Kerala, one of the loveliest states in India, is situated in the Southwestern corner of the sub-continent under the foothills of Western Ghats. Karnataka on the north, Tamil Nadu on the east and the south, and the Arabian Sea on the west border it. The state lies between 8°18’ and 12°48’ North latitude and between 74°52’ and 77°24’ East Longitude. Today, within this narrow coastal strip - the area of which is 39,863 square Kilometres, and constitutes of about 1.18 of the total area of the nation - live 3.1 percent of the people of Indian Union (31,838,619 people). As part of the decision to organise the states on linguistic basis, the present state of Kerala formally came into existence on November 1, 1956. The region is linguistically homogeneous since majority of the population speak Malayalam. The state has to its credit some of the distinct features of the nation. The Kerala Model of Development has gained the appraisal from various corners, both national and international. In terms of physical quality indicators such as literacy, life expectancy, infant mortality, sex ratio, fertility rate etc Kerala is not only ahead of all Indian states but also similar to most of the advanced countries.

From the very early days, Kerala enjoyed a type of political and social insularity from other parts of the Indian sub continent thanks to its geographical isolation and proximity to the Arabian Sea. Systems like Marumakkathayam and polyandry are distinctive social systems which developed in Kerala. It may seem paradoxical that this land and its people started and retained active contacts with the outside world than with the other
parts of India.\textsuperscript{1} The Western Ghats that lies on the East and North of Kerala acted like a shield protecting the region from the foreign invasions that shook the entire Indian subcontinent in the past.

However, Kerala was never united politically except for a brief period under the Cheras in the twelfth century. In the medieval period, Kerala was fragmented into a number of territorial segments ruled by a number of local chieftains.\textsuperscript{2} In the course of time, there arose in Kerala some powerful rulers whose ambitious actions reduced the number of these minor kingdoms and in their place a few powerful and large kingdoms emerged in the state. In the south, there came up some powerful rulers, like Marthanda Varma (1729-1758), who founded the kingdom of Travancore unifying the entire territories from the boundary of Cochin to the southern tip of India. The Perumpadappu Swarupam or Cochin, which got political prominence in the 16\textsuperscript{th} century, became a powerful kingdom in central Kerala under Saktan Thamburan (1790-1805). The invasion of the Mysore rulers, Hyder Ali (1763-1782) and Tipu Sultan (1782-1792), brought the entire area, north of Cochin, under one political sway. Thus when the Seringapatnam Treaty (1792) was signed, Malabar had become a distinct political unit in the North under the British. When the British gained their sway over Kerala the region had been clearly divided into three political units – Malabar as a district of the Madras Presidency directly under the British rule in the North and Cochin and Travancore as tribute paying princely states under the imperial control of the colonial rule in the South and the centre respectively.

\textsuperscript{1} When religions like Christianity and Islam reached Kerala immediately after its emergence in the West Asia, comparatively it took more time for the Indian born religions to take their roots here.

Social configuration and economic linking

The political fragmentation of Kerala had its replica in the social sphere also. Basically, Kerala had been a land of equality without any type of social distinction. In ancient period, this part of landed territory which was a part of ancient Tamilakam, was divided into five natural divisions viz. Kurinji, the hilly country which was inhabited by Kuravas (hunters), Palai, the dry waterless region, the inhabitants of which were Maravar and Kalvar (fighters), Mullai, the wooded land between kurinji and Palai the inhabitants of which were the Kurumber (herdsmen) Marudam, the lower courses of rivers where Vellalar (agriculturists) found their dwelling and Neydal, the coastal belt where paradavar (fishermen) lived.

In short, the people of ancient Kerala were divided into five groups based on their occupations. They spoke the same language and belonged to the same race and had no caste. The spatial mobility in those days also resulted in the change of occupation and thereby the group they belonged. Thus a Kurava from the Kurinji territory could settle in Mullai and become a Kurumber and so on.

From the 5th century onwards, there started the inflow of Aryans from the North. Bit by bit, the Aryan Brahminism could succeed in reconfiguring the Kerala society on the lines of Chaturvarnya model. In this process, they suppressed the Buddhist and Jain faith, which was firmly established in Kerala. Kerala society was divided into a number of heterogeneous castes.

4 Elamkulam P.N.Kunhan Pillai, Studies in Kerala History, (National Book Stall, Kottayam, 1970), p.103. Though these are the traditional divisions of Kerala, we cannot see five distinct thinai in Kerala. The most suitable division seem to be the familiar high land, midland and low land. To put it more clearly, Kerala can be classified into five physical physio-graphic zones, viz. mountain peaks about 1800 metres above sea level, the high land between 600 and 1800 metres, the mid land between 300 and 600 metres the low land between 10 and 300 metres and the coastal plains and lagoons between main sea level 10 metres above thesea level.
5 See P.C.Alexander, Buddhism in Kerala (Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, 1949).
from the highest and most sacred to the lowest and the least worthy. The religious priests and a ruling aristocracy stood at the top. The Namboodiris, the so-called Brahmans of Kerala, held the highest position in the social, ritual and economic spheres of Kerala society. Prior to the arrival of the British, Kerala, probably had the most highly stratified caste system in India. It is marked by strange customs like untouchability and even unseeability. The position of each caste in the social hierarchy matched with the agrarian economic hierarchy. The Namboodiri Brahmins who stood at the top in the caste hierarchy were also landowners. Nairs, the most dominant caste in Kerala, and who stood second in the caste order were landowners or superior tenants. Just below these two upper castes were the Ezhavas (Thiyyas), the polluting intermediate caste. In the lowest step of the caste ladder stood various depressed downtrodden classes – Pulayas, Parayas, Cherumas, Kuravas and so on. They were landless agricultural labourers or mere agricultural slaves. Along with these social groups, two parallel communities – Muslims and Christians – also started to play their role in the social, political and economic life of Kerala.

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6 Since the Namboodiris were considered the highest and the most sacred caste, all others, including the Kshatriyas were regarded as polluting either by touch or by approach or both. The Kshatriyas were, therefore, compelled to keep a distance of two feet away from the Namboodiris. The distance to be observed by others were prescribed, the Nairs 16 feet, Ezhavas 32, and Pulayas 64. The very sight of Nayadi would force a Brahmin to undergo ritual purification. In addition to this, all these social groups had to keep some specified distance from each other according to the position each occupied in the social order (C.N.Somarajan, ‘Foundations of Kerala Society and Politics’, Journal of Kerala Studies, Volume 15 (Thiruvananthapuram, March – September 1988), p.105.


