

**LOCATING THE HISTORICAL PAST OF COLONIAL TEA
PLANTATION LABOUR AND GENDER QUESTION IN
KANNAN DEVAN HILLS: 1870 TO 1930**

A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Hyderabad in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

HISTORY

BY

ANASWARA. B.K



**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD
HYDERABAD - 500046**

JUNE- 2019

CONTENTS

Introduction	1-17
Chapter 1 Historical Background of Tea Plantation in Kannan Devan Hills	18-35
Chapter 2 The role of the Colonial State in Kannan Devan Tea plantation	36-63
Chapter 3 Mapping of the Colonial Discipline, Power Structure, and Women Laboueres in Kannan Devan Tea Plantation.	64-91
Conclusion	92-97
Bibliography	98-103



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD
CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled ***“Locating the Historical past of Colonial Tea Plantation Labour and Gender Question in Kannan Devan Hills: 1870-1930”*** submitted by Ms. ANASWARA. B.K, bearing Reg. No. 17SHHL10, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy in History is a bonafide work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance which is a plagiarism free thesis.

The dissertation has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any other degree or diploma.

Date:

Place:

Prof. Bhangya Bhukya
Supervisor

Prof. Bhangya Bhukya
Head of Department

Prof. P. Venkata Rao
Dean



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
UNIVERSITY OF HYDERABAD

DECLARATION

I, ANASWARA. B.K, (Reg. No. 17SHHL10), hereby declare that this dissertation entitled “*Locating the Historical past of Colonial Tea Plantation Labour and Gender Question in Kannan Devan Hills: 1870-1930*” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Prof. Bhangya Bhukya is a bonafide research work which is also free from plagiarism. I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma. I hereby agree that my thesis can be deposited in Shodganga/INFLIBNET.

A report on the plagiarism statistics from the University Librarian is enclosed.

Hyderabad

ANASWARA B.K
17SHHL10

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been accomplished without the support and guidance of several people. It is a pleasant duty for me to acknowledge the kindness of all my teachers, friends, well-wishers and family with whose help and advice I was able to complete this work. First of all I wish to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to Professor: Bhangya Bhukhya, for his supervision of this thesis. He is a tremendous source of guidance and encouragement. I am thankful to Dr. V.J Varghees, Department of History, University of Hyderabad for being always receptive and supportive. He always provided me with constructive and critical suggestions. I am gratefully indebted to Professor Atlury Murali, Dr.M.N Rajesh, Proffessor Sanjay Subodh, Dr. M.N Rajesh, Dr. Swaroopa rani, Dr. Eswara Rao, Dr. Rajagopal, for their interest and guidance in my work, I am also thankful to Professor Anindita Mukhopadhyay, who guided me during my course work. I owe my thanks to the Office Staff of the department of History (UOH). I would also like to put on my record of thanks to the Staff of the following archives, museum and libraries for providing me access to the sources and secondary works concerning my dissertation: State Archives of Kerala (Trivandrum), Indira Gandhi Memorial Library (University of Hyderabad) State Library of Kerala (Trivandrum), Legislative Library (Trivandrum), Centre for Development Studies Library (Trivandrum), Kerala University Library (Trivandrum), Regional State Archives (Trivandrum, East Fort), Madras State Archives (Chennai,Egmore), Tea Museum at Munnar Nallatani (Idukki) for searching and providing me the valuable documents indispensable for the writing of the dissertation. I would also love to thank all my friends and comrades for their endearing encouragement. Especillay Abduka, Irfanka, Manoj ettan, Shameer, Arun Thomas, Saiunka, Riyaska (Isu), Subeesh ettan, Shuhaibka, , Shibna Chechi, Jency, Neha, Preeti Deedi, Hinduja,Aakhya, Nayan, Ajesh, Fahadka, Atheena Chechi, Pattambi ettan, Aslamka, Rashidka, Greeshma chechi,Nimitha Chechi, Anil Ettan, Suji Chechi, Jiji

Chechi, Soniya chechi, Ramya chechi, Shihaska, Aswathi Chechi, Manju Deedi, Niharika Deedi, Sujatha Deedi, Deepanjali Deedi, Sunny Deedi, Parul Deedi, Antony Chettan, Gopika, Neethu S. Biju, Shereena Jasmin, Ayana, Sreekala, Dayal, Sreelakshmi Chechi, Vijila Chechi, Mariyam Chechi, Keerthana, Aswini Chechi, Muhsinata, Ayoobka, Vasilka, Ambu, Azi, Irfan, Muba, Sidharth, Anwar, Athul, Ambili, Waseem Mam, Rama Rao Sir, Deepa Mam, Nikhila Mam. Prasoon Sir, Vasisht Sir and Shinoy Sir, Staff and Management of Sri Chaithanya IAS Academy.

My family has been a constant source of inspiration who had remained patient with me. I am indebted to my parents for their immense support. This work would not have taken shape without the support and care of them. I extended my special thanks to my Sister Aiswarya BK, My Sister-in-law Sudheesh and also my dearest niece Naithika and my nephew Nilav Gautham. I am immensely thankful to SFI (Student Federation of India). It gave me the strength and determination to complete this work.

My dissertation is dedicated to Martyr Comrade Abhimanyu.

INTRODUCTION

Plantations were a major industry in the world at the time of the Industrial Revolution. Spread over large tracts of land and producing single commercial crops, they were established largely in tropical areas. According to a definition provided by the International Labour Organization, the term plantation referred at first to a group of settlers or a political unit formed by it under British colonialism, especially in North America and the West Indies (ILO 1950, 6). With the colonization of Africa and Asia by British and European entrepreneurs and colonialist, the term acquired a broader connotation, coming to indicate huge- scale enterprises in agricultural units and the growth of certain agricultural resources of tropical countries in along with the with the methods of Western Industry. The main plantation crops were cotton (in the early stages in the southern United States), sugar cane (Caribbean Islands, northern part of Latin America, Mauritius, Fiji, etc.), tobacco (in the southern United States, Indonesia, and elsewhere), tea (Indian ,China, Indonesia), coffee (Brazil), rubber (Malaysia).¹ The plantation has a distinct form of production organization which gives rise to certain specific social relations. Plantations require large tracts of cultivable land and a large labour force.² The tea Industry in India began with the founding of the Assam Company

¹Bhowmik, S. K. (2011). Ethnicity and Isolation: Marginalization of Tea Plantation Workers. *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts* 4(2), 235-253. Indiana University Press. Retrieved October 10, 2017, from Project MUSE database.

²Sarkar, K., & Bhowmik, S. K. (1998). Trade Unions and Women Workers in Tea Plantations. *Economic and Political Weekly*,33(52), 50-52. Retrieved October 10, 2017.

in 1839. The potential for growing tea had been discovered earlier, in 1824, by Major Robert Bruce when he came across indigenous tea bushes in Assam, in northeast India.³

In 1877 in the Kannan Devan Hills, planting was begun by the J.D Munro, together with Henry Gribble Turner of the Madras Civil Service and the latter's half-brother A.W Turner.⁴ Tea was a different undertaking. Huge financial investments were needed for the opening as well as the development of the plantations. Planters were required a large number of labourers at affordable expense. The majority of plantation labourers migrated from locations where they had either restricted or definitely no means of production and also where a lot of them were indebted to regional landowners and lenders. In Kannan Devan Hills most of the laborers came from Tamil speaking regions of south India. The reason behind the migration of labourers into the plantation is similar as mentioned above. Majority of the labour force belonged to a backward caste. Prior to entering into the plantation, laborers were eligible to obtain advances offered by recruiters to settle existing debts. Percival Griffiths a remarkable historian suggested that in south India the advances made by estates assisted to disrupt the system of hereditary serfdom as well as contributed to relieving the insolvency and also depressed conditions of labour. In their discussion of plantation work, these

³Bhowmik, S. K. (2011). Ethnicity and Isolation: Marginalization of Tea Plantation Workers. *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts* 4(2), 236.

⁴ Griffiths, P. (1967). *The History of the Indian Tea Industry*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson. <https://www.kdhptea.com/our-history/> accessed on 10 February, 2018.

writers do not focus on labour discontent and, often implicitly, stress the consensus between the worker, the overseer and the manager.⁵

Tea plantation has changed the face of Kannan Devan Hills. Before the introduction of tea plantation, that land was inhabited by Muthuva Adivasi Community, basically, they were migrated from Madura in the part of the present state of Tamil Nadu. During that time Muthuva's were enjoyed their own autonomy on forest even though the forest area belonged to Poonjar Royal Family. But after the introduction of tea plantation, the land of Kannan Devan hills have witnessed a transformation from forest to a capitalist place.

Obviously, that resulted in social, cultural as well as an economic crisis to the Muthuva the original inhabitants of Kannan Devan Hills. In addition, the eco-system of the whole area was smashed with the thoughtless damage of forest, as well as the subsequent drying up of natural springs and reservoirs.

The colonial state has played a crucial role in the development of plantations during the second half of the nineteenth century. The state has ensured support to provide adequate facilities for the development of plantation through the introduction of roads and railway system, providing electricity, and ensuring legal as well as judicial support to planning community. Travancore rulers were not independent of the power of the

⁵ Eric Baak, P. (2000). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. P. 78.

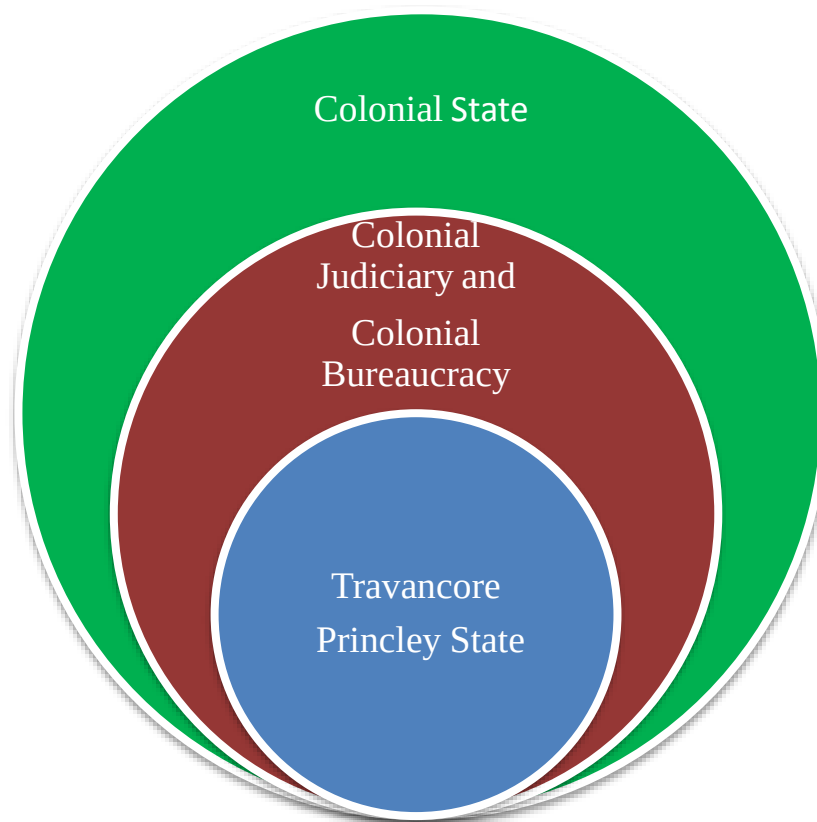
Satya, L. (2001). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in South-West India in the Long-Term Perspective, 1743-1963*. By Paul Erik Baak. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997. xxii, 370 pp. \$29.95 (cloth). *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 60(1), 253-255.

colonial state at the time of British Raj. For instance, Travancore Raja was not having power in decision making. Even in the appointment of various officers in Travancore State Raja must take permission from the colonial state. British Resident has full power in Travancore Princely state.⁶ In the case of Tea Plantation in Kannan Devan Hills the nature of Travancore state was similar. Travancore princely state policy towards Kannan Devan Tea Plantation has indicated the loyalty of Travancore State to Colonial State.

Kannan Devan Hills were the part of Poonjar royal family and that royal family belonged to Travancore princely state. The presence of the Colonial State existed. But the State was invisible during the initial period. But their power was very visible. It muted the voice of Travancore Princely State in Several times. The colonial state has enjoyed more authority than Travancore princely state. The various activities of the colonial state have questioned the sovereignty of Travancore state.

The present Research would suggest that this was a system in which a state has functioned within the state in Kannan Devan Hills. This would present in the following chart.

⁶Namboothiripad, E. (2008). *Kerala Charithram Marxist Veekshanathil* (Second ed.). Thiruvanthapuram: Chintha Publishers, P. 78.



In Kannan Devan Hills substantial tracts of lands were moved to the planters as free grants or were distributed at a minimal cost. Besides it, the planters were greatly pampered by fiscal policies of colonial state such as tax and duty concessions. Accumulation of more profit is the success of any capitalist system. Kannan Devan was also similar to like another capitalist production system. Planters were introduced several disciplinary strategies which were based on coercion to control labourer and therefore they can achieve more profit. This was badly affected among the labourers. Particularly among the women labourers this has resulted in multiple exploitations.

Significance of the Study

The major reason for the present research study to choose Kannan Devan Hills as a research topic is because of the historic women labourer's protest named it as "Pempulai orumai" which means Unity of Women. It happened on 5th September of 2015 at Munnar the headquarters of Kannan Devan Hills Company. This was a protest against the system of gender segregation exercised in the plantation, to defend not only male trade union leaders but also the men in their own family during the struggle. The present research would suggest that the problems of plantation labourers have not developed in recently. It has a long history of exploitation. Various considerable factors behind the marginalization of the women labour force in the tea plantation of Kannan Devan Hills throughout modern times have its origins in the colonial past. Since the beginning of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills labourers were faced problems from the side of planters. We have actually been seeing in the plantation is a repetition of history with the burden of being continuously transferred to labourers as well as the success being exclusively enjoyed by the management. So the present research would point out that society should know about the historical background of Kannan Devan Tea Plantation, How does it function? And what was the impact of tea plantation among the labourers particularly women labourers, The present researcher believed that understanding about the past will give us the strength to fight against issues.

Review of Literature

There has been no lack of published historical accounts of the Indian Tea plantation. Studies relating to the plantation in India were begun in the early 1930s. Earlier studies related to tea plantation mainly consisted of Bengal and Assam region. For instance, Percival Griffiths was talking about the tea Industry in Assam. Mr. Griffiths works presented in the form of business history, is the only complete account of the tea industry, with all India coverage. The first section talks about the old story of tea drinking in Asia and Europe and of the discovery of tea in Assam. The second section describes the growth of the Indian tea industry right from the 1830s to the end of 1960. Griffiths work was mainly about Tea Industry as capitalist production. Moreover, his work is an example of the Eurocentric approach.⁷ Another important work about tea plantation in India is *A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World*, by Erika Rappaport. Was tea the engine of Empire and creator of the Global Economy? The relevance of tea, its manufacturing, intake and also trades, has actually long been acknowledged by economic, cultural and imperial historians, however in this variety and also clearly detailed study, Erika Rappaport makes the case for the book that the thirst for tea was the force that formed the modern world. Erika Rappaport's excellent book combines comprehensive evidence to bring together colonial history and the commodity history of the tea plant. She cogently argues that the modern commercial models developed around tea production prefigured contemporary global economies

⁷ Griffiths, P. (1967). *The History of the Indian Tea Industry*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

in several ways. Tea, she states, was the first agricultural industry to use advertising and lobbying in a manner that is still common today, as well as it was consequently foundational to current consumer politics and publicity. This study is also touched on the aspects of tea as capitalist production. The works of Percival, as well as Erika Rapport, were mainly concentrated to locate the past of tea production and how does tea shaped the modern world. Both of them were ignored to talk about the history of labourers. In fact, labourers were one among the major factor of the success of tea plantation in all over India. The Indian labour historiography has of late, turned to the exploration of the complex interplay among the labourers, discipline, and power.

The advancement of the tea sector in India was closely related to the development of the Western market for tea as well as the colonialism which urged and also sustained the tea plantation with foreign capital and enterprise. The plantation labour historiography in India has actually had a tendency to neglect the uniqueness of women's lives and experiences⁸.

Succeeding the significant bodies of social theory expressed in the western scholarship in the twentieth century, gender came to be an essential analytical category. Yet gender as an analytical category has continued to be greatly missed in the scholarship on working-class history in India.⁹ This is because following the colonial discourse on

⁸ Sen, S. (2008). Gender and Class: Women in Indian Industry, 1890-1990. *Modern Asian Studies*, 42(1), 75-116. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20488013>.

⁹ Scott, J. (1986). Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis. *The American Historical Review*, 91(5), 1053-1075. Accessed on 15 December, 2017.

labour, working-class history in India has actually been formulated primarily in economic terms till the 1960's much to the ignorance of gender issues¹⁰

From the 1970s when the scholars of labour history in India, under the influence of E.P Thompson, began concentrating on the thorough social as well as a cultural history of the working class in India, gender took place to continue to be a marginalized category in their analysis.¹¹ Other than a few pioneering studies, gender and other issues concerning the lives of women working class were not subjects of serious inquiry. Adhering to Thompson, who was criticized by the feminist scholars for staying essentially quiet on gender issues, the cutting edge research on labour in India, like the works of Dipesh Chakraborty, Raj Narayan Chandavarkar and the subaltern school, have actually overlooked the gendered nature of industrial work and working classes.

The studies which are related to South Indian Tea plantation was begun late than the studies of Bengal as well as Assam Tea plantation. Paul Eric Baak has made a contribution to the plantation historiography in South India. Paul Erik (1997) has made a study of plantation production and political power in south India mainly concentrated on the history of formations of various plantations in Travancore as well as its various social relations. In the growing literature on the history of plantation in south India, this study is a contribution to a difference. It deals with a lengthy historic duration including the pre-colonial, colonial post-colonial periods as a kind of uniform and also

¹⁰Sarkar, S. (1998). *Writing Social History* (2nd ed.). Delhi: Oxford University Press.

¹¹ Sen, S. (2006). *Women and labour in late colonial India*. Cambridge University Press.
Srivastava, P. (2012). *Creating a Healthy and 'Decent' Industrial Labor Force: Health, Sanitation, and Welfare in Colonial Bombay, 1896-1945*. Retrieved from <https://etd.ohiolink.edu>.

continuous Continuum. The reasoning behind this is that pepper in the 18th century, and also coffee, tea and also rubber in the 19th as well as 20th centuries were commodities generated predominantly for overseas export, and that in each stage the contemporary plantation proprietor elite utilized their proximity to the political regime to regulate production, the lives of producers and the marketing of the produce.

The author is critical of existing historiography on Indian plantations. He has actually said that imperialist, nationalist, anti-colonial and also neo- Marxist scholars have actually taken on a 'Eurocentric' approach in their studies of Asian plantations which have actually caused a highlight on the colonial period and also predominantly on European led agro-industries. The unfavorable outcome is that the European planters and also officials are thrust into the foreground, huge and also clear.

Whereas the Asian Aspects laborers, peasants, state officials as well as particularly planters) are downgraded to the background, grey also uniform. Yet an additional repercussion of embracing a Eurocentric approach, the author says, is that it promotes 'undesirable value judgment'. Plainly it is not the job of the historian to evaluate the behavior of the planters as either good or wrong.

The writer was attempted to explain that the planter's initiatives to produce an unfree labour force. The planting community, European and Indian alike, simply attempted to limit the laborer's choice of the employer as well as to influence labour conditions. The kanganies/maistris too played their role in maintaining the workers in bondage. The kangany system restricted the freedom of the labour force in three ways.

Most pertinently, it urged debt slavery. The kanganies owed money to the planters: The advances provided by the planters were used by the kangagnies to recruits workers. In their turn field workers became indebted to the kanganies. The advances promptly being utilized, for most cases, to repay existing debts, for basic needs (foods, garments, etc) and also for the traveling expenditures to the estates. Second of all the kangany system urged the spread of incorrect details regarding plantation life. Lastly, it was a motivation to different another sort of misuse, consisting of using violence.

Paul Eric suggested that the kanganies at first worked as labour recruiters on the plains as well as ultimately functioned as overseers on the estates, derived the majority of their earnings from commissions on their gangs' earnings.

This motivated the kanganies not only to maintain the labourers indebted however additionally urged the overseers to abuse their position, apprehending the workers beyond the period of the contract, compelling all workers, consisting of the ill, to meet their everyday jobs as well as work long hours, and penalizing resistant workers severely. The most awful image of this is the whipping, kicking, and also covering with farming chemicals of runaway labourers by Kanganies in the Kannan Devan Hills in the post-- 1947 period.

Ravi Raman's work (2002) 'Global capital and peripheral labour' concentrates on the capital labour relationship. He explains the experiences of plantation workers in the Indian South via the lens of subaltern studies and world system analysis. In the 9, chapters the author provides an essential account of global capital as well as peripheral labour in colonial South India in addition to giving a historic and political economy

perspective of plantation Workers that extends to the post-colonial period. In the introductory chapter, entitled 'Peripheral Labour', the author analyses the theoretical premises of the study and situates it. He provides a critique of considerable social science traditions, subaltern studies, and world-systems analysis, and also suggests expanding existing Studies by highlighting the issues of plantation labourers in the Indian South, survived under several subalternities and also peripheralities.

In this work he had suggested that the workers needed to experience one of the most dreadful sorts of misuses, they were usually terribly attacked as well as women were sexually abused. The workers found themselves incapable to speak up. The planters have taken the aid of the police in their bid to the silence them.

This book offers a historical account of plantations in India in the context of the modern world economy. It brings history up to the present, thus demonstrating how history can help in clarifying contemporary condition and trends. The author concentrates on labour as well as economic development problems and uses the world system theory so as to demonstrate the practical utility of the theory and its limitations as a guide to historical research. Based upon broad historical research, the book examines the features of plantation capitalism by focused on the work, life and also battle of the Dalits on plantations in colonial and also post-colonial south India as they established from the mid- 19th century. It recommends that these factors of the plantations life-world were shaped by the peculiar features of the workers location within the capitalist world economy, the term controlling local social structure as well as the system of self-control to which the employees went through dealing with the relations amongst

numerous social the planting communities, the oppressed communities, the regional and national state, and the imperial regime.

We have one more work about the plantation history of Kerala that has given by the same author. Ravi Raman's paper is entitled 'Bondage in Freedom'. This paper tries to decipher the constituent of changing forms of bondage and also the forceful methods embraced by the planters to self-control the newly liberated agrestic slaves and in effect to trap them in a new kind of bondage. It likewise tries to expose the method which the bound workers released their power of resistance at the capitalist work sites. The claims that The spread of plantation precipitated the procedure of pauperization with the adivasis being kicked out from their very own homelands and also the peasantry giving in the stress of unfavorable government regulations such as a rise in land profits; they were after that certainly attracted to the plantation which appeared to guarantee them a much better life. The adivasis, strongly removed from their communal property, developed a significant source of labour supply for the early plantations.

The historiography of labour in Kerala was largely focused on tea plantation production, Administrative history of tea plantation and labour history. Within this array the experience of women as a labourer is seemed to be less explored, Moreover, the impact of tea plantation on Muthuva adivasi community of Kannan Devan Hills also explored little. So the present research study would look into these aspects. In addition, the present research study would also concentrate on how does the colonial state as well as the Travancore state has contributed to the growth of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills.

Research Problem

Tea plantation in India started under the patronage of the colonial British rulers. Kannan Devan Tea plantation was also no exception to this. After the introduction of the plantation, Kannan Devan Hills has transformed into a capitalist place. And also tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills has resulted in the pauperization of Muthuva Community, those who were the real inhabitants of Kannan Devan Hills. The colonial plantation had witnessed a system of hierarchy. The power relations in colonial tea plantation were mainly based on the basis of class, caste, and gender. The structure of power in the colonial plantation was mainly exercised through disciplinary mechanism particularly coercion and extra-legal authority.

The colonial state was provided with different facilities for the betterment of tea plantation. Moreover, Colonial Judiciary and bureaucracy were stood for the betterment of planting community, not with labourers. During the time of colonialism, Travancore princely state has acted according to the interest of Colonial State in several cases.

The Research problem is formulated on the background that, geographically the Kannan Devan Hills belonged to the Travancore Princely state simultaneously the Colonialism has exercised their power over the Travancore Princely State. Therefore the research intends to study the nexus between the Colonial state and the Travancore Princely state, how did it impact on the lives of the labourers as well as the development of tea plantation in the context of Kannan Devan Hills.

The research objectives are broad as follows

Research Objectives

1. To understand the historical background of Kannan Devan plantation in Kerala.
2. To study the role of Colonial State in plantation through analyzing the concept of power in the context of the plantation.
3. To survey the various Colonial strategies of Discipline and analyzing the power structure of Kannan Devan Hills with main focus on women labourers.

Methodology

The present research predominately based on Archival sources includes photos, official letters. This study also covers large secondary sources such as news reports, legislative proceedings, also covers large secondary literatures as well.

Chapterization

The entire study is structured into 3 chapters further Introduction and Conclusion. The first chapter; Historical background of a tea plantation with special reference to Kannan Devan Hills, examines the history of Kannan Devan plantation along with that how did tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills has influenