfaction of these new developments.⁶⁴ A night school was started to teach the illiterate. Sometimes there will be no permanent jobs in the tile factory. It was understood that in 1898, May, the workers of the tile factory went on strike. Their demands were less hours of work, more wages, no fines etc. It was also a year in which many Christian people died of contagious disease. Thus we find strikes, people opposing the officials, demanding hike in their pay etc.⁶⁵ The deteriorating living condition along with diseases might have prompted them to rebel. One of the first instances of the reference of a strike in a Basel Mission factory could be seen here. Here we find the beginnings of opposition in the urban space of Palakkad, against the higher authority. The opinion of Timothy Parakandy should be understood in this context.

Many of the earning members are employed in these factories. The factories at Codacel, Melparamba and Parapperi were closed down for three or four months every year which led to utmost distress and poverty among themselves.⁶⁶ In a statement of the movable property belonging to the Basel Mission in the district of Malabar, Palakkad, Vadakkanthara, a list of movable and immovable property was given. The movable property consisting of benches, lamps, desks, land and the building were treated as immovable

⁶⁴ B M R 1897, 1906, KTC Archives

⁶⁵ History of the Basel Mission in Malayalam by Malabar Church Council printed at Basel Mission Press: Mangalore, p. 157, KTC Archives. This can be considered as a rare mention of a strike in the mission factories, KTC Archives.

⁶⁶ The 1st Synod of the United Basel Mission 1936, printed at Basel Mission: Mangalore, p. 53, RAK

property. Statement showing the value of movable and immovable properties of the Basel Mission trading society at Olavakkode tile factory.⁶⁷

The total liabilities of the Basel Mission Industries in Malabar was rupees sixteen lakhs six thousand nine twenty one, fifteen annas and fifteen paise (Rs 166921/. 15. 5.) The particulars of the names of the creditors and the respective amounts were to be obtained from *Drysdale*.⁶⁸ The different industrial ventures and establishments came to an end in 1920 when they were taken over by the British Indian Government under the provision of the Enemy Trading Act 1916.

A petition was submitted by the Manager, Basel Mission Tile works, Olavakkode requesting permission to lay portable rail track in the bed of Kalpathi River. Here the manager asks for permission to put up a portable tramway twenty four (24") inch in width in the bed of Kalpathy River for the purpose of transporting clay from the adjacent fields in the tile factory. The trucks will be moved for the present manually and later on substituted by locomotive power. At each end of the rail track the bank of river should be cut, the one passage being for entering the fields and other for taking wagon up to the factory. The manager undertakes to file up these passages on the banks of the river when the rails are removed at the outbreak of the monsoon. This proposed tramway was to be laid partly with the help Palakkad Municipality. But Indian Tramway Act XI of 1886 (page 583, vol. III) of the Governor General that the Act should not be extended beyond the city of Madras. Moreover it should be for public use only, but this was purely

⁶⁷ D.Dis No.10530/19, dated 25.10.19, B.NO.222, SL.NO.5, RAK. The land and building were mainly valued on a rental system and hence the rate for separating the value of lands and buildings is not available .The valuation of the building and land now given is approximate .This statement is in response to the request from Drysdale, Basel Mission industries, Calicut to the Collector of Malabar,2.10.1919, RAK

⁶⁸ Drysale was managing the Mission affairs

private.⁶⁹ After the inspection of the tile works, a query was made to the manager of the tile factory whether the water in the river passing along the rear of the latrines provided for the use of the employees of the tile factory was used for drinking and if so the latrines were to be removed to a safe distance.⁷⁰

To the above query it was ascertained and understood that river in question was used for drinking purposes by persons living by the side of the river lower down. Necessary steps were then taken to have the latrines of the factory removed to a reasonable distance from the back of the river.⁷¹ The Basel Mission thus was able to chalk out a place in the urban space of Palakkad, a very active role played in education, tile factory, hospitals, weaving units (not in Palakkad) etc and it was able to make its presence felt in the society. A pioneer work done in the field of education, by establishing schools in many parts of Malabar, they had to face many odds for survival, appreciable work in the field of industries, one of the major endeavours in that field, greatly changed the social mobility of the times. Thus they contributed some positive effects also, instilling values in the minds of the people through their bazaar speeches, was able to create waves in the society. It was a period which covered almost fifty (50) years, from 1864—1914, in the latter part we find much of the trade as well as manufacturing units were confiscated or taken over by the Government at the onset of First World War. There were able to work out an industrial outfit which had far reaching effects in social and economic spheres combining the labour policies, rules, discipline and also cultivate the Christian ethos within the

⁶⁹ Disposal No.1343/p. 14, dated 17.8.14, Collectors Office, RAK.

⁷⁰ A letter dated 30.9.1915 ,from H.T. Walters , Chief Inspector of Factories , Madras Presidency, Madras to The Manager, Basel Mission Tile Works, Olavakkode, Malabar, Revenue R dis.1915, RAK.

⁷¹ Disposal No. D, 1821/M.15 dated 20.11.15, RAK.

broader realm of Christianity. Thus the Basel Mission involved in its different activities and had doubtlessly a great role to play in converting Palakkad to an urban space.

5.2 Education

Initially, only traditional forms of teaching existed in Palakkad. The subjects were Sanskrit, Malayalam and some Mathematics. Not much formal education was there. But with the takeover of the British there occurred a complete change in this department. Many new schools came up. Along with the reference of 'Palakkad as a large town, as large as Vizhagpatanam, with well stocked bazaar, with four schools and a college'⁷², we come to understand that people of Palakkad were also familiar with this type of formal education in the later stages. As early as 1865 – 7, applications were sent to the Collector of Malabar, requesting that schools be established in Palakkad under Act XI of 1863 (Madras) of a central school at Palakkad and two elementary schools at Kollengode and Alathur and other such places.⁷³

Another application was received by the Collector, to establish school at Kollengod for the amsoms of Kizhakethara, Padinjarethara, Kollengod, Vadavannur, Alampallam and many other nearby places and it was intended to forward petitions within forty days to the Collectors for or against the enforcement of the Madras Educational Act in the said *amsam*.⁷⁴ Lands were acquisitioned by the Government, for various purposes, for laying railway tracks, roads, for market places, burial grounds, sanitary purposes,

⁷² Roger Bell, *Recollections of an Indian Official, (1928 – 1949)*, e-copy, accessed 28th July, 2016, 10 a m.

⁷³ *Municipal Supplement*, 3rd August, 1867, RAK.

⁷⁴ *The Malabar Government Gazette*, vol.viii, Calicut, Saturday, 17th June 1865, RAK.

for educational purposes and so on. On and often, they will have to invoke the Act of 1870 and take over the lands from the owners. At times the officials were able to reach amicable settlements with the rightful owners. In about 1893, when the Government was in the process of one such acquisition, the work of taking over was obstructed and the Municipal Inspector was required to prosecute the persons and also to formally acquire the site and premises from the *Uralar of Kattumatam* temple and details were asked to be reported by the contractor Pazhaniappa Pillai. The Government instructed to acquire the place without delay and to proceed with the building of a school. Under section 6, Act of 1870, Governor in Council declared that land necessary needed for public purpose to be taken over and Head Assistant Collector, Malabar was appointed to complete the formality of taking over the land.⁷⁵

In 1893, land was needed for the construction of a school house in Palakkad Municipality. The land belonged to one Chitaberam Chetti of Koppam amsom. The amount to be paid was Rs. 1500/- which was considered as an exorbitant compensation. Padigathepuram Salary School was the result of this take over. Usually if the owner refuses to hand over the land, it was to be acquired by Land Acquisition Order.⁷⁶

In 1891, the budget for schools was estimated as follows. The provision of Rs. 3,750/ made under this head was the income expected in the stage of Salary Grants to the amount of Rs. 2,840/ for the teachers of the college and high school departments and Rs. 910/ as grants, claimed for special contingent expenditure of above institution. The income of rupees eleven thousand nine hundred and thirty to be (Rs 11, 930/) under this head

⁷⁵ Bundle No.124,SI .11, Revenue Folded Files , 1893 , RAK.

⁷⁶ Folded Revenue Document, B.NO.124, SI.52, 1893, RAK.

includes rupees four thousand three sixty Rs. (4360/) from college departments. Rupees four thousand four fifty (4400/) was to be got from High school department, rupees two thousand six twenty (Rs.2620/) expected from middle school department, rupees five fifty (Rs. 550/-) from salary result schools.⁷⁷ This was just a budget estimate of the Municipal Council.

Alfred Chatterton, officer in charge of the Aluminium Department, School of Arts, Madras offering suggestion for starting a school of metal work in Palakkad and took up connected papers on the subject. The Chairman was required to address Chatterton and enquire what salaries would be paid to the mechanics as starting pay and what the Government could expect from the provincial fund and also certain information on other matters connected with it.⁷⁸ Meanwhile, in the Palakkad Municipality we find the names of two schools to be closed down, 1.Nurni School and 2. The Native Primary school. The names of the Managers of the school were V.Venkita Subbha Vadhair and VV Paramesswara Aiyar. The reason stated was that the privilege of recognition was withdrawn and also no certificated teacher in the school. In the outskirts also some schools were closed down.⁷⁹

Two Government Girls schools were closed, the Valiyapadam school at Palakkad, the pupils of which has been amalgamated with those of Lakshmi Narayanapuram School. Cherayi Mappila School was only in name. It has been reopened under private Management and included in the list of unaided schools.⁸⁰ In one of the above mentioned schools, the students were given admission in a nearby school and in the case of other, the school was

⁷⁷ Budget Estimate Local and Municipal Department, 1891—92, From P. Rajagopalachari, Chairman, Municipal Council, Palakkad District 31st January, 1891 File No.207, related to Municipal Files.

⁷⁸ Proceedings of the Municipal Council, Palakkad, 19th September, 1900.

⁷⁹ Document on List of Schools to be Rejected for the Official Year 1894 - 95

⁸⁰ *Annual Report on Female Education in the Western Circle (1890—91)* Proceedings of the Director of the Public Instruction on 6th November, 1891.

reopened by the private people. Meanwhile a building grant was applied by the Manager of the Basal German Mission School along with Acting Municipal overseers report. But it was not sanctioned for want of funds.⁸¹In 1908, Reverend Father Baihelard's school in Sultanpet was taken over by the Municipality and a rent not exceeding rupees five would be paid for the building and furniture by the Municipality.

List of Schools 5.2.1⁸²

Name of school	Year	No of students
Roman Catholic Girls school	1890	2
	1891	3
Roman Catholic Girls school	1890	10 – upperprimary
	1891	29
Sekharipuram	1890	2
	1891	4
Sekharipuram	1890	31 - lower primary
	1891	33 "
Ambikapuram	1890	2
	1891	4
Ambikapuram	1890	61—lower primary
	1891	78 "
Chattapuram Girls school (Lower primary)	1890	42
	1891	29
Peruvemba Girls High school	1890	39
	1891	40
Kizhakethara girls school (Kollengod)	1890	33
	1891	42
Padinjarethara	1891	36

⁸¹ Municipal Council Meeting held on 21st March, 1900.

⁸² The 5th Tour Report of Arthur Lawley, Malabar, Governor of Madras, September 13 – 24, 1907, p. 46.

The above table shows the number of girls school and the female education in Palakkad in about 1907. According to the census of 1903, ten percent the whole population were literate and three percent of the women were considered as literate.⁸³ The Basel Mission High School was established in June 1858, the first secondary school in Palakkad. The mission authorities at the time of beginning of the school was of the opinion that it was not their duty to do much for higher education and gave orders to close the higher classes and to conduct the school as a sort of town school. It was not long before they realized the mistake. Others schools were soon established, and as a result this school began to lose the Government grant and the strength were down to twenty five (25).

Rev. Diez, now got permission to raise it again to the status of lower secondary school. The school found it difficult to regain or compete with other schools, and encountered much hardship; it struggled for its upkeep and existence. In 1875, there was a letter from Rev. E. Deiz requesting the enlistment of an elementary school connected with the German Mission School, which has hitherto receive a grant from provincial funds.⁸⁴ From 1881, things slightly changed and income of the school began to increase. Hillar, who was in charge of the school, understood that it should be raised and got permission to add higher forms. In 1904 the Director of Public Instruction recognized it as a high school.⁸⁵

⁸³ The 5th Tour Report of Sir Arthur Lawley, Malabar, Governor of Madras, September 13th ---24th September 1907, p.46, RAK.

⁸⁴ *Municipal Supplement*, Saturday 9th, October 1875, RAK.

⁸⁵ Seventh Tour of Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, printed at Government Branch Press: Ootacamund, 1914. For a detailed understanding of the subject please refer an article of K.K.N.Kurup entitled *Contribution of the Basel Mission in Malabar to Malayalam Language and Literature*, pp. 224-231.

The Victoria College was started as a rate school in the year 1866. In the 1871 it was handed over to local fund board. In 1877 it becomes a Government high school, and in 1884 the Municipal Council undertook to pay the net cost. In 1891, the Municipal Council decided to accept the salary grant system instead of the payment of net cost by Government. By 1909, the new Intermediate course of the Madras University began. The Governor of Madras plans to visit this educational institution also.

In about 1889-90, St. Sebastian School, was founded in Palakkad. Steps were taken to provide better teachers and improved accommodation for the Government girls schools at Kanathur and Palakkad, it was sanctioned, the services of a competent Malayali literature teacher could not be found. The service of a Tamil trained matriculate was also engaged. Another main educational institution was Native High school, which in the later years the manager of the school started a bank known as the Palakkad Bank Limited in 1908, for the upkeep of the school.⁸⁶

Another important educational institution of Palakkad was the Nurani High School, started on 4th May 1904 with only three upper secondary forms – 4th, 5th and 6th. About 1908, the upper classes fourth class to third form of a lower secondary school managed by the Venkata Subbha Vadhyar and held in the building adjoining the High School building was amalgamated with it so that the school has at present all classes from the fourth class to sixth form.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Seventh Tour Report of Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, printed at Government Branch Press: Ootacamund, 1914, TSA.

⁸⁷ Seventh Tour Report of Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, printed at Government Branch Press: Ootacamund, 1914, TSA.

The nursery school was mainly a Brahmin oriented school. We can find that there is a fairly big Tamil population here and this school mainly caters to their educational needs. Here, students had English education also, which enabled them to get into many of the governmental posts and the alien government also stood by them in times of need. The above mentioned school was a well equipped one with labs, library and staff. The government in 1907 gave a grant of rupees one thousand seven hundred twenty five (Rs. 1725/-) also. Lord Pentland, the Governor was received by C.A. Innes, Collector of Malabar on 16th Oct. 1914, after which the party was to depart to Basel Mission High School where his arrival could be attended by public.⁸⁸ Meanwhile in 1916, the Inspectors of Girls school, southern circle reported that the government girls school in Vatakkanthara, in Palakkad Municipality had been in existence, since 1889 and had developed into a complete elementary school, having one hundred and two (102) pupils. However, the school's location was in an insanitary condition, which affects progress, and needed to be changed. As no suitable buildings were found nearby, it was decided in 1916 that a new one would be build. An exchange of sites here occurs with the sites for police lines at Palakkad and Government girls' school at Vatakkenthara. The cost of the school site was rupees two thousand one hundred and fifty seven (Rs.2157/- 5 – 3.) The owners consented to the acquisition of new site for girl's school in exchange.⁸⁹ However, it seems that the exchange of lands did not take place. In the year 1918-19 some lands at Vadakkanthara in Palakkad are acquired by Government for Moyan Girls High School the new name of the Vadakkenthara School, were sold for rupees five thousand nine hundred and

⁸⁸ Seventh Tour Report of Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, Malabar, October 15th 3rd November 1914, Printed at Government Branch Press: Ootacamund, 1914, RAK.

⁸⁹ No. R 10 /p 16, dated 8.2.16, Department of Revenue Public Branch, Office of the Collector of Malabar, RAK.

one (Rs. 5901-10-0).⁹⁰It was decided that the sale proceeds should be credited to the District Board sale proceeds of building and some money was to be credited to local funds deposits. Thus the balance amount was credited to local funds deposits and then adjusted to the credit of land revenue. This type of adjustment could be done only with the sanction of government. The AG was requested to adjust the credit of Malabar District Board the sum of rupees eight hundred- being balance of the sale proceeds of land at Vadakkunthara acquired for Moyan School to be credited to District Board.⁹¹

In 1920, the construction of a building for Moyans Girls School was decided. The President of District Board, Malabar forwarded plans and estimate for construction. The provision of a veranda around the building was waived (given up). The builders were instructed to lay strong foundation, so that upper storey could be built as soon as possible. A grant of rupees eight thousand four eighty eight (Rs 8488/) was to be paid to the District Board on the completion of the building, out of the provision for payment of subsidies. The financial department established that the cost of the site and buildings for the school as rupees twenty three thousand six hundred and twenty six. Land value was about rupees five thousand and four sixteen (Rs 5416/,) buildings about rupees eighteen thousand two hundred and ten (18210). The total amount comes to about rupees twenty three thousand six twenty six (Rs23626/). Vadakanthara School later came to be known as Moyans School.⁹² Along with the grant some money in the form of land proceeds was also added in 1922.⁹³ The proposal to acquire at a cost of rupees two thousand one hundred and fifty seven (Rs. 2157/-,) the site, for

⁹⁰ G. O.NO.303, L& M, Mis. Dated 14thFebruary, 1922, RAK.

⁹¹ GO NO 303, L& M, Mis dt 14th February 1922. Mis.Series, G.O. NO. 2803, L&M dated 9.10.1924 18333/24, RAK.

⁹² LSGD, G.O. NO.1256 dated 17.2.20, RAK.

⁹³ LSGD, G.O.NO 303 L&M dated 14.2.22,RAK.

construction of a new building for the Government girls school at Vadakanthara, Palakkad, was approved by the Collector was required to submit a draft notification for the acquisition of the lands. Application in the prescribed form with financial statements for a loan of Rs. 2280/- from the amount of Rs. 3500/- was sought. The work was sanctioned by authorities. The amount of loan was to be repaid on 1st Sept. 1926 from general funds of the District Board. The application of Malabar District Board was for a loan for the construction of a building for the Moyan girls high school, Palakkad would be published in the fort St. George in the Malabar District Gazette.⁹⁴ Later 6th form (eleventh standard) was sanctioned in Moyans School.⁹⁵ Teachers were appointed on a salary of rupees hundred or hundred and twenty five per month. The recurring contingent charges in respect of the teachers were being limited to rupees hundred a month. The expenditure on equipment was estimated at rupees two thousand and it was decided to be met from the Boards' own funds.⁹⁶

The school was now held in thatched buildings with no safety.⁹⁷ A second revised estimate for the construction of Moyan Girls School, Palakkad was submitted. The revised estimate was rupees fifty six thousand three hundred (Rs.56300/-). It was sanctioned by the Superintending Engineer, Coimbatore circle dated 26.2.1928 provided for the outhouses the girls school with the ground floor only but substantial upper floor as a later stage.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ LSGD Mis. Series, G.O. NO.3944 L&M dated 28.10.1925 18808/25,RAK.

⁹⁵ LSGD B. NO.6 SL NO.24,RAK.

⁹⁶ LSGD G.O.NO. 863, L&M dated 15.5.1922,RAK.

⁹⁷ LSGD G.O.NO.1588,L&M ,Mis. dated 22.8.22, RAK.

⁹⁸ PWD (1924), Mis Series, GO NO.1344, dated 26.11.24, RAK.

It seems that the minister (P. Subbarayan) during his visit - period over the Palakkad Municipality Diamond Jubilee celebration, opened the Moyan school new buildings and also presided over the anniversary of the nursing home of Dr. K.Krishnan .⁹⁹In 1923, in the Kollengode Girls Secondary school, it was decided to open VI form, and Government undertook to bear one half of the net cost of the school subject to a maximum of Rs. 3878/.¹⁰⁰Upto Vth form, the government had undertaken to bear half the net cost of the school. Credit was taken for a half grant from government for opening VI form and the other half was provided for from local funds.¹⁰¹

The District board was to open a girl's high school at Ottapalam. The public would contribute rupees ten thousand before 15th May 1930. *Sir C. Sankaran Nair*¹⁰² gave the cheque for the said amount. A suitable building was to be selected as there was a need to fix the rent, arrangements for supplying furniture, library, books and maps, science apparatus etc were to be made.¹⁰³ In 1933, Palakkad Municipal Council was using the building occupied by the secondary department of Victoria College, Palakkad for conducting V and VI forms. Now it was required to accommodate the training masters. So the Municipal Council decided to set up a large temporary shed in the vacant space to the right of the Municipal school building so as to accommodate forms V and VI. The Chairman stated that an application for grant of money for extension of the building would be submitted shortly. Government ordered the abolition of form V and VI in the Government Victoria College, Palakkad and to open these forms in Municipal

⁹⁹ LSGD, Mis. Series GO. N O .4807, L&M, dated 11.11.1926,RAK.

¹⁰⁰ LSGD GO NO. 1588, L&M dated 14.7.23, 12963/23,RAK.

¹⁰¹ LSGD, Mis ,Series, G.O.NO.209, L&M dated 23rd January ,1924, 28872/24, RAK.

¹⁰² C. Sankaran Nair ws the President of the Indian National Congress in 1897,the only Keralite to hold that post

¹⁰³ LSGD, Mis Series, G.O.N O.2393, dated 16.6.30, RAK.

Secondary School, Palakkad with effect from 1933-34. The recurring and non-recurring cost was to be met from the Municipal Funds. A temporary shed for two new forms were put up in the vacant land to the right of Municipal secondary school. It was also instructed to build suitable permanent building and playground should be provided for the new forms within three years from the date of opening. Regarding the shifting of the furniture and equipment from the secondary department of Victoria College, the College Principal should have to be consulted.¹⁰⁴

In 1929, Head master of Puthur elementary school reported in writing that in the school building some of the rafters and reapers had developed cracks in the wall, which were dangerous and requires immediate alteration. It was referred to the Public Works Committee. Head master again reported the issue. A district Board member of the taluk, who was also the President of the Town Congress Committee, reported that the building was getting dangerous and requires immediate action. Minute of Dissent rose in the Council, arguments and counter arguments ensued as any further delay would endanger the lives of and safety of small children. Government on its part viewed it as unnecessary to interfere in this matter and in the end it was decided to take action.¹⁰⁵ It was an age of financial stringency and hence the reluctant approach by the Government. Thus the Municipal Government had played an active role in the case of the Educational matters in Palakkad suggesting remedies as well as interfering wherever required.

Thus we can understand about the educational institutions and the creation of a class of educated, especially, English educated class in the

¹⁰⁴ LSGD, Mis. Series, G.O. NO. 2403, L&M, dated 19.6.33. The letter dated 30th May, 1933, from W.E .Smith, Acting Director of Public Instruction to the Secretary to the Government, LSGD, RAK.

¹⁰⁵ LSGD, G.O.NO.4124, dated 23 10 1939, RAK.

urban space of Palakkad who acted as a comprador class of the British power, engaging themselves in small time works as well as remaining loyal them. The colonial power also needed a class of people whom they can depend on to carry out the administrative works well.

5.3 Palakkad Municipal Hospital

Palakkad Municipal Hospital consist of a civil *apothecary*, one sub assistant surgeon, one mid wife, two compounders, three male ward attendants, two female wards attendants, one cook, one waterman, one gardener, one peon, one dhobi, one male *toti*¹⁰⁶, one female *toti*. This hospital was opened by Government on 1st Sept. 1860. About 1866, the management of the hospital was transferred to Municipal Council. Duke of Buckingham, Governor of Madras visited the hospital on 11th April, 1878. The site of the present building was occupied in 1877, when there was only the main building, in which were both inpatients and out patients treated, the stores, three small septic and contagious wards and out houses. After this, many improvements were made.¹⁰⁷ An inpatient ward was attached in 1900 with *batty* walls which were replaced in the next year with *pucca* walls. An operation room's construction was begun in 1906 and within two years its work was completed. Small pox ward shed was completed in the next year. Quarters for the hospital *toties* were built in the compound in 1912 and in 1913. Till 1882, the hospital was under the charge of hospital assistant who was replaced in that year by a civil apothecary.¹⁰⁸ The Surgeon General in a letter writes that each hospital and dispensary should have a copy of the

¹⁰⁶ Engaged in doing scavenging work.

¹⁰⁷ Seventh Tour Report of Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, printed at the Government Branch Press: Ootacamund, 1914, RAK.

¹⁰⁸ Seventh Tour Report of Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, printed at Government Branch Press: Ootacamund, 1914, RAK.

Clinical Manuel for India which can be considered to be a very useful guide for hospital practices.¹⁰⁹

It was an age of contagious diseases like smallpox, cholera, plague etc. Measures were taken for the immunisation, and sanitary boards were set up in each province. In 1866-67 it was said that Rs eight hundred and thirty eight was spent for public health as per the Municipal records. For special observation of the plague cases, a building equipped with medicines and the assistance of a second class hospital assistant was prearranged. Immunisation as well as observation of the patients was done here.¹¹⁰ The selfless work of Dr Krishnan was to be remembered in this context.¹¹¹ In the Municipal Council, the Chairman was required to report whether the council has considered the question of appointing a health officer in the Palakkad Municipality. To which the Chairman replies that the appointment of a Health officer has been deferred for want of funds.¹¹² Step by step much progress was attained by the District Hospital. In the year 1923, medical institutions or dispensaries were opened in Cherplassery and Ottapalam. The initial expenditure for almirahs, tables, stools, benches etc were provided. Recurring expenses for Assistant Surgeon and others were also to be provided. The Local self government department proposed to sanction from the provincial funds a grant of half of the initial and recurring charges for the current year.¹¹³ In the outskirts of the Palakkad town like Elapully, Kuzhalmannam, Kongad, medical dispensaries were started. Another letter

¹⁰⁹ Surgeon General, Cornish, Madras, in a letter dated 15th, February, 1892, No.150, B.NO.98,SL.NO.33, RAK.

¹¹⁰ See for details *Nagaram Pinnita Naal Vazhikal*, Palakkad Municipality Publication, 2015.

¹¹¹ See for details Seluraj, *Kozhikodinte Paithrikum*, Mathrubhumi Publication.

¹¹² LSGD, Mis. Series, G.O.N.O 179 PH. dated 6.2.24.

¹¹³ LSGD,G.O N.O 1506,PH dated 10.9.23,RAK.

in 1924, states that the District Medical Officer of Malabar does not recommend the opening of the dispensaries which do not benefit the urban population.¹¹⁴

5.4 Markets

Fairs and markets were held periodically throughout the Presidency weekly or biweekly markets, occasion of different festivals (fair). In Malabar there were four Municipalities –Calicut, Palakkad, Tellicherry, Cannanore --- The first three contain bazaars of outstanding importance. Calicut acts as a collection and a distribution centre for South Malabar. Likewise Palakkad markets handle the produce of that region through roads which connects it to Pollachi and Coimbatore and this adds to its importance as a trading centre. Thus the bulk of this trade was carried on in the permanent markets of the Palakkad towns as well as in weekly markets. Some of the weekly markets were:

1. " Palathulli in Palathulli amsom held on Sundays
2. Kongad in Kongad amsom held on Mondays
3. Alathur in Kattisseri amsom held on Wednesdays
4. Vadakkancherri in Vadakkencherri amsom held on Thursdays
5. A market at Para held on Thursdays
6. Palakkad market held on Fridays. "¹¹⁵

Various kinds of food grains, cloths, mats, tobacco consists of articles of export while tobacco, cloths, spices, cattle forms items of import. The Palathulli and Kongad markets may be considered as main centre of cattle trade in the District.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ From the Surgeon General T.H.Symonds to the Secretary to the Government of Madras in the LSGD, Mis, Series, G. O. No. 1159, PH. dated 16.8.1924, RAK

¹¹⁵ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, Asian Educational Services: New Delhi, 2010, vol.2, p.cccxcix.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. cccxcix

During Haider Ali's campaign, it was seen that , some thirty thousand oxen, which were loaded with tobacco, annually pass through Coimbatore, besides tobacco, much silk, pepper, cardamom clove, ivory etc also consisted of the items of trade brought from the coast of Malabar.¹¹⁷ Vaniyamkulam situated close to South Indian Railway in the Valluvanad region was renowned for its cattle market, weekly markets were run by the local chief or janmi called Kavalapara Moppil Nayar . A large part of the cattle dealings of the Palakkad taluk takes its purchase of this kind from the neighbourhood of Pollachi.¹¹⁸ Other markets were generally on a much smaller scale. The main articles consist of grains and other petty articles for domestic consumption. Things greatly changed with establishment of local fund boards, which provided sheds, wells and drinking troughs in the markets.¹¹⁹

In 1867, notice was hereby given that the assessment of the Municipal taxes on houses, parambas, trades, and professions has been completed in the Puthur, Koppam, Vadakanthara and parts of Yakkara and Kavilpad amsom of Palakkad Municipality and that the Commissioners will proceed to revise the same on 31st March 1887 on or before which assessment lists open to the inspection in Municipal Commissioners office.¹²⁰

Under the provision of Section 36 of the Towns improvement Act (No. X of 1865) the Governor in Council authorizes the Commissioners to levy several rates and taxes for the town of Calicut, Tellichery Palakkad and Cochin to levy for the purpose of the Act, for the year ending on 30th April 1868 . In Palakkad Municipality – rates on houses and shops was at five

¹¹⁷ Gholan Mohammed, *The History of Hydershah*, London: 1855, p. 97.

¹¹⁸ A.R.Macewen, Report on the Resettlement in Malabar District ---8 taluks, p. 22 ,RAK.

¹¹⁹ Manual of the Administration of the Madras Presidency, vol.1 (Chapters 1-8), Printed by E.Keys, Government Press: Madras, 1885, p. 296 , RAK.

¹²⁰ Malabar Government Gazette, Sat. 16th, March 1867, RAK.

percent on the annual rental. Taxes on trades, professions at half the rate prescribed in Schedule A. Tolls were also levied on carriages, carts, and animals entering the Municipal limits.¹²¹

In 1867, General Conservancy laws clauses, Section 82, 85,86,88,89,131 and 132 of the Towns Improvement Act X of 1865, all persons holding lands and owners and occupiers of houses within the limit of the town of Palakkad defined in the proceedings of the G.O. No. 160 dated, 3rd July 1866 were required to keep all drains and water channels in and about their premises free from obstruction of every kind. All hedges and walls of compounds were being maintained, lower branches are to be cut etc. Municipal Commissioners were empowered to impose and recover fines in case of noncompliance within one month.¹²² The laws also insist on the keeping the market as well as the adjoining places clean, especially the slaughter houses. Much precaution was thus taken to curb the communicable diseases in Palakkad.

Another notification appeared in which it was said that tolls payable on carts, carriages and other animals on entering the Municipal limits, will be put up for auction at the Municipal Commissioners office, Palakkad on 13th June 1868, 3 p.m.¹²³ The collection of tolls and taxes can be considered as an important revenue source for the Municipality. Another notification, in 1870, appeared on the assessment of Municipal taxes on house, buildings, trades and professions for the Municipal year 1870-71 has been made by the

¹²¹ Malabar Government Gazette, vol X, Saturday 27th July 1867, (ii) Public Department, FSG, July 3, 1867, RAK.

¹²² *The Malabar Government Gazette*, Saturday 5th January 1867, RAK.

¹²³ Municipal Supplement, Saturday 6th June, 1868, RAK.

Commissioners of Palakkad Municipality and that they will be prepared to hear and dispose of appeals against such valuation and assessment.¹²⁴

In 1871, one Sivarama Iyer and Sobrama Shastry was requested to undertake the re numbering of the houses, according to a revised register to be prepared by them assisted by the Adhigari or Menon of the amsom and Municipal peon. It was stated that certain errors and omissions are apparent in the numbering of houses, it was asked to prepare a register avoiding the mistakes.¹²⁵ This is being stated to show the participation of people living in the urban space of Palakkad.

Another act was passed which insists that under section 92, 93, 94 and 95 of the Towns Improvement Act, No. 3 of 187, every birth death occurring within the Palakkad Municipality must be registered. The office of registrar was in the *Tailor Street* with a sign board.¹²⁶ This proved to be much useful as far as Towns Census is concerned. Any person found gambling in public in any place in this Municipality, it shall be liable to a fine not exceeding rupees ten for each offence.¹²⁷ Later on Town Nuisance Act was enacted. The bandipettahs are place where carts are kept. An amount of rupees thirty nine, fifteen annas and five paise (Rs 39 – 15 – 5) was allocated for shifting tiles and white- washing Melparamba bandipettah.¹²⁸ The Municipal toll gates, slaughter houses, market places and bandipettahs are sold for rupees twelve thousand and nine fifty as per list signed by the Commissioners.¹²⁹

¹²⁴ Municipal Supplement, 2nd August 1870, RAK.

¹²⁵ Municipal Supplement, Saturday 1st April 1871, RAK.

¹²⁶ Supplement to the Malabar Gazette, 17th August, 1872, RAK.

¹²⁷ Municipal Supplement, Saturday 22nd November 1873, RAK.

¹²⁸ PGT Municipality, Municipal Supplement 12th September 1874, RAK.

¹²⁹ Meeting on 15th March 1875, RAK.

Sometimes unoccupied places that were not fit for cultivation were used as or converted into market places. For example, Palathulli market. And it should be under the management of Local Fund Board. In another correspondence from 1882, we find that the government has no claim to the Pudunagaram and Koduvayur, but that the property of the Palathully bazaar belongs to the government. It was then suggested that shops at Palathully should be charged with one fanam each as quit rent.¹³⁰

Meanwhile Shaiva Ravuther, the son of Meera labba Ravuther of Koduvayur amsom, Palakkad taluk asserted that all the bazaar sites in Palathully, Koduvayur and Pudunagaram belong to the government, since they were formerly erected by the Tipu Sultan and that *samoothiri and Kuthiravattom Nair* were trying to misappropriate these properties, so the Government should interfere in the matter. On enquiry, the Palakkad Tahsildar reports that the bazaar at Palathully belongs to government and that the present shop owners had given a deposit to that effect. As regards the shop owners of Koduvayur and Pudunagaram was concerned, there are several claimants and so it seems that the Government did not have any claim to that land. It was in the hands of certain private *jenmies* and there were no documentary evidence for Government to establish its rights. It therefore declined to interfere.¹³¹

In the year 1892 the tax yielded on vehicles and carts, was rupees one thousand nine hundred and seven ,ten annas as against rupees two thousand two fifty seven in 1890 – 91. Many of the unregistered carts have been seized; some have been removed beyond the municipal limits while some seem to be kept concealed by owners of the arrears. Regarding the

¹³⁰ Proceedings of the Collector, 1882, RAK.

¹³¹ Revenue Dis. Folded – B : 27, S: 12 – 1882,RAK.

concealing of the carts, a close search was now being made for the seizure of all concealed in three weeks.¹³² Some fraudulent practices were there in order to evade tax payment. The contract for the bandy pettah or stand for eight months was put up to auction and sold to Kalahasti Pattar for rupees six sixty five. The contract for the slaughter house for the same taken was put up to auction and sold to Araby Ravuther for Rs. 220/-.¹³³ As per the Act, tolls named in the list were sold in public auction for one year from 1st April 1907 to 31st March 1908, at the places and before the officers. The sale to be confirmed by the President of the District Board, who may confirm it or not as it was fit.¹³⁴

The above mentioned list shows the places and the numbers of the roads, which were sold in public auction for one year. The sale was to be conducted before the Divisional Officer, Palakkad in Palakkad taluk Cutcherry (A.R. Knapp) President, District Board, Calicut, 24.12.1906.¹³⁵

As regards the shop owners of Koduvayur and Pudunagaram was concerned, there are several claimants and as such the Government does not seem to have any claim. It was now in the hands of certain private jenmies and more over there were no documentary evidence for Government to establish its rights. Therefore the Government does not propose to interfere in this matter.¹³⁶ In 1892, some money was needed for markets. A loan of Rs. 10000/ for Dance market, slaughter house for Rs 2000/- as well as Rs. 600/- was needed for a site for cart construction. The Madras District Municipalities Act IV of 1884, the law, stated that the said

¹³² Annual Reports and Accounts of the Palakkad Municipality Government (1892) of Madras, Local and Municipal, G.O. 10th Oct. 1892, No. 1651, M October, RAK.

¹³³ *Supplement to Malabar Gazette* 10th August, Saturday 1872, RAK.

¹³⁴ Malabar District Gazette, Palakkad Municipal Office, Palakkad.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ Revenue Dis. Folded – B : 27, S : 12 – 1882, RAK

fund was to be levied or received only. The money was to be borrowed in two instalments for a term of thirteen (13) years. There did not exist any sinking fund.¹³⁷

“Section 53 of the District Municipalities Act IV of 1884 as amended by Act III of 1897, that every person who within the limits of the Palakkad Municipality exercises after 1st April 1900, anyone or more of the arts, professions, traders was to pay for the year 1900 – 1901. Vehicles and carts are also taxed. It was said that vehicles with springs (bicycles & tricycles) kept within the municipality or let out of hire or used within the municipality shall be payable. All carts and vehicles with springs are to be kept within the Municipality, registered and registration number fixed on them. Registration fee for carts and other wheeled vehicles without springs shall be at the rate of Rs. 2 – 1 – 0 half yearly. Carts which are not registered will be seized and detained till registration. At the end of ten days it will be sold if the formalities are not followed”.¹³⁸

It was also said that vehicles and animals entering the Palakkad Municipality limit through the toll gates of Kongad, Olavakkode, Akathethara, Kadukkankunnam, Kottekad, Kallepully, Kalmantapam, Chittur, Kollengode, Tirunellai foot path, Yakkara, Mankarai and Parli, are to be registered and licenced by the Municipality and shall pay a toll at $\frac{3}{4}$ of maximum rates prescribed.¹³⁹

When the government instituted tax on vehicles and carts, persons began to evade tax by keeping the cart beyond the municipal limits.¹⁴⁰ Ways and means were formulated by the people to evade taxation. But correct taxes were able to be collected from the toll gates in this Municipality. There

¹³⁷ Signed by G.W. Dance, Head Assistant Collector in charge 24th January 1892, B. 98, SI :4, RAK.

¹³⁸ Proceedings of Municipal Council, 1899, RAK.

¹³⁹ Proceedings of Municipal Council, 1899, RAK.

¹⁴⁰ The raised estimate is Rs. 2200/- but only Rs. 1966/- was able to be collected because of tax evasion, RAK.

are some thirteen (13) toll gates. The total lease aggregated to Rs. 12,995/- was able to collect fully with fines amounting to Rs. 105 – 4 – 0, which was imposed for late payment of the monthly *kists*. Half of the amount i.e. Rs 6,497/ – 18 – 0 was paid to the Malabar District Board.¹⁴¹This is a reference to the vigilant nature of the Municipality with regards to the collection of taxes. In 1900, there was an auction of sale of tolls and other contracts. The under mentioned tolls and carts were sold in public auction for prices shown against each of them.¹⁴²

Rents & Licences¹⁴³ **Table 5.4.1**

1.	The Dance Market	Karathottathil Huzain	1010 – 0 – 0
2.	The cart stand	Unnoo Rao S/o. Chandi Rao	800 – 0 – 0
3.	The black smiths Pettah	Kundan S/o. Kajah	12 – 0 – 0
4.	Slaughter house	Muhammed Sherif S/o. Usman Sherif	650 – 0 – 0

From these list it is very clear that the business in these region was mainly carried out by the Muslim community with one or two exceptions, this trend has continued even into the twenty –first century.

Licence was issued for continuing the private markets during 1903-4.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Annual Report and accounts of the Palakkad Municipality Govt., of (1892) Madras, Local and Municipal G.O. 10th October 1892, No. 1651, M, October, RAK.

¹⁴² Meeting held on 14th March 1900, MDG (Malabar District Gazette), RAK.

¹⁴³ Meeting held on 14th March 1900, MDG, (Malabar District Gazette), RAK.

¹⁴⁴ Proceedings of the Palakkad Taluk Board, 14th March, 1903, RAK.

Table 5.4.2

Place	Name of the Owner
Kootingal Punnathur estate	--- Data not available --- -----
Valanchery	Mezhayancheri Damodaran Namboodiri
Vadakkencheri	Puzhakal edom Valiya Andy Achan
Alathur	Kavalapara Estate

The Tahsildar reports that though the jenmi's right of the ground belongs to the estate, the owners of the market were the following persons.¹⁴⁵

Table 5.4.3

Type of market	Name of owner
Salt Market	Kadirakutty S/o Ibrahimkhan
General market	Malamal Nami Nair
Sheep market	Kunhahamed S/o. Sayid Chekutty son of Ahamed
Flesh and Fish market	Chekutti S/o. Ahmed Kunhi
Vegetable market	Seshan Pattar S/o. Krishna Pattar

Another act passed in 1904, indicates that any person carrying on offensive or dangerous trade should take license and pay the prescribed fees, or else they are liable to be prosecuted before a magistrate and are

¹⁴⁵ Proceedings of the Palakkad Taluk Board, 14th March, 1903, RAK.

liable to pay a fine of not exceeding rupees hundred. Example tanning, tile kilns, lime kilns etc.¹⁴⁶

A petition was received from the dhobis of Sultanpet requesting that the tax imposed on the ass, not be levied from them, and that they should be altogether be exempted from animal tax. The Municipal Chairman was requested to address the Government to sanction this proposal.¹⁴⁷We come across a notice relating to the leases of cart stand, Dance market, slaughter house and Blacksmith's rents, hospitals and lighting contract for the ensuring year will be put up to public caution at the Municipal office, Palakkad on Saturday 23rd February 1907.¹⁴⁸Till 1905, the toll gate at Olavakkode was within the Municipal limits and the tolls collected there. All Municipal tolls were made over to the management of District Board.¹⁴⁹The Municipal toll gate at Olavakkode was shifted to Mundur, on the grounds that the Olavakkode – Mundur road traffic was mainly for the Olavakkode railway station, which was outside Municipal limits and Council will not be affected. Since 1905, there underwent much changes all over, the traffic over that road increased and two tile factories whose fuel supply depended on the extensive forest area between Mundur and Olavakkode. In addition, cart loads of paddy and other provisions were taken into town from that area, leading to a substantial amount of easy wear and tear on the roads. Many took to driving carts, which were not taxed if they were kept outside Municipal limits. This leads to a great loss in revenues. Therefore the Council requested that the Government to open a toll gate at Olavakkode and to exempt those who paid at Mundur or Dhoni road. The shifting of the toll

¹⁴⁶ Proceedings on 16th November 1904, RAK.

¹⁴⁷ Proceedings of the Council, 6th March 1907, MDG, RAK

¹⁴⁸ Malabar District Gazette, Palakkad Municipality, 28.1.1907, RAK

¹⁴⁹ GO. NO. 5 L, dated 4.1.1905, RAK

gate to Olavakkode was sanctioned.¹⁵⁰ The District Board appointed a Committee to look into the matter, and eventually declined to shift the toll gates. The Municipality then decided to open a toll gate at Olavakkode. So it was not the shifting but the opening of a new toll gate subject to the conditions laid down by the Malabar District Board.¹⁵¹

Another important toll station was the Kalmandapam toll gate, the only toll gate on the Palakkad – Walayar section of Madras – Calicut trunk road and along with three other toll stations in Kottekkad, Kalpathi and Chittur, the income was equally divided between the Palakkad Municipality Council and the District Board, Palakkad. The income got from the tolls during the past 3 years.¹⁵² **Table 5.4.4**

Kalmandapam	1920 – 21	Rs. 11100
Kallepully	1921 – 22	Rs. 11100
Chittur	1922 – 23	Rs. 13000

The average works up to Rs. 11730/- half of which may be credited to the Kalmandapam toll. Therefore the actual income derived by the District Board from the toll was round about Rs. 2930/-.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ i. The G.O. to shift the toll gate is G.O. No. Mis. 1356 L & M, dated 22nd April, 1925, RAK, ii. LSGD, Mis Series, G.O. No. 185, L & M dated 17.1.1928, RAK.

¹⁵¹ LSGD, GO NO .185, L&M, dated 17.1.1928, 46113, RAK.

¹⁵² From P. Hankins, 4th Circle, Madras to the Chief Engineer, Madras—Madras, Calicut Trunk Road –Palakkad—Walayar Section, Toll Gates—LSGD, GO.NO.659, L& M dated 17th March, 1923--00774/22, RAK.

¹⁵³ From P. Hankins, 4th Circle, Madras to the Chief Engineer, Madras – Madras Calicut Trunk Road – Palakkad –Walayar Section – Toll Gates – LSGD, G.O. No. 659, L & M dated 17th March 1923 – 00774/22, RAK.

In 1900, there was an auction of sale of tolls and other contracts. The under mentioned tolls and carts were sold in public auction for prices shown against each of them.

¹⁵⁴**Table 5.4.5**

Sl.No.	Name of toll sites	Name of contractor	Sale Amount Rs - anna -paise
1.	Kongad to Olavakkode	P.Krishnan Nair	3610 - 0 - 0
2.	Akathethara to Kadukkamkunnam	Muhammed Sheriff	480 - 0 - 0
3.	Kottekad to Kallepully	Sheik Ibrahim Sahib S/o. Sheik Hussain Sahib	405 - 0 - 0
4.	Kalmantapam	Abdul Aziz S/o. Mohamed Kasim Sahib	3700 - 0 - 0
5.	Chittur - Kollengode	Muhammed Khan Sahib S/o. Resool khan Sahib	2755 - 0 - 0
6.	Tirunellai & Footpath	Davood Sahib S/o. Muhammed Hanif Sahib	1770 - 0 - 0
7.	Yakkara	Davood Sahib S/o. Muhammed Hanif Sahib	1820 - 0 - 0
8.	Mangara & Parli	Ameez Mian Sahib S/o. Thara Mian Sahib and Vazur Hussain Sahib S/o. Sheik Murthoza Sahib	1820 - 0 - 0 1250 - 0 - 0
		TOTAL	15790 - 0 - 0

Security deposits furnished by public servants in Palakkad Municipality.¹⁵⁵ It is to be understood that there existed the practice of paying security to the government in return for the governmental offices.

¹⁵⁴ Meeting held on 14th March 1900,MDG(Malabar District Gazette), RAK.

¹⁵⁵ 16th May 1906, Proceedings of Municipal Council, Conrent Press, Palakkad, p. 6 ,RAK

Table 5.4.6

Sl.No.	Designation	Amount	Nature of Security
1.	Manager	200 – 0 – 0	Cash in post office saving bank
2.	Shroff	500 – 0 – 0	Mortgage of house
3.	Tax clerk	200 – 0 – 0	Cash in post office savings bank
4.	Bill collector	200 - 0 - 0	Cash in treasury
5.	Private scavenging maisteries	50 – 0 – 0	Cash in treasury
6.	Municipal overseer	100 – 0 – 0	Cash in post office
7.	College peon	500 – 0 – 0	Mortgage of land
8.	TB's masly	20 – 0 – 0	Cash in treasury
9.	School HM	50 – 0 – 0 100 – 0 – 0	Cash in post office Mortgage in home

The Tahsildar reports that though the jenmi rights of the ground belongs to the estate, the owners of the market were the following persons.¹⁵⁶ **Table 5.4.7**

Type of market	Name of owner
Salt Market	Kadirakutty S/o Ibrahimkhan
General market	Malamal Nami Nair
Sheep market	Kunhahamed S/o. Sayid Chekutty son of Ahamed
Flesh & Fish market	Chekutti S/o. Ahmed Kunhi
Vegetable market	Seshan Pattar S/o. Krishna Pattar

¹⁵⁶ *ibid.*

In 1920, a proposal for the sale of the Dance market was put forth and a note of dissent was seen against it. This dance market was constructed to commemorate the services done by the former Collector (G.W. Dance) of Malabar for the town. The site was carefully selected in consultation with the then Sanitary Engineer and the Commissioner and received approval of the Board and Government. It was also centrally located. It was now alleged that the sale was grossly irregular, for want of sufficient note (explanation) and want of wide publicity. Sale against the market was pointed out, as Deputy Engineer in his note has stated that, as this was a 'memorial market' it should not be given up, rather it should be improved. The sale note was not published in any newspaper and gazette, despite the fact that in the civil court, any movable or immovable property worth Rs. 100/- or less could not be sold without a months' notice. Here only a single days notice was given to the public for the sale of a very valuable property which was immovable and had an annual income of Rs. 5000/- and site at least Rs.50,000/- . The notice was published on the 24th March and was sent to the Sanitary Inspector on 27th and the sale was effected on 28th March, Sunday. Only a few select persons, bidders took part in the auction on 28th March. Thus the Council was wrong in having conducted the sale at the meeting late at 7 p.m. without giving any notice whatever to the public and final auction at its meeting held on 14th April.¹⁵⁷ Some irregularity was therefore alleged and hence the note of dissent.

This market was leased out for a sum of Rs. 3,588/- and it was collected. In 1922, a certain portion of land was sold during the year for Rs. 29,435/ and a new market was being constructed, a sum of Rs. 2562/- spend for the same purpose in the year. In the same year, two new cart stands

¹⁵⁷ LSGD, G.O. No. 789, M. Mis. dated 16.9.1920, RAK.

were introduced with a revenue of Rs 689/ – 13 – 0 and Rs 489/ – 0 – 0 and the amount was appropriated to the service. These two Municipal cart stands were leased to the contractors, the rate of which was approved by the Council.¹⁵⁸ In 1922, the Chairman was seen requesting the Government to utilize Rs. 5000/- from the sale proceeds of Dance Market for other purposes (Ordinary expenditure). The government permits, but the Palakkad council requests, that the Government may reconsider their orders here referring to the permission for the utilization temporarily up to Rs 5000/- from the proceeds of the Dance Market. The necessities for the proposed temporary diversion of capital assets for Ordinary expenses has thus been obviated to a great extent and therefore the Government was unable to reconsider their orders.¹⁵⁹ In another note to the Secretary of the Government, the Chairman writes that the diverted funds were readjusted at the close of the year 1921 – 22.¹⁶⁰

As there was no collection from house and land tax, and the full grants from the Government and Local Board hadnot beenreceived, the proceeds of the sale of the Dance market,a total of Rs. 36,449/ was to be utilized for ordinary expenses. However in order to utilize funds of different sections or heads, prior sanction was needed.¹⁶¹ Thus the Chairman was unable to approve diversion of funds. Again the note of dissent was recorded. The whole proceeds to the development of markets in the town and Rule 3 of the Schedule IV of the District Municipality Act of 1920 that no Municipal Council shall in future apply capital receipts such as sale proceeds

¹⁵⁸ LSGD, G.O. No. 598, L & M, 31st March 1922, 2259/27, RAK.

¹⁵⁹ LSGD, G.O. No. 1987 L & M Mis dated. 20th Oct. 1922, 17190/22, RAK, GO NO.1350, L&M, dated5.8.22,RAK.

¹⁶⁰ Letter from Govinda Menon, Chairman, Municipal to the Secretary of the Government of Madras, LSG Department, LSGD G.O. No. 897, L& M dated 22.5.22, 01367/22, RAK.

¹⁶¹ GO NO. 778, L&M, dated 5.5.22, RAK.

of lands buildings and machinery to the ordinary receipts or expenditure except with their sanction. The Council deciding to utilize the sale of proceeds of Dance market to a very ordinary expenditure and that too recurring in nature. Thus it was decided to avail the amount got from Dance market to the upkeep of lanes and streets. 1) Rs. 10000/- was allotted from Municipal funds for the repair of roads and the Government agreeing to contribute Rs. 4000/- for the upkeep of Coimbatore – Trunk road, a part of Madras – Calicut Trunk road, secondly Municipality realizes from tolls, tax on vehicles, animals, carts, Rs. 25000/- and spends Rs. 10000/- from Municipal funds for roads. If the roads were to be maintained and kept in good condition the allotment should be increased and NOT to spend money which has been reserved for special purposes.¹⁶²In a Municipal meeting held on 5th 1921, regarding the spending of money for other expenses, necessary orders were passed. Chairman did not vote for the resolution, as he was of the opinion that expenditure for the repairs of streets and lanes should not be met from capital receipts.¹⁶³

The dissent note also stress on the need of a vegetable market at Kalpathi. Deputy Sanitary Commissioner laid stress on this point, another vegetable market was needed at the western side of Big Bazaar and the present Dance market needed improvements. The repairs of streets and lanes were to be met out of the Ordinary Receipts.¹⁶⁴Thus, there were annual, weekly as well as daily Municipal markets in the Palakkad region. The total weekly market comes to about fourteen and daily markets about three. In the daily municipal market goats and sheep were sold. There were

¹⁶² LSGD, B NO.6 , SL.26, G.O. No. 897 L & M dated 22.5.22, 01367/22, RAK.

¹⁶³ A letter from Govinda Menon, Chairman Palakkad Municipality to the Secretary to the Government of Madras, LSGD through the Collector of Malabar, 3 : 5, SL : 72, LSGD, RAK.

¹⁶⁴ LSGD, B: S, 51 : 72, G.O .No. 2466 , L & M dt. 9.12.21, 21545/21, RAK.

also markets functioning under the local funds and there were five weekly markets functioning and in these weekly markets cattle were sold .There also exist private markets and there functions nine weekly markets and in two of the private markets cattle was the main item of trade.¹⁶⁵

It was to be remembered that the period was immediately after the war time and hence the financial constraints on the part of the government. In 1920, public complaints were made about the exorbitant fees levied in several private markets. It seems that the Taluk Boards gave licenses but did not interfere in the question of rates. In the public interest, government should take steps to curb this. The President, Taluk Board was therefore asked to furnish copies of the licenses issued to private markets within his jurisdiction showing the terms on which these licenses were granted.¹⁶⁶ However, control of the fees cannot be done without a suitable amendment of the local Board Act. Such high levy will affect the popularity of the market as well as give the general public much trouble. One way out of this was by constructing or opening public markets itself and levying fees on a lower scale. The President was informed that the government do not consider it necessary to take steps to the control of fees in private markets, a change of site would have the effect of converting an old market into new one, were change of ownership would not have the same affect.¹⁶⁷

It was explicitly asked to be put up legibly written or painted in English and in the vernacular language the table of tolls to be levied. Regarding public latrines and urinals, we find vacant lands taken over by the

¹⁶⁵ R/324,AR Macewen, *Report on the Resettlement in the Malabar District,1930*, p. 82.

¹⁶⁶ From V. Madhavaraja, President, taluk Board, to the Secretary to the Government, L & Municipal Department. F S G, Madras Through the President District Board, Calicut dated 24th March 1920, RAK.

¹⁶⁷ LSGD, B : 2, SL : 17. Revenue Division Files, RAK.

Government to build them. Every owner or occupier of the ground on which any group of six or more huts stands should provide latrine. The Municipal Council was also to make adequate arrangements for regular sweeping and cleaning of the streets as well as daily removal of filth, carcass, rubbish etc, the maintenance and repair of streets also with the Municipal Council. It was owner's obligation to make a street when disposing of land as building sites. Thus detailed laws were framed in 1931, as to the powers and obligation of Municipal Council as well as the District Board.¹⁶⁸ The Government in 1927 decides to exclude from the operation of the Madras local Boards Act, 1920, certain roads and battis not maintained by local boards as the local bodies had not the necessary staff to watch encroachments on cart tracks, villages, streets etc. Taluk board has about one seventy miles of road under its control and a Sub Overseer was there to look after or detect cases of encroachments on roads, footpaths etc such cases were to be promptly dealt.¹⁶⁹ There occur certain arrears in the toll amount collected from Kottekad, Kallepully, Kalmandapam and Chittur. The Government sanctions the write off of the sum of Rs.766 – 2 – 1 being considered as irrecoverable arrears of lease amount.¹⁷⁰

In 1931, in the annual files of leases of slaughter house and butcher stalls, they combined together and refused to bid for a reasonable amount. Three times the auctions were held and postponed for want of suitable bidders; lease was taken up by an outsider. Because of this the disappointed butchers began now slaughtering sheep outside the Municipal limits and sell mutton clandestinely to the people residing within the Municipal limit,

¹⁶⁸ Govt. of Madras, law (Legislative Department) Madras District Municipalities Act, printed by Superintendent, Govt. Press: Madras, 1931, RAK.

¹⁶⁹ LSGD, Mis series, G.O.No. 4433, L&M, dated 15.11.27, 38297, RAK.

¹⁷⁰ LSGD, LA (1938) Department, G.O. NO. 3811, dated 24.9.1928, RAK.

where they opened stalls just outside the Municipalities selling mutton in small packets or baskets to the regular customers. The authorities are to look into this matter and put a stop at once or else health well as financial loss will be there. The Government decided to permit the Council to issue license with respect of butcher stalls and slaughter houses within three miles of the Municipal limits of Palakkad and the Government sanctions it.¹⁷¹ The Council requested orders of the government exempting animals and carts used for agricultural purposes from taxation. Council resolves that cattle and carts are only used for agricultural purposes and kept within the Municipality, be exempted from taxation. But it was said that it was not permissible under law and that it was a difficult task to distinguish against animals and carts from others. In a place like Palakkad, cattle and carts are used for agricultural purposes during the period and for other purposes during off season.¹⁷²

Thus it could be understood that one of the hallmarks of a Municipality is its ability to levy taxes on a property, professions, carriages, animals, carts, vehicles, on land, buildings, lighting, scavenging and so on. Another is its ability to require licenses for the practice of a trade, absence of which are liable to be fined. Thus the urban space of Palakkad was transformed to a full scale Municipality lying down rules and regulations, breaking of it is liable to be punishable. During the British domination, in Palakkad, usually the property tax comprised of a tax for general purpose, for lighting, to provide for expense connected with the construction, maintenance, repairing, extension of water or drainage works, for lighting, railway tax for the maintenance of it etc. Certain places were exempted from

¹⁷¹ LSGD, G.O.NO. 4820, L&M, dated. 12.12.31, RAK.

¹⁷² LSGD, MIs series, G.O. NO. 4170, L&M dated. 21.10.1932, RAK

taxation eg : places of worship, places of education, hospitals, public buildings, places of charity, libraries, play grounds, burial grounds etc.

Thus the markets play an important role in the growth and development of the urban space. Not only trade but also dissemination of ideas take place here and the government by initiating a number of taxes, through laws were able to shape the market place and, by extension, the urban space.

5.5 The Urban Fort

The Palakkad Fort, started construction by HyderAli and completed by Tipu Sultan, was built in a strategic position. Like the rest of the city, it finally came under the control of the English power as a result of the Seringapatam treaty in 1782. This Palakkad fort was situated in the taluk of Palakkad amsom of Yakkara,

“its length is 487 ft and breadth is 487 ft. As far as its construction was concerned, rampart and bastions are built of granite and laterite contains embrasures for canons. The fort was surrounded by a deep moat and a trench on the southern side and also a bridge on the eastern side. It has two gates, one with doors and one without. Inside there was a small tank having steps. The fort had also ditched building for arsenal magazine and dispensary. There was also a well of most excellent drinking water”.¹⁷³

There are some records of certain repair and alteration works undertaken in the fort during the time it was kept as an arsenal in Palakkad by the military department. The materials and workmanship supplied in repairing the flooring, doorway and whitewashing of the arsenal, occupied as regimental storehouse in the fort at Palakkucherry executed by the order of

¹⁷³ Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 31st Jan. 1867, G.A. Ballard, Collector of Malabar to the Secretary of the Stateto the Board of Revenue dated 23rd January 1865, Calicut , RAK.

the Chief Engineer dated 20th May 1866. The materials used were bricks, gallnut, jaggery, and measures of shells, amounting a total Rs 72 – 1 – 8. The building was also whitewashed on April 1854. The work supposed to be started on 23rd March and completed on 7th April 1859. I.W. Douglas was the lieutenant in corps of 21st regiment also makes a declaration as to the amount used and says that rate charged for are to the best of his knowledge the lowest procurable of the station.¹⁷⁴

Meanwhile, in 1878, a letter from Acting Head Assistant Collector (Logan) to the Collector of Malabar ascertaining the condition of the Fort and also enquires whether the fort would be permanently converted into a jail, if so, and that Palakkad Tahsildar who had previously occupied the fort, should be provided with a new building. He also notes that the fort was hot during the summer and impossible to work in the monsoon season and enquires about what further arrangement can be made and also regarding the finances.¹⁷⁵ Acting Secretary¹⁷⁶ informs that Palakkad Tahsildar's office had been removed from the buildings in the fort to make room for housing convicts. The present building in which Tahsildar and other clerks were relocated could be considered as one of the very inconvenient buildings in the bazaar. The Revenue Department referred the inquiry to the Inspector General of Jails, of what it was proposing to do with Palakkad fort. This was being referred to IG¹⁷⁷ of Jails for report, to which it was replied that it does not recommend the closure of the fort jails in Palakkad. He furnishes the statistics i.e. the Central and District jails in the Madras Presidency, were

¹⁷⁴ Madras Correspondence, vol. 4, S I.No. 1547, vol. 7876. The date of correspondence is on 14th May, 1857, Palakattucherry.

¹⁷⁵ Correspondence Files Relating to Jails, 1878 Palakkad Fort, Cantonment from 19th September – July 1888, RAK.

¹⁷⁶ Acting Secretary is C.A. Galton.

¹⁷⁷ IG of Jails is Tenant.

constructed to contain 11,860 prisoners, but there were 22,090 prisoners (almost double) if remission was carried out the number of prisoners may decrease.¹⁷⁸

The number of prisoners in the Palakkad fort jail was increasing, as there were restrictions on their deportation to Port Blair. The number of foreign convicts was also increasing. **Table 5.5.1**

As on 31 st Dec. 1870 ¹⁷⁹				
Year	Chinese	Malaya	Burmese	Total
1870	64	39	40	143
1871	45	32	69	146
1872	28	21	116	175
1873	41	16	137	194
1874	36	15	155	206
1875	32	14	181	227
1876	27	14	197	238
1877	13	6	202	221
1878	12	2	233	247

Of the total two forty seven (247) foreign convicts in 1878, two hundred and fifteen (215) were under sentence of transportation for life and thirty two (32) are term transportation convicts. For this reason, the Jail department informed the revenue department that it would likely not cease operations in the Palakkad fort and that as a matter of economic measure, permanent jail buildings should be constructed within the fort at Palakkad.¹⁸⁰ Meanwhile the condition of the fort further deteriorated greatly

¹⁷⁸ Correspondence Files Relating to Jails, 1878 Palakkad Fort, Cantonment from 19th September, July 1888, RAK.

¹⁷⁹ File No.235, Correspondence relating to Jails, Palakkad Fort, Cantonment from 19th September, to July 1888, RAK.

¹⁸⁰ File No. 235, Correspondence Relating to Jails, Palakkad Fort, Cantonment from 19th September 1878 to July 1888, RAK.

and in order to avoid unwanted expenses permission was sought to close down the jail at Palakkad by the jail authorities.

Palakkad fort jail consists of three substantially built blocks constructed of rammed earth (pise) and fitted with strong iron -barred doors and windows. Each of the three blocks was divided into seven wards with sixty three prisoners in each block. The blocks were built of rammed earth by convict labour under the direction of the Superintendent. The cost of doors, windows, fittings etc has been Rs. 2,530/-.¹⁸¹In 1881, the Collector would resume charge of the fort and buildings in it and the sanction to close was only temporary. Hearing this news of closure, a letter from the Head Master, Palakkad, and High School requested the use of certain buildings in the fort at Palakkad, while class rooms were under construction. It was felt to be a good arrangement for time -being.¹⁸²Collector of Malabar reports that he had taken charge of the fort jail and forwarded a statement of it.

Some jail stores are still left in the fort, which could only be disposed of after receiving the instruction from IG of jails. There are six blocks of permanent buildings within fort, five of which used as offices and sixth as a sub jail .Of these two could be used as taluk Cutchery and Treasury room, one as a Sub Registers room, one taluk police station, one as Assistant Police Superintendent office and last as subjail. Other small buildings can be used as kitchen for subjail prisoners and tiffin rooms for officers located in the fort. Another permanent structure inside the fort which was formerly used as a magazine room when a garrison was stationed at Palakkad could be

¹⁸¹ Tyrrell, permanent keeper, succeeded G.D. Grimes as Superintendent of Jails in Palakkad in February 1879 , RAK

¹⁸² Letter dated 14th May 1881, RAK

converted into an office at a small outlay.¹⁸³ Of the three temporary blocks of building of rammed earth work constructed by the jail department, one was required by the Inspector of schools, to accommodate students of 6th division, High school in Palakkad, until the construction of their new building was completed. Regarding the proposal of the IG of jails, to dismantle the fort and sell the materials by public auction if it was not required by any department, it was hereby proposed to keep them as they were for the present, to be utilized as mentioned above and early orders were sought on the subject, to avoid further payment of office rent for the private buildings. In 1882, however, a letter records the decrepit state of the thatched building in the fort, if they were not disposed off, these buildings would fall down and the materials would be destroyed during monsoon. At this point, jail had to be removed as many buildings are out of repair, an early sale of materials was sought and that there was no possibility of jail being again re-established in the fort.¹⁸⁴

This discussion then turns on as to the relevance of the existences of the fort in general based on its dilapidated condition and the cost incurred on repairs. Fort dates back, though not in its present form to 1766 when Haider Ali built it to secure his communication between Coimbatore and West coast. Subsequently it was completely rebuilt on approved European principle. Colonel Fullerton who had captured it describes it as a 'place of first strength in India'. 'Square in shape with walls of immense thickness and strong bastions at four corners and in the centre, the fort must be seen to be impregnable in those days. A deep moat was to be crossed by a single draw bridge which can be reached by a covered way through the glacis'.

¹⁸³ Madras Correspondence Files, vol. IV, The date of the correspondence is 14th May, 1857, Palakkattucherry.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

Col.Fullerton stormed the fort on 15th November 1784 after a siege which lasted for eleven days, along with Captain Maitland took advantage of the heavy rainfall to drive the enemy. It was said that when the English evacuated the fort and it was taken over by the Samoothiries troops. Later by about 1790 it was finally recaptured by the English.¹⁸⁵

The Mysore rulers understood the strategic position of the cantonment area and hence built a fort there. The English power also realised its significance and strived hard to maintain their dominance over it. Much doubt was raised now, if it should be demolished or protected.¹⁸⁶ By 1920, a *tiffin* stall started functioning in the old sub jail cells which was abandoned with the construction of a new sub-jail. The rooms were in a state of disuse for several years and PWD had done some minor works to make it usable. It was decided that rupees ten would be charged from the *tiffin* vendor as rent. The stall was intended mainly for the convenience of the Government officials employed in the fort.¹⁸⁷

However, a small issue or disagreement arose between the Executive Engineer and the Tahasildar over this coffee stall within the fort. The Executive Engineer inspected the fort and said that there was no need to keep two rooms for PWD and one room could be utilised for preparing the food and the other one for serving it. Only a door will be needed and that would not cost more. The Tahasildar, on the other hand, was against the

¹⁸⁵ Seventh Tour of Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, Malabar, October 15 to November 3, 1914 Ootacamund, Printed at the Government Branch Press: 1914, pp. 16,17, TSA

¹⁸⁶ It has been understood that due to the spread of the contagious diseases in 1859, many of the prisoners died leading to the closure of jails in the fort. But later on, again a taluk office started functioning in here. See for details *Nagaram Pinnita Nalvazhikal*, (Mal.), Palakkad Municipality, 2015.

¹⁸⁷ PW&L(1930) Department MS Series, GO NO.3162—W dated 8.11.1930, RAK.

whole idea as according to him the whole place would get dirty and rats would breed leading to plague. It was then pointed out that as Tahasildar could not keep his surroundings and compound clean, it was not likely that he would keep the taluk in much order. Here it implies that the inability of the Tahasildar to keep it clean indicated the poor state of affairs in the taluk. Much care should be taken to keep this surroundings clean it was said. Meanwhile the Municipal Chairman issued an order that he would not give the license to the highest bidder as this place was unfit to be used as a coffee shop. The Malabar Collector requested an estimate for the construction of the shop from the Executive Engineer. The approval of the Archaeological Survey would also be necessary for the erection of the building within the fort¹⁸⁸. A memorandum by Chief Engineer Coimbatore Circle dated 30th January, 1928, asked that the proposed building be used as *tiffin*¹⁸⁹ shed for the convenience of the office workers in the fort. Therefore the sanction of the Government would not be necessary provided the cost does not exceed the powers of the Collector. The Superintending Engineer was required to arrange for the preparation of plans and estimates after obtaining the approval of Superintendent, Archaeological Department and forward it to Collector. An estimate of Rs 2700/ was forwarded the proposal for the construction two stalls, one room for Hindus and other for Christians and Mohammedans.¹⁹⁰

Over the years, we can see that the fort was put to a number of uses as a school building, offices, prisons, even a *tiffin* stall was also opened, and we find separate rooms for the Hindus, Christians as well as

¹⁸⁸ Department of Revenue, D. Dis. File, 9021-27, dated 2.2.29, RAK

¹⁸⁹ *tiffin stall* is small hotel.

¹⁹⁰ Department of Revenue, D. Dis. File, 9021-27, dated 2.2.29, RAK. It shows the existence of the caste-class disparities in the society.

Mohammedans.¹⁹¹ In the beginning, the authorities had plans to demolish it but later changed their decisions. Thus the fort and the surrounding areas always posed a strong symbol of dominance and power of the British rule in India. It is still maintained in good condition by the Archaeological Survey of India.

5.6 Acquisition of Land for Public Purpose

Under the Act of Acquisition, 1870, the government was given authority to take over lands by paying compensations to the owners.¹⁹² Some of the purposes for which the government usually acquires sites, were for the construction of schools, roads, lanes, rubbish dumping spots, latrines, wells, markets places, railways etc. In 1892, for example, the government decided to acquire some 9 ½ cents in the Akathethara village for a rubbish depot. The owner agreed on the certain condition that half of the ashes from the burning of rubbish would be given to him and that a footpath must be left through that place to carry the dead bodies to the nearby burial ground. The government agreed with these conditions and acquired the land.¹⁹³ To provide an idea of the range of reasons for government acquisitions of the land the following examples took place in the year 1916.

A public well was needed at Kollengode for which two cents of land was required. This was registered as wet land in the settlement register, Raja

¹⁹¹ Reference to the map attached in which clearly it was shown the space meant for each sections. A strong indicator to the existence of caste system in the society.

¹⁹² Rev. Dis folded – B.29, Sl.19, RAK

¹⁹³ This letter from Chinnaswamy Pillai, Chairman, Municipal Commissioner, Palakkad to the Collector of Malabar, forwarding the copy of the letter received from the owner giving conditions under which he would be willing to part with it. Proceedings of the Madras Government from the Collector of Malabar, 31st Oct. 1892, submitting for approval and publication in the Fort Saint George Gazette, the site for use as rubbish depot in Palakkad Municipality, RAK.

Vasudevan Raja Valiya Nambidi of Kollengode accepted the settlement. Taluk Board was of the opinion that the cost of the acquired land was too much (Rs. 108 – 1 -7) but Kollengode Raja has consented for a nominal price (Rs. 5 -12 -0) There were some improvements on the land i.e. a compound wall and also a drain (Rs.4/- for land Rs. 1/- for compound wall and drain and 12 annas, the usual 15% allowances). This amount was allotted in the next Board meeting. This is also published in FSG.¹⁹⁴

Petition was got from N.K.Ramanatha Ayyer, Nellisseri Village, Vadakkanthara amsom against the acquisition of certain lands belonging to him which was required by the Municipal Council, Palakkad for scavenging lines. The land was acquired and the petition was rejected.¹⁹⁵ The Taluk Board (road) No.III, from Kollengode Nambidies palace to the Alampallam village passed through the middle of a tank at the third furlong and during monsoon the road was far from passable. Palakkad taluk Board President requested the acquisition of land as it was required for the diversion of Taluk Board road leading from Kollengode Nammidies place to Alampallam village and steps were taken to acquire it. The cost of acquisition was estimated at Rs. 78 – 12 – 5.¹⁹⁶ There being four(4) feet of water above the road. The Assistant Engineer requests to divert the road and some acquisitions were needed, the land required are lying waste and for raising seedling. The proposal has been approved by the Taluk Board.¹⁹⁷

At Vandazhi desam, in Palakkad taluk some two(2) cents and eighty

¹⁹⁴ No .R 72/ p16, dated 15.9.16, RAK, FSG – Fort Saint George Gazette.

¹⁹⁵ No. D 2033/ p16, dated 28.11.16, RAK

¹⁹⁶ Department of Revenue, Public branch, Office of the Collector of Malabar, Calicut No. R 91/p16 dated 27.11.16

¹⁹⁷ Letter from the President, Taluk Board, Palakkad to the Collector of Malabar, dt. June 1915. The notification to be published in Fort St. George Gazetteer of 11th November 1916, RAK

five (85) sq.ft lands were needed for constructing a public well. The valuation was estimated to be Rs. 3 -7 -2, inclusive of the 15% allowance. The cost of the scheme was established at Rs. 757/- and the site was also approved by the District Medical and Sanitary Officer of Malabar.¹⁹⁸ Again for the purpose of digging well, two and a half (2 ½) cents of land was acquired at Kottekkad. The cost of the acquired land was about Rs.35 -15 (15% allowance included). There was no objection from the owner.¹⁹⁹

Some lands were needed to be acquired as there was the necessity of diversion of the private scavenging lane at Nurani village in Palakkad. The cost was Rs. 3 – 8- 11 inclusive of 15% allowance on account of the compulsory nature of the acquisition. Eight cents was acquired and the present owner and occupant of land was Padmanabha Iyer, son on Subramania Jatavallabhar and he accepts the valuation and consents to the acquisition. The registered janmi was one Ramaswami Ayyer who also admits a verbal sale of the land to the present janmi.²⁰⁰

At the instance of Municipal Council Palakkad, the Divisional officer, Palakkad, submits valuation statement and other papers for the acquisition of a part of land required for diversion of scavengers lane at Tharakad village. The site was in Puthur desam, Puthur amsom (2 cents and 173 sq.ft). As this was an occupied dry land, valuation was at Rs. 13-12-10 which was inclusive of 15%, site was in Puthur desam. It was sanctioned.²⁰¹ Some land at

¹⁹⁸ Disposal No. R.26/p 16 dt. 10.5.16. Malabar Collectors Office published in the 15th April 1916 Fort St. Gazette, RAK.

¹⁹⁹ Disposal No. R36/p of 1916 dated 28.5.16, RAK.

²⁰⁰ Letter from Chairman, Municipal Council, Palakkad to the Collector of Malabar. Disposal No. R.20/p16 dated 5.4.16. The draft notification to be published in FSG 1st April 1916, RAK.

²⁰¹ No. R102/p16, dated 17.12.16 Department of Revenue, Public Branch, Office of Collector of Palakkad. Notification in Saint Fort George Gazette on December 18th 1916, RAK.

Kizhumuri village was needed by the Palakkad Municipality for the extension of sanitary works, viz. widening the existing lanes and opening of new lanes. The estimated cost comes around Rs 2500/. Here the land belonged to the dry land category, Government puramboke, single crop wet lands. The dry lands were valued at Rs. 1250/ an acre. Another 1500 acre wet land costing at Rs. 1000/²⁰² For the widening of lanes Rs. 220 – 5 – 50 was required to meet the cost of acquisition of land.²⁰³

The Taluk Board, Palakkad, insists the Divisional Officer Palakkad to submit valuation statement and other papers necessary for the acquisition of proceedings in respect of the site required for sinking a public well at Kuzhalmannam.²⁰⁴ Acquiring site of four cents in portion of Kavelpadamsam, cost estimated at Rs. 46/- inclusive of 15% of allowance on account of compulsory nature of acquisition. The *janmi* of the land is E.R.AppodharaAyyar of old Kalpathi. He agrees for a compensation of Rs. 46 – 0 - . Thus the land was acquired and latrine was built and it was sanctioned by Government.²⁰⁵

Land was needed to open a scavenger lane in Pannandar Street of old Kalpathi, Palakkad. The proposed site was registered in the name of Kalpathy Viswanatha Swami Devaswom Manager, Kelu Achan as jenmi. The present manager was Cheria Pangi Achan. He states that the jenmam *vaha* should be paid to him on behalf of the Devaswom and the value of the improvements to the respective occupants. The occupying tenants claim both the jenmam

²⁰² Department of Revenue, Public Branch, No. R. 76/p16 dated. 16.09.16, Notification to be published in FSG Gazette on 12th Aug. 1916, RAK.

²⁰³ No. Dis. R. 70/p16, dated 20.8.16, RAK.

²⁰⁴ Disposal No. 1225/p15 dated 10.5.16. Notification published on FSG Gazette 22nd April 1916. The place approved by District Medical and Sanitary Officer, RAK.

²⁰⁵ Disposal No. R. 13/p16, will be published in SFG Gazette on 14th February 1916, RAK.

value and the value of improvements and thus a dispute as regards the payments of janmam value. Another person included in the dispute was Ayya vadhyar. His exact whereabouts were not known and therefore the statement could not be obtained by the government. Somehow these obstructions were overcome and acquisition proceedings were done as quickly as possible.²⁰⁶

At Pudiayangam a site measuring two (2) cents, part of the double crop wet land was needed for a sinking a well. The valuation was Rs. 965/- based on similar lands in the vicinity. The jenmi was willing to part with the site free of competition. The *kanamdar* and the present occupant had no objection to the acquisition. The valuation was therefore nominal. There were no improvements on the land. The approximate cost was Rs. 650/- and the site was approved by District Medical and Sanitary officer, 15% allowance, on account of compulsory nature of this acquisition sanctioned.²⁰⁷

At the instance of Taluk Board, Palakkad, the Divisional Officer, Palakkad submits papers necessary for the acquiring proceedings for a site, for sinking of a public well at Parli, a portion of Edathara amsom. The land needed was nine cents. The site has been inspected, and the cost of acquisition has been estimated at Rs. 5 – 2 – 10 inclusive of 15% allowance on account of the compulsory nature of acquisition. The owner and occupier had no objection to the acquisition.²⁰⁸ In this way, the taluk board in different places acquired lands to create for public utilities such as wells, rubbish depots, scavengers' lanes, latrines etc in the urban social space of Palakkad.

²⁰⁶ Disposal No. Rs.5/p16, dated 27.1.16, RAK.

²⁰⁷ Disposal No. R7/p16, dated 29.1.16, RAK.

²⁰⁸ Disposal No. R 18/P 16 dated 29.3.16, RAK.

5.6.1 Public Bungalows

In 1829, in one of the letters it was said that necessary orders were issued to allow free access to get materials needed for the construction of a Public Bungalow.²⁰⁹ In 1853, It was also observed that no budgetary provision had been made for the repairs of traveller's bungalow and no appropriation can be made by Superintending Engineer on this account unless they were required to propose transfers of funds to meet such demands when this office can only check appropriations made so that they do not exceed the annual grant made by Government of India.²¹⁰

In 1865, regarding the condition of the traveller's bungalow, it was noted that some of them was in a slightly better condition. Lakkidi bungalow was in a ruinous state and although thatched, it would be ruined by a few showers of rain. As these buildings, are thatched, it was necessary that it was to be renewed particularly and that the *adhivasikal*²¹¹ would do the job more carefully and cheaply than the overseer. The Alathur traveller's bungalow, though thatched a few days before, was most miserably done, with holes, through which sun shone it seems. The charge was also 2/3rd times higher and that for half that amount, the bungalow could have been thatched.²¹² In 1896, the charges connected with the construction of bungalows should be debited under the heading "New works" and those for repairs of existing buildings to "Repairs".²¹³

²⁰⁹ To the Principal Collector in Malabar from L.N.Natson, Captain Commandant at Palakkad dated Palakkadcherry, May 10th 1829, E. 441 – SI.No. 5032 Inward Letters in the letter No. 2556 Road and Bridges Department 1829,RAK.

²¹⁰ File No. 751, Inward letters in the Department of PW from May to July 1853,RAK

²¹¹ The original inhabitants.

²¹² Letter from Acting Assistant Collector, Palakkad to the Collector of Calicut dated 22nd March 1865, Palakkad. File No. 750, Inward letters in the PWD from June – April 1860, RAK.

²¹³ G.O.NO. 6th July, No. 1896, RAK.

List of Travellers bungalow in Palakkad.²¹⁴ **Table 5.6.2**

Village	Nearest railway station	Daily charges
1. Koppam	Palakkad	Rs.1 for I class 8 anna
2. Kollengode	Palakkad - 13 miles	for 2 nd class Rs. 1- 8 -0
3. Alathur	Lakkidi – 12 ½ miles	for married couple
4. Vadakkancheri	Lakkidi – 19 miles	Anna. 8 for a single
5. Mankara	Mankara – 1 mile	person and Anna. 12
6. Mathur	Mankara – 6 mile	for married couple, for
7. Koduvayur	Palakkad – 7 miles	halt of 3 hrs. or less
8. Kongad	Parli – 6 miles	Anna. 4.
9. Para	Palakkad – 8 miles	“
10. Dhoni	Palakkad – 6 miles	“
11. Walayar	Walayar – 1 ½ miles	“
		“
		“
		Anna 8 for single
		person and as 12 for
		married couple.

These travellers bungalow were to be maintained by District Board, Palakkad Taluk Board, Forest department, Palakkad Municipality etc.

²¹⁴ *List of Travelers Bungalows, Rest Houses and Chattrams in the Madras Presidency*, Printed by the Superintendent, Government. Press: Madras, 1916, pp 12-13, RAK.

List of Chattrams in the taluk of Palakkad.²¹⁵ **Table 5.6.3**

Village	Nearest railway station	Maintained by
1. Vattapara	Walayar – 2 miles	Palakkad Taluk Board
2. Kanjicode	Kanjikode - 1 mile	“
3. Vadakkanchery	Lakkidi – 19 miles	“
4. Tirthala	Pallipuram – 3 miles	“

In 1924, one of the Director of Town planning remarks that, Palakkad was an interesting town from the town planers point of view as there are two distinct types of development.

“Detached or semidetached house with its own garden or compound.

Type of houses, represented by the Brahmins agraharams of Palakkad where the group of houses generally consists of a single street, a cul – de – sac branching main road terminated with a temple. There may be congestion in these streets but it was in the direction longitudinal, an open land on each side of the street and every house was open on its back sides to the fields. Thus there was no lateral congestion and if this open land was taken into consideration, the density of population is insignificant. In Palakkad, those agraharam are generally on cul-de-sac or side streets there is little traffic and the houses are not subject to the dust nuisance”.²¹⁶

²¹⁵ *List of Chattrams in the District of Malabar in Lists of Travelers Bungalows, Rest Houses and Chattrams in the Madras Presidency*, printed by Superintendent, Government Press: Madras, 1916, p. 19.

²¹⁶ Inspection Notes of Director of Town Planning, LSGD (1924) Ordinary Series, G.O. No. 340, P H, 11 dated 27.2.24, RAK.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter dealt with the culture under the British Raj. In the previous chapter, an analysis was done on how the British introducing a series of Acts as well as initiating changes in the transport, communication, technology, roads, railways etc were able to fully administer the dominated region well. In this chapter, it is graphically described about spirituality and the existing social conditions in Kerala in general and Palakkad in particular. The different temple festivals, about the graveyards, the work of the Basel mission, how they were able to create a place in the urban scenario of the Palakkad, progress in the field of education, the changes underwent in the markets, the different places from where tolls were collected and the role of the Palakkad Municipal Council in implementing various Acts could be seen here, the establishing of the hospital in this urban space, the transformations underwent by the forts and the different utilities it used for, about the different public utility services etc were the topics dealt here.

Chapter 6

Between the Two World Wars

6.1 Introduction

The World Wars occurred in Europe and it had repercussions in India, including Kerala. Palakkad was part of the Malabar District which was directly under the British rule. The war created havoc and subsequent material changes in the urban life in all parts of India including in Palakkad

In 1898, the government decided to introduce the system of identification by means of finger prints among the government servants. The government claimed that this was a reliable method of establishing identity of government servants. This was to detect attempts of false personation and also cases of doubts where arise as to the identity of the individual claiming pension and other benefits.¹

The First World War was over and the Treaty of Versailles was signed between the victorious and the vanquished powers. Almost every important political activity during the interwar period was the direct or indirect product of this settlement.² Such was the impact of this Treaty that the World had to suffer another devastating war within a span of twenty years. The First World War did away with the idea that, war affects only professional soldiers and that international politics could be left safely in the hands of professional diplomats. India being a part of the British colonies was thoroughly affected. There was a general scarcity of all food items and also

¹ G. O. No. 1761, 29th January 1898, RAK.

² Vide E. H. Carr, *International Relations Between the Two World Wars (1919 – 1939)*, Macmillan: London, 1963, p. 21

³ *Ibid.*, p.21.

reparation problems. It had also become common to invent theories to explain the situation. E.H.Carr says that 'the period of crisis was a common feature and the main highlight of the crisis of twenty years in between 1919 – 1930 was that the reality was not grasped well and existing utopia was to be removed'.³

The global economic crisis, which reached its culminating height in 1931 was a matter of debate among economists. The capitalist system was widely feared to be collapsing, but Nikolai Kondratiev's in 1920s, in his research pointed out that the capitalist system would not collapse as a result of the 'Great Depression of 1929'. His analyses described how international capitalism has gone through many such great depressions and as such were a normal part of international mercantile credit system.⁴ Many thinkers like Schumpeter and others were able to formulate theories on the basis of Kondratiev's ideas. As far as India was concerned in the time of depression, there was generally stagnation, as India did not operate in the free competent world. M.K.Gandhi had appealed to the U.S. government to distribute its great hoard of gold to lessen economic suffering of the people.⁵

The English economist in favour of British overseas empires suggested that empires across protected the European investments' abroad at a time when the need to export capital was acute because of the falling rates of return on capital at home. V.I.Lenin accepted this theory of Hobson and he

⁴ Nikolai Kondratiev was a Soviet economist. In his meticulous research he identified long term business cycles which came to be called as K waves. It is for 60 years + or --- (plus or minus) 2 years. (See for details in Christopher Quigely, 'Kondratieff Waves and Greater Depression of 2013-2020' in *Financial Sense*, 2016, www.financialsense.com, accessed on 13th May 2016, 4.30 p.m.)

⁵ Chicago Daily News issue from 1931, <http://chicagonews.com>. accessed on 10th May, 2016, 9 a.m.

elaborated the First World War in these lines.⁶ The Hobson - Lenin thesis did not get wide acceptance as there is little relationship between capital investment and political annexation.⁷

Generally, it was said that the important powers sought out colonies as a region from where they would get raw materials and also a market to sell their products for their budding industries. Later Marxist historians also restated the theories of Hobson - Lenin as they viewed empires as a prolongation of political way. The two British historians J.Gallagher and R.Robinson challenged the Marxist view as they played down the economic factors.⁸

John Ward another theorist put forth that the main reason for British colonization was industrialization. P.J.Cainn and A.G.Hopkins challenged both Marxian and non Marxian approaches, that imperialism was the after effect of industrialisation in Europe.⁹The imperialist view point distinctly elaborated, as the British power in India was able to put an end to political anarchy and ushered in an era of technology and development. But the nationalist historians underlined the fact that there occurred a concern for the distribution of resources in the British regions and also of the drain of wealth from India.¹⁰ During both the First World Wars and the Depression, there was massive food scarcity in India that caused much distress on

⁶ See for details Thirthankar Roy, *The Economic History of India, 1857 – 1947*, OUP: New Delhi, 2006, pp. 6-15.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-15.

⁸ The Marxian historians gave stress to economic aspects like industry, capital, profits etc. See *Ibid.*, pp. 6-15.

⁹ Thirthankar Roy, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-15.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

account of this.¹¹ As the war was going on, the distress of the people increased, there was general stagnation.

At that time, in Palakkad, there occurred a difference of opinion between the Collector as well as the Municipal Council. The Collector did not agree or support the views of the Council and Chairman's requests for the removal of the Thiya doctor who was appointed recently. The Collector did not believe that the objection raised against the *thiyyanapothecary*¹² are genuine and if any such general orders were passed as that desired by the Chairman, it would cause much trouble and would also set a wrong precedent.¹³ We here find the District Collector¹⁴ not agreeing with the council members as it would create a wrong precedence and also he does see any much valid reason for his removal. Contrary to the Municipal Council's views one finds that this doctor was a man of high reputation.

It has been for some time that the Palakkad Municipal Council was requesting to accord to the municipality, the privilege of electing its own chairman. The Council in the past has made many unsuccessful attempts to get this privilege. In 1892, W.A. Dance suggested that the Palakkad Municipality was to be given the privilege of electing its own Chairman. Dumegare, the Collector, was not in favor of it, as the election was not successful in other Municipalities. He recommended a system of nomination to be followed by the government. Subsequently in 1896, the Council passed a resolution requesting that it may be given the privilege of electing its own Chairman. The Collector was not in favor of it and declined to comply with

¹¹ See for details Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India ,1885 – 1947*, Macmillan: Delhi, 1983, pp. 257–266.

¹² *Thiyan* is the caste name in Kerala, also known as Ezhavas, *apothecary* is the doctor

¹³ Disposal No.D 727/P 0 4, dated 7.6.04,RAK.

¹⁴ Pinhay was the Collector of the Malabar District. Details in Seluraj, *Kozhikodinde Paithrukam*, Mathubhumi Books:Kozhikode,2011, p.21

the commissioner's request. Again in 1905, the same question was raised by the Council.¹⁵ The reply was that chairman was only a recently appointed officer by the government and when the office becomes vacant, this question would be considered.¹⁶ In the meantime, the Council was directed to reconsider the matter.¹⁷

The government took steps for the grant of compensation for dearness of food to full time officers of the government on civil establishments whose pay does not exceed thirty rupees per month. The allowance was at the rate of three rupees per month in the case of officers whose pay did not exceed sixteen rupees without exceeding thirty rupees per month. In the case of servants where pay was less than five rupees per month, allowances would be increased so as to bring the monthly pay and compensation allowance to rupees six and eight annas (Rs. 6-8-0) per month.¹⁸ The First World War was raging on and there was no indication of War coming to a speedy conclusion. There was severe shortage of food on account of the critical situation created by War.¹⁹

The First World War began to take its toll on the people. Slight relief measures were taken by the government and they were insufficient. Within a gap of twenty years another more disastrous war was to happen and the government had to initiate many relief measures to tide over the crisis.

¹⁵ Disposal No: 239, dated 23.10.1906, RAK.

¹⁶ G.O.N.O. 1848 M, dated 16th October 1906, RAK.

1. Local and Municipal Department, RAK.
2. Disposal No. 239, dated 23.10.1906, RAK.

¹⁷ File No. 415 of 1306, Collectors Office, Municipal Branch, Disposal No. 239, Dis, dated 23.10.1906, RAK.

¹⁸ G.O. No. 48, Financial dated 17th July 1913, Palakkad Municipal Office.

¹⁹ *Andhra Patrika* of 14th November 1917, NNPR, TSA. (Native Newspaper Report, henceforth NNPR and Tamilnadu State Archives, henceforth as TSA)

6.2 Newspapers and the Urban News

The newspapers in the urban space could influence the activities of the reading public during the war period. In 1906, some complaints about the irregularities of the Kollengode postmaster were taken up by the newspapers. There was no regular window delivery and that the people were put to too much inconvenience. They were not supplied any value payable and money order forms and stamps when required. Sometime for one week the villagers of Vadavanoor (Kollengode) could not see the post man. The news reported that it was high time that such officials were to be transferred from the place.²⁰ Similarly, in 1908, an editorial in a daily, observes that the Palakkad Municipality was trying to obtain the privilege of electing its Chairman.²¹ It came to the notice of the government that the Municipal Council levied tax on vehicles and animals carts at maximum rate laid down in the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1920.²²

There were efforts to increase the facilities for army and police personnels in the town during the war period. A proposal was submitted to the government, including plans and a revised estimate for the construction of huts for five head constables and thirty nine constables and two latrines for the town police at Palakkad in the South Malabar district. The necessity for the revision was explained in the report accompanying the estimate. There were plans to construct quarters for sub Inspectors and huts for five head constables and thirty nine constables at Palakkad.²³ The newspapers

²⁰ *Manorama*, Calicut, June 8th 1906, NNPR, 1906, June – December, TSA.

²¹ *Kerala Sanchari*, Calicut, August 21st 1908, NNPR 1908, p.602, TSA.

²² GO NO.1332, 16TH June, 1914, RAK.

²³ This incident shows that some PWD works were approved by the Government, whether it was carried out or not is not clear.(G.O.NO. 2830 dated 5.2,1914, RAK. PWD(1922), M.S.Series, G.O.NO100W, dated27.1.22,RAK.)

reported that large sums of money were spent on the army and for the high pay of the officers appointed from England which together swell up the expenditure of the Government of India. In 1922, the authorities even appointed a Commission to discover the means of reducing the expenditure. These members travel in saloon carriages, examine zone official and non official matters had to submit long reports. The imperial government was cutting down the facilities given to higher officials in the army service for maintaining largest number of soldiers in India.²⁴ The vernacular newspapers questioned the extra vagenza of the Europeans in the government service when ordinary people were suffering due to the problems created by the War.²⁵ There was hot debate about the sale of the old bridge existed at Kalpathy river and related sale procedures during the inter war period. *The Hindu*, and *The Mail* pointed out the irregularity in these dealings, as about fourteen tons of the materials were sold by inviting tenders and not by public auction.²⁶ Thus, the inter war period was an era of journalistic intervention in the urban life of Palakkad. It was an opportunity for them to attack the mis deeds of the colonial government.

6.3 Common man in the Urban Space

The British imperialism did not face serious attack from the nationalist wing during the interwar period in Palakkad. Many people donated huge amounts of money and many young people joined the army. As a means of collecting money a song drama titled *Sarajini* was enacted which won much acclaim and was a huge success in terms of financial collection.²⁷

²⁴ *Naveena Keralam*, Madras, 12th June 1922, NNPR, July to August 1923, TSA.

²⁵ *Swatantram*, Rajahmundry, 18th March 1924, NNPR, March – June, TSA.

²⁶ Local Administration Department, Mis. Series, G. O. NO.362, dated 30.1.42.

²⁷ See details, C.Kesavan, *Jeevithasamaram*, DC Books, 2004.

Dr.Krishnan, Narayana Menon and others played a significant role in staging this drama for the war fund collection.

The *Mathrubhumi* reported the news of the Kerala *yatra* of M.K.Gandhi in 1925. A public meeting was organized under the President ship of the Municipal Chairman S.K.Ramaswami Ayyar to hand over the fund to Gandhi. M K Gandhi visited the *Sabari Ashramam* of T.R.Krishna Swaami Iyer.²⁸ The city dwellers came into contact with the issues of thenation and they began to become part of the national movement. In 1928, a pamphlet was pasted on the walls of Government Victoria College by C. Rajagopalachari. It advocated the people to use *khader(khadi)* cloths. This was severally disliked by the Papworth, thePrincipal of the Collegeand he ordered that this pamphlet be removed. It seems that as a European, he was not at all in tune with the Indian aspirations and hopes of freedom. In connection with the Simon Commissions Boycott movement, *a hartal*²⁹ was organized and many students boycotted the college. The Principal took a note of those names and the students were put to great difficulty as they participated in these harthals.³⁰

During the 1930 Salt Satyagraha also they showed high moral values, were strict disciplinarians as well as made many personal sacrifices. One among them was T.R.Krishnaswami Ayyar and his wife Isweri ammal. He led the group of sathyagrahies to the Payyanur beach for breaking the salt laws. He worked tirelessly for the downtrodden and eventually was ostracized by

²⁸ 1925, March 14th *Mathrubhumi*, Keluettan Gaveshana Padana Kendram, Kozhikode, p.5.

²⁹ *hartal* means strike.

³⁰ The difficulties which the students had to suffer were detailed in another sub-heading-nationalistic awakening and the college in the urban space. (See *Mathrubhumi*, 20th November 1928, Keluettan Pedeme Gaveshana Kendram, Kozhikode, p.5.)

his own community.³¹ One gets to know about persons like R.V.Sharma, Parakkal Vasudevan, R. Raghava Menon etc who all had a very prominent part to play in the national movement in Palakkad.³²

Another prominent leader of this region was Alathur. R.Krishnan. He was an active Congress man in the beginning but later on turned to be a socialist leader at par. At Palakkad, R.Raghavamenon, Mundur K.V.Chammi, A.R.Ramankutty, M.P.Kunjiraman Master, P.Balachandran were some among them.³³

Slowly there developed a rift among the Congress men - rightists and leftists. The leftist minded people were more different or intense in their outlook. They proposed that Congress bring workers and agriculturists into its fold. The main leftist oriented workers of Palakkad were R.Raghavamenon, MundurChamu, R.Muthukrishnaidu, P.Vasudeva Menon, Kavassery Sethumadhavan Nair, Mudappallur Setumadhavan nair so on.

Palakkad had a few businesses that were frequented by various political factions. In the G.B. (*Gandhi Bazar*) Road, for example, was a site for leftists meetings because of the leftist leanings of the manager and employees. Another bakery in Sultanpetta named K.R. Biscuit Company belonged to rightist group. Leftists also met at an allied Madhavan Nairs'

³¹ They had a *ashram* named Sabari in Akathethara , Palakkad where they spent their rest of their life along with the downtrodden ones. Gandhi had visited here thrice here. They were very progressive minded and initiated inter dining, right to enter the temples, the right for education etc., in this the caste ridden society and had to face severe opposition .

³² C.H.Kunchappa, *Smaranakalmatram*, Autobiography, (Mal.), Current Books: Trichur, 1981, p.234.

³³ Alathur R.Krishnan, *Veezhimalayude Thazvarayil Ninnu*, (Mal.), Chinta Publishers: Thiruvananthapuram, 1993, pp.43, 44, (N.R.Bakery owned by Menon from Thathamangalam had leftist leaning and KR Biscuit Company had rightist leaning).

hard ware shop and at K.C.Gopalakrishnan's Radha press which printed leftist documents.³⁴

There were marked attempts by communist sympathizers to ferment labour troubles in several parts of Madras Presidency. These activities were committed to the safeguarding the interests of the working classes. Strikes were frequent, such as the Burma oil company strike, the Asiatic petroleum and standard oil company employees struck work but when they were given some concessions they withdrew. B.G.Horniman passed through Calicut on his way to Madras where he presided over the Kerala Conference.³⁵ The meeting strongly criticized the alleged betrayal of Congress mandate by the Swaraj members of the local Council and advocated complete non co-operation as the most effective method of getting freedom from a foreign Government.³⁶

In 1931, from Palakkad was published a newspaper named *Yuvabharatham*, wrote about the troubles endured by Bardoli and its neighborhood and the consequences of the last struggle were indescribable. Lands worth crores of rupees were confiscated by the Government. On most occasion lands and grains were confiscated and were sold in auction for five percent of the value.³⁷ A.S.K.Iyengar was another communist leader, who glorified the communist ideology, attacked the bourgeoisie elements in the Congress and puts forth a plan for revolution. He also condemned police

³⁴ *Ibid.*,pp. 47-48.

³⁵ Benjamin Guy Horniman, a British Journalist, Editor of Bombay Chronicle, supported Indian Nationalist Movement (History of Freedom Movement, (HFM), vol.70, TSA.)

³⁶ History of Freedom Movement, (HFM),vol.p.70,TSA.

³⁷ Mention here is made of the Bardoli Satyagraha in Gujarat. It shows that the people were aware of the happenings in distant regions and were politically conscious.(*Yuvabharatham*, 31st May 1931, May to August, NNPR, p 1051,TSA)

surveillance of the activities of the socialists and the speeches delivered by them.³⁸

The views and voices of the communists can be heard in Kerala, in Kozhikode where the Kerala Radical Conference was held on 15th December 1935, to them independence for India means complete independence not having any partnerships with British empire, strongly opposed the new constitution and also to negate the policy of Congress.³⁹ Thus, the radicals were against any compromise with Britain; their goal was complete independence, which they believed could be won through direct action of the masses. It was observed that the birth of the Congress Socialist party was not at Patna, but within the precincts of the jails into which the young men of India were thrown. The aims of these radicals were to bring the people back to the great struggle where the Congress leaders have left it in 1931. Commenting on the proceedings of this radical conference, *Mathrubhumi* states that, the programme of the militant socialists were not clear. The resolution that in the event of any world war breaking out, the occasion should be made use for winning Indian freedom, suggested that the country should be ready for fight and not peace. But another paper *Manorama* wrote against these proposed policies, saying that this talk of destroying land- lordism and refusing to pay rent would create hatred and strife between different classes of people. It concludes by saying that people should not 'lecture in India, while dreaming of Russia and America'. In 1942, Communist party of India, its committee, subcommittees and branches were declared unlawful.⁴⁰

³⁸ History of Freedom Movement, (HFM), vol. 69, 1932–33, TSA.

³⁹ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 18th December 1935, NNPR, July – December 1935, TSA.

⁴⁰ G.O.N O. MS 2152, dated 23rd July 1942, RAK.

However the Government later cancelled the note of Home Department declaration that CPI was unlawful and released some fifty six security prisoners unconditionally from central jail Vellore.⁴¹ When the Communist party was declared illegal, we find party groups coming up in Palakkad. In the earlier times party groups comprised of N.Krishnan, C.V.Madhavan, C.A.Vasudevan and others. They held their first meeting in Kattusseri, a village in Alathur. The party conducted study classes and issued many pamphlets. Issues were thoroughly discussed in these party groups and, people with party leanings were identified by the members.⁴² Main leaders visited these areas. A.K.Gopalan, K.A.Keraleeyan, Subramaniya Thirumaulpad, E.P.Gopalan, P.Krishnapillai, P.Narayana Nair, participated in these meetings.⁴³ There existed many beedi factories in and around Alathur region. They rallied behind these leaders. (Pineapple beedi company, Poona, Turkey Kozhi Beedi Company). These workers had to suffer low wages as well as worst treatment from owners.

M.R.Ayyappan was an ordinary worker, who began to attend party meetings. He reminisces about how R.Krishnan hid himself when the police party came in search of him. Meanwhile we come to understand that R.Krishnan had become a very prominent local leader at Palakkad. It was said that to get the *patta* receipt a *jenmi* was locked inside a *kalam* under the instigation of R.Krishnan, Kunchu, Pullott Ramankutty were there in this. Openly violating was the injunction order of *marichettiyar*⁴⁴, the local communists lead by T.Damu, harvested the field, strong social inequalities

⁴¹ G.O.N O. MS 1772, dated 23rd June, 1942, RAK.

⁴² Strong party groups came up in Vandazhi Mudappallur, Kizhakkancheri, Kannabra, Manjapra, Chittilencherry, Kavasseri, Alathur, Mangalam, Elavanchery etc (All places in and around Palakkad).

⁴³ Foremost communist leaders of communist party in Kerala.

⁴⁴ marichettiyar was the local land owner

existed in the society and when a low caste person entered the temple pond he was cruelly assaulted. The people were not allowed to walk through Kunisseri Nair's road. K.C.Kunji was the leader in the Kunisseri area and he was the main person who strengthened the communist movement in those parts. It was recorded that with the Brahmin community they did not have to face much difficulty, but Nairs' behavior was so atrocious. The men and woman belonging to lower classes were treated extremely badly by them. Many leaders in order to break the existing social taboos took bath in the temple ponds.

There are also references regarding the religions conversions of the lower classes to Christianity during this time. This was done by one Rev. John Varghese. Thus many people belonging to '*asari*'⁴⁵ community were Christianised. It was reported that the people generally led a hand to mouth existence. There was not much work, if they could find work, such as in the beedi companies, the wages were meager. There was no money to buy food and cloths. Along with these miseries the people had to suffer many atrocities and taboos at the hands of the high caste people. Attempts were made to challenge caste restrictions by taking water from forbidden wells.⁴⁶

In public ponds, these common people were not allowed to enter. *nayadis*⁴⁷ were one of the most downtrodden sections of the society and no one *even* gave them any job. In order to fight casteism, at Chittilenchery, Kunju, a communist leader made these *nayadis* to sit on the back of elephants and took them in a procession. Govindan, Appu and others lead

⁴⁵ *asari*— The people belonged to this community engaged in wood works or carpentry.

⁴⁶ Evidences from the venture to write party charitram of Palakkad,an endeavor by Kunjiraman Master Padana Kendram, Alathur. They had organised family get together of aged people and collected details from them,which are being used here.

⁴⁷ One of the lowest and downtrodden sections in the society.

the interdining in Chittilanchery. A major *Janmi* house was Kadambatt who committed many atrocities. Another daily reports about the decision of the party workers not to support the war efforts of the British Government and to utilize this opportunity for getting our own independence.⁴⁸In 1937, C.Kunhiraman Nair, K.A.Keraliyan and K.P.Gopalan were charged with *sedition*. Case was posted to early January. All the three were ordered by Joints Magistrate to enter into *bonds* for rupees five hundred with two *sureties* for rupees three hundred. They refused to furnish the security and they were ordered to undergo simple imprisonment for one year or until the period they furnish security. They were sent to central jail Cannanore.⁴⁹

The Hindu also reports the arrest of Chandroth Kunjiraman Nayar Member of KPCC for his seditious speech against the Government. He had organized a *JATA*⁵⁰ of hunger marchers, carried on intense propaganda against the Government.⁵¹In 1943, many street meetings were held in Palakkad town, in which some two hundred (200) beedi workers were present. Leaders spoke in these meetings and appealed the people to rally behind them in unity. The beedi workers were in unity with the Kozhikode workers and in fact successful in getting better wages. Through these workers unions the party was further strengthened.⁵² The party workers as well as the union workers were very active. In Chittalencherry, as a result of the unity and initiative taken by the communist party workers, the saw mill

⁴⁸ *Prabhatham*, May 1st 1937, Kerala Congress Volunteer Core, Keluettan Gaveshana Padana Kendram, Kozhikkode, pp. 7-8.

⁴⁹ G.O.NO. 231 dated 29.1.37, Public record (1937) Department, Misc series letter from District Magistrate Malabar to the Secretary to Government, Home Department on 4th January 1937, Calicut, RAK.

⁵⁰ procession

⁵¹ *The Hindu*, 27.11.36, NNPR, TSA.

⁵² *Deshabhimani*, May 30th 1943, Sunday, Keluettean Padana Gaveshana Kendram, p.5.

workers got an enhancement in their wages.⁵³ The communist party workers were able to intervene very effectively in the urban space of Palakkad, by successfully bargaining with the Government as well as the land owners.

Attacks of cholera were reported in Palakkad. Common people were greatly affected by this. In Parakunnam, Pallistreet when people died of this disease, it was the party workers who conducted things then.⁵⁴ In Palakkad talook at Kannadi, a meeting was to be held. One *karshakajadha* (farmers procession) started from Kottekad and it was led by K.Kesavamenon, K.V.Chamu etc. They spoke about aims of this Karshaka organization. The procession reached Pudusseri, Kanjikode and there was a public meeting there. Next day the procession proceeded to Attapallam, Elapully, Polpully, Panayur and from there (30th) to Kodumbu, Kinasseri, Peruvemba, Tannisseri etc. Thus till February seventh the procession visited various places and it ended in Mundur.⁵⁵ The procession carried on by the leaders acquired much political significance. It united the people and also created a political awareness among the common man.

In October 21, 22nd, 1938, the aided school teachers conference was held at Ottapalam, presided over by Cochin Education Director K.N.Menon, the meeting to be inaugurated by P.Narayanan Nair.⁵⁶ Slowly the different sections of the people were becoming aware of the combined strength in them. An all students meeting were decided to be held at Madras in next January. Students from different parts of Madras were to be united and to give it a centralized leadership. That was the main aim of this meeting.⁵⁷

⁵³ *Deshabhimani*, May 30th 1943, Sunday, Keluettan Padana Gaveshana Kendram, p.5.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.5

⁵⁵ *Prabhatam*, 1939, February 6th p.7.

⁵⁶ *Prabhatham*, 24th October, 1938, p.18.

⁵⁷ *Prabhatham*, 28th November 1938, p.21.

In the field of co-operative sector, it is understood that even in the year 1913, a cooperative society or *sangham* was formed in Kannambra in Palakkad taluk. Thus, the first cooperative sector came up in Palakkad as a means to help the farmers escape from the cruel money lenders, an effort to help the cultivators, later on spread to the suburbs of Koduvayur, Peruvemba, Mayannur, Vaniamkulam, and Cherplassery.⁵⁸ The farmers greatly benefitted out of these as it was possible for them to get small time loans in times of need.⁵⁹

West Coast Spectator in 1920, remarks that the labour conditions are far from being satisfactory, labour literally being 'sweated, underpaid, and overworked'. They led their life in abject poverty. The inauguration of a labour union in Malabar with its head quarters at Calicut was established.⁶⁰ Later on branches were opened in other parts of Kerala. In between the World Wars, it can be considered to be an age of forming associations or groups collectively, a politically conscious section, and demanding rights.

K.V.Chamu was another active participant in the secret meetings and who undertook radical actions as part of Quit India Movement, such as plans to bomb the Government Victoria College, Palakkad. His other activities were to dynamite the College laboratory. People actively participated and scores of post boxes were reported missing, railway culverts damaged, the Municipal radio at Palakkad, missing as a part of Quit India struggle.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Stalam, Kalam, Charitram, DTPC Publication: 2011, p.226 (places in and around Palakkad)

⁵⁹ See for details O.Abdulla, *Sahakaranaprsathanam Vikasavum*, (Mal.), Sahithya Pravathaka Sahakarana Sangham, Kottayam: 2011, pp. 66-83.

⁶⁰ *West Coast Spectator*, Calicut, 4th March, 1920, NNPR, 1920, January-March, TSA. Factory workers get only 6-8 annas daily for nine hours of work. We find the workers agriculture or industry had a very hard time.

⁶¹ See for details P.K.K.Menon, *The History of Freedom Movement in Kerala*, vol. 11 (1885 - 1938), Thiruvananthapuram, 1972.

Meanwhile in 1945, in the Malabar area, Kerala Congress Samiti workers were actively engaged in organizing students, laborers' and Kisans. The Kerala Students Congress proposed to depute five representatives to be trained at a Citizenship College which was to be opened in Bombay early in May and the working committee has drawn up a programme which includes the payment of full time workers, night schools and other items in the constructive programme. A number of training campuses were being opened in the various places and funds were being collected for the purpose.⁶²

In the 1935 – 36 it was observed that police were keenly watching the movements of those who participated in the socialist movements. House searches, confiscation of pamphlets and the issue of prohibitory orders became the order of the day and those found guilty were punished.⁶³ Strikes occurred in different centers between February and March 1935. In Malabar very few suspensions of sentences have been sanctioned because District Magistrate anticipated a possible revival of movement.⁶⁴ At the same time anti Brahmin feelings under the leadership of Dr.T.M.Nair was getting stronger and a branch of the anti – Brahmin movement was set up in Palakkad. Sankunni, who was the Principal of Government Victoria College, beat a Brahmin boy and after effects were there. Along with him Dr.Krishnan also tried to patronize this movement a lot. Ezhavas challenged the age old rites and customs prevalent in the Kalpathy streets, with the full support of Sankunni as well as Dr.Krishnan. At that time the Ezhavas even though was rich with a lot of cattle and land, they had to suffer many disabilities in the society. Many opted to convert to Christianity.⁶⁵

⁶² Public (General) Department, FSG, 12th May 1945 – Strictly Confidential, History of Freedom Movement, HFM, vol. 75, p.48, TSA.

⁶³ *Tamil Nadu*, 18th 1936 Madras, TSA

⁶⁴ HFM, 1935, TSA

⁶⁵ C.Kesavan, *Jeevithasamaram*, (Mal.), DC Books, 2004, p. 160. See also for details *Exercises in Modern Kerala Society*, K.N.Ganesh (ed.), NBS: Kottayam, 2012.

There was a change in the nature of Congress voice during the 1920-21. They now appealed the students to boycott the classes and to come to the strike front. Officers and *vakils*⁶⁶ were asked to give up their jobs. As a result of this K.Kelappan who was studying law at Bombay gave up and returned to Kerala to join the national movement. London barrister A.K.Pillai also returned. All over Kerala the workers engaged themselves in many constructive activities, which strengthened the freedom movement. Youth organizations, women associations, libraries, anti caste propoganda, Hindi *pracharanam*⁶⁷, weaving etc were vigorously taken up.⁶⁸By 1934, the Government of India had declared the Communist party of India and all its branches illegal. This was in keeping with the general policy of the Government, for the Government in India was really fascist.⁶⁹

The paper in strong words criticized the policy of double dealings of the British Government. The writers argued that, if a Communist party in Britain can exist and even send members to Parliament, why should it be banned in India. It alleged that they had no use of democratic doctrines, ideas, freedom of speech and associations outside Britain.

6.4 Urban Space and the War

In 1914, the District Magistrates and the residents of Travancore and Cochin were informed that arrangements have been made for the supply of the abbreviated Reuter news by telegram from Bombay during the present crisis in Europe. These officers will be required to see that the news so communicated was not to be 'published by them in English or vernacular

⁶⁶ advocates.

⁶⁷ propagation.

⁶⁸ Janardhanan Moyarath, (ed.,) Moyareth Sankaran, *Atmakadhayaum Charitra Smaranakalum* (Mal.), Chinta Publishers: Trivandrum, 2012, p. 103.

⁶⁹ *The Indian Express*, Madras, 28th July 1934. , NNPR, 1934, July – December, TSA.

until the telegram of which summaries are supplied to them have appeared in the press, subject to this condition the officers may expose translation of the telegram or of such portions as it may seem advisable, some remarks may be added so as to explain the situations to make it understandable'.⁷⁰ The War has started and hence such precaution.

The Madras War Front was established on 11th August 1914, one week after the outbreak of the War, to help to the British India, and the Indian troops fighting on the military fronts. It also had a Ladies' Wing for the supply of Red Cross articles and other necessities to the troops overseas. British and many Indian ladies formed centers in Madras and in different towns and districts of the Presidency and supplied cloths and such things to the troops in the field as well as sick persons. The Ladies Wing supplied Red Cross articles to all military hospitals, items sent to Egypt, Palestine, East Africa, Persia, and Mesopotamian and also returned sick and wounded in hospitals in South India. They were able to collect some funds as well.

One such centre was founded in Palakkad, led by the wives of the British officials like H.M.Hall and Dupen as well as ladies from Nelliampathi. In 1916, the Ladies Fund brought out a War Fund stamp which was sold in the main shops, banks and hotels in Madras. The ladies of Palakkad led by (Mrs.) Dupan donated rupees two thousand two hundred and twenty nine (Rs 2229-0-0) to Ladies Depot. The Indians and Europeans of Palakkad were able to collect rupees three hundred (Rs 300-0-0) through K.Krishnan. Thus both men and women of Palakkad, whether British or Indian contributed well to the fund by organizing 'war fetes' entertainments, benefit programmes, sale of works etc. In fact, as of 31st October, 1915, women of

⁷⁰ File No. 287, War Bulletins and Gazettes Extraordinary, RAK.

Palakkad had collected rupees one thousand five hundred and eighty five (Rs.1585/-) for the war effort.⁷¹

In many places in Kerala as well as at Palakkad, meetings were held in connection with the recruitment of soldiers in the First World War. Raja of Kollengode, Mannarghat Moopil Nair, Kadathanattu RajaKavalapara Nair, Muthukoya Thangal, Raarichan Moopan requires the jenmies to hand over the properties on lease to those who had joined the army. These local Rajas did yeoman service in the recruitment of soldiers to the army. They also gave contribution to the War Fund and the Kollengode Raja announced scholarship to the children of those men who had joined the army. More than a lakh of rupees was collected towards War Fund under his initiative.⁷² He also donated a sum of rupees two hundred towards the monthly war fund, for the maintenance of the hospital ship Madras.⁷³

On May 10th 1915, the King of Britain issued a Royal Pardon, in which he had approved of pardon being granted to all persons subject to the Indian Army Act who were in a state of desertion on 5th August 1914 and who surrendered themselves at any place in India on or before 15th Jan 1915. The Government of India wanted such persons should surrender in order to avail themselves of the benefits of the royal clemency.⁷⁴ The sincerity and the determination of the Indian soldiers were elaborated in a book.⁷⁵ Meanwhile in 1917, the British Government passed the Indian Defense Bill and the

⁷¹ W/23, *The Madras War Fund*, published by Higginbotham: Ltd, p. 44, RAK. The stamp shows the Hospital ship "Madras" steaming along, half anna on the scroll along the lower line of the ship the dies struck by Hyderabad State Mint free of cost by Nizam.

⁷² Revenue Records, Bundle No.204, Sl.No.35, RAK (These are all important naduvazhis or powerful local rajas of Kerala).

⁷³ *The Work of the War Fund*, Aug 1914-1915, December, Higginbotham: RAK.

⁷⁴ Notification, Ootacamand, May 10th 1915, PublicDepartment,RAK.

⁷⁵ Philip Mason, *A Matter of Honor, an Account of Indian Army, its Officers and Men*, Natraj Publication: Deharadun, 2004.

papers react favorably towards it. It exhorts all patriotic and loyal Indians to join the army. The Commander –in –chief’s statement that Indians would be given commissions in the army, when qualified for the same and observes that besides giving Indians military training the bill improves the relations between the Europeans and the Indians and thus the differences can be lessened to a great extent.⁷⁶

In 1916, Subedars were asked to provide necessary assistance, for the recruitment of the Nairs to the army.⁷⁷ The Nairs were generally given preference to others as there were considered to be traditional fighters and also taking into consideration their physique, social back ground, education and so on. We come to notice many of the petitions rejected from Muslims and Brahmins on these grounds.

Recruiting officer at Bangalore explained the advisability of opening a depot for recruits at Malappuram and he wanted the District Magistrates assistance to provide accommodation in an empty barrack room or police line or some space and to erect a temporary shed, cookhouse and latrine.⁷⁸ In the archival records, we see a petition from G.Mahadevan dated for 5.12.15 requesting enlistment in the army, and another petition from U.Kunnhunni Nair of Palakkad, dated 13.12.15 for the post of Subedar in the army. These applications were submitted to the District Magistrates and these applicants were directed to appear at Palakkad on 23.12.2015. Also E.T.Gopalan Nair of Perinthalmanna, M.Bebjisaheb of Palakkad was also for Jemadar post. The District Magistrate, Palakkad suggests the name of one

⁷⁶ *Keralapatrika* , 24th February, 1917, NNPR, TSA.

⁷⁷ Disposal File No. 1327/H.16, dated 15.7.16 R.D. Files, RAK.

⁷⁸ Letter from the Commandant,⁸⁶th Carnatic Infantry, dated 8.9.15. The Nairs were also the traditional military group in the society, along with it their standing in the society, money, and education were also considered for recruitments in the army.

Mudavangatil Sankara Menon of Talakad amsom, Ponnani Taluk as a fit person, to whom direct Commission in the Indian army be given. The District Magistrate, Palakkad had already sent out the names of four of the Commandant and directed two others to appear before the Recruiting Officer, Mr.Skinner. The potential recruits' social status, education and health were being compared. One seems to come from a comparatively poor family that paid only rupees sixty as assessment and he himself was a clerk having rupees twelve in the Sub Registry office, Tirur.

From these descriptions, it is clear that good education, level of taxation, and Nairs social background were the criteria used to determine whether one should be recruited to the army. While passing the rules of recruitment in the proposed Nair regiment, the rules were wholly beneficial to the recruits and hence it was suggested that Nair's should come forward to enlist them.⁷⁹

We find another letter in 1915, which enquires about Nair recruitment position. This was the only regiment authorized to enlist full class company of Nairs. He (Commandant) was already having thirty three Nairs and requires a further number of eighty to complete a company of one hundred and thirteen. It also requested that much help was needed in obtaining suitable candidates of age and social standing and interviews were to be conducted personally. It also required certain non- Commissioned officers and queried whether it was possible to obtain them from men who were enrolling as sepoy. It was asked to recommend, some six men of superior standing to the ordinary man who could be enlisted for appointment on probation, direct to the rank of Havildar and Naick. In

⁷⁹ NNPR, *Manorama*, Calicut, May 5th 1916, TSA.

taking recruits, here, preference was given to men from land, rather than men from commercial and clerical professions as the former was more active and would be able to bear the hard out of door physical labors of a soldier's life.⁸⁰ One V.Konithi Menon of .K.Menon and Company, Huzur Road, Calicut have applied for Nair Commission.⁸¹

The second grade Pleader in the Walluvanad Municipality court was willing to accept direct Commission as an Indian officer, but not willing to accept anything below Subedar rank.⁸² The candidates also had their own preferences, is amply understood here. In a letter from O.Kunhunninayar, Vattakkanchira, Palakkad requested to join the army and stated his desire to serve his country as an officer in the Indian army and if there was no vacancy in the South Carnatic Infantry, he asked to whom to apply.⁸³

He received a reply through the Principal, Government Victoria College, directing him to appear before the District Magistrate at Palakkad on 28.12.15. One Madhava Aiyer wanted to enlist but Brahmins were not apparently wanted. C.R.Balakrishna Menon belongs to a good Nair family, who was in a socially and intellectually in a good position, was declared quite fit for commission. Gopalan Nair of Perinthalmanna was to appear before the District Registrar between 10th and 20th January 1916. M.Bebji Sahib, a senior intermediate student, Government Victoria College, Palakkad, belongs to a

⁸⁰ Confidential Letter from the Commandant, 86th Carnatic Infantry to the District Registrar, Malabar, dated 8th September 1915. Disposal No. 1327, M.16, dated 15.7.16, R.D.Files, RAK.

⁸¹ No. 1327, M.16, dated 28th September 1915, RAK.

⁸² U. Konthunni Menon from Calicut K.P. Karunakara Menon 189, Victoria Hostel, Triplicane. C.R.Balakrishnan, Cherumanisseri, Panniankara, Kallai, M.P.Narayana Menon, Perinthalmanna, Valluvanad are all Nair officer candidates, to be interviewed by F.B.Evans. (From T.H. Hill, Joint Magistrate to the District Magistrate, 25th October 1915, Disposal No. 1327, N.16, dated 15.7.16, R.D .Files , RAK)

⁸³ The Letter Addressed to the Collector of Malabar, 13.12.15, He was a student in Government Victoria College of 20 years of age, RAK.

Mohammeden family in Arcot residing in the college hostel, Palakkad, his course was to be completed by the end of March 1916 and by that time he should be ready to join army. The reply was that, as to the knowledge of District Magistrate, no direct commission was offered to Muhammadans and that he was asked to contact Assistant Recruiting Officer, Captain Skinner, Coimbatore.⁸⁴ P.S. SivaramaGurukkal, Koduvayur Palakkad, was not offered the commission, as people belonging to his caste were not given jobs. He again submitted another letter requesting to join the volunteer forces in the military department. He was the acting Head *adhikari* of Koduvayur amsom, Palakkad taluk for last two years, had studied up to 5th form (10th standard). He was of twenty nine years of age and family assessment was rupees one thousand two hundred (Rs.1200/-) and was paying income tax of rupees fifty seven (Rs.57/) to the Government. He wanted the job as an officer.

Tahasildar of Palakkad states that he was unable to find any suitable candidate, and reports that Kochunni Menon of Nalepully, who has been enlisted as a Naik belongs to the respectable house named Manikkathand also Mutavangathil PuthiyaVeetil Sankara Menon of Talakadamsom, who belongs to a respectable family, knows English, worked as a temporary clerk in the Sub Registry Office, as eligible. They were requested to appear before the District Magistrates at Calicut before 4th March.⁸⁵

Further, recruiting licenses were requested, to send recruits for the Nair regiment fresh licenses were requested for recruits.⁸⁶ In one of the G.O's we find a letter, forwarding a set of rules drawn up as a guide for local

⁸⁴ Disposal File No. 1327 /M/16, dated 5.7.16, RAK.

⁸⁵ Letter from the Office of the Sub Collector McEwen, Palakkad dated 6.2.1916 to the District Magistrate, Calicut, RAK.

⁸⁶ From K.P.Achutha Menon, Taluk Board, Member, Vilayannur, Palakkad to the Collector of Malabar dated 5th June 1916, RAK.

governments to follow in the grant of concessions to meet the education of the children of Indian soldiers and also issuing certain subsidiary instruction in this matter. Thus the education of the orphaned and destitute children of Indian soldier was being looked after.⁸⁷ Instructions were given to all Collectors for the compilation of district records of the war services.⁸⁸

The district officers' were asked to report about the conditions of camping grounds and to submit necessary proposals, if repairs are there. The district officer, Palakkad reports that Fort Maiden was the only camping ground in the town and which was in good condition. The details of Route no.11 (Kozhinjampara, Palakkad, Lakkidi, Kollengode, Kunissery, Alathur, Thattamangalam, and Koduvayur) and Route No. 13 (Konjicode, Walayar, and Thirthalla) were also given. The charges for repair to the camping ground and for staying bungalows and encamping grounds were to be met from the proposed expenses from the 32 Misc. Discretionary grants and also the amount to be debited to 45 civil works also.⁸⁹ From the recruitment files it was known that discharged sepoy or so who are of thirty years of age, whose military service was not less than "very good" and whose character in civil life was vouched for by the civil authorities, and then these men could be employed on the same terms as permanent recruiters.⁹⁰

After the War it was decided to extend the benefits given to recruits

⁸⁷ G.O.NO. 198, 1st June 1920 Revenue (Special) RAK), G.O.NO. 663, Home (ed.), dated 23rd May 1918, RAK, D. Dis, 8395/20 dated 17.7.20, RAK.

⁸⁸ (1) G.O.NO. 208, 8th June 1920 (2) G.O.NO. 335, Revenue (Special) (war) dated 16th July 1919, RAK.

⁸⁹ (1) G.O.NO. 1861 of 1.12.16, RAK, (2) Rev .Dis .D. 10006/m 17, dated 25.5.17 certain formalities to be observed on the occasion of the marching of regiments through districts, RAK, (G.O. NO. 1358, Public dated 22nd October 1914), RAK.

⁹⁰ Extract from letter from the Additional Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Army Department to the Adjutant General in India, No. 6973 dated 12th May 1917, RAK, (2) File No. 293, Recruitment Files, RAK.

and men in active service in the army provided that they apply for the extension within twelve months of the date of discharge, that their service was satisfactory. It was also decided that when land was granted under this scheme to a discharged soldier particulars regarding the survey number, classification, extent and assessment of the land granted and date of grant should be noted on the discharge certificate by the assigning officer with a view to prevent the same men getting land twice.⁹¹

It seems that the Brigadier General wanted a list showing military camping grounds and those actually reserved as such, as far as Palakkad was concerned

The District officers concerned were asked to report whether these grounds were still used as camping grounds, about their condition now and whether there were any other places within their jurisdiction reserved as military camping ground.

Walayar was described as a very small village, where there was no good camping ground and the place seemed to be very 'feverish'. Good camping ground was located about four miles short of the village, the railway station was one mile from the village, country was very flat and with jungle sand there was a river bridge crossing at about six miles.

"Remarks: It was remarked that there was no camping ground in or near Walayar. The remarks against the stage "good camping ground four miles short of village" was not properly understood. In the District Board road no. 6, there was an extensive *maiden* on the southern side of the road. It was registered as private *janmam*.⁹²"

⁹¹ Board of Revenue Proceedings No.60, 7th June 1919,RAK and R. Dis. Files No. 7714/19 dated 8.7.19,RAK.

⁹² *Ibid.*,

Regarding the above mentioned paragraph, we find a query from the Brigadier General regarding the conditions of the ground, if it was suitable as camping grounds. We find a description of Palakkad and Walayar. In Palakkad town in this context, the presence of a civil station or the place where the administrative departments were located and the fort were both mentioned. This is a clear indication that in the urban space of Palakkad the civil bodies and fort were of foremost importance. The location of the railway station was also mentioned, as an area where people converged for administrative and trading needs.

In 1918, a note in the Malayalam daily points out that, there was a decline of the martial spirit of South India and a decrease in the proportion of recruits required by the government of India from the Madras Presidency, it seems to show that the real cause of this decline was because of the peace and quietness which have prevailed under British administration and the resulting absence of an opportunity for the use of arms or the exercising of the martial spirit common in Malabar before British occupation and which has attracted the attention and admiration of travelers abroad. 'Old arms and dilapidated forts are standing witnesses to the old military glory of Malabar.' The note concludes with an appeal to the people of Malabar to join the army and retrieve the whole of South Indian from the disgrace of being considered as people without courage and martial spirit.⁹³ That was a reference to a bygone days of glory and militarism of Malabar and urging the people to recreate the golden times. Here the daily opines that the bygone days are actually to be glorified and urges the people to take up arms against the enemies.

⁹³ NNPR, January – March, *Manorama*, 5th March 1918, Calicut, TSA.

The government decides to issue certificate to the highest subscribers in each district, five certificates being given for each lakh subscribed in any district with a maximum of hundred certificates per district.⁹⁴ As the total amount from this district was about eleven lakhs, the District was entitled to get fifty five certificates, Secretary Zacharias gives fifty five names of the largest subscribers of which some were not alive and some not ready to accept.⁹⁵

The government has arranged for the certificates to be printed on parchment paper at government press and decided that they should be signed by Collectors and sent to the recipients by post. But some regard this as offensive. In such cases certificates should be confined to those acceptable to the recipients.⁹⁶ It seems that Mannarkad Raman UnniMoopil Nair has subscribed about Rs 1,36,400/-, Vasudeva Raja of Kollangode Rs15,000/, K. Krishnan, Civil Surgeon Palakkad Rs 5000/ were the major contributors.⁹⁷

In 1918, one of the Malayalam dailies stated that Madras government mentioned that there was not much co-operation in the Presidency regarding the recruitment of soldiers to the army. A charge that which altogether cannot be denied. An explanation to this was that, if respectable leaders were appointed as Recruiting Officers in different parts of the country, and also if the details about the full pay, offices, recruitments, remuneration etc and also of the prospects of joining the army were frequently published in papers things might have been different. The

⁹⁴ D.Dis No. 2437/4, Huzur Office, Calicut dated 7.6.19, RAK.

⁹⁵ Letter dated 18.3.19 from the Secretary District War Loan Committee, dated 18.3.19, RAK.

⁹⁶ Letter dated 18.3.19 from the Secretary District War Loan Committee, RAK.

⁹⁷ D.Dis No. 2437/4, RAK.

indifferences of Recruiting Officers may also have been the reason of insufficient co-operation.⁹⁸

In 1918, the government asked for details of the deceased soldiers of Malabar. A doubt arises about Shimgaram, Thiruvillamala, office was at Palakkad or not. For example it was understood that one K.Shimgaran, No. 1287, 5th Labor Corps belonged to Thiruvillamala amsom in Telapetti taluk of Cochin State, but Cochin durbar was not able to trace the identity of the deceased, K.Sankaran Nair of the 5th Labour Corps asked the Commandant for full particulars regarding the address of the deceased, but the Commandant now said that his name was Kuttikattil Sankaran Nair and that he belonged to Thiruvillamala, Palakkad, and was also requesting to make some enquiries regarding his dependents and report the result to the Government. The Tahasildar of Palakkad was then requested to locate the information.⁹⁹

Enquiries were made about the deceased Sankaran Nair in the amsoms adjoining Thiruvillamalai but the identity of the deceased could not be traced. There was a house called “Kuttikad” in Tholanuramsom and the *adhiig(k)ari* belongs to this house, it was further reported that there was no person bearing the name Sankaran Nair in that house.¹⁰⁰

We come across a statement showing particulars of circumstances of the dependents of deceased Indian officers and men in the district of Palakkad.

- 1) Govindan Nair, 73 Infantry Sepoy, No. 4553, Cherplassery village, Walluvanad.

⁹⁸ *Manorama*, 5th March 1918, NNPR.,TSA.

⁹⁹ R.Dis No. D 7297/18 dated 31.12.18.,RAK.

¹⁰⁰ 1) A letter to the Collector of Malabar from Palakkad Taluk Office dated 21.3.1918, RAK, *adhiigari*-local official. 2) R. Dis 7297/18 dated 31.12.18,RAK.

- 2) Chinna Panikker, Naik No. 4169, Kollengode, Palakkad.
- 3) Narayana Nayar, 2nd S and M.Sapper, No. 176, Tarur Village, Palakkad. Communication to the Collector informing that all recruits who enlisted since the beginning of the war should be allowed the concession completed in G.O.No.62, Revenue dated 10th Jan 1916.¹⁰¹
- 4) The District Magistrate forwarding a petition from Kesava Panikker sepoy No. 1284, B. company, 2/73rd Malabar infantry, Bellary requesting the grant of free education to his nephews Kumara Panikkar, a student in 3rd standard of the Board Middle School, Cherplassery.¹⁰²
- 5) Petition from A.Balakrishna Nayar of Palakkad taluk, ex-lance Naik No. 5023 of III Labour Corps requesting to get the arrears of family allotment made by him from that unit.¹⁰³
- 6) The Government requesting Presidents of all Districts Subedars Committee to render all possible assistance in the matter of re-enlistment of men recently discharged in 63rd GLT and 2/73rd Malabar infantry for active sessions in Mesopotamian.¹⁰⁴
- 7) M.Ravunny Nair, No. 658 Sepoy B. Company 2/7 3rd Malabar Infantry requesting to grant of concessions or lessen the standard rate of fees on behalf of his brother M.KumaranNayar, a student in II form Board Higher School, Koduvayur.¹⁰⁵
- 8) K.Karunakara Nair, Sepoy No. 768, B.Company, 2/73rd Malabar Infantry, Bellary requesting the grant of concessions or lessen the standard rates of fees on behalf of his brother K.Ramanathan, a student in the III form Native High School, Palakkad, Collector forwards a petition from Achuthan Nair, Sepoy No. 1164, Sepoy B. Company 2/73rd Malabar, infantry, Bellary requesting the commission for education for his brother K.Kunhukuttan Nair, a student of 4th form school of Kottayi.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ 1) Board of Revenue Proceedings (Land), Madras, Proceedings No. 48, 12th February 1916, RAK, 2) D. 406/P. 16, dated 7.3.16, RAK.

¹⁰² Proceeding of the Executive Committee of District Soldiers Committee met at Calicut on May 13th October 1919, RAK.

¹⁰³ Proceedings of the Executive Committee of the Malabar District Soldiers Committee dated 1st August 1921, RAK.

¹⁰⁴ Misc. G.O. NO, 209 (Rev), Special War Papers, RAK.

¹⁰⁵ Misc. File dated 17th November 1919, RAK.

¹⁰⁶ Proceedings of the Executive Committee of the Malabar District Board Soldiers Committee held at Calicut 17th November 1919, RAK.

- 9) Iyyappan, Mesopotamian Railway No.37340, gangman Kaniyapuram Ottapalam, Walluvanad.¹⁰⁷
- 10) P.Chamu Nair, Ramunni Menon's father, 5th Labour Corps, 2114, labourer, Nair caste – Koduvayuramsom, Palakkad.¹⁰⁸

Thus, the government was able to get the information of those dependents that had died fighting in the War so that adequate compensation can be given to them. Regarding the granting of recruiting badge for which Indians are eligible to be selected from the civilians and military pensioners, serving with units for recruiting work done during the War. The badge consisted of five pointed bronze stars enclosing a gilt plaque bearing an effigy of the King. The plaque was surrounded by a wreath bearing the inscription 'for recruiting work during the war' The badge was suspended by a gilt ring to a dark green ribbon twenty seven inches in length and was to be worn around the neck. The badge will not carry any title, alphabetical letter or privilege other than that of wearing it. And the recommended names should be done in consultation with the Assistant Recruiting Officer and the grounds of recommendations should be clearly stated. In the case of difference of opinion between the Collector and the Assistant Recruiting Officer, the views of both have to be included.¹⁰⁹ Either badges or certificates were issued. In these lists, the names of the Kollengode Raja (Vasudeva Raja), Mannarghat Moppil Nayar, Kavalappara, Nayar heads the list.¹¹⁰

Educational concessions were given to the children and dependents of

¹⁰⁷ R. Dis. NO.7297/18 dated 31.12.18, RAK.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ From the Secretary's Office, FSG, dated 26th December 1918 to F B Evan's, the Collector of Malabar. 2) Government D.O. 3758, R.B/18-1 of 26.12.18, RAK. 3) R. Dis. NO. 9536/19, dated 23.12.19, RAK.

¹¹⁰ R.Dis.NO. 9536/19, dated 23.12.19, RAK.

the soldiers. As a result of this compensation a loss of income was reported .In the educational institutions they are exempted from the payment of certain items of special fees besides the ordinary tuition fees payable to the schools and colleges. The government does not usually provide compensation from the provincial funds for the local bodies to make good for these concessions. A few local bodies took this opportunity to claim compensation for the loss of income, consequent on the grant of these concessions in general. However, the Government did not propose to modify the existing arrangement.¹¹¹ The following are some examples of people from Palakkad who requested this educational concession. One petition from E.T.BhaskaranNayar, Sepoy No. 1166 B. requested that his brother E.T.Thatchan Nair a student of III form (8th Standard) at Koduvayur High School be given some educational concession.¹¹²In 1919, another petition from KunjuNayar, Sepoy No. 1285 Co. 2/73rd, Malabar Infantry, Battery, requested a grant of free education to his nephew KumranNayar, a class 1 student at Peringottukurissi Elementary School, Palakkad.¹¹³

Collector of Malabar forwards a petition from K.P.Thangam Nair, Naick No. 1378, 2/73rd Malabar infantry Bangalore requested an educational concessions for his brother Kutti KrishnaMenon, a student in the IV form, (9TH Standard) Board High School, Koduvayur.¹¹⁴In the budget session of

¹¹¹ GO NO. 887, Education, dated 14th June 1945, The Government directs that the rate of scholarship sanctioned to the children and dependents of deceased and incapacitated soldiers from Std.1to5 is Rs. 5/and from 6th to 8th of higher schools is Rs 7/.GO NO.886,Education, dated 36th April 1946 revised in GO. NO.1792,17TH September 1946, Government of Madras, Education and Public Health Department, RAK.

¹¹² Misc. B. 138, Sl.34, RAK.

¹¹³ Proceedings of the Executive Committee of District Soldier Committee on Calicut on Monday 27th October 1919, RAK.

¹¹⁴ Proceedings of the Executive Committee of the District Soldiers Committee held at Calicut on Monday 5th January 1920, RAK. 2) Letter No. 12002/19 dated 17.10.19 of the Collector of Malabar,RAK.

1915 – 16 framing a budget on national lines implies the existences of a power in the local government to raise taxes. However the local government did not have this power at present. District boards of Madurai and Coimbatore took up to the railway line between Podanur and Dindigal. But Malabar was not likely to join the construction. It was the war period and so abnormal conditions present, under medical and education a reduction of 5.58 lakhs was made. War condition was the reason for the reduction under two important heads.¹¹⁵ It was believed that changes will be affected after the end of this war condition.

Again government issued orders about the employment of the demobilized or retired sepoy. That was while filling vacancies on Rs.15/- and below, preference should always be given to men who had served in the army provided they are qualified by character and education. Government extends the order for one more year.¹¹⁶ In 1918, another act stated that where there was a prescribed age limit for obtaining a government job, the candidates time in the army should be subtracted from his chronological age, This was done so that men returning from war, could have a chance of getting these appointments even if they were older than would normally be accepted .According to the same law newly enrolled combatants could register their application for the branch of government service to which they would like to be appointed on return.¹¹⁷ In order to ensure that full effect was given to these orders they would suggest that officers who have appointments to make should communicate with District Soldiers Committee, who will be in a position to recommend the news of discharged

¹¹⁵ FSG, January – June, 1915,p. 501,RAK.

¹¹⁶ G.O. No. 254, 4th June 1919 Government of Madras, Revenue (Special) (War) Department, RAK.

¹¹⁷ G.O .No. 1358, Revenue, dated 8th April 1918, RAK.

Indian soldiers who are suitable for these appointments.¹¹⁸ Cash allowances were disbursed to the children and other relations of the ex- army men studying in elementary and secondary schools. The amount is limited to the actual cost incurred on the purchase of books and also some incidental expenses incurred by the students attending the schools.¹¹⁹ As in the case of First World War, during the time of Second World War also The Governor of Madras initiated a War Fund, for the purpose of raising money require for the successful completion of the War.¹²⁰ This fund replaces the Governors War Charities Appeal Fund. The Governors War Fund was sponsored and directed by the finance Sub-committee of Madras War Committee of which the Governor was the President. All money subscribed will go directly to help the war efforts.¹²¹

At the time of Second World War, when it was prolonged we see reports that rates of stationery enhancement was to be considered. S.Ebrahim Rowther, stationary contractor requested an extra forty percent of the rates sanctioned for the supply of stationery. The increase in the cost of stationary articles was due to the war condition. It was understood that government sees no reason to approve the proposal of Special Officer of the Palakkad Municipality for the payment of enhanced rate to stationery contractor.¹²² Due to war conditions there is acute shortage of paper and other items. With a view to reduce expenditure on paper and printing the government decided to discontinue the present system of communicating through printed government orders to local bodies. Municipal Councils and Heads of Department and if any amendments to rules or criticism or

¹¹⁸ G.O .Order No. 254, 4th June 1919, RAK.

¹¹⁹ G.O.N.O.880, 15TH May 1930, RAK.

¹²⁰ G.O.N.O 2832,9TH August, 1940, G.O. N.O. 565, dated 13th February 1940, RAK.

¹²¹ G.O.N.O. 2832, 9TH August, 1940, RAK.

¹²² L.A. 1942 Department Ms Series, G.O. NO.63, dated 7.1.1942, RAK.

suggestions on draft rules can be made as soon as they are published in Part 1 A of FSG which was supplied to them free of cost.¹²³

As the 'paper' position was likely to remain difficult for some more time due to war, all local bodies are instructed to continue to exercise strict economy in the use of paper in their offices and not to relax any of the existing paper economy measures.¹²⁴ The matter was examined by the government as to what extent 'Madrassi' ex-soldiers can be appointed to the posts and if qualified these men may be given preference.¹²⁵ In 1944, it was decided that the following payment would be made as compensation to contractor's labor employed on air field construction for injury caused by air raids.

- 1) Up to Rs.720/ in the case of death
- 2) Rs.1008/ in the case of permanent total disablement and Rs.8/ on temporary disablement.¹²⁶

Decision was also taken on war evacuees. All Collectors' of all districts were asked to submit returns and reviews in the 1) return no.1 expenditure on reception, feeding and dispatch of evacuee from overseas. 2) return No.2 monthly return of disbursements relating to financial assistance to the evacuees, 3) quarterly review on the working of the scheme, relating to the grant of repayable capital advances.¹²⁷ An enquiry was conducted which expressed doubts whether the scheme of school and special allowance sanctioned were made applicable to evacuees who had not applied for the

¹²³ G.O. No. 2791, L.A. dated 6th August 1940, Government of Madras Local Administration Department, RAK.

¹²⁴ G.O. N O. 1657, 11th October 1946, Government of Madras, Local Administration Department, RAK.

¹²⁵ G.O.No .3016, 22nd August 1940, RAK.

¹²⁶ War Department letter No. 63461/E 3-D10 dated 2nd February 1944, RAK.

¹²⁷ Rev. Dis. No. 2409, M/44 dated 17.3.44, RAK.

allowances at the time of application for school. While doing this, it was intended by the Government of India that some means of relief to the evacuees who found it difficult to meet the cost of education of their children, their need should be specific and genuine. So these benefits should be granted in deserving applicants irrespective whether the applicant had applied for such allowances.¹²⁸ Previously the Indian bank accounts of people stranded in enemy territories were frozen by an order by the government, but in 1944, the permission was given for the dependents to withdraw from frozen accounts.¹²⁹

As the War was going on, Rule 21 was introduced, which gave District Magistrates, Commissioners of Police, the power to intercept and censor postal articles was introduced. Sub rules (2) & (3) of rule 19, also gave them power to control the possession and use of means of secret communication.¹³⁰ One Natesalyer of Vaidhyadhapuram village, Kalpathy was seeking an enhancement in the allowances. It was first sanctioned rupees one fifty later on reduced to rupees ninety and then given an increase to one twenty five.¹³¹

In 1943, K.Rugmanyamma, Kunnakat House, Ethanoor PO, Palakkad to the Deputy Tahasildar, Alathur, requested that she be granted an allowance as early as possible. She described her current pitiable state, since she depended on her stepson for livelihood, who was in Singapore but as the Japanese had captured Singapore, she was put to great difficulty because her income from that source had stopped. Revenue enquires were made and

¹²⁸ From Government of India, Department of Overseas to all Provincial Governments and Chief Commissioners' dated 14th February 1944, New Delhi, RAK, (2) R. Dis. No. 2359 M/44 dated 9.3.44.

¹²⁹ G. O .No. MS 567 dated 25th February, 1944, RAK.

¹³⁰ G. O .No. 450 dated 6th February 1942, RAK.

¹³¹ R. Dis. No. 11178/M/44 dated 20.1.45 Dept. of Revenue, RAK.

reported that he was not applicant's direct son and was not under Malayan Government, but was working in an estate. She was granted an evacuee allowance of rupees ten per month with effect from January 1944. The Tahasildar of Palakkad requires, drawing the amount in a contingent bill and disbursing the amount on proper receipt after obtaining from her an undertaking in the usual form.¹³² Regarding war executes Mrs.K.V.Menon/N.MeenakshiAmma of Kollengode was in Singapore with her husband. On March 1940 she and her children came back and were depending on the remittances from her husband. After the Malayan attack, when she applied for financial assistance, she was granted an allowance of rupees eighty four per month by the Malayan representative from 1.4.43 to 31.8.44. Her allowances were discontinued from 1.9.44 as there were no records to show that her husband was employed by the war officer in Malaya at the time of the Malayan campaign .Later on she was granted an allowance of rupees sixty (Rs.forty for her ten + ten for two children) with effect from September'44.¹³³

C.V.Reghunathan, a student of junior intermediate class, Government Victoria College, Palakkad has applied for financial assistance and it was in the office numbered 7.55.7235M/of 17.8.44. The Government of India has now sanctioned the grant of allowances to students who passed their *SSLC exam*¹³⁴ in 1944 also. According to this, the student was also eligible for financial assistance. The government sanctioned an allowance of rupees one forty nine to C.V.Balasubramanian, an elder brother of the petitioner for the year 1943 – 44 for his study in Junior Intermediate class in Government Victoria College. The government sanctioned a non-recoverable grant of

¹³² L.Dis. 18625/430 dated 31.12.43,RAK.

¹³³ R. Dis.NO. 11097, 11/44, dated 9.12.44, RAK.

¹³⁴ Tenth Standard Exam

rupees one fifty nine to C.V.Raghunathan for the year 1944 – 45. He was not granted any recoverable advance. The applicant's father C.R. Venkatachala Iyer was employed in the Department of Agriculture and Forest in the Burma Secretariat. Father was evacuated from Burma, but he died at Calcutta. Mother was given a monthly pension of rupees sixty five and the applicant and his brother rupees twelve. But the college fees along with cost of book come to rupees one fifty four.¹³⁵

Financial assistance was also given to RamaswamyIyer of Palakkad taluk in getting an allowance of rupees forty. Because he had been selected as a teacher in Polish refuges camp in North India, the Central Refugee Officer had requested the Collector to grant re-allowances according to the revised rates for the month of August and September '44, so that he could settle his family affairs and debts before proceeding to take appointment. His pre-evacuation income in Burma has been rupees one fifty. According to enquiry made by Tahasildar, Alathur, he was entitled an allowance of rupees one hundred and ten, special allowances of rupees sixty to meet the expenses of his wife's treatment.¹³⁶ During the war period many G.O's were issued which issued orders to give reemployment to retired officers who are still in force.¹³⁷

Now the War was over but the GO's mentioned continue to be in force, but as and when suitable and qualified candidates become available to fill the places held by retired officers, he may be given a monthly notice and

¹³⁵ R .Dis. No. 8574, M/44, dated 15.1.45, RAK.

¹³⁶ F. Dis No. 8304 M/44 dated 3.10.44, Department of Revenue, RAK.

¹³⁷ G.O.NO. 88 Finance dated 4th June 1943, No. 1830 Public (services) dated 16th June 1944, G.O.NO, 3524, Public (Services) dated 9th December 1944 Regarding Re-employment , RAK.

discharged from the duties.¹³⁸ Field publicity organisation was in existence. There were a number of Gazatted and non Gazatted servants in the ex national war front organization.¹³⁹ The question of what to do with these staff arose, whether these officers and staff shall be permitted to carry forward the leave earned by them in their old services.¹⁴⁰ Proprietors of Cinemas were reminded to furnish this office regularly every month end, returns of the Information of India war shots and other films by them as well as the publicity done regarding the gramophone propaganda records supplied to them by the Junior information Officer of the taluk in the district will inspect and report on registers maintained for this purpose.¹⁴¹

During the period of War, there was a paucity of steel. The government of India advised that works involving the use of steel should not be undertaken, until after the war, unless it was essential for the war effort. The construction of bridge across the Bharatapuzha at a site on the Tirur-Ponnani road was considered impracticable.¹⁴² Relating to this, much economy in the use of steel during the period of war period was shown.¹⁴³ There are a series of correspondences from 1945 regarding whether the land occupied by the Military Department in Palakkad, should be taxed or not to be taxed? Some private Jenmam lands in Mankara and Nagaripuram amsom of Palakkad taluk had been requested by the Military Department temporarily for military purposes. They had occupied it by constructing buildings. Revenue Divisional Officer of Palakkad asked for

¹³⁸ G.O.NO. 2196, MS (public services) Department 19th September 1945, RAK.

¹³⁹ G.O. N.O. 1600, Public war dated 3rd July 1945, RAK.

¹⁴⁰ Government of Madras, Public War Department, Memo no. 1014/45-2 dated the 29th August 1945, RAK.

¹⁴¹ L. Dis.C.NO. 403/45 E. dated 13.8.1945, from the Office of the District Organiser, Field Publicity Bellary copy through Regional Organiser, Western Range, Palakkad, RAK.

¹⁴² Sanctioned in G.O.NO. 2237, LSG dated 11.6.1937, RAK.

¹⁴³ L.A 1941 Dept. Services., G.O .NO. 1703, dated 23.6.1941, RAK.

order on following points i.e. (a) whether stone inspection was done in the land occupied by the military. Tahasildar replied that these lands were clearly in the occupation of the military, stone inspection may be deferred (b) and who was liable for payment of taxes. Whether the owners or the military? (c) Whether the assessment should be collected on unoccupied dry lands (UD, unoccupied dry) which was temporarily occupied by military in two amsoms. They do not have permanent assessment and the question of payment of assessment only arises after active possession and conversion of sites into house site by constructing buildings, which in this case was done by the military. So RDO says that it was not proper to charge the owners with the assessment for which they are not responsible, so long as (owner) has left it waste. The compensation in these cases would have to be fixed to classification of land as UD(unoccupied dry) only and not OD (occupied dry)occupied. So they have to be exempted.¹⁴⁴

In 1946, the government banned the installation of the statues on public roads without the permission of Local Boards concerned. Under the provision of the Madras District Municipalities and Madras local Boards Act of 1920, no encroachment of a permanent character can be made on public street or road without prior permission of a local body and also without the approval of the Collector.¹⁴⁵The government did this to curb the nationalistic spirit of the people.

Recent article in a daily was a pointer to the sad plight of the ex-soldiers who had participated in the Second World War. In it was detailed

¹⁴⁴ 1).Letter from RDO to Collector of Malabar dt.30.8.45,RAK. (2) Letter from Board of Revenue, Ref .no.2983 – 46-3dt30.5.45. (3)Department of Revenue, Dis.Office of the Collector, Calicut, D.dis. No 16645/45 dated 16.7.47,RAK.

¹⁴⁵ G.O. NO. 1232, 16th July 1946, Government of Madras, Local Administration Department, RAK.

the terrible situations which these soldiers had to undergo while in the war fronts. A plea was made through this column to treat these ex-soldiers on par with freedom fighters of that time. Only a nominal amount was paid as pension to some survivors.¹⁴⁶

As of 1944, Reading Circles existed; some instructions were issued to district organizers to incorporate people into the running of reading circles that have the necessary leisure and possibly more interest, both are necessary to promote the efficiency of reading circles. However, this institution does not seem to have been implemented. District organizers were required to contact their District Educational Officers in order to bring out greater association of teachers in the management of reading circles. If not much response was got from district education officers, the matter was to be reported to the principal organizer.¹⁴⁷ We have to understand their importance in the urban space limits of a town. Mostly these were considered as mere formalities intended for touring officers to inspect. They are confined to note books, mostly one which contains a few pages of a record of Yuddasanchika received and those pages for visitor remarks, which serve as a museum of language, writing and literature.¹⁴⁸

In another document also we find reference to reading circles, association of teachers, asking whether there were any practical difficulties in following the instructions.¹⁴⁹ As in the case of Second World War also the government put forth the rates of scholarships sanctioned to the children

¹⁴⁶ *Mathrubhumi*, 29. 6. 2016.

¹⁴⁷ Circular No. 1083 4/44 dated 6th March, 1944, RAK.

Letter dated 6th March 1944, from A.F Mascaren has for Provincial Organisor to all District Organisors, No. 4181/45- G. dated 2nd August 1945, RAK.

¹⁴⁸ DOC No. 20/25 dated 11.8.4, RAK.

¹⁴⁹ Doc. No. 20/45 dated 11.8.45, RAK.

and dependents of deceased and incapacitated soldiers.¹⁵⁰ By an order the government removes the ban on recruitment of Indian National Army men to the Police Services. The government also decided that of the war reserved vacancies in all services for which war service candidates, have not been selected to far. A maximum of ten percent shall be allotted to Indian National Army men who have already applied for such vacancies. In the case of special police units, not more than five should be so allotted.¹⁵¹ Thus the war time was a turbulent period for the people in the urban scape of Palakkad. There was much suffering by the war participants, the families and the general public because of the Wars.

6.5 Municipality and the Electoral Rolls.

Draft electoral roll of non-official members of Municipal Council, (Provincial Schedule III, Group 7) – Palakkad

The electoral roll given here are an indication of the involvement of the people in the administrative affairs. Even though the modern system of election did not exist at the time, we can understand that with much limitation there existed a system of electoral process. Of course property ownership was the criteria and the rich and influential people in the society could vote.¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ GO NO.1792,17TH September 1946.

¹⁵¹ G O.No. 48 dated 7.1.48 Public Services (1948), Department. MS Series., RAK.

¹⁵² Madras Legislative Council Draft Electoral Roll of Non Official Members of Municipal Councils and District and Taluk Boards and Certain other Electors Entitled to Vote in group (1) at the Election of a Members of Madras Legislative council, 1909, pp. 10,11,RAK

Table 6.5.1

No.on General Roll	No. on Dist. Roll	Name
242	161	Kuthiravattam Appu Thampan, Kalpathy P.O
259	178	Kuthiravattam Kunhikuttan Thampan
266	185	N.ThangunniAchan, Kuthanur, Palakkad
269	188	K.Damodaran Nambudiri Kodumbu Post
260	179	Paravilappa Pillai Ponnann, Para, Palakkad
270	189	Nellikeledom Kombi achan, Vandazhi
271	190	M.K. Venketeswara Ayyer, Highcourt vakil, Palakkad
282	201	S.Selvanayagam, Palakkad
283	202	P.KesavaMannadiar, Kuzhalmannam, Palakkad
285	204	C. Swaminatha Pattar, Chathapuram, Palakkad
286	205	K. Natesa Ayyar, Kalpathy, Palakkad
287	206	K.Krishna Nayar, Puthiyankam, Palakkad
288	207	P.N.Madhava Menon, Tharekkad, Palakkad
289	208	A. Chokkalingam Pillai, Big Bazar, Palakkad
290	209	S.K.Ramaswami Ayyar, Sekharipuram, Palakkad
291	210	V.K. Gayatri Ayyar, Vadakkanchery, Palakkad
292	211	N.R.Ramaswani Ayyar, Nurani, Palakkad
293	212	V.RamanNayar, Puthur, Palakkad
294	213	P.Pazhayangadi Taraker, Kizhakkumbrum
295	214	A.Krishna Moothan, Palakkad
296	215	V.K.Unnikannan, Palakkad
297	216	Rev.Father Bachelard, Palakkad
298	217	N.A.Ayyappan Pillai, Palakkad
299	218	P.Balakishna Menon, Palakkad
300	219	M.S.Rama Ayyer, Thirunellayi, Palakkad

301	220	K.Damodara Menon, Pattencheri, Palakkad
302	221	R.Sekhara Menon, Sulthanpet, Palakkad
303	222	L.A.Subbarama Ayyar, L.N.Puram, Palakkad
304	223	A. GovindaMenon, Sultanpet, Palakkad
305	224	G.D.Manikkam, Mission Compound, Palakkad
323	242	H.A.Krishna Aiyar, Palakkad
99	18	P.K.Naduvat Tangunni Achan, Palakkad
108	27	P.I.Chinnaswami Pillai, Palakkad
306	225	Ottur Vasava Menon, Near Tharekkad, Palakkad

Draft Electoral roll of land holders other than Zamindars, (Provisional Schedule V, group 3) **Table 6.5.2**

No.on General Roll	No. on Dist. Roll	Name
177	177	Kuttanatt Madambil Chethunnamam alias Tekkumbat Kochunnielayanayar of Mannarkkad, Palakkad
195	195	Kenath Suppan Menon, Kenatt Achan, Vengodi amsom, Para, Palakkad
196	196	Ekkanat Vassunni ValiyaKammal, Elapulli amsom, Para
197	197	Puzhakkaledom Valiyakelu Achan, Tarur, Palakkad
198	198	Kandappanalies Kongad Valiya Nayer, Parli, Palakkad
199	199	Mannur Perevunni Nayar, Mannur Amsom, Mankara, Palakkad
200	200	Naduviledom Kelu Achan, Kazhani Post, Palakkad
201	201	PaliampulathKandappa Mannadiar, Thenkurussi, Palakkad
202	202	Raja Venganad Vasudeva Raja, Valiya Nambidi, Kollangode, Palakkad

203	203	Kannambra Raman Unni Valiya Nayar, Kannanmbraamsom, Pudukkod P.O
204	204	Elayachanedom Dharma Achan, Akathethara, Palakkad
205	205	Valiya Konikkaledom Keluachan, Palakkad
206	206	Motappila Sekharan Nambudiripad, Koyalmannam, Parli P.O, Palakkad
207	207	Nellisseri Anantanarayana Ayyer, Nellisseri, Palakkad
208	208	Swami Pattar Karyakar, Chalapuram, Kalpathy, Palakkad
209	209	Anjantumpuratt Sridharan Sankara Mussad, Yakkara, Palakkad
210	210	Panikkettu Allu Mannadiyar, Kollengodeamsom, Palakkad
211	211	Kallempulli Gopalan Valiya Nagar, Melarcode P.O, Palakkad
212	212	Kadathanattu Samu Mannadiyar, Kuzhalmannam P.O, Palakkad
213	213	Kovilakat Ramasshan, Keralasseri, Parli P.O, Palakkad
214	214	Mundancheri Nanu Muttanayer, Peringottu amsom, Parli, Palakkad
215	215	Nellikeledom Kombi Achan, Vandazhiamsom, Vadakkenchery, Palakkad
216	216	Neduvatt Allu Achan, Kuthanur Amsom, Kuzhalmannam, Palakkad
217	217	Neduvatt Tangunni Achan, Kuthanuramsom, Kuzhalmannam, Palakkad
218	218	RanganPattar, Tirunellai village, Palakkad
219	219	Chiratt Padmanabhan Nayer, Kuthanur amsom, Palakkad
220	220	Konikaledom Chettukutti Achan, Taruramsom, Palakkad
221	221	Vallooli Padmanabha Panikkar, Kannadi amsom, Palakkad
222	222	Subramaniya Mudaliyar, Kizhakkethara, Kollengode, Palakkad

223	223	W.R.Mackenzie, Planter, Muthalamada, Kollengode, Palakkad
224	224	Konikkaledom, Ithikombi Achan, Kavassery Amsom, Alathur, Palakkad
225	225	Kuhunni Edathara Valiya Nayar, Edatharaamsom, Palakkad
275	275	Puzhakkaledom Valiya Kelu Achan, Parli, Palakkad

Draft Electoral roll of Muhammadans Provincial Schedule VI, Group(2),
Table 6.5.2

Sl.No	Name
226	Sayyid Muhammed Kulaiyappa Ravuthar, Big Bazar, Palakkad
227	Qadirsa Ravuthar, Big Bazaar, Palakkad
228	Kondayan Pakkiri Ravuthar, Big Bazar, Palakkad
229	Saku Ravuthar, Big Bazar, Palakkad
230	Shaikh Abdul Qualir Marakkayar, Mankara amsom, Parli, Palakkad

Draft Electoral roll of Muhammadan Imperial Schedule XII, Imperial Legislative Council in the Madras Presidency under schedule XII of the regulations framed under the Indian Council Act 1909.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ E/57, Madras Legislative Council, Draft Electoral Roll of Non-Official Members of Municipal Councils and Districts and Taluk Boards and Certain Other Electors Entitled to Vote in Group (1) at the Election of a Member of the Madras Legislative Council Under Schedule 111 of the Regulation Framed Under Indian Councils Act, pp. 10-15, RAK.

Table 6.5.3

Sl.No on general roll	Sl.No. on district roll	Name
396	27	Kadersa Ravuthar, Big Bazar, Palakkad
397	28	Seku Ravuthar, Big Bazar, Palakkad

In the Palakkad Municipal Council five members declined to stand for re-election as a protest against the way in which the administration was carried on. Another *vakil* councilor also resigned on the same grounds. The paper in hard voice comments that this was nothing but civic cowardice and absence of moral courage, for how could these protests have any effect on administration? If the administration was so bad it was the duty of the councilors to remain there and attempt to make changes. The six councilors should have remained there and if they acted together can make and unmake by mean of interpretations, resolutions and minutes of dissent, they would have neutralized some of its evils.¹⁵⁴

In 1945, Later on Government through a letter requested to sent the list of persons residing in the Municipality area, of Muhammedans and non Muhammedans as having voting rights so that their names could be included in the electoral rolls under preparation.¹⁵⁵

6.6 Nationalism and the Intellectual Space

In 1917, the nationalistic feelings were escalating in Kerala, including the urban space of Palakkad. There was much vibrancy in the air and the

¹⁵⁴ *The West Coast, Spectator* of 27th July 1916, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁵⁵ Letter from Commissioner, Palakad Municipality dated 24.4.45 to all Revenue Officers, Executive Authorities of all Municipalities, RAK.

people especially the students participated in the activities challenging the British authority. Much political activity began in India in 1916 with the commencement of Home Rule Movement initiated by Annie Besant and Tilak. A branch of Home Rule League was started in Palakkad.¹⁵⁶ In the year 1916, the Malabar District Conference was held at Palakkad on the 4th and 5th March under the President ship of Annie Besant.¹⁵⁷ Annie Besant voiced her opinion that these meetings and conferences should address regional and specific issues so that it comes to the notice of the Government. It was to be noted that Theosophy as a movement appeared in India when the educated leaders experienced political rousing which soon manifested itself into provincial and all India conferences.¹⁵⁸

It is in this backdrop that political conferences were held in different parts of Kerala and in Palakkad in 1916. Annie Besant ceaselessly wrote articles inciting the student community to join the movement and work against the Government. Actually from 1911 to 1916, there was a lull in the political scene, but when Annie Besant started Home Rule Movement, the Press also became very alert and active and she was vehemently attacked by a section of the press and a series of articles were published for and against 'dragging the students into politics' and accused her of 'spoiling the future of the students'.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ It is the Malabar Theosophical Society that gave leadership to Home Rule agitations in Palakkad. See for details Sivadasan.P, *Malabar Theosophical Society, Nagaram Pinnitta Naal Vazhikal*, (Mal.), Palakkad Municipality, 2015, pp. 246-248.

¹⁵⁷ P.K.K.Menon, *The History of Freedom Movement in India*, Department of Cultural Publication, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1972, pp. 88-90.

¹⁵⁸ R. Sunderalingam, *Politics and Nationalist Awakening in South India, 1852-1891*, Rawat Publication: Delhi, 1980, pp. 302-304.

¹⁵⁹ S.Ganeshram, *Pathways to Nationalism: Social Transformation and Nationalist Consciousness, 1858-1918*, Routledge: New York, 2016, online accessed on 4.11.2016, 4 pm, *Dravidian*, Wednesday Review and non Brahmin papers opposed her. Deshabhimani felt that these agitations educated the masses.

In 1917, the nationalistic feelings reached a new high in Kerala, including in the urban space of Palakkad. It was said that in Kerala the students participated against the evils in the society and with the establishment of the Home Rule movement the message of freedom had reached all sections of the people. Students boycotted classes in Government Victoria College, Samoothiri College and Brennan College for the right to hoist the national flag and to wear the national badge.¹⁶⁰

Meanwhile, Madras University had issued an order prohibiting the college students from associating with the political agitations spreading all over India. Adverting to the order passed by the Syndicate of Madras University, the students were expelled by the Principal of Victoria College.¹⁶¹ This was a major topic of discussion in the newspapers for days to come, as various daily newspapers wrote for and against the use of such dramatic measures. The *Swadeshabhimani* of 19th November refer in detail to the punishments inflicted on the students by the Syndicate and remarks that this order will doubtless make the people tremble and exclaim whether these students are 'youth or heinous culprits'.¹⁶²

Another paper remarks that it was surprised at the Syndicate having inflicted on some students of Palakkad College, punishments which are too severe according to the paper, when compared with mistakes and observes that these punishments were severe when compared with the mistakes and observes that there are many who hold the students by 'nose'. The Professors and Principals of colleges in India instead of being kind to the students make much of their activities and create as many obstacles as

¹⁶⁰ N.E. Balram, *Keralathile Communist Prasthanam Aadya Nalukal* (Mal.), Prabhat Book House: Palakkad, 2016, p. 22.

¹⁶¹ *Prapanchamitran*, 27th November 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁶² *Swadeshabhimani*, 19th November 1917, NNPR, October–December, TSA.

possible. Compared to the students of the highly civilized western countries, the Indian youths largely were very quiet and even the Syndicate has the power to do good or harm to the students undergoing the University course, they should exercise these powers only for the benefit of the students and not to injure them permanently. But here, that was, what was exactly going on.¹⁶³ Another daily newspaper recorded that the punishments inflicted by the Syndicate of the Madras University on the students of Victoria College, Palakkad were severe, but reasonable and states that political agitation in the country did more harm than good.¹⁶⁴

Remarking to this incident and referring to the resolution of the Syndicate on the Palakkad College incident, says, that those who hold responsible positions should be cool headed and unbiased. The students were not guilty of any grave offences but have incurred the displeasure of College authorities, because of a particular frame of mind of the latter; it was hardly fair to meet out such rigorous punishment as University has now done it. This particular incident can be said to be most deplorable. This question was to be discussed in the legislative Council. The article ends with the hope that the Syndicate will withdraw the formidable weapon which they have hurled at the “poor sparrows”.¹⁶⁵ Thus, it was understood that for participating in political agitation, students were expelled from the Victoria College by the Syndicate of the Madras University. The students were put too much hardship as a result of this, the authorities were behaving in a revengeful manner towards the students. Major dailies wrote for and against such dramatic measures, it was a raging topic of discussion in the papers for days to come.

¹⁶³ The Hindu, 19th November 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁶⁴ *Dravidian*, Madras, 20th November 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁶⁵ *Swadeshabhimani*, Mangalore, 23rd November 1917, NNPR, TSA.

The local government modified the G.O.No. 559, which prohibited students from attending political meetings, but the G.O .No. 1531 (Ed.) which was issued in supersession of G.O. No 559, was capable of more mischief they rely only on the Principles to give effect to this order. The perusals of the former order will clearly convince anybody that it only enforces rigorously latter order. The Principal was given the discretionary powers; this clearly states that Government was not convinced about the rigorous nature of G.O. N.O. 559.¹⁶⁶ This was like a move from frying pan into fire, comments a daily.¹⁶⁷ The paper was trying to prove that both the government orders were very strict and shows no leniency to the students.

It was an age of great Wars and agitations all over, and it was but natural that the students of Victoria College, Palakkad associated themselves with these aggressions. But the G.O.'s of the government was a direct blow on the freedom of action and speech. The newspapers discussed the pros and cons of these actions, with some supporting and some decrying the government's attitude. Through the newspapers, the student unrest and politics of the urban Palakkad attracted nationwide attention. This institution was started in the year 1866 as a rate school, so called because it depended for its finances upon an educational rate which was at that time carried by local governments. In 1871, the year in which the Local Fund Act came into force and educational rates, were abolished the school was taken over by the local fund board in 1877 it became a government high school. In 1884 it was handed over by Government to the management paying the net charges of the school. In 1888 it was raised to II Grade College and was affiliated to

¹⁶⁶ 1) *Swadesamitram*, Madras 7th December 1917, NNPR,TSA and *Manorama*, Calicut, 11th December 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁶⁷ *Lokopakari*, Madras 10th December 1917, NNPR ,TSA.

Madras University under the management of the Municipal Council, Government undertaking to bear the net cost of the college department.¹⁶⁸

It was remarked that the troubles in the college had become very frequent and the Principal of the college not realizing how and when to exercise the powers, instead of being patient, treated the students like slaves.¹⁶⁹ The students in the colleges of Trichinapoly met together at Chinmaya Pillai's *Choultry* on the 20th September and took a vow not to abide by GO. NO.559, prohibited students from taking part in the politics.¹⁷⁰ In a public meeting certain members were selected to represent the students' grievances, but the Director of Public Instruction, refused to meet these members and was unwilling to hear them. Adverting to this incident the paper further writes that the Director was only willing to meet the students and not committee members.¹⁷¹

The students were expelled by the Principal; the hardship of the students has been increasing since the issue of government order prohibiting them from taking part in politics. A new spirit of freedom was spreading all over the world, it was necessary for the government and college authorities to view this with sympathy. Such restriction was not seen in England.¹⁷²

By 1918, the affairs of the college had positively become even worse regarding politics and student unrest. The government behaved in a very high handed fashion against the decisions taken by the Palakkad Municipal Council. The issue was related to a teacher, A.T.Ramanujachari. The main

¹⁶⁸ Calendar, Government Victoria College, for 1936–37, Printed by Superintendent, Government Press: Madras, 1936.

¹⁶⁹ *Hindu Nasen*, 26th September 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁷⁰ *Dravidian*, 25th September 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁷¹ *Swadeshimitram*, 27th September 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁷² *Prapanchamitram*, 27th November 1917, NNPR, TSA.

charges leveled against the teacher were that (a) he was not acting according to the rules of the college, for which no explanation was sought from the teacher for this. (b) His case was discussed in the public press. It seems some of his private letters which were in articles was published in the press; the authorities alleged that these articles were given by him, fact which may be construed as disobedience but no evidence for it. Both the teacher and the editor denied this. He was dismissed from the service without even asking for an explanation.¹⁷³ This was a peculiar case in which the government as well as the Municipal Council interfered and took sides.

He was asked to rejoin duty by the Council with arrears of pay. It was then the government interfered by asking the Council to reconsider the decision. The government has decided that the teacher should not rejoin the college after the vacation. They actually wanted the Council to dismiss him. Moreover a notice was issued to those Councilors who voted reinstatement of Ramanujacharier, to showcause why they should not be removed from the Council.¹⁷⁴ As far as the Councilors are concerned it was pointed by the government that their presence will be a menace to public peace and also they have brought forth contempt to the Municipal administration. Hence they have to be removed. Feelings ran high; people of Palakkad held public meetings and protested against the highhandedness of the government.¹⁷⁵ We find great discussions ensuing as to how far the government can interfere in the working of the local self-government and that local self governments are instituted to lighten the burden or responsibility of the colonial power, usually the government only interferes if the interest of the taxpayers are imperiled, even then it only advises and

¹⁷³ *Swadeshimitram*, 27th June, 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁷⁴ *Swadeshimitram*, 23rd June, 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁷⁵ *Swadeshimitram*, 27th June 1917, NNPR, TSA.

suggests, threats are never issued to remove the Councilors. Here the government sets precedence by taking into accounts the words of only the Chairman of the Municipality. Kerala Patrika remarks this interference as the First of its kind in the history of Malabar Municipalities.¹⁷⁶The teacher later resigned.

In a public meeting which was held at Salem Town Hall to protest against the action of the government regarding the Palakkad Municipality affair and in a strongly worded message said that the government was interpreting their powers of removal under Section 19 of the District Municipalities Act, so as to extend to a case where they disapprove a resolution duly passed by majority in the Council and also the notice to remove the Councilors is a great interference in the independence of the Municipal Council.¹⁷⁷The Municipal Chairman defended the Principal Sankunni's shameful action in the treatment of the students. The Chairman's latest action was to punish the lecturers who disassociated themselves from the Principles action. Two of them have been forced to resign their places; one will be deprived of his office for a year, while four other will have no increments for a year. The Principal, it seems, was behaving like a mad man and the students and teachers are punished for no fault of theirs. Hardly any moral atmosphere was said to exist there (Victoria College) and that it would be better for the parents to withdraw their children from it.¹⁷⁸

These actions demonstrate how the teachers and students were treated in this colonial dominated region. The urban space of Palakkad was

¹⁷⁶ *Kerala Patrika*, 24th June 1917, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁷⁷ *The Hindu*, June 28th 1911, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁷⁸ *New India*, 20th March 1918 and *Desabhaktan* of 22nd March 1918, NNPR, 1918, January–March, p.542.

getting widened day by day, Roads, Railways, Municipal organization, Hospitals, Schools, Colleges and what not? While the urban space of Palakkad was being transformed through new organizations and technologies, the freedom of expression in this atmosphere was a much talked question. Somewhat similar case can be seen in Kozhikode where the *Samoothiri* threatened to close the college, on account of the Principal of the Samoothiri College having expelled all the students of the college who participated in these strikes.¹⁷⁹

The Hindu also reports the strike situation in the Palakkad College and it trusts that the educational authorities will remedy this state of affairs at an early date.¹⁸⁰ Thus we see the active involvement of students in the national movement in the urban space of Palakkad also. The news reached all over the urban space of Palakkad and role these reports had in their daily life is understood. The atmosphere now became vibrant and politically charged crowd.

6.6.1 Political activities and Repression

The newspapers took sides for and against Mahatma Gandhi's actions. For example, different papers wrote about the understanding between the Bolsheviks and Gandhi and how it was creating a situation of anarchy in India. One daily *Swarat* of 20th June 1921 tries to refute the contention of the Morning Post that Mahatma Gandhi received substantial financial help from the Bolsheviks and observed that such falsehoods will never stain the non

¹⁷⁹ *Sujanamitram* of 24th Sept 1917, NNPR ,TSA .Students were expelled from the Govt. Victoria College, Palakkad, Brennan College, Thalassery, Samoothiri College Kozhikode as many participated in the agitation for wearing Badges as well as for hoisting the national flags. Theosophical Movement also had a great role to play in inciting the students in agitating against the Government. See E.Balram,*op.cit.*,

¹⁸⁰ *The Hindu*, Madras, October 9th 1917, NNPR October – December, TSA.

co-operation movement or its leaders. *MalayalaManorama* of 27th June traces the causes of the rumors that Gandhi received financial support and remarks that more evidence was certainly necessary for this. *Kerala Patrika*, of 17th June 1922, reported that it was likely that this news was true, but adds it was not yet time to believe it in too. *The Margadarshi* of 23rd June points out that anarchy, instability of administration, despotism were the main objects of the Bolshevik non co-operators and as a result of Mahatma's action, anarchism was spreading in the country and there was room to believe the helping hand of Bolsheviks in India was true.¹⁸¹ Here is the report by different papers about the understanding between Bolsheviks and Gandhi and how it is creating a situation of anarchism in India.

In one of the Government orders against indulging in political activities by local bodies, it was said that Government had recently observed an increasing tendency on the part of local bodies in the Madras Presidency to indulge in activities designed to support or show sympathy with the disloyal movement promoted by the advocates of Civil Disobediences, passing resolutions congratulating persons who have been convicted and sent to jail for hoisting National Flags over buildings belonging to the local bodies etc . The Government regards these activities, as they support a movement which deliberately seeks to defy law and order as disloyal. The local bodies which discarded these warnings and who indulged in the activities of these kinds were prone to withhold financial assistance. Should the local bodies disregard this order and continue with their own measures of supporting the anti- Governmental activities, the British Government will not hesitate to resort to the power of suppression and dissolution vested on

¹⁸¹ NNPR – 1922 July to August, TSA (*Swarat*, of 20th June 1921, *Malayala Manorama*, 27th June 1921, *Kerala Patrika* of 17th June, *The Margadarsi* of 23rd June).

them by law for dealing with extreme cases of abuse of powers. Another method by which the local bodies had been showing sympathy was by closure of offices and institutions under their control, other than on public holidays. According to Government, this involves the cessation of public services, and these establishments were paid during the period of closure, for services which they were not allowed to perform and was 'surchargeable' upon person or persons responsible for the closure of the office. Surcharges made would be rigorously enforced.¹⁸²

The Collector of Malabar was advised that any application from the Palakkad Municipal Council for sanction to incur expenditure from its fund in connection with the presentation of an address of welcome to Mahatma Gandhi should be negative.¹⁸³ It's a direct curb on the civil liberties of the people. The government is keeping a strict vigil over the functioning of these local bodies.

On 1st April 1937, new reforms came into force against the will of India. Indian people decided to observe a *hartal* day for all Municipal institutions and black flags are to be raised all over Municipal buildings. Vice Chairman of Palakkad Municipality wanted to pass a resolution to this effect, but resolution was disallowed by the Chairman on the ground that it contravenes specific orders of government. They were also further informed that closure of Municipal offices and institutions on 1st April 1937 would be dealt in audit in due course, and that keeping the office or institutions open

¹⁸² G. O. 2414, L & M, dated 17.6.30 and No. 60, L & M, dated 7.1.1932, RAK.

¹⁸³ Letter dated 19th March 1925 to the Collector of Malabar from Deputy Secretary to Government, RAK.
2) LSGD, Memo No. 8490 – 1, L& M dated 24th March 1925, RAK.

on another day, will not affect the liability to surcharge.¹⁸⁴

Since it was the time of Civil Disobedience movement and the Government was doing their best to curb the nationalistic feelings. Severe measures were initiated against those who dared to disobey. The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee was actively engaged in the civil disobedience movement. Political prisoners were beaten up in Cannanore and resolution was passed protesting against this. The main leaders based at Calicut were HassankoyaMulla, T.Raghavankurup, K.V.AhmedKoya, P.D.Deevar etc. A special committee consisting of SreematiM.KarthyayaniAmmam, Mrs. Samuel Aaron, K.Ikkanda Warier, N.Krishna Nair and others were selected for *Khadi* propaganda. This Committee was to enlist volunteers to spread khadi. Propaganda in villages was organized to collect subscriptions for that purpose. Many committees were appointed, in one such subcommittee, consisting of Samuel Aaron, M.V. Ramakrishnan and A.K. Kunhikrishnan Nambiar for issuing certificate to the weaving factories in North Malabar, who undertook not to use foreign yarn and allow the Congress Committee to inspect their accounts. The Committee considered that Mr. K.V. Subramaniya Iyer of Palakkad was wrong in offering bail to come out of jail and requested him not to defend the case. Picketing of cloth shops and liquors shops has spread and becomes more intensive in Calicut, Cannanore and Palakkad town.¹⁸⁵

During the Civil Disobedience movement severe recessive measures

¹⁸⁴ 1) Letter from Commissioner, Palakkad to Vice Chairman, Palakkad Municipality on 22nd March 1937, RAK.

2) LSGD (1937), MS Series, G.O. NO. 1778, dated 13.5.1937, RAK.

¹⁸⁵ History of Freedom Movement File, HFM No. 66, 1931 – 32, Strictly Confidential, p. 3, TSA.

were taken for wearing khadi caps.¹⁸⁶ The Department of Police has come under much criticism, people beaten up for wearing khadi, workers beaten, put in buses, taken out of the way miles away and left on the roadside at night, if understood that they were given shelter or food, they too would be severely punished. Heartlessness and brutality can go no further it was said. Another MLC proceeding describes how urine was forced into the mouth of the volunteers. Such inhuman treatment was meted out to workers. Members began to criticise Home Ministry. He was told of the burning of khadi, clothes which were stripped from the weavers and they were compelled to buy foreign clothes and wear it. The institution of Government, declared an MLC stating, when unlawful assemblies are to be dispensed, lathies are to be used with the force, the users are capable of and that the blows should be aimed at the neck and face'. There were strong criticisms against the Government. The situation was summed up by another MLC the...

“Empire slowly slipping out of hands of the Britain not because of the Civil Disobedience movement or the feeling of the country but because of their own action. If the rule has to be continued, the people should be treated as human beings and methods of administration as applied in other countries“.¹⁸⁷

The British Government thus adopted many repressive methods to use against the Indian nationalistic activities. Meanwhile notices calling upon the public to take part in a procession were printed and circulated in Calicut on 27th September, calling upon the public to take part in the procession. The object of this move was apparently to ascertain the amount of support which the organizers expect from the public of Calicut. The procession composed of

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.93

¹⁸⁷ History of Freedom Movement, HFM File No. 1932 – 33, pp.93, 432, 433, 270, 613, 433, 443 ,TSA.

about a hundred of Congress members, started from Congress office on the 2nd October and marched through town with usual Swaraj flags and the shouting of congress slogans augmented by the mill workers till eventually it numbered about four thousand to five thousand people. The activities of Palakkad District Congress Committee were identical with those of KPCC and were mainly centered on the Civil Disobedience movement. Their main activities were, the salt Satyagraha, picketing of toddy shops, khadar, boycott of foreign cloths and village propaganda. Sub committees were set up for the collection of funds. All antigovernment propaganda in Malabar was the direct result of the organization of this Committee.¹⁸⁸

Meanwhile in Palakkad this committee has dissolved itself to the great annoyance of the Provincial Committee in Calicut, which had called upon the Palakkad Committee to explain the matter. And in practice the Palakkad Committee has ceased to function. A Nair who has returned from Burma, has since anointed himself as " Dictator". He came to Calicut to raise volunteers but has had no success to speak of. Thus there was no body as such now in Palakkad which could be declared unlawful.¹⁸⁹

As of 1931, picketing of shops selling foreign cloth was regular but peaceful in Calicut, Talassery, Kannur and Palakkad. Liquor shops picketing were gradually increasing in Calicut. All shops in the town and nearby villages were to be picketed. The same practice was also just beginning in Palakkad taluk. The liquor sellers began to get more and more desperate.¹⁹⁰ From an extract of the Hindu paper, one comes across about the instructions given to

¹⁸⁸ H F M, 66, 1931 -32, p. 11, TSA.

¹⁸⁹ H F M, 66, 1931-32, p.12., TSA.

¹⁹⁰ Strictly Confidential from Special Branch, Criminal Investigation Department, dated April 1931, HFM File 66, 1931-32, pp. 20-31, TSA.

the volunteers who were engaged in picketing.¹⁹¹

In one paper we find a description of different efforts undertaken to stop the public use of liquor. However the same article points out the difficulties and hardships that the people engaged in this occupation has to undergo. It was mostly affecting the poor man who has no other go. The people were asked by the leaders to give up liquor making, but they do not provide any suggestions of an alternative job to these people. Actually they must be rehabilitated, as the article put forth, in starting jaggery industry, fish industry etc where these workers get ample scope to work without being thrown to abject poverty and thereby their grievances can be reduced.¹⁹² Some constructive works are also to be looked into as suggested by the newspaper.

It was said that Congress has already stated that India must have the substance of full autonomy and the details of administrative reform must be in the hands of India with or without the interference of the British Government. It was said by the British Government that, there was some difficulty in extending the franchise to the villages, but what objection can there be to grant adult suffrage in village areas? It was said that political power would be centered in the urban population which was detrimental to villages. This can be considered as a new phase of the policy of divide and rule which the British statesmen have resorted to in order to hold India for a longer time. They are trying to bring about a cleavage or rift between rural and urban population.¹⁹³ The paper was of the opinion that on one pretext or other the colonial power is denying India full autonomy. In spite of the

¹⁹¹ Extract from, 'The Hindu' of 19th May 1931 in HFM, 66, 1931 – 32, p. 5, TSA.

¹⁹² Excerpt from a paper titled 'Buddhatatvadeepam' preserved at the Pallissery Mana, Manjeri.

¹⁹³ *Thayinadu*, Bangalore, 4th June 1932, NNPR, 1933, April – December, TSA.

existing differences in castes, religion etc a new disunity was being aimed that was between rural and urban population, a new phase in divide and rule policy of the British.

In the year 1930 the British, sensing a decline in their trade as due to the boycott of foreign good propagated by the Congress, declares Kerala Congress Committee as an unlawful assembly. They were not in a mood to listen to India's, lamentation to view with sympathy the actions of Indian and hopes that the cloth merchants give a right reply ,not give room to the accusation that they are traitors who fought India and acted will selfishness.¹⁹⁴ During the 1935's much political activity was going on in all parts of the country and the Government invites the attention of the Municipal Councils and the Presidents of the Local Boards against the hoisting of the national flag on the Municipal local board building. The hoisting of any such flag or emblems other than Union Jack was definitely not allowed. The Government issued a warning to the concerned departments about the possibility of hoisting the Indian flag and to disallow it at any cost.¹⁹⁵

The government was trying its best to suppress nationalistic feelings and movements and it's no wonder that they issued these by G.O's they were also against the use of khadi and also wearing Gandhi caps.¹⁹⁶ Time and again, the government had issued many types of various orders prohibiting

¹⁹⁴ *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut, 12th December 1930, NNPR, TSA.

¹⁹⁵ GO NO. 60 , L&M and G.O. N.O. 13-LSG, dated 6th May 1937, L & M,RAK.

¹⁹⁶ IG of prisons is informed that prisoners of 'B' and 'C' class undergoing simple imprisonment should not be permitted to wear Gandhi caps as a part of their clothing. They got to understand that no facilities should be granted to prisoner undergoing the imprisonment in jails either to exercise their franchisee or take steps that will enable them to stand as candidate for election to any legislative body.(See *From the Office of Inspector of Prisons*, Madras, dt.2.4.1941 to the I.G. of Prison, Malabar, RAK and File No. 170, Subject List Correspondences Files, RAK.)

the hoisting or flying of INC flags. The government after careful examination of the whole position, decided in supersession of all their previous orders on the subject not to hoist or flag such flags, to prohibit expenditure from the funds of the local bodies on the purchase of flags.¹⁹⁷

In 1936, the Council passed a resolution, requesting the Commissioner to give effect, in service matters the representation of different communities in government services. But a note of dissent says that, it was applicable to only government services that under the Madras District Municipalities Act a Municipal Council had no power to prescribe rules and regulations for the representation of different communities in its services. As far as Palakkad Municipality was concerned, the meeting was held and that backward and unprecedented communities were not represented in the Municipal services. One member requests that (P.C.Kandaswamy Pillai) instead of the word "not represented", the word "sufficiently represented" is to be used. S.R. Ramachandra Ayyar raises a point of order that the resolution was an infringement of the powers of the appointing authorities. Chairman but overrules this and declares that it does not take away the power of the appointing authorities but was only in the nature of a suggestion. The resolution was put to vote, and twelve voted for and four against. The motion was carried on. The Chairman of Palakkad writes to Secretary to government clarifying the matter, the contention that communal G.O. was only intended for government services and for any other services it was untenable. Even local bodies are semi governmental institutions which have adopted the fundamental rules, the PF rules, CSR in their services. The Coimbatore and Tirunelvely Municipalities have adopted the communal

¹⁹⁷ G.O.NO. 2892 L.A. dated 13th August 1940. G.O.NO.1394, 13th August 1946, Madras Local Administration Department, RAK.

G.O. and are following the same in regard to their services. The Council has power to prescribe educational and other qualifications for their services. The communal representation in services is absolute necessity so that sufficient and adequate opportunities are given to several communities who are unemployed and to prevent undue predominance of representation of one particular community. Moreover the government has not yet framed rules under section 73 and so communal representation is kept pending. The resolution was carried by large majority. Only four councilors voted against. The Commissioner of Palakkad Municipality was informed that the resolution of the Municipalities dated 13.5.36 was not a regulation under section 74 (b) MDM Act of 1920 and had, not been published as required by Section 312 of the act.¹⁹⁸

Here one understands that high jobs and appointments were the monopoly of one single class. A (suggestion to) change to that was not received well. But the Government was yet to formulate real laws on it. So that sense of fairness can be ensured to all. Again the war has started and the Governor of Madras has recently initiated a Madras Governor's War fund which embodies all existing organizations constituted in the Presidency for the purpose of raising money for the provision of the various means necessary for successful prosecution of the war and was intended to constitute the sole channel through which the citizens of the Presidency are asked to make their contributions.¹⁹⁹ All money subscribed will go directly to

¹⁹⁸ LSGD, G.O.NO. 3251, dated 23.7.36, RAK and The Extract from the Proceedings in the Municipal Council Palakkad at its Meeting held on 31st May 1936, RAK.

¹⁹⁹ G.O.NO. 2832, 9th August 1940 also read. G.O.NO. 565, dated 13th February 1940. G.O.NO. 1986, dated 13th May 1940, RAK.

help the war effort, all incidental expenses being met independently from government funds.²⁰⁰

Amount subscribed to the fund may at present be earmarked for 1) Defenses of Britain 2) Royal Air Force 3) Defense of India 4) Indian Air force 5) War Charities 6) General purposes. The progress of the war makes it clear that utmost effort will be needed to overcome the German danger and the Government was also aware that the local bodies wish to contribute more than what has been permissible under the existing orders. The Government removed the limitation, placed upon the Panchayat board regarding their contributions.²⁰¹ And the Government trust local bodies will contribute as fully as their means permits to the Madras Governor War Fund.²⁰²

6.6.2 Political Conferences and the Urban Space

In 1921, the Non co-operation was in full swing and one paper remarked that the movement was making steady progress in the interiors part of the country. It elaborates saying that repression can create fear but not loyalty.²⁰³ Many of the papers also in glowing terms stressed the importance of Non-cooperation in India. In the year 1916, it was decided that Congress national meetings would be held in Malabar. From the year 1914 itself Malabar District Committee used to convey a meeting once in a year in which the representatives to the Congress meetings were selected. In the meeting held at Calicut in 1915, the idea for the yearly meeting was mooted but nothing concrete was decided then. At this juncture the people at Palakkad took the initiative and a meeting was decided to be held at

²⁰⁰ G.O. NO.2832, L.A.dated 9th August. 1940, RAK.

²⁰¹ G.O.NO. 1986, PH dated 13th May 1940, RAK.

²⁰² G.O.NO. 2832, 9th August 1940, RAK.

²⁰³ *Kerala Sanchari*, 20th April 1921, History of Freedom Movement, vol.36,1921,TSA.

Ottapalam on 4th and 5th May under the President ship of Annie Besant. The welcoming address was by the Kollengode Vasudeva Raja. In the Ottapalam conference of 1921, thousands and thousands of people participated. Separate meetings were held for different groups, such as the *janmimar*, *kudiyanmar*, and students.²⁰⁴ Meanwhile the authorities sensing the mood of the huge gathering decided to frighten the people by inflicting blows and harassing them. The huge gathering, the festival like enthusiasm of the people, the unity displayed between the people, the success of the non-cooperation movement, all these factors might have enraged the authorities and so they unleashed terror on them. Thus we find in this urban space of Palakkad the people in a very vibrant, charged, politically conscious atmosphere.

Second meeting was held at Kozhikode, third one at Thalassery, fourth one at Vadakara. The fifth meeting was to be held at Manjeri. Till the Manjeri Conference we find the janmies, rajas and other feudal elements dominating the scene. But from this conference onwards there was a sharp divide between the landlords and the middle class tenants. This provided a platform for the middle class Mappilas and non Mappilas to attend the political conferences.²⁰⁵ Some of the main leaders were Manjeri Ramaiyyer, M.P. Narayana Menon, K.P.Kesava Menon, K.Madhavan Nair etc who emerged to the forefront. One daily publishes the extracts from the speeches of the leaders in support of the non-cooperation resolution at the Ottapalam Conference. 'We cannot be slaves any longer. In foreign countries we are considered as slaves. How can thirty two crores of Indian be willing to

²⁰⁴ A.K.Pillai, *Congressum Keralavum*, (Mal.), D C Books: Kottayam, 1986, pp. 282-286.

²⁰⁵ *The Hindu*, Tuesday, 28th June 2016. Records preserved at the Maranattu Mana, Manjeri explain these conferences.

be slaves of a lakh of English men? (K.P.Kesavamenon)'.²⁰⁶ The paper speaks of the deprecating terms of the wicked efforts of the Government officials and their satellites to arrest the movement set on foot by the heroic sons of India.²⁰⁷

6.7 Urban Social Space

English education had a great impact on the minds of the people who were greatly attracted to the progressive, liberal ideas of the west regarding nationalism, individual rights, democracy etc. Kerala was no exception. Through their literary works and writings they began to inspire the common man, their aspirations were given a shape in these writings. This national independence and social emancipation became the important or the ranging topics. The political parties at this time along with political agendas took much care to eradicate the social evils of the times. Untouchability and unapproachability were the two social evils that existed here. Along with boycott of foreign goods, khadhi, charka, social up gradation of the downtrodden people, also find a graphic depiction of the social conditions as well as the inequality which existed in the society. Even though members of all castes existed in the society, we find the existence of Brahmana supremacy especially in *Kalpathy*. It was also said that many prominent and rich Ezhavas had to change their residence or else they had to undergo conversion.²⁰⁸

People talk about political autocracy in India, but caste autocracy is a different matter. It was an unmitigated evil. Sometimes the caste and the political autocracy will be aimed at the same persons, the victim had to

²⁰⁶ *The Manorama* o the 29th April 1921,HFM , vol.36, 1921.

²⁰⁷ *Veerakeralan*, 4th May, 1921, HFM, vol.36, p. 597.

²⁰⁸ See details C.Kesavan, *Jeevitha Samaram* (Mal.), D C Books: Kottayam.

suffer greatly then. One such instance in Kerala was the Vaikom Sathyagraha. (K.P.KesavaMenon having roots in Palakkad, participated in the Vaikom Satyagraha) other leaders were K.Madhavan Nair, Manjeri Rama Iyer etc. The state supports with all force any custom which was sanctioned by the caste or creed; it upholds irrespective of the consideration that the rights claimed by the victims are the rights of ordinary citizenship. This non interference in religious affairs extended to the tolerating of misrule and these are the source of some worst aspects of the British rule. Another example of such British policy was the Kalpathy question, which took place in Palakkad.²⁰⁹We understand the British always tend to side with the orthodoxy and the jenmies instead of fighting for the common people. The British authorities had faith in the of the Kalpathy orthodoxy and as a result of that some portions of the roads were not opened for all people.

Many newspapers expressed disappointment about the G.O. issued by the Madras Government regarding the Kalpathy affairs. Ambiguous language was used in the order which opens way for strife and troubles in respect of individual road.²¹⁰The Government does not have any good will to bring the matter to conclusion without the intervention of civil courts.²¹¹The Governments order was not at all satisfactory. The order curtails the scope of the Council resolution and it evaded the most important issue that the matter of redressal of grievances of restriction of freedom of movement on the pretext of pollution.²¹²Another paper called upon the depressed classes to establish their rights in civil courts and reveal Government's partiality. In contrast to these views, another paper approves of the order and observes

²⁰⁹ *Mithavathi*, Calicut, 15th June 1925; NNPR, TSA. Also see for details, K.N .Ganesh (ed.), *Exercises in Modern Kerala History*, SPCS: Kottayam, 2012.

²¹⁰ *The Kerala Kaumudi*, 15th January 1925, NNPR, TSA.

²¹¹ *Nazranideepika*, Mannanam, 17th June 1925, NNPR, TSA.

²¹² *Samedarshi*, Trivandrum, 13th January 1925, NNPR, TSA.

that the Travancore Government could have similar order regarding Vaikom Temple.²¹³

It was stated that, regarding the Brahman-Ezhuva troubles at Palakkad, the Government was trying to crush public opinion. The paper expresses surprise that with a knowledge of the trend of public opinion against pollution, a Government order was issued which, pleasing a few persons but obstructing the freedom of many people .²¹⁴

Another paper from Kottayam condemns the action of the Palakkad Brahmins and thinks that this event will be a stain on the fair name of Congress which tries to do away with untouchability especially as Palakkad was considered as a centre of Congress activities. The paper rejoices that it has caused an awakening among the Ezhavas and warns the Brahmins that if they are not amenable to wise counsel the Ezhavas will get the support and sympathy of all the people and they will be successful in establishing their civic right of freedom of movement. It was hard to understand the argument that if Kalpathy road was maintained by and at the cost of the Brahmins, they have the right to deny freedom of movement of other castes in that road and as such if all the roads are apportioned by different castes, what will be the condition of the country.²¹⁵ That was an interesting poser by the paper. The government (Arthur Knapp) at this juncture was not prepared to say definitely whether the depressed classes have OR have not the rights of entry to the *agraharam*. *Mathrubumi* expresses dissatisfaction at this reply and states and that the Government should make it clear what they intend to do in this matter.²¹⁶

²¹³ *The Pauran*, 17th January 1925, NNPR, TSA.

²¹⁴ *Manorama*, 18th November 1924, NNPR, TSA.

²¹⁵ *Pratidinam*, 2nd December 1924, NNPR, TSA.

²¹⁶ *Mathrubhumi*, 9th December 1924, NNPR, TSA.

The Vaikom Satyagraha and the Kalpathy affair were the two eye openers of the social untouchability in Kerala. It was a campaign in the name of humanity seeking to establish some sort of dignity and equality for the depressed classes for travelling through the roads. One was directed towards the Maharaja and the other occurred in the British controlled Malabar. Both were attacks, not on the respective administrations but against the custom of not allowing the use of roads. Kalpathy incident was a crucial test for Palakkad society.

After the Malabar District conference at Palakkad, a series of resolutions were passed on the Arms Act and the forcible speeches of its supporters as well as Mrs. Beasant's fearless denunciation of the policy of distrust underlying it, attracted attention. This reflects further the intensity of peoples feeling. The way the act was worked by the European District Municipalities does certainly cast a slur on the loyalty and self respect of our countrymen. The act it seems 'was a blot on the escutcheon which ought to be removed long ago'.²¹⁷ One daily severely criticizes the huge amount of fifty lakhs of rupees which the Government of India had to pay towards the expenses of League of Nations and the paper adds that if only one would know what benefits India is going to derive from such costly expenses.²¹⁸

6.8 Health and Financial Management

In the budget estimate presented for the year 1935 – 36, the Palakkad Municipal Council, it was decided to reduce taxes on rickshaws from Rs. 3 to 2 per half year, tax on carriage be reduced from rupees five to four per half year. Likewise tax on single bullock carts rupees three to two and a half

²¹⁷ *The East-Coast Spectator*, 11th May 1916, TSA.

²¹⁸ *Yogakshemam*, Trichur, 23rd September 1922, NNPR, 1922, TSA.

(from Rs.3 to 2 ½) as well as tax on houses was also reduced from rupees six to four(Rs. 6 to Rs.4).

Statement showing the total number of vehicles in Palakkad, with their present and proposed rate of taxes.1936-37. **Table 6.8.1**

Name of vehicles	No. in 1936 – 37	Amount existing rate	Proposed rate	Decrease
Rickshaw	20	Rs.120-0-0	80-0-0	40-0-0
Carriages	58	“ 580-0-0	464-0-0	116-0-0
Single bullock cart	181	“ 1086-0-0	905-0-0	181-0-0
Horse	15	“ 180-0-0	120-0-0	60-0-0
Total		Rs. 1966-0-0	1569-0-0	397-0-0

The government observes that the financial position of the Palakkad Municipality according to the budget for 1936 – 37 was not satisfactory so they cannot sanction the Councils proposal to reduce the rates of taxes on vehicles and animals as specified in its resolution of 10.02.36.²¹⁹ It was a proposal by the Municipal council only, which the Government did not agree.

It was an age of financial crisis and the colonial government was in a no mood to succumb to the demands of the Council members of the Palakkad Municipality. They were searching for means and ways to increase taxes at this time. The financial condition of the Municipal Council was gradually deteriorating year after year. The town was growing in all respects expect income. The Government therefore asked the Council to increase taxes and improve financial condition, while approving the budget proposals for 1941 – 42, the Government remarked that taxes are to be increased .The

²¹⁹ LSGD, Mis.Series, G.O. NO. 437 dated 1.2.1937, RAK.

minimum requirement was about rupees eight thousand five hundred (Rs.8500/-), available money was four thousand (4000) only. In the budget it was proposed to appoint an additional Sanitary Inspector and one woman vaccinator basing the income as per the proposed increase of taxation. Government did not approve these proposals while approving the budget.

In 1942, the Health Officer proposed to appoint two additional sanitary Inspectors, two vaccinators, six peons, fifteen sweepers and ten scavengers in view of the influx of evacuees into Palakkad. But the additional staff costs extra rupees five hundred per month. The Director of Public Health wrote that there are about fifteen thousand (15000) evacuees in the town and to increase the staff was an absolute necessity. After much discussion, it was decided to appoint one Sanitary Inspector, two Vaccinators, four scavengers and four sweepers. The financial condition was very bad and requires Government's special grant to cover such additional expenditure, as it was very important in view of influx of evacuees. It was decided to place an advance amount of rupees six thousand (Rs.6000/-) at the credit of this Municipality to settle accounts. It has to be repaid in five equal annual installments of rupees one thousand three seventy two (Rs.1372/-) each inclusive of interest at four and a half percent per annum. If there was any alternation to the interests, it will be informed later.²²⁰

In 1930, from 18th to 23rd November it was decided to celebrate Health Week in the Municipalities. The announcement was done in a beautifully decorated motor lorry, which plied the main streets of the town with placards and posters advertised on all sides of the vehicles. Men in the lorry distributed pamphlets on health to the people as, the lorry passed

²²⁰ This meeting was held on 28th April 1942 and also on 27th May 1942, RAK.

along. In Palakkad this Health Week was celebrated from 24 to 29th November 1930. The unique and interesting feature in the programme was a health exhibition which was arranged in the Municipal Council hall. Besides health postures and charts and pictures on various health subjects, interesting models on physiology and general sanitation. This was accompanied by baby show and school activities such as sports, dialogues, competitions and health dramas. Several lectures were delivered, twelve magic lantern shows, six cinemas shows on hook worms and other health subjects. A large number of people attended. A number of health leaflets on various health subjects were distributed from the Director of Public Health. The total income of this event including the Municipal contribution of Rs.200/- amounted to about Rs.336/- Total amount spent was Rs.370-12-6.²²¹

Details – Palakkad, **Table 6.8.2**

Lectures	12
Audience	2500
Magic Lantern Demonstration	12
Audience	4180
No. of Centre	1

Activities in School

Essay competition	1
Sports	2

²²¹ G.O.N.O.2472, P.H. dated 18th December 1931, RAK.

Display of boy scouts and guides

Procession	1
Health drama	2

Persons who rendered valuable help in the Health week celebration of 1930 were awarded certificate of merit by Director of Public health.²²² Under the initiative of the Public Health Director, these activities were undertaken to create public awareness among the people of the urban space, to create an awareness of the health issues, anatomy, sanitation hygiene etc. The meeting was conducted; various competitions, dramas, shows etc were organized. Many leaflets describing about health issues were distributed. In totte it can be analyzed as a successful effort to create awareness among the urban population of Palakkad on various health related issues. For certain works done in the Palakkad Municipality in 1936 – 37, 37-38, the estimate did not get prior sanctions. It was said that there exists innumerable lanes, small and big in all parts of the Municipality and it was not possible to prepare detailed estimates for each lane. It was opined that, it was wise, that such things were to be avoided and as a special case this was to be condoned and to be avoided in future.²²³

There was a report on cholera epidemic in Palakkad Municipality. In the first case of cholera, a Muhammedan woman at Kanjikode eight miles from Palakkad town was brought to Mettupalayam, a congested Muhammadan locality on 15.9.1936. Her cholera was detected on the next day. Preventive measures were taken. In the same house two more attacks

²²² G.O.NO. 2472, P.H. dated 18th December 1931,RAK.

²²³ LSGD, Ms Series, G.O. NO.2578, dated 3.7.1939,RAK.

were fatal. Many cases were reported from the same locality. The infection spread to Sekhripuramagraharam. Three deaths and three attacks took place, spreading on to Kumarapuram. Then it spread to Chetty Street, a congested part of the town, where poor people dwelled. Altogether there were twenty three attacks and sixteen deaths of cholera within six days. In response to this outbreak, Government took strong and effective measures and within three weeks the epidemic was totally brought under control. Many forceful inoculations were done, systematic chlorination of wells, whitewashing of the infected houses were done at Municipal cost. Stools and vomiting were collected and buried.²²⁴ In about 1943, there was another outbreak (bout) of cholera gripping Palakkad. *The Hindu*, Madras on 08.06.43 reported that cholera cases are on the increase. The affected areas are Olavakkode, Kalpathy, Sulthanpet, Moothanthara and Kalmandapam. The total figures were forty attacks and twenty seven deaths.²²⁵

The Municipal Commissioner has ordered the closure of hotels and restaurant in the neighborhood of Sultanpet Bazar. As per the separate notes on the places inspected in Palakkad Municipality it was understood that three villages affected are close to Palakkad town. The range Health Inspector assisted by his II class vaccinators was attending to these places. The Health Inspector has been asked to utilize the services of the lady vaccinator also for disinfection, Since Palakkad Municipality was infected, and there was every likelihood that more regions would be infected. From 26.12.42 to 3.4.43, there were one hundred and thirteen infections and ninety three deaths and 14,223 anti-cholera inoculations were done. After

²²⁴ LSGD, E & PH 1936, RAK, G.O.NO. 2402 PH, dated 15.12.1936, RAK and Letter dated 3rd November 1938 from the Office of Health Officer, Palakkad to Commissioner, Palakkad, RAK.

²²⁵ *The Hindu*, dated 26.8.43.

an interval of two months, a second outbreak occurred during week ending 5.6.43, which suddenly increased to thirty two infections and eighteen deaths.²²⁶In spite of the increased vigilances, the total infections in seventeen days were one forty three with hundred and six deaths. Number of person inoculated was six thousand seven forty six persons.²²⁷ The Ramakrishna Mission arranged relief works in Malabar.²²⁸The All Kerala GramaSevaSangham Cholera Relief Committee announced opening of relief centers in all parts of Malabar and to organize medical and nursing services. It was appealing for funds, the contribution to be sent to M.K.Raju (editor) *Mathrubhumi*, Calicut or V.M.GovindanNambisan, Secretary, All Kerala GramaSevaSangham, Kallai Road, Calicut.²²⁹

When there was an attack of cholera in Palakkad, where the people were reluctant for inoculation, intense propaganda work were done by organizing awareness talks, by teachers, free distribution of leaflets on cholera etc. For this reason the disease was brought under control within three weeks. The Government decided that it would be neither feasible nor necessary to reserve vacancies in posts of Women Medical Officers, Maternity and Child Welfare under the Municipal Councils and District Boards for candidate who has rendered war services.²³⁰

All those persons who have rendered service in the Defense Department of the Government of India in connection with war, vacancies would be reserved for them. Appointments should be made from war service candidates selected by Madras Public Service Commission. Thus all the

²²⁶ Public Health Department G.O.NO. 2022, dated 21.8.1943, Cholera, Malabar, 1943,RAK.

²²⁷ *The Hindu*, Madras, 21.7.43 in the Public Health GO,RAK.

²²⁸ *The Indian Express*, 28.7.43, in the Public Health GO, RAK.

²²⁹ *The Indian Express*, Madras, dated 16.7.43, in the public health GO,RAK.

²³⁰ G.O.N O, 3123, 3rd December, 1945, RAK.

remaining vacancies should be filled after the present war by men who have done meritorious duty in accordance with the 'rules 7- D in the case of Municipal Medical Officers and on the advice of Surgeon General in the case of compounders'.²³¹

In another order the Government permitted Municipal Council to employ masteries where ever necessary for the supervision of schemes undertaken by them with the aid of provincial schemes and to acquire the necessary experience which would be useful to them later.²³² Through another order to Government directed that all water supply and drainage schemes involving technical skills should be entrusted to PWD for execution now that they are prepared to relax the conditions for small schemes.²³³ The post war reconstruction general committee has accepted the recommendation of its subcommittee (public health) that a minimum of floor area in any living or bed room in a dwelling house conforming to the minimum standard which is necessary to follow in the interest of the health of inmates should be 120 sq.ft instead of 80 sq.ft.²³⁴

6.9 Conclusion

This chapter endeavored to understand the urban space in between the two world wars. The newspapers were able to convey the news for and against the government during the war and they could shape the public opinion. As a public institution in the urban space, issues in the Palakkad College involving the students, teachers and the public is examined. Progressive, democratic and nationalistic ideas were vehemently put down

²³¹ G.O.NO, 3123, 3rd December, 1945, RAK.

²³² G.O. NO, 3889 PH, 26th August, 1940, RAK

²³³ Government Order No. 5409, PH dated 18th November 1940.

²³⁴ Government of Madras Education and Public Health Department (PH) G.O. NO. 2179, P.H, dated 15th July 1942, D. Dis .No. 347/45, RAK.

by the colonial rulers and they formulated rules and regulations to suppress the nationalistic sentiments at any cost. These newspapers undertook this debate in forming the nationalistic voice. There was an acute and terrible shortage of finances and many of the developmental works like road, bridge railways, health works took a back seat. Within a span of twenty years another war occurred which was more furious and severe than before. The government was on the defensive and again the brunt of taxes and other things fell on the shoulders of the common man. Indians participated in these wars as the colonial government enticed the people with many offers like jobs, good service entry, pensions, educational concessions etc. Many lost their life, many returned wounded. They had to fight in distant regions, and had to suffer much agony. Few were able to get some retirement benefits and educational concessions for their dependents. One positive aspect of the War was that the common man became more politically conscious and thereby more politically empowered and his entry into the urban politics marked a turning point in the nationalist movement. It henceforth became the movement of the common man. The crowd mentality changed and became ready to plunge into political activity. The urban life was moved by international and national events. All these reflected in the everyday life of the people in Palakkad in between 1918 and 1945.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

This thesis is an attempt to understand the history of the urbanisation of Palakkad under British colonialism. It is believed that the modern town of Palakkad came into being in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There are evidences to show that the town appeared with the establishment of Mysorean hegemony in the end of eighteenth century. Therefore, the pre-Mysorean and Mysorean periods had to be contextualised to know the transformation of the town in the nineteenth century.

Urbanisation as a whole can be considered as a very important as well as a complex phenomenon. Only from recent times this branch was taken up by the social scientists per se. Not much work was done in this field before in the context of Kerala, and systematic attempts have begun to study it today. It is said that this nineteenth century period can be considered as a critical and momentous period in the transformation of the Indian society in general and Kerala in particular. This age also witnessed a turbulent period, as there were intermittent wars between local feudatories, an opportunity amply utilised by the Mysorean as well as the European powers leading to the victory of the English in the race for colonisation, leading to the establishment of the administrative mechanism which was unknown before. The English powers were able to establish their superiority over this land with their innovative and superior technology. It is in this framework that the present transformation and reconstruction of Palakkad should be viewed.

The analysis of the problem is done, the period from 1860 to 1947. It is so because the region of Palakkad became a Municipality by about 1866 and

1947 denotes the end of colonialism in India. The study covers the pre-colonial period which had a feudal backdrop and the changes the region underwent as a result of the contact with the Mysoreans and the English powers. Drastic changes transformed the society and administration as a result of these acquaintances which later on led to the establishment of an apparatus which is totally different from all the previous periods. Ultimately it led to the domination by the English power.

It is opined that the usually the urban centres comes from a rural setting, and this can be seen in Palakkad. In the beginning the agrarian character is very prominent but with the passage of time the urban character emerges unmistakably. It is in this complex context that the history of Palakkad should be viewed. Another feature that becomes evident in the history of this city is the increasing heterogeneity of population in the city, as it becomes more urban, a place where divergent elements converge.¹

The ancient history of Palakkad is shrouded in mystery. We do not have any information as such, but from some Sanskrit works as well in some foreign notices we are able to know that Palakkad was ruled by a feudal power structure led by the *achanmar*. The feudal elements were very strong and later on led to their urban migrations. Their strong presence could be found in the urban space where they maintained their residences and families. We find equally powerful rulers in Kollengode, Mannarghat etc., who exercised their own suzerainty over Palakkad and the town always had to face the brunt of their wrath and was invaded under one pretext or other by them. In order to escape from one such attempt we understand that the

¹ SC Mishra, 'Urban History in Indian Possibilities and Perspectives' in InduBanga (ed.), *The City in Indian History*, London: 2005, pp. 1-7.

help was sought by the *achanmar* from the ruler of Mysore leading to the intervention of HaiderAli first and then Tipu into the soil of Palakkad.

Understanding the strategic importance of this place, Haider decided to construct a fort and also garrison soldiers here. It was here, one of the passes which connects Palakkad region to Coimbatore and from there it is being connected to distant areas. Active trade activities were being carried on through these routes. Haider Ali could challenge the British power. As soon as the Mysoreans established their power in Kerala, they started to issue instruction for a stable government and for this purpose a fresh revenue settlement was initiated. The Mysore administration transformed transport communication in Malabar with the help of the French experts. No roads were in existence in Malabar region as the rulers did not find it a necessity. Since the Sultan used heavy artillery, found it very difficult for its easy movement and so he started road construction activity in Malabar. This sparked the first attempt at road construction in Malabar. The urban space of Palakkad took birth in this context as an important space linking interior India and Malabar. The SultanPetta, an important part in the Palakkad town space can be considered as the nerve centre or the focal point of this region. Tipu wanted to connect all roads to Seringapatanam, all main regions, markets towns, garrisons with roads, causing a great increase in trade and commerce as well as administrative efficiency which expedited trade and commerce. Buchanan testifies to this mass roadbuilding activity and also about the thousands of employees involved in it. Tipu Sulthan also understood the importance of this and later the British also followed it. Buchanan has mentioned the pitiable condition of the roads and the forests, terrain, heavy downpour acted as obstacles and adequate restorative works to be done in order to keep it in good condition. In one of

the Malayalam lessons introduced by the British administration, we find Tipu being portrayed as a very progressive leader, very secular in outlook, these glowing terms about their enemy, goes a long way in proving the secular outlook of the Sultan.²

The Palakkad gap is not merely a gap for traders, but it is a bearer of culture, through which scores and scores of people and immigrants had been to Palakkad throughout the ages. We find huge gathering of the people who had come through the passes during festivals especially the Kalpathi Car festival. Market places, festival places etc., can be termed as places where ideas and practices were disseminated due to these interactions. Active inland trade existed between Palakkad as well as neighbouring places. Through the Pollachi – Coimbatore route many came with essential articles as well as luxurious items to do the trade. Traders like *chettimar*, *tharakanmar*, *vadugar*, *ravuthar* etc., traded through this route. With the coming of the Mysoreans we find many trading communities immigrated to Palakkad along with the Sultan's army and settled in the urban space. The main road around the Fort got the name ChaturengaPetta or SultanPetta in Palakkad. The areas came to be known by the name of the trade that was practiced. For example we find Flower Street, Ghee Street, Rice Street, Tailor Street, Buffalo Street etc. Palakkad reputation turned into a flourishing trade centre. In the markets we find the business being conducted very briskly and cattle market is one of the famous one. Weekly and Daily markets flourished. Christian traders had an important part to play and were also considered to be very affluent section in the society. Along with the inland trade there also existed vigorous overseas trade especially in the ancient times. Thus, the

² Pallath Raman, 'The Malabar Kohinoor Reader', Fourth Form Book, ANP Press, Kunnankalam:1937 preserved at the Government Boys High School, Manjeri.

Gap acted as a gate way or means of communication through which hordes of immigrants have crossed over to Palakkad, the Gap, greatly influenced the climate of this region and also lead to vast contacts with other parts of Kerala.

The administrative and communicative changes effected in the Mysorean administration exploited in the beginning by the British. They made use of the communication facilities introduced by the Mysorean rulers, to strengthen and augment their exploitation of the resources in these regions. The local rajas were subdued to a subservient position and a yearly pension or *malikhana* was given to them. Thus, they were suitably pensioned off. In order to carry on the administration there were collaborators who helped them in their day to day work of administration. Much concessions and privileges were granted to them, who were well versed in English language. With the onset of the British domination, followed by British administration, it is said that there dawned an age of peace and security which was conducive for urbanisation. It is a debatable question as far as India and also Kerala is concerned.

It has to be taken into account towns and cities were not static at any point of time. Always cities were regarded as ever moving, vibrant, full of life, an area of dissemination of ideas, place of chances and possibilities. It is argued that these urban places are those where one tends to find all sorts of people belonging to different walks of life converging and exchanging ideas.

The character of the town underwent great transformation under colonialism since 1792. The most important development was the construction of railways, which is one of the key factors that reshaped the destiny of this region. It is said that building of railways and arrival of

modernity happened almost simultaneously. Railways, telegraphs, and postal services were major breakthroughs in the technological side, believes the British writers. They believed that this railway will give control over this diverse land. They considered it as the manifestation or unmistakable sign of their conquests and seeing it satisfied their vanity. Trade began to be linked internationally and commerce received an impetus. Another social impact with the coming of railways is that the caste system which was deep rooted in the society got a severe blow. It made the mobility of all people a stark reality. Mobility was made easier, rapid and swift; its effect was instantaneous in the minds of the people. But the people also had to suffer much hardships and discomfort. The British government had no interest in improving public facilities and they erected structures and institutions to exploit resources. Railway stations and other buildings developed a unique kind of architecture, one that came to represent the power, the power and symbol of British authority. Architecture evolved itself into the buildings of railway colonies, which we can find in Palakkad also. A new type of architecture also came up in the colonial setup. Railways can be considered as a great boon to the nationalists. Students and people flocked to railway station to see leaders alighting from the trains.

In the year 1860 – 77, a rapid expansion of the domination over the Indian culture took place by the British powers. Here the imperial power is making a thorough attempt to understand the region and also to preserve the ancient culture, language, monuments etc.³ It is also generally argued that when empires were found in distant places, the imperial powers were more concerned with extricating the maximum of agricultural products

³ See Saurabh Dube (ed.), *Post-Colonial Passage: Contemporary History Writing on India*, OUP: Delhi, 2004.

which is in demand in the European regions. At the same time they also need the amenities of the urban life. For example, ports, trains, easy accessibility etc. In Kerala also we find the existence of many ports and Palakkad acted as a region from where the goods were collected or a transit region, as there was a thriving trading community here. In order to carry on the trade unencumbered, led to the garrisoning of these outposts which in turn led to the density of the population as many artisans, craftsmen and others arrived to serve these establishments. To construct roads and railways, the government had to take over private lands, displace communities and clear jungles. Mass deforestation took place. In certain areas displacement of certain communities took place because of the developmental processes. The taking over of lands for railway constructive works were not always smooth and many a times the owners had to settle for less money or else by invoking certain Acts, the government just took over the lands for public utility purposes.

The British made much technical advancement in this region to suit the requirements of colonialism. Foremost among them were Post and Telegraph, Press and Printing. Messages could now be sent to and from and Government can keep itself aware of almost all happenings in the districts within no time. The Basel Mission and other Christian organisations for publishing various Christian religious books and texts introduced printing press. Before long strict instruction and orders were given by the Government not to publish any offensive matters against the Government. Those who disobeyed were punished and their licences disallowed. During the national movement strict vigil was kept by the government on these public institutions.

Regarding markets, much trade and commerce were carried on. Haider and Tipu Sulthan had realized the importance of the Palakkad region as a place which can act as a linkage with far off places, later the British power also got to know of importance of this place as a region which will augment their trade as well as their revenue.

It was an age of differentiation as well as caste distinctions in the society and that was also visibly seen in the case of cremation of dead bodies also. People belonging to different castes had their own burial grounds. Often the ecclesiastical bodies or trustees were in charge of these graveyards, the government sanctioning some money for the upkeep or its maintenance. Within the urban space as the available land is limited the government provided sufficient burial spaces for the growing city's population.

In 1866, Palakkad was declared a Municipality, taking into account the number of people residing in that area and according to the Towns Improvement Act of 1865. At the same time the government withdrew from grants in aid and directed toll collection and taxes to manage towns. Later on District Boards were introduced by the government so as to run the administration. The Brahmins in the city feared that all types of people would enter into their spaces and that was opposed by them. The peculiar social set up of Palakkad prevented the government from introducing reforms.

In the field of education, the traditional sort of education prevailed in the *ezhuthupallikal*. With the advent of the English power, the English form of education with the intention of creating a group of people who could assist the administration, people who had knowledge of English were employed in the British services in the posts of peons, clerks, etc. In

Palakkad also many schools with English education were introduced. The Government Victoria College was an upgraded to college among them. There was a remarkable change as a result of the introduction of the modern education. It inculcated and infused a new analytical, logical and a rational way of thinking. The Western educated group were very much impressed by the progressive and liberal ideas of the new system. The British Rule of Law, their sense of justice and fair play, equality, liberty greatly inspired them. The works of Rousseau, Voltaire and others greatly changed and moulded their mindset. But back home they were aghast at the contrary scenes of exploitation and inequality. A vivid picture of naked enslavement and oppression unfolded before them. There could be absolutely no comparisons between the situations that existed in Europe and India. The Victoria Jubilee celebrations of the late nineteenth century helped the Malabar public to construct public spaces to facilitate national sentiment through public activities in the town spaces. Many Tamil speaking people got themselves educated in English and transformed themselves into a strong pillar of the government bureaucracy at Madras. It is remarked that the Brahmins dominated the rice growing areas of Palakkad where feudal system persisted, which later on became a communist stronghold with the inter War period.

The Basel Missionaries also had an equally important role in the emerging urban economy and society of Palakkad. A new type of modernity different from the colonial modernity emerged, which was more humanitarian in its approach. Many English teaching schools were established. They initiated a tile factory at Olavakkode. Through the school the Mission inculcated Christian values, ethics, English language etc., to the students. Influenced by these, people got themselves converted to

Christianity. These converted people had to face much hardships as well as struggle a lot for their day to day life. In order to provide a livelihood for them, they were given employment in the tile factory. Their services were very commendable in the field of education, employment and but for them the urban phase would have been different. They were able to create an English speaking people who were to get into different services. By the 1920's the thatched roofing of the *agraharam* as well as many public buildings in the urban space of Palakkad began to be tile roofed by using the tiles from these factories. Thus a great precaution against the constant fires could be brought about.

The British affected certain changes in the top order of the society. They established a bureaucracy as elaborate machinery with military as a supportive base. Just like the Mysorean administration it was able to give a strong blow to feudalism. A new type of elite was created by them, who were English speaking and a 'comprador class' was formed. The *thiyya* class was the by product of this influence. Along with towns new social classes emerged. Even the local rajas of the olden times, it seems they maintained residences in the urban places also. It was but only natural that the Kollengode Raja or the Kavalapara Nair maintained huge residences in the urban space of Palakkad.

The new English speaking, abroad educated people, we understand that they formed the pillars or the bastions in the national movements of the country. They readily boycotted their jobs and joined the freedom struggles of that age. They cannot turn a deaf ear to the boycott call of M K Gandhi. Among many such persons in the Palakkad regions the most noteworthy was that of TR Krishna Swami who was ostracised by his own

community for participating in the freedom struggles as well for his stand against untouchability and participation in inter caste dining. This new generation was shocked to see the tolerant, progressive, liberal ideas which were practiced in the west were not seen in India. The elite group of business men, doctors, advocates etc., understood the need of the hour and rallied behind the call of M K Gandhi. These people were able to provide leadership to the common masses through the vernacular language.

Newspapers tend to play a very crucial role in the urban scenario. In this thesis their active role and how it was able to influence the public opinion. In the beginning they highlighted many local matters, and national issues. Ideologies like Communism took its roots in the town with the expansion of the public sphere. Strikes became a regular feature in the town space with the politicisation of the ordinary masses. They questioned and criticised age old customs and superstitions and also spoke against the foreign rule.

During the War time many people joined the army and money was collected towards the colonial War Fund. Men, money and materials were sent to the War front and Palakkad also made its own contributions. In return it was decided by the government to extend certain benefits to the recruits as well as those who are wounded and deceased. Land as well as educational benefits was given to the dependents of these soldiers. Many people immigrated to the Malayan countries and they were put to much hardship with the onset of the War.

The educational institutions in Palakkad especially the Government Victoria College had an indispensable part to play in the national awakening in Palakkad town. Due to the works of the Theosophists, the atmosphere of

Palakkad was practically charged and the people as well as the students plunged into the national movement by the end of the nineteenth century. The government took a very reactionary stand and the students were given severe punishments for participating in the national movement activities. Many were expelled. Student's grievances were not heard and highhanded punishments were meted out to them. Much protest was voiced through the newspapers but to no avail. The college cultivated a secular public sphere in the town culture and people from different walks of life began to educate the city population and advanced political culture. The newspapers also played a vital role in the dissemination of news and the ordinary people came to know the world around them.

The government issued orders prohibiting the students participating in politics. A new spirit of freedom was ranging fiercely in the horizons and the dictatorial government using its might was trying to suppress these nationalistic feelings. The same attitude was taken against the teachers also. The members of the Municipal Council also supported the teachers who were issued show cause notice by the government for intervening in political activity. This led to wide spread protests and discussions on how the government could interfere in the working of the local self-governments.

The city population, irrespective of their position in the society involved themselves wholeheartedly in the national movement and the authorities used all means at their disposal to crush it. Picketing the liquor shops and boycotting foreign goods became the order of the day during the Civil Disobedience Movement and in Palakkad town. Thus, we find the people of Palakkad in a very vibrant and dynamic mood and that was very

evident when the District Conferences was launched.⁴ Side by side with the political consciousness, there was the growth of social renaissance.. The depressed classes started many movements to get rid of the social shackles and the Kalpathy incident could be treated as an example of the mass involvement in breaking feudal laws. There existed restrictions on movements on the roads in the pretext of pollution. The Brahmin population settled in the *agraharam* houses at Palakkad were the strong holds of orthodoxy and they stood against any progressive changes in the society. The only exception can be cited is the case of T.R.KrishnaSwamilyer. These Brahmins took to English education and became the strong supporters of the colonial government and got into the services of the British government. They had come over to Palakkad centuries back through the pass and settled here, doing odd jobs, trading,etc. The Vaikom Sathyagraha and the Kalapathy issue can be considered as twin exposures in Kerala as far as untouchability and inapproachability are concerned. One movement was directed against the Maharaja and the other against the religious orthodoxy in British Malabar.

In Palakkad, we come across some open space or the *maidanam* in the town. This space is open to the public and often it is the venue of political meetings today. The birth of this open space was a reason for the empowerment of the people against the colonial rule. The Fort, important buildings like jails, offices, reading rooms etc., came up around this vicinity. Even in the time of Tipu Sulthan, this area was called Chaturanga Petta or Sultan Petta. In the early British time this area was called the Cantonment Area. The British as well as the Municipal Council undertook the construction of some buildings there. Thus the idea of the public space or the open space

⁴ See Janardhanan Moiyarathu (ed.), *Moyyarathu Sankaran: Atmakadhayum Charitra Smaranakalum*, (Mal.), Chintha: Trivandrum, 2012, pp.33-103.

gradually came up and it became the symbol of their unpiercable power. It facilitated public gatherings in the later times. It was by exhibiting the increasing number of nationalists, the town was able to strengthen the defeatist mentality of the colonial government.

The late nineteenth century can be considered as an age of revivalist Hindu modernity and this also reached Kerala through Palakkad. The Hindu revivalist elements reached through print culture from Madras with the help of the railways.

The city scape of Palakkad, though formed in the colonial period had some elements of the past. The character of Palakkad changed to an urban space with the coming of cantonments, roads, railways, markets, cultural and political gatherings, educational institutions, political awakening, the print culture, migration of the rural population etc., and each segment has a crucial role to play. With the declaration of independence in 1947, the urban space had achieved a matured growth. The character of the cityscape is thus, interconnected with the historical evolution of the town.

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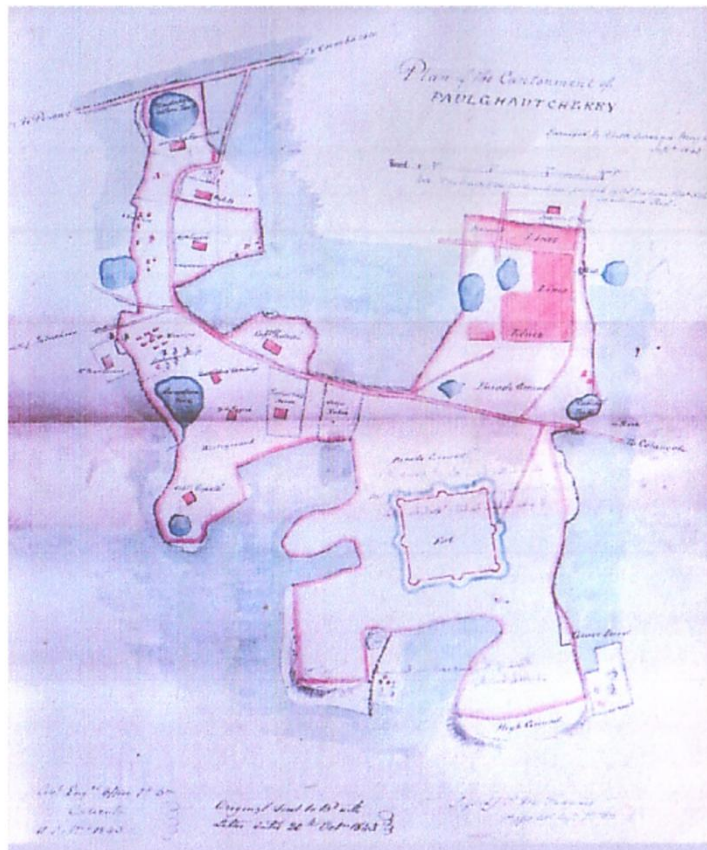
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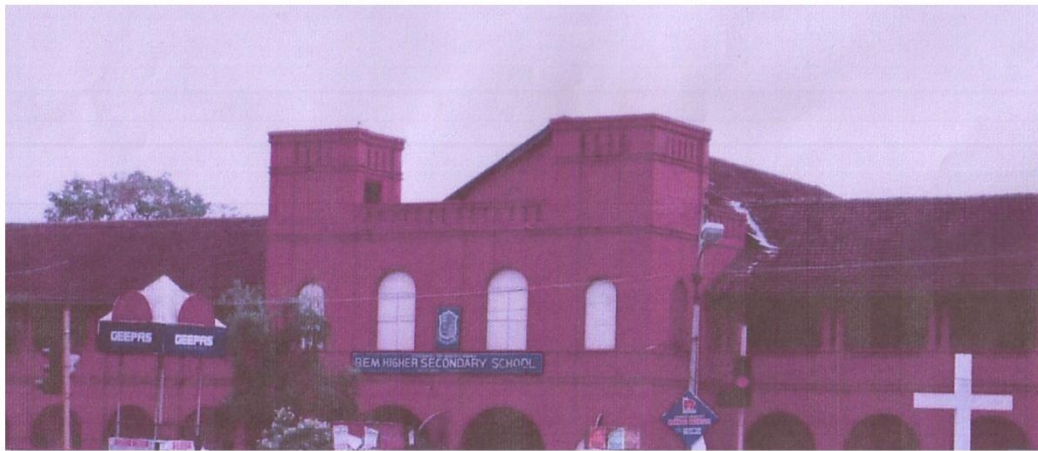
APPENDIX 1



Plan of the cantonment and Palakkattucherry

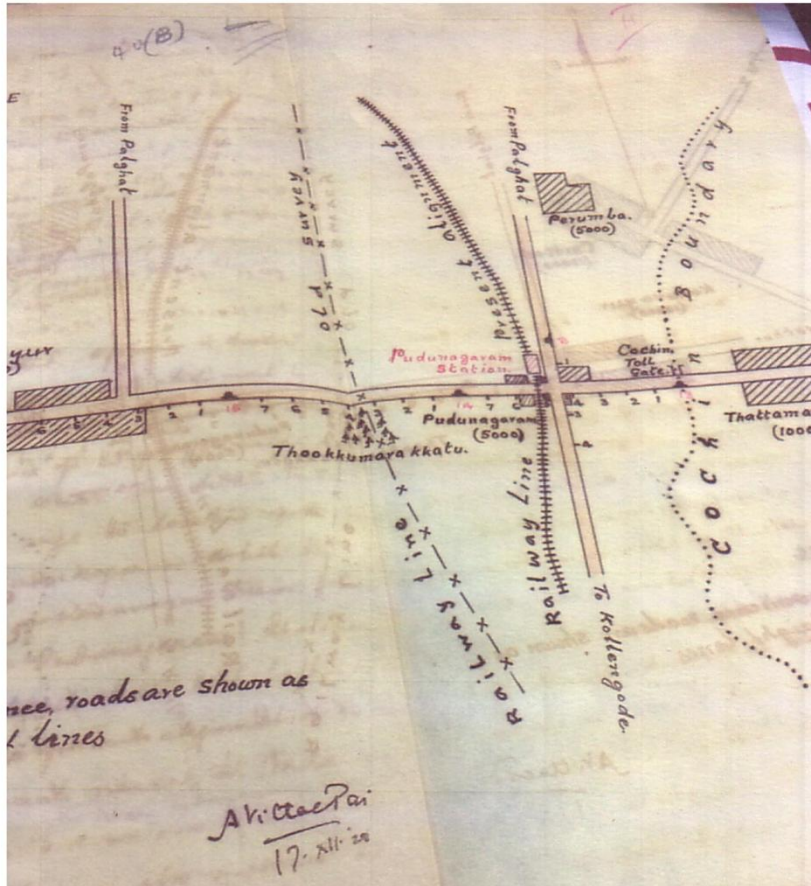
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APPENDIX 2



BEM School, Palakkad
Source: www.google.com

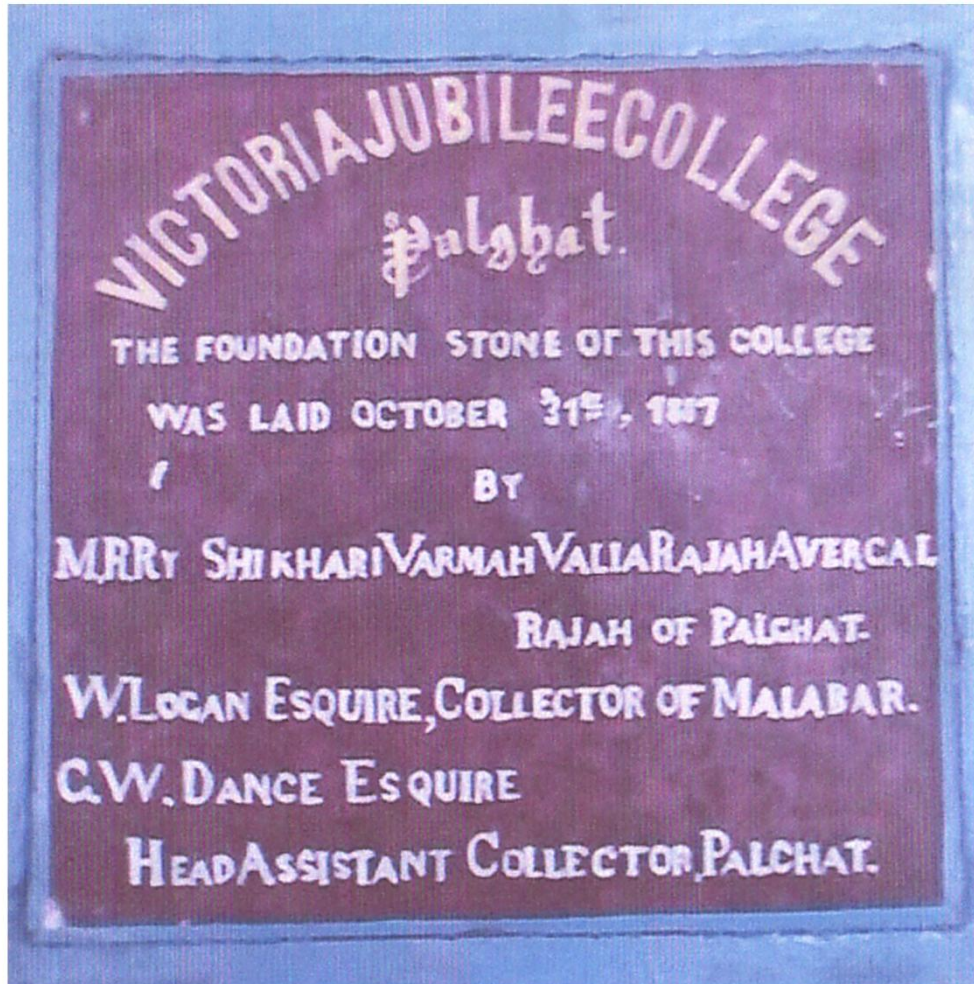
APPENDIX 3



Railway Line Palakkad

Source: G.O. No. 87 Ry. dt. 15. 1. 1929, PW & L (19290 Dept.), RAK

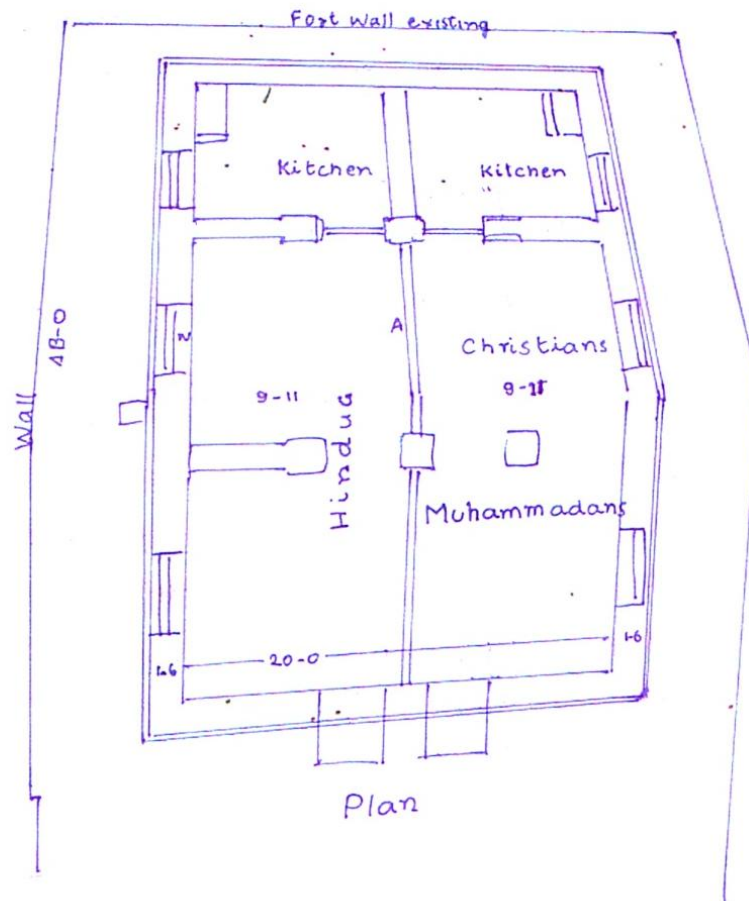
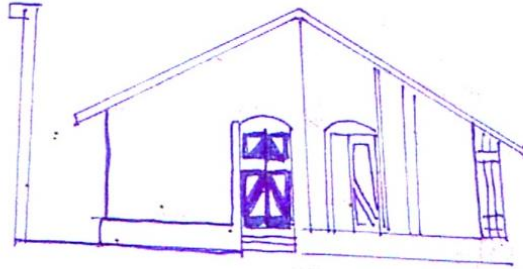
APPENDIX 4



Victoria College Palakkad

Source: www.google.com

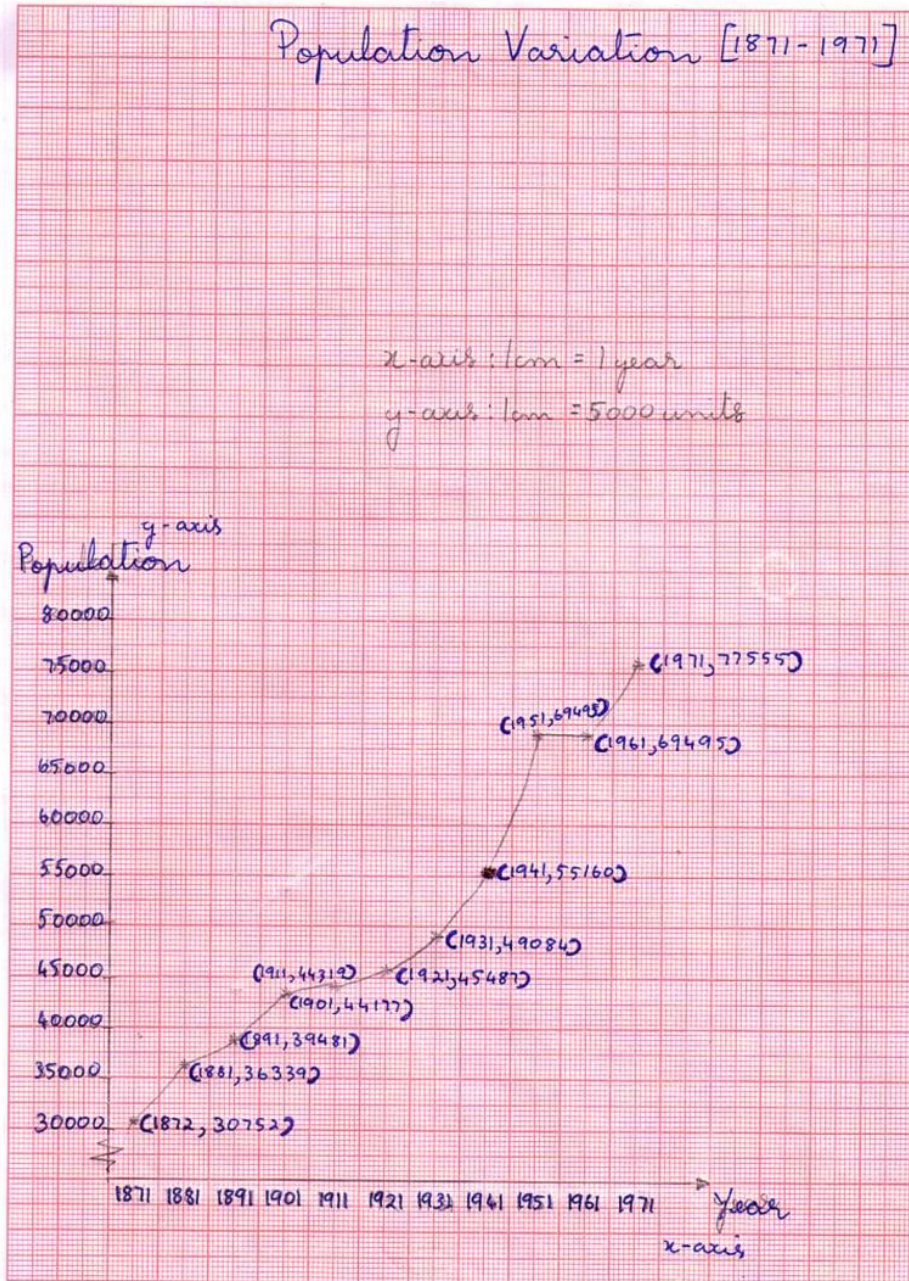
APPENDIX 5



Blue print of a tiffin stall

Source: D. Disfile 9021-27 dt. 2.2.29, RAK

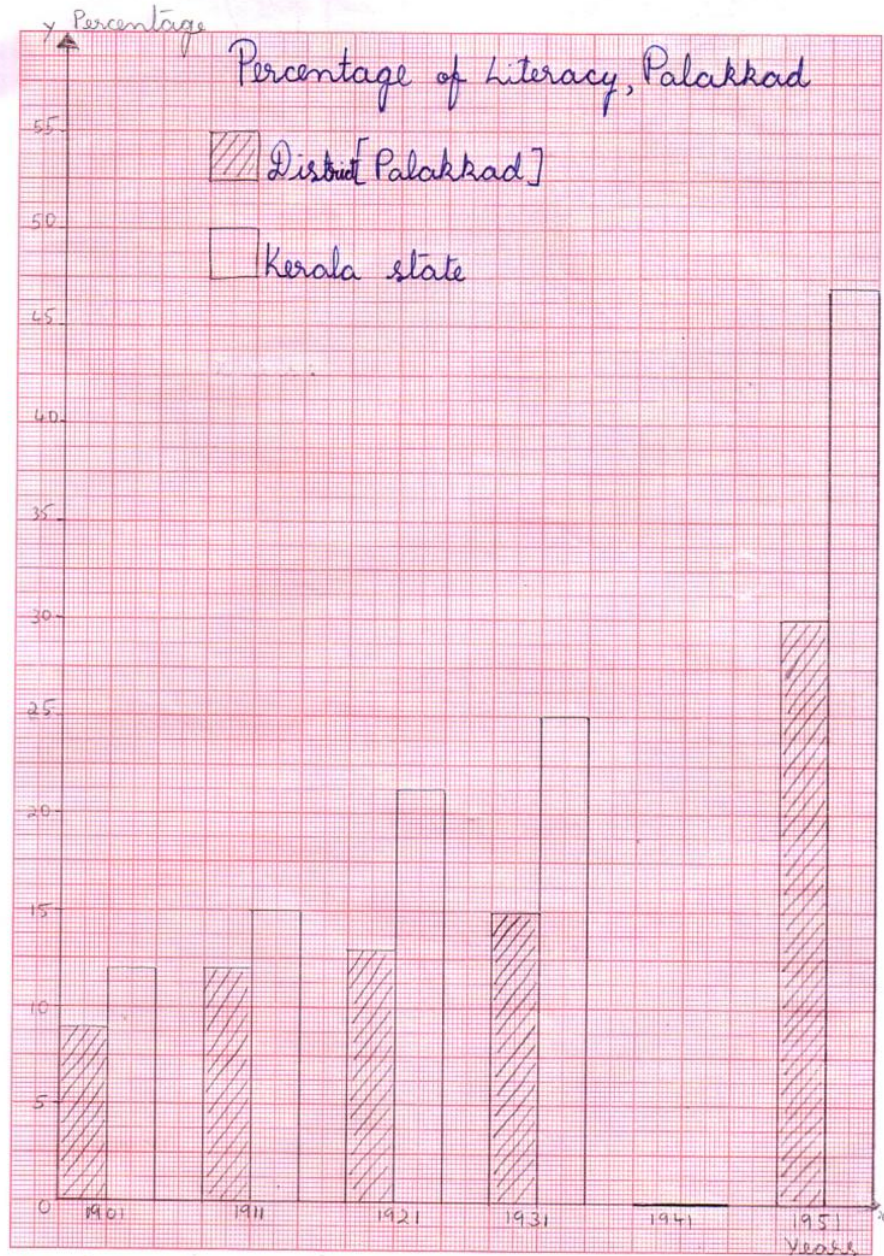
APPENDIX 6



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APPENDIX 7



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