8 Untouchability, as it was practised in Kerala, assumed various and curious forms; not even the realm of language was untouched by it. The avarnas were forced to use a special language when referring to themselves or their possessions. When speaking of their bodily members, such as an eye or an ear, to a superior, they had to prefix it by epithet ‘old’ such as an “old eye” (pazhamkkannu), “old ear”(pazhamchevi). They were obliged to call their children “calves” (kidakkal) their silver “copper” and their paddy “chaff” (patiru). They were to commence speaking by saying: “Your slave has received permission to observe”. (See C.N.Somarajan, n.6, p.105.)

One of the salient features of the land ownership in Kerala was that unlike in any other part of the country, the rulers or kings had no right over the land held by the people. From time immemorial, the ownership of the land vested in the hands of those who cultivated the land. There was no authority to check the ryots from ploughing and cultivating the land they held. The Janmi system was a later development in Kerala, the result of a long historical transformation. Its growth and functioning are again interlaced with the caste system. “The system of land holdings reflected the hierarchy of the caste system. All the Namboodiris, some Samanthans and rich Nayars were Janmis. A majority of the Nayars were Kanakkars. They either cultivated the land themselves or let out in turn to Ezhavas on Verumpattom tenure. The channars and other aggrestic serfs worked on a patch of land a Janmi or non-cultivating Kanakkaran reserved for the maintenance of his family.”

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12 There were frequent skirmishes and encounters between feudal chieftains and Naduvazhis. The anarchy created insecurity in the country. These constant clashes and wars made farming difficult. During this period, the society was passing through a great transformation. The advent of the Aryans made distinct categorisation in the casteless society of Kerala. The Namboodiris who stood atop in the caste system were considered as the incarnations of God on the earth. Their properties and the properties of the temples were considered sacred. When the properties of Brahmans and temples had been considered sacrosanct and had been proved safe even in turbulent times, the poor cultivators thought it better to dedicate their lands to a Namboodiri Brahmin or to a temple thus escaping from the clutches of the marauders. This dedication was only an imposed or artificially created nominal overlordship and didn’t mean any legal ownership. This was done by the agriculturists for safeguarding their own interests and protecting the crops from the robbers and thieves. At the time of harvest, the agriculturists were prepared to give a share of their produce to that Janmi or temple as the case may be. The persons who enjoyed the overlord ship also accepted the term most willingly because they received without any labour a share of the produce of that land dedicated to them. Thus the landlordism or Jenmisambradayam came into vogue in Kerala through the willing obedience of the cultivators themselves (See, C.K.Kareem, n.11, pp.583-584). Anyhow, as in the case of India, there is no unanimity about the evolution of feudalism in Kerala. In India system of land grants to Brahmans with administrative rights started evidently from the post-Mourya period onwards tended to feudalise the state machineries. “The widespread practice of making land grants in the Gupta period paved the way for the rise of the Brahmin feudatories who performed administrative functionsnot under the authority of the royal officers but almost independently... Whatever might be the intention of the donors, the grants helped to create powerful intermediaries wielding considerable economic and political power”. (R.S.Sarma, *Indian Feudalism*, Calcutta, 1965, p.4).
political divisions of Kerala, the socio-economic structure was more or less the same until the advent of the Europeans. On the basis of these factors, we wish to analyse how the socio-economic formation of Malabar differed from the other two – Travancore and Malabar.

**Travancore**

In the beginning of the 19th century, there existed different kinds of land tenure in Travancore. They may be classified under the following three broad heads,

1) **Jenmomvaka**: This includes *Devaswamvaka, Brahmaswamvaka* and *Madampimarvaka*.

2) **Pandaramvaka or Sirkarvaka**: *Pandarapattom, Inam, Viruthi, Thiruppuram* lands came under this category.

3) **Pattom free bhumi**: *Edavakai, Sree pandaravaka, Kandukrishi* belong to this category.14

The authority of the British power in Travancore was effected through the system of indirect rule. The British authorities didn’t meddle with the land relations prevalent in the region but allowed it to continue as it was. The conquest of Marthanda Varma had brought acres of land under state ownership. The lands under state ownership were further enlarged in 1812 when the state in its attempt to curb the power of the local chieftains and to raise the resources to meet the burden of the increased tribute; took over vast tracts of lands of 378 important temples.15 In subsequent years, lands of 1178 temples were added to this. As part of enhancing the revenue of the state, Government issued a Royal Proclamation in 1818 promoting the cultivation of the wastelands. The Government allowed the enjoyment of possession of

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15 Ibid. p.44.
such lands by the cultivators themselves at concessional rates of assessment and recognising their claims for recoupment of the cost of improvements. In 1850, about 60-70% of total lands belonged to pandaravaka.

Landlordism and Feudal set up came to an end in Travancore from 1860s onwards. Through the proclamation made by the Travancore government in 1865, “the ryots were conferred ownership rights, heritable, saleable and otherwise transferable, subject only to the obligation of paying the land tax assigned to them.”

Important laws, regarding land relations were passed by the Travancore government in successive years. The Royal Proclamation made in 1865, gave full proprietary rights for free exchange to the tenants cultivating the pandaravaka lands. This Proclamation is hailed as the ‘Magna Carata of Travancore ryots’. The tenants were encouraged by the government to cultivate the wastelands and forest lands. The Proclamation paved the way for a revolutionary change in the land distribution of Travancore. Besides strengthening the revenue base of the state, the Proclamation created a large body of small peasant proprietors who played an important role in the agricultural development of the state in subsequent period. By 1904, there were more than 5,00,000 revenue paying land holders in Travancore each holding small pieces in quite contrast to the situation in Malabar. Further legislations were made by the Government in subsequent years that made the land relations more favourable to the cultivators. The Acts of 1867 and 1896 extended security of tenure to the tenants of private jenmom lands. The Royal Edict of 1829, its repromulgation in 1867 and finally the Travancore Janmi-Kudiyan Regulation passed in 1896 protected the tenants

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from eviction, declared that the *kanam* tenure was not redeemable, conferred on the *kanam* tenants fixity of tenure and curbed the demands of the *janmis* for exorbitant rents and renewal fees. The latter Act was further amended in 1932 (the *Janmi-kudiyan* (Amendment) Act, 1932) converting all *kanam* tenants of the *janmom* lands into proprietors of such lands. By this amendment, *kudiyans* became the owners of the land subject to the payment of *janmikaram*. About 0.15 million acres of land or six percent of the cultivated area of Travancore, came under the purview of the Regulation.\(^{20}\) Thus in contrast to their counterparts in Malabar, the conditions of the Travancore peasantry were far better.

Apart from many Acts and reforms introduced by the Travancore *Sirkar*, the importance given to the plantation crops marked the beginning of the commercialisation of agriculture. By the policy followed by the Government, even food crops like paddy, tapioca, coconut etc became commercial products in addition to plantation crops like pepper, coffee, rubber, cardamom etc. The Government followed liberal policies of all types so as to increase the agricultural production and its marketing. The state provided not only lands at cheap prices but also physical infrastructure like roads.\(^{21}\) Whenever the land was sold and not leased out, the price was one rupee per acre, which was the equivalent of only four days’ wages of a cooly employed by the Travancore Public Works Department at that time.\(^{22}\) The Regulations issued in 1818 encouraged the cultivation of waste lands assuring the cultivators the possession of such lands tax free for the first ten years and under light taxation thereafter. Large areas of land were reclaimed from the

\(^{20}\) TC.Varghese, n.14, p.133.

\(^{21}\) The efforts of the Travancore Government had received the admiration of even the Madras Government. The Madras Government wrote in 1870-71, “The state has treated the planters with liberality as regards roads, and there is no locality in India where the produce can be sent from the estates to the shipping port with such facility as in South Travancore” (Government of Madras, Report on the Administration of Madras Presidency, 1870-71 (Superintendent, Government Press, Madras), p.144).

\(^{22}\) M.Kabir, n.18.
swamps and backwaters of Kuttanad for the cultivation of rice. The state provided all the incentives to the fresh reclamation. By the beginning of the 20th century about 5,500 acres were reclaimed.\footnote{V.R.Pillai and P.G.K.Panikkar, \textit{Land Reclamation in Kerala} (Asia Publishing House, New York, 1965), p. 18.}

Under the above-mentioned favourable atmosphere, the area under cultivation especially plantation crops marked sharp increase. The area under coffee increased from 9,172 acres in 1865-66 to 16,00 acres in 1875-76. By 1904, the area under tea came to 24,712 acres. The number of registered plantation companies in Travancore rose from 3 in 1905 to 89 in 1945. Between 1855 and 1934, the export of coconuts increased by 5 times, of \textit{copra} by 7 times, of areca nut and turmeric by 4 times, ginger by 9 times, and pepper by 18 times … The value of pepper exports went up from Rs. 268.7 thousand in 1865 to Rs.1463.3 in 1895, Rs. 2708.1 thousand in 1915 and Rs.5855.8 thousand in 1925.\footnote{See Government of Travancore, \textit{Travancore Administration Report (Annual)} – Respective years (Government of Travancore, Thiruvananthapuram).}

The rapid progress in agriculture in Travancore paved the way for social and economic changes in the state. Wages began to increase with increasing demand for labour, and the standard of living rose. The labour of the previously enslaved castes, which had hitherto been regarded almost valueless, became remunerative. Everywhere the landed proprietors were reminded of the necessity of fair and kind treatment towards them.\footnote{S.Mahadeva Nadar, ‘Commercialisation of Agricultural Products and the New Economic Order in Travancore, 1860-1900’, \textit{Journal of Kerala Studies}, Vol.7 (Thiruvananthapuram, March-September 1980), p.222.} The changes that came about in the land relations of Travancore in the 18th century - the confiscation of the lands of \textit{Madampis} and distributing it to \textit{Kudiyans} by Marthanda Varma, the dispensation of arid lands for cultivation, undertaking of Devaswam lands by Col. Munro etc commercialised the land and agriculture in Travancore. Thus private cultivation developed. British
supervision and flow of foreign capital strengthened commercial plantation crops. Whereas the British dominance in Malabar strengthened the Janmi System. So, the condition of the peasantry there became worse.\textsuperscript{26}

The commercialisation of agriculture and the consequent financial improvement led to the growth of financial institutions including commercial banks and co-operative credit societies. The number of joint stock banks increased from 8 in 1918-19 to 57 in 1926-27 to 270 in 1930-31.\textsuperscript{27} These banks allowed loans to peasants on the security of land.\textsuperscript{28} The growth of Co-operative Credit Societies since its inception in 1915 was rapid. Their number went up from 20 in 1916 to 266 in 1927 and to 757 in 1924, to 1555 in 1927 and to 1710 in 1930.\textsuperscript{29}

Till 1860s, Travancore could not boast of a single road fit for transport. The commercialisation of agriculture and resulting development in trade served the way for expansion and growth of transport. The Travancore Public Works Department started functioning in 1860. Thereafter, the growth of transport was at a high pace. The plantation estates which were situated in the eastern hill tracks and extended from extreme north to the south were connected with the port towns in Alleppey and Cochin. The construction of Main Central Road from Trivandrum to Kottayam and a large number of branch roads connecting this road exposed a number of remote villages to outside world. In 1925, the government formed a Road Board and a Road Development Fund especially for the development and maintenance of village

\textsuperscript{28} In 1928-29 the Agricultural Credit Societies alone had paid an amount of Rs.20.48 lakh as loans for a total 54,531 applicants. The total amount of loan issued by all Societies together came to Rs.39.5 lakh (Government of Travancore, Travancore Banking Enquiry Committee Report (Superintendent, Government Press, Thiruvananthapuram, 1930), pp.116-117, 126
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid. p.115.
Consequently, the length of roads increased accordingly in the state. The details of annual expenditure of the Government show that the state had given much importance for the development of roads.

An important outcome of the above mentioned developments especially the commercialisation of agriculture and growth of roads, was the mobility of the people – both occupational and spatial. Consequently the intimate link between caste and economic position began to loose. Two important communities who were the beneficiaries of this transformation were the Ezhavas and the Syrian Christians. Gradually caste-based Social Reform Movements emerged from different corners of the state towards the end of the 19th century. They stood for radical changes in the social field and their demands were placed before the government. A Royal Re script issued by the government as early as 1817 shows its commitment for the education of its people. The government opened new schools and supported private schools by giving grant-in-aid. The budgetary allocation for education in Travancore shows the devotion of the Government in this regard. From 0.58 percent in 1862-63 it rose to 3 percent by 1894-95, by 1903-04 to 6 percent, by 1914-15 to 14 percent and by 1924-25 to 18 percent. By 1901, the Diwan of Travancore declared in the late 1850s that at least one percent of the state revenue should be sent on education.

Jeffrey Robin notes that between 1860 and 1870 Travancore government obtained Rs. 5,78,000 from the sale of land, taxes and spent Rs. 2,21,000 on roads, road building subsidies to planters and subsidies (Jeffrey Robin, “Temple Entry Movement in Travancore 1860-1940”, Social Scientist, Volume 4, No.8, March, 1976, p. 97). Government expenditure on roads, which was 0.55 million in 1905 rose to 0.63 million in 1911. From 0.96 million in 1921 it became 1.62 million in 1940 (See Government of Travancore, n.24).

It reads, “The State shall defray the entire cost of the education of its people in order that there might be no backwardness in the spread of enlightenment among them ….By diffusion of education they might become better subjects and public servants and…the reputation of the state might be advanced thereby” (Government of Travancore State, Census Reports of Travancore (Superindentent, Census Operations, Trivandrum, 1941), p.155.

Travancore had 1370 schools of which 429 were under the direct management of the State. Besides these there were 2313 indigenous schools, which remained outside the system of inspection and control. “To the lower castes, education became a symbol of eradication of their social deprivation and the most important means for upward social mobility. To the upper castes, education was a means to retention and stabilisation of their social position. The demand raised by each group exerted pressure on the government to expand its educational activities.”

The Government opened 15 Special Schools for Ezhavas in 1895. By 1897 the number rose to 30. Within a decade, the number became 480. The Roman Catholics opened 285 Paraya schools by 1904. The Grant –in aid Code of 1894-95 was another step towards the education of the backward classes.

By 1904, the government took the entire cost of primary education of backward classes, the principle of education of all children irrespective of caste, creed, or race is responsibility of the government was also accepted in the same year. The number of children of backward communities, which was 20,400 in 1894-95 rose to 43,580 in 1904. When government opened the doors of all educational institutions to children irrespective of caste and creed the response was spontaneous. The number of Ezhava students enrolled in the school of Travancore increased from 23,383 in 1914 to 51,114 in 1918 and the number of Pulaya students, which was only 2000 in 1916 reached 17,753 within a year. In 1935-36, the government began a scheme of lump-sum grants to pupils belonging to the backward communities.

M.Kabir, n.18.
Under this Programme, the government provided grants to low caste children in Special schools under private management. Within two years of its inception, the number of such schools getting aids rose to 150 (V.Nagam Aiya, n.37, p.482.)
P.R.Gopinatahan Nair, n.35, p.33.
V.Nagam Aiya, n.37, pp.460, 472, 482.
enrolment increased from 5.88 lakhs in 1930-31 to 7.65 lakh in 1940-41.\textsuperscript{43} A small movement towards compulsory primary education was made in 1945 by the government.

The spread of education ensured mass participation in the ensuing process. People became more conscious and vigilant especially in matters like healthcare. The syllabi of Travancore schools included even lessons on health care. From Ayurveda and folklore systems of medicine the region began to move to the Western system of medicine. By 1904, Travancore had 54 allopathic medical institutions run by governments – 22 hospitals, 20 dispensaries, 6 weekly dispensaries, 4 by-weekly dispensaries, 1 ‘leper asylum’ and 1 ‘lunatic asylum’; in other words one institutions for every 125 square kilometres and 52,715 of the population and visited annually by 6,23,643 persons.\textsuperscript{44} The budgetary share of health care went up from 4.5 percent in 1904-05 to 5.14 percent in 1931 and again to 5.4 percent in 1941-42. By 1948-49, Travancore had 158 government medical institutions – 32 hospitals, 126 dispensaries, and 3378 hospital beds.\textsuperscript{45} Basic structural changes in the land relations and commercialisation of agriculture thus became the catalysts for the social transformation in Travancore.

**Cochin**

Cochin had its origin as an independent principality immediately after the fall of the Kulasekhara Empire. But its prominence in Kerala politics starts from 16\textsuperscript{th} century onwards after the arrival of Portuguese and the consequent developments in the political history of Kerala. The land relations in Cochin were more or less the same as that of Travancore. In Travancore and Cochin, the land was generally categorized into Pandaravaka (belonging

\textsuperscript{43} Government of Travancore, *Census Reports of Travancore*, (Superintendent, Census Operations, Thiruvananthapuram, 1941), p.155.
\textsuperscript{44} V.Nagam Aiya, n.19, pp.536 and 543.
to the ruler) and Puravaka (privately owned). In both the states, the rulers tried to expand the Pandaravaka land by confiscating the lands of their political adversaries. In Cochin also, dynamic changes took place by the beginning of the 20th century. “Travancore changed over to a region of peasant proprietors, Cochin developed into a tract of peasant proprietors and absentee landlords and Malabar into almost an absentee landlord tract.”

In Cochin, the Settlement Proclamation of 1905 gave full proprietary rights to holders of state owned lands subject to the payment of land revenue. But in private lands tenants were subjected to arbitrary eviction by janmis.

The Cochin Tenancy Act 1915, attempted to regulate janmi-kudiyan relations. Under the Cochin Tenancy Act of 1938, the Kanam tenants got fixity of tenure, who took kanam tenants before 1885. The Cochin Tenancy Act of 1936 swapped the 1915 Act and conferred security of tenure on Kanam, which originated between 1885 and 1915. However, till the passing of the Cochin Verumpattomdars Act 1943, the Verumpattomdars were subjected to arbitrary eviction by the janmis. Immediately after the formation of the Travancore-Cochin state, two Acts were passed viz. Kandukrishi Proclamation of 1949 and the Travancore-Cochin Holdings (Stay of Execution Proceedings) of 1950.

Under the reign of Saktan Tampuran, several measures were adopted towards the commercialization of agriculture. The Raja provided all amenities to the Syrian Christians who were engaged in trade in the urban centers of Cochin. The reforms of Col. Munro in various sectors modernized Cochin. School education developed at an increasing pace since the 1890s. “The most significant fact to note however is that even 1890, when the government had

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hardly entered the scene of primary education, the literacy rate in Cochin was the highest in India, a fact which bears eloquent testimony to the great services – rendered by the indigenous schools”. In every village there was a vernacular school. The Western System of Medicine was introduced. For example, Vaccination against small pox was adopted as a state policy under the Diwanship of Nanjappayya.

**Malabar**

Historically, the name Malabar is the ancient epithet for the so-called Parasuram legend territory stretching from the northern land mark of Mt.Deli to Cape Comorin. Ancient travellers and historians have described the land by various terms such as ‘Malabar’, ‘Malibar’, ‘Manibar’ and ‘Munibar’. It is said, Albiruni (973 – 1048), the medieval Arab traveler, is the first to call the country Malabar. When Tipu Sultan ceded his treaties with the British at Seringapatnam on February 22 and March 18, 1792, the Malayalam speaking territory under Tipu passed into the direct colonial rule. And this northern third of Kerala was made into a separate administrative unit and was made one of the districts of Madras presidency under the name Malabar on 21 May 1800. From that date onwards, the use of the term Malabar was limited to British Malabar. The district that lies on the Western Coast of India stretches from 10° 12’ to 12° 15’ North Latitude and between the parallels of 75° 10” and 76° 50” East Longitude. The British Malabar consisted of a large area of about 6262 square miles and was divided into 18 Taluks and 2222 villages by the beginning of the 19th century. This northern third of Kerala may be shown as the most suited section of India in assembling the fragments of ancient cultures and societies. Malabar has also in its credit the first place in

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India ever trodden by the feet of the mighty Europeans.\textsuperscript{51} This old province of Madras Presidency is now roughly consisted of six districts of present Kerala viz. Kasargod, Kannoor, Wayanad, Kozhikode, Malppuram and Palakkad. The observation made by a scholar on Malabar is significant. “In the first place, its development was qualified by its position as an over-the-mountains extension of a largely Tamil province. Secondly, its people were involved in a direct relationship with the British and their political institutions, the district being governed by a system of principal Collectors and Sub-Collectors”\textsuperscript{52} “Though Malabar had been a major exporter of a wide variety of agricultural products to Europe for more than two thousand years and consequently exposed to influences from abroad, it still remains an under developed region with a backward agricultural sector.”\textsuperscript{53}

The history of the other two-thirds of the state – Travancore and Cochin – is different. They were princely states. As we noticed in the foregoing discussion, they could retain their distinct identity under their enlightened local maharajas. Because of this historical divergence, the two regions could go far ahead in all spheres of human life in comparison to Malabar. To quote a famous writer, “It may however be made clear that the progress of British Malabar was not so spectacular as that of the princely states of Travancore and Cochin.”\textsuperscript{54} Malabar and its folk suffered a lot under the direct colonial administration, which lasted for about 150 years. “The contrast in policies was particularly sharp as between Malabar under British administration and Travancore which continued to remain a native state till 1947. Cochin presented an intermediate position. The differences would

\textsuperscript{51} Vascodagama, the Portuguese navigator, sent by Dom Manuel, the king of Portugal, reached at Kappad near Calicut in May 1498.


appear to have had important and identifiable consequences on the rate and pattern of social and economic change in Kerala.\textsuperscript{55} The remnants of this unpleasant remote past are still being reflected and echoed in every walks of people’s life – political, economical, and even psychological.

The economic conditions in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and at the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century were absolutely dissimilar between Malabar on the one hand and Travancore and Cochin on the other. Traditionally, the Malabar land system consisted of four important elements viz.

1. \textit{Janmis} (landlords)
2. \textit{Kanakkar} (cultivating tenants)
3. \textit{Verum Pattakkar} (landless tenants)
4. Agricultural labourers\textsuperscript{56}

In between these four classes, there were a number of intermediaries, which made the system more complex and more feudalistic. Prior to the Mysorean invasion, the \textit{Kanakkar} kept their land in possession as a free hold property, which was not reclaimed by the \textit{Janmis} at all. What required was that he had to give ‘\textit{pattom}’(rent) every year and a ‘\textit{policchezhuthu panam}’(renewal fee) after every twelve years. The \textit{Kanakkar} could not be evicted of the land, even if they fail to pay the \textit{pattom}, which was 1/3 of the agricultural produce. Until the Mysorean conquest this system followed without any interruption. Till then, the land revenue had been unknown in Malabar, what existed was a system where by the produce of the land was divided in between different interest groups of land.\textsuperscript{57} The Janmi never felt a proprietary right over the land. It was the Mysore rulers who made key changes in the status quo by introducing land tax. “Still another result of the

\textsuperscript{55} K.N. Raj, ‘Forward’ to T. C. Varghese, n.14.
\textsuperscript{56} See T.C.Varghese, n.14, pp. 51-62.
Muslim invasion was the introduction of direct taxation of land which did not exist in Kerala until then.”  

By surveying the land under cultivation, the Muslim ruler imposed land tax. This taxes in no way affected the peasants. It was imposed on the landlord’s share. It was a heavy blow to the Janmis who had been enjoying one-third of the produce without any physical labour. “The Mysore ‘settlement’ as seen from the British records, was that six-twentieth of the gross produce should go to the state, leaving eleven-twentieth to the cultivators and three twentieth to the landlords….The Mysore system favoured on the whole cultivators at the expense of landlords.”

When Malabar came into the hands of the British East India Company the Janmis who had sought asylum in Travancore came back to Malabar. The Company introduced new land system in Malabar and accorded full proprietary rights to the Janmis. “The revenue policy introduced by the East India Company after the conquest of Malabar from Tipu Sultan in 1792 had two main characteristics”, says K.N.Panicker, “First it provided for the state’s appropriation of the largest share of produce and secondly, it recognised the Janmi as the absolute proprietor of the land.”

Dr.K.N.Raj notices further motivations behind the Company’s implementation of new land system in Malabar. “In Malabar, tenurial policies were influenced both by the British fear at this time of the Muslims (ie. of the Mopplahs, as they were called in Malabar) as well as by Anglo-Saxon notions of proprietary rights (which imposed fewer constraints on those recognised as “owners” than was the case under the customary relationships prevalent in the area until then). The British found it to their interest to drive support from

58 K.N.Raj, n.55.  
59 T.C.Varghese, n.14, p. 18.  
precisely the strata of society that had been adversely affected by the Muslim invasion. Both political exigencies and biases of the British legal system tended to favour those who were in a position to claim ownership of property (the Janmis as they came to be called) and those enjoyed inferior rights in the system hitherto prevalent were adversely affected to a corresponding degree. The total outcome of the new land policy was that the traditional norms of ‘Janma-Kana-Maryada’, the unwritten laws that defined the rights and obligations of the different interests in land, were superimposed by Anglo-Roman juridical concepts. Norms of absolute rights of ownership came into vogue, replacing the customary practice of ‘co-proprietorship’. This was because the British administrators basing their conclusions on the verbal testimony of local informants and upon the meager written records which had survived the Mysore wars decided that a class of land holders called janmies had rights roughly equivalent to free-hold proprietors in English land law. This janmom tenure, closely identified in pre-British Malabar with high social position, was held almost exclusively by Namboodiri Brahman and Nayar joint families, by temples of which Namboodiris or Nayars were managers, and by the entailed estates of former rulers.

The land system shattered the traditional land –relationships in Malabar that existed for centuries. It made the non-cultivating owners of lands who had only customary ownership over the land the legal proprietors. The customary kanam tenure came to be defined as a twelve year mortgage and verumpattom as a mere tenancy at will. One of the consequences of the new land concept was the worst accumulation of land ownership in the hands of a few janmis. It may be worth mentioning that out of 1,229,217 acres of total

61 K.N.Raj, n.55.
land in Malabar, 628,921 acres (about 52%) were owned by 32 Janmis. The village registers of the settlement conducted in 1900-01 demonstrate the extreme uneven distribution of land in the villages. For example, in Kulathur, a single Janmi held 646 acres and 95 cents of land, out of a total of 1214 acres and 47 cents, paying annual land revenue of Rs. 2205 and annas 10 out of a total of Rs. 3949 and annas 11. In the same village, four pattadars shared 1 acre and 2 cents and 42 pattadars shared 85 acres and 8 cents of land. In Pookkottur village while 20 acres and 14 cents were shared by 33 pattadars, 242 acres and 7 cents belonged to a single individual. In Chevayoor village, where 12 janmis owned 635 acres and 49 cents and 85 pattadars shared 43 acres and 86 cents. In Kottakkal, the entire land belonged to one janmi. What was described by Raja Sir. T.Madhava Rao, by no means an opponent of the principle of Landlordism, as an ‘extra-ordinary… a stringent and systematic monopoly of land’ characterized the land system in Malabar.

Kanakkars, majority of who were Mappilas, could not adapt to the new land policy. They found it as an encroachment over their customary rights imposed by an alien power. The janmis on the other hand sought various practices to oppress and exploit the peasantry and avail themselves maximum advantages out of the new land rights accorded by the government. By recognising the Janmi as the absolute owner of his holding, and therefore free to take as big a share of the produce of the soil as he could screw out of the soil, the British had, as William Logan claimed, presented him with power which were not customary in Malabar. As a result the Janmis sought to various ways of exploitation. The enhancement of pattom, eviction,

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64 K.N.Panicker, Against Lord and State: Religion and Peasant Uprisings in Malabar (1826-1921), (Oxford University Press, New Delhi).

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‘melcharthu’ (overlease) and increasing of renewal fee were the common ways of oppression and exploitation sought by Janmis.68

The new land policy introduced by the colonial administration had serious repercussions in the economic arena of the region. At the beginning of the 19th century, the agricultural yield produced in the region was sufficient to the entire population except for a few who engaged in other activities. But after 1860, Malabar had to import large quantities of rice.69 The productivity of land especially paddy field was also quite low. The reasons for the low productivity are quite obvious. The prevalent land tenure system didn’t give any lures so as to increase agricultural yield. As a result, traditional methods of cultivation, absence of modern irrigation etc became the hallmark of Malabar paddy fields. The ownership of waste lands and forestlands were also rested in the hands of Janmis. The recognition of waste lands, cultivable waste lands and forest lands as jenmam land had also discouraged expansion of cultivation of crops, especially commercial crops, construction of public irrigation works, and stood as a major obstacle to agricultural development.70

When coffee plantation was started in Wayanad one of the problems faced by the European planters was the difficulties in getting lands for plantation, though large areas of lands were available there.71 Even the government in acquiring the land for public irrigation projects had faced the same difficulty. See the remarks made by the Malabar Tenancy Committee (1940). “One of the obstacles to the state scheme of irrigation is that all land including the beds of rivers, streams and canals, is regarded as private property and the government cannot, therefore interfere with the rights of private owners by

69 For details See, Government of Madras, Statistics of Malabar 1873 - 74 (Superindentent, Government Press, Madras),
70 B.A.Prakash, n.53.
constructing irrigation works.” Any extension of cultivation to these lands is to be made with prior permission of Janmis who allowed it only under rigorous conditions of tenancy. The tenants who know the janmis’ intentions accurately, were not ready to go for a risk. This explains the situation why the area under cultivation in Malabar became smaller than in Travancore at the turn of the 20th century, in spite of the density of population (See the Table 3.1). The result was that in a region where acute unemployment and food shortage existed large areas remained uncultivated.

The wide contrasts between Malabar and Travancore in the early part of the 20th century were astonishing. Majority of the agricultural population in Travancore were owner cultivators whereas Malabar presented a picture of cultivating tenants and field labourers constituting the lion share of the population. The Table 3.1 displays intense variation between the two regions.

1. In both regions the number of people depending on agriculture were more or less same (Malabar 18,24,564) Travancore (18,20,417).

2. However the proportion of agricultural population to total population was higher in Malabar.

3. In spite of higher density of population, the area under cultivation was smaller in Malabar.

4. Since majority of the agricultural population belonged to landless tenants and labourers the distribution of income might have been more unequal in Malabar.

5. While cultivating tenants and farm labourers constituted more than 86% of the agricultural population in Malabar, cultivating land-owners constituted about 63% in Travancore.

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Table 3.1
The composition of Agricultural Population in Malabar and Travancore in 1911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl.No</th>
<th>Class of people</th>
<th>Malabar</th>
<th></th>
<th>Travancore</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of people</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Number of people</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Non – cultivating land owners</td>
<td>74,549</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>91,305</td>
<td>5.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Non – cultivating Tenants</td>
<td>24,923</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>4,456</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cultivating land owners</td>
<td>96,220</td>
<td>5.27</td>
<td>11,63,974</td>
<td>63.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cultivating tenants</td>
<td>8,21,462</td>
<td>45.02</td>
<td>1,24,067</td>
<td>6.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Farm servants and field labourer</td>
<td>7,62,591</td>
<td>41.80</td>
<td>2,29,809</td>
<td>12.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Growers of special products</td>
<td>44,819</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2,06,856</td>
<td>11.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18,24,564</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18,20,417</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>30,15,119</td>
<td></td>
<td>34,28,975</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Density of Population</td>
<td>520</td>
<td></td>
<td>451</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Reports, for the year 1911 of Madras and Travancore.

While the Government in Travancore encouraged and extended alluring offers both to native and foreign planters for commercial cultivation, the land tenure system in Malabar stood in the way of such a change. The observation made by Governor Charles E Trevelyan is significant. “It has now been established that this district (Wynad) is well suited for the production of coffee of a superior description, and that its climate is favourable to the European constitution… There are only two obstacles to the formation of a
strong English settlement in Wynad in this sense – the want of roads, and the
great difficulty of obtaining a secure title to land”. While a part of the land
in Wynad was owned by the state, a major part was in the hands of private
individuals. While from 1861 onwards the government began to seek lands in
Wynad taluk, the Janmis were reluctant to part with their land. The result was
that when as late as 1945-46 the total plantation area under all crops was only
just above 50,000 acres in Malabar, it was nearly 1,95,000 acres in
Travancore. Between 1911 and 1951, Travancore region registered a
percentage increase of 47.09 in land under occupation.

In the same period in Malabar, cultivated area increased only by
37.4%. Additionally, the occupied area in Travancore formed 73.7 percent of
the total land available for cultivation in 1911, and 98.1 percent of the total
land available for cultivation in 1951. The corresponding figures for
cultivated area as a percentage of the total arable land in Malabar were 59.1 in
1911 and 36.0 in 1951. The report of T.H.Baber, who spent 25 years in
Malabar is an illustration for the fact that even the British officials had been
convinced of the high land revenue imposed on Malabar peasantry. “The
people are in great distress, compared to what they used to be, owing, I
conceive, to over-taxation. I know indeed that the revenues bear exceedingly
hard upon them”. In 1877, the land tax in Malabar was one rupee and six
annas as against eleven annas in Travancore. The four taluks of South
Malabar – Ernad, Valluvanad, Palghat and Ponnani – contained 70 percent of
the total grain area of Malabar and almost full two-thirds of the land revenue
of the district came from these taluks. These were also the areas where the

Government of Madras, ‘Minutes by the Governor of Madras Relating to the Tour in the
South India Between the 5thJanuary and 6th of March’, Madras, 1860, p.53 (Quoted in
M.Kabir, n.18)
P.K.Michael Tharakan, Intra-Regional Differences in Agrarian Systems and Internal
Migration: A Case Study of Two Farmers from Travancore to Malabar, 1930-1950.” Working
K.N. Panikkar, n.64, p.18.
V.Nagam Aiya, n.37, p.141.
rent on the land was the highest.\textsuperscript{79} Even as early as 1800, the Malabar peasantry perpetually depended on trader-cum-money lenders. Buchanan wrote that the peasants of Malabar forced to sell their produce to traders who lent money against the crops in advance under conditions totally unfavourable to them.\textsuperscript{79} The worst hit were the ‘verumpattakkar’ who stood at the bottom of the tenurial order.\textsuperscript{80} The opening of commercial markets, which benefited cultivators in Travancore helped only landlords and rich merchants in Malabar. The poor peasants who received cash advances were bound to sell their products to middlemen merchants at a rate of 20 to 30 percent less than the market price.

In giving evidence before the Madras Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee, A.K.T.K.M.Namoodirippad, a big landlord of South Malabar, observed, “Small dealers purchase paddy locally and market it in profitable centres. Petty farmers sell their produce to these dealers immediately after harvest time. The prices they get are most often less than the market price because the farmers would be in great demand for money to pay their debt. Well-to do farmers, on the other hand keep their paddy in granaries and sell out only when they can make a decent profit”.\textsuperscript{81} Unlike Travancore peasants, those of Malabar, turned to cultivation of commercial crops due to two factors. One, the eviction was more common in wetlands than in dry lands. Second, the income from commercial crops helped the poor peasants to bridge the gap of high revenue and rent in the wet-lands and to keep him at bare


\textsuperscript{79} Francis Buchanan, \textit{A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara And Malabar}, (London, 1807), P.134.

\textsuperscript{80} Innes stated that most of the verupattom tenants were chronically in debt. They borrowed money in Karkitagom on the security of their crop and this was one of the values of the verum pattom land (See Innes, \textit{Notes on Malabar Tenancy Legislation} (Madras, 1917). Sathyathanathan’s enquiry in 1936 revealed that in the three villages studied by him almost all the tenants were in debt (W.R.S.Sathyathanathan, \textit{Report on Agricultural Indebtedness}, (Madras, 1936), pp.38-39).

subsistence. Thus “adoption of commercial crops was thus a defensive mechanism for majority of the Malabar peasants”. 82

The policies followed by the British government in the non-agricultural sector were also not favourable. For example the cottage weaving industry that flourished somewhere in South Malabar had to face disaster due to the discouraging policies adopted by the government. The government imported mill-made cotton and the indigenous manual made products could not compete with them. To quote Clemenston, Collector of Madras in 1838, “Malabar has never been famous for manufactures. Coarse cotton is manufactured in Palghat and Temalpooram Taluks and here and there on the coast; the vast quantity of Europe piece goods imported – and which are procurable at very cheap prices – have discouraged this branch of industry, so much so that the poorer class find it more profitable to turn their lands to agriculture.” 83

The development of financial institutions in Malabar also differed from their counterparts in Travancore. The first commercial bank in Malabar was started by Appu Nedungadi in 1898. According to the statistics, Malabar had more banks than any other part of the Madras Presidency had. 84 But unlike in Travancore all the banks were concentrated in urban centres, the clients being mainly urban traders. Again, unlike in Travancore, banks in Malabar had not given loans to peasants probably because of their poverty and insecurity of tenure. The Co-operative societies, an alternative suggested by the government, also was a failure in the sense that ordinary peasants did not get loan. The end result was “every man who has money, instead of depositing it to others on high rates of interest. The landlords, the Vakils,

82 M. Kabir, n.18.
84 For details see M. Kabir, n.18.
the officials or any other class forms no exception to this rule”. The slow pace of the growth of Plantation agriculture and marketing had its corresponding reflections on transportation facilities also. A network of roads was constructed in Wynad where cultivation of commercial crops was high. In other areas, the charge of constructing roads was with the Local Fund Boards and Municipalities. The paucity of funds and lack of required skill on their part thwarted even the maintenance of existing roads. A few roads that constructed in Malabar were to suppress the peasant uprisings that broke out at various times in Malabar. The suppression of the outbreaks would naturally lead to a standstill of road building.

The total road length in Malabar increased by barely hundred miles in the course of the first three decades of the 20th century. The total number of carts in use in Malabar in 1904-05 was 9,707 as against 15,217 in Travancore. The number of motor vehicles introduced in Malabar was also comparatively less at any period. Passenger buses and goods carrier lorries were rare sight along the rural tracts of Malabar. Out of 1,337 motor vehicles in Malabar in 1931, 723 were light vehicles used by rich people; 163 were lorries used for goods transport chiefly in the urban centres; 453 were buses which operated in urban areas of Calicut, Palghat and Tellichery.

When the commercialisation of agriculture paved the way for the growth of physical infrastructure and the development of social sector in

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85 Ibid.
86 Ibid.
87 Innes revealed that the local fund roads “leave much to be desired, especially in the Monsoon, and the ruins of great bridges over many rivers attest the chronic impecuniosity of the Local Boards (Innes, Madars District Gazetteer, Malabar District, (Madras, 1951), p.271).
88 Length of Roads in Malabar, 1901-1951
YearRoad length (Miles)190117471911802192617901931184319511224
Source: Aiyar, 1933, p.122, Census of India, , Census Hand Book, Malabar District, 1951 (Quoted in M.Kabir, n,18).
89 For details, See Directories and Agencies Limited, Madras Motor Directory, (Madras, 1931).
90 Ibid.
Travancore, where the existence of an economy of small proprietors and tenants with substantial economic independence and sustained interest in the land acted as a dynamic force of socio-economic change its benefits in Malabar were confined to high caste Janmis and superior tenants in Malabar. Kerala experienced a continuous process of educational expansion throughout the period of 1793-1947 and at an increasing rate from the second half of the 19th century, the expansion during the latter phase being confined mainly to the southern region of Travancore and Cochin.\textsuperscript{90} The statement made by C.A.Innes regarding the level of literacy in various regions of Malabar reveals the glaring overcast that shadowed the educational horizon of Malabar. "945 Mappilas and 999 Cherumas out of 1000 are illiterate; these two castes between the number form more than 37 percent of the total population. Ernad with Wynad shares the unenviable distinction of the most illiterate taluk in the district. Palakkad where Mappilas are scarce is also one of the ignorant taluks. Ernad with 15 percent literacy among males and 3.3 percent women and Wynad taluk with 15 and 2.2 percent are still the most backward taluks. The general literacy in the area is 15 percent and the rate of female literacy 6.4 percent.\textsuperscript{91} The direction of the Wood’s Despatch that local Governments need not open schools on their own if there “existed a sufficient number of private institutions capable of supplying the local needs of education” gave an excuse for the Madras Government to withdraw from the responsibility of primary education.

The Government introduced a scheme of bringing schools under the inspection and control of the Government through a system of grant-in-aid. Though some of the Thiyyas and Muslims made use of the school system, majority of them who were mere verum pattakkar and coolies could not send


their children to school due to acute poverty. Unlike in Travancore, no community-based social reform movements that stood for educational and social uplift of the masses developed in Malabar. The official machinery on the other hand, withdrew from its responsibility giving the entire charge of primary education to Local Fund Boards. But the Boards were not in a position to open new schools due to lack of funds. However, the grant-in-aid programme encouraged a number of private individuals to enter into the field of education and the number of schools increased thereafter. By 1817-18, Malabar had 1340 aided Schools as against 839 in 1909-10.

One should not think that the increase in the number of schools had a corresponding increase in the number of children. The average strength of pupils per school was as low as 91 in Malabar as against 131 in Travancore. In the case of Mappila schools the figure was still lower – 59.6.

In the provision of medical facilities too, Malabar lagged far behind Travancore. In 1860 itself, the Government had declared that only charges on account of European medicines and services of a medical officer and subordinate should be borne by the state and every other items of expenditure should be met through local contributions. Town Improvement and Local Funds Act of 1871 vested the responsibility of health care on Municipalities and Local Fund Board. The financial responsibility of the Central and Provincial Governments in health care was limited to payment of salary of the

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92 The representation submitted by some of the Mappilas of Ernad taluk before Lord Ampthil in 1901 highlights this assumption. The representation states, “In a poverty stricken community like ours, where the wages of labour are less than a trifle, every child has to help in bringing grist to the parental mill, and every child removed from the field and send to schools represent a loss to the family, so that Mappila parents be persuaded to keep their children at school after they have attained an earning age. The vision of future greatness is obscured by this clouds of present poverty” (Government of Madras, The Third Tour of His Excellency Lord Ampthil G.C.I.E. In the Madras Presidency, Extracts from Madras Mail, Madras (Madras, 1901), p.124, (Quoted in M.Kabir, n.18).


94 Ibid.

95 P.R.Gopinathan Nair, n.90, p. 144.
IMS Medical Officer and the cost of maintenance of class I hospitals. In 1889, there was only one IMS doctor working in Malabar and the only class I hospital was a ‘leper asylum’. By 1902-03, the combined health expenditure incurred by the Provincial Governments, Local Fund Boards and Municipalities together was only Rs.1,82,300\textsuperscript{96}, roughly 40 percent of the corresponding figure for Travancore although the population of Malabar was nearly 85 percent of that of Travancore. In 1901, Malabar had only 25 medical institutions (14 hospitals, 10 dispensaries and 1 leper asylum) visited annually by 2.69 lakh persons\textsuperscript{97} as against 48 institutions visited by 4.6 lakh persons in Travancore.\textsuperscript{98} In 1926, the total expenditure on hospitals and dispensaries in Malabar was 296,150.\textsuperscript{99} It was hardly 3 percent of the corresponding figure in Travancore.\textsuperscript{100} By 1951, Malabar had 53 allopathic hospitals and dispensaries under the state and 1692 hospital beds. The corresponding figure for Travancore in 1948-49 was 158 and 3,378 respectively.\textsuperscript{101}

In short, the British land policy put majority of the Malabar population in utter poverty and misery. The landlords were mainly Namboothiris and Nairs whereas the tenants hailed from Mappilas and Ezhavas. According to Buchanan, in Malabar a farmer’s share of the income from two acres of good rice land was barely sufficient to provide a slave’s diet.\textsuperscript{102}

\textsuperscript{96} C.A.Innes, Madras District Gazetteers, Statistical Appendix for Malabar District, (Madras, 1905), pp.54-64.
\textsuperscript{97} Government of Madras, Annual Report on Civil Dispensaries in the Madras Presidency, 1901(Quoted in M.Kabir, n.18).
\textsuperscript{98} Government of Travancore, Travancore Administration Report 1900-01 (Superintendent, Government Press, Thiruvananthapuram).
\textsuperscript{100} Government of Travancore, Travancore Administration Report, 1925-26 (Thiruvananthapuram).
The Malabar region, which was economically backward at the beginning of the British colonial rule, remained so till they were to leave the land in the middle of the 20th century. Further, under the unfavourable policies of the colonial administration, a gradual shift of the economy from primary to secondary or tertiary sector was clear by its absence. The result was that when the people of Travancore and Cochin region were receiving the news of the formation of the new state in 1950s with a cheering face, a huge section of the population in Malabar was under endless poverty and unemployment.