ABSTRACT

The present study focuses the political processes in Kolathunadu on the eve of colonial intrusion at the behest of the English East India Company. Kolathiri ruled the northern portion of Malabar, which roughly corresponds to the modern Kasargod, Kannur and some parts of the Kozhikode districts of the Kerala State along with Mahe under the Pondicherry State. The peculiarities in geo-physical conditions, the agrarian structure and the land relations developed from within the territory had resulted in a relatively stagnant and decadent political organization in Kolathunadu. The response of the indigenous power structure to the shifting power relations in the region consequent on the intrusion of the European trading companies during the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries had a devastating impact. This research work throws light into the inherent weaknesses in the socio-economic and political structures of Kolathunadu and the machinations employed by the English East India Company for extending the colonial yoke through the application of merchant capitalist tactics. Further it shows that the causes and effects of imperialism had regional variations and hence its study demanded systematic and analytical observation in its specificities.

Keywords - Brahmin Settlements, Canarese Invasion, Debt-trap, Malikhana, Maritime Trade, Merchant Capitalism, Mysorean Interregnum, The English East India Company, Tellicherry Factory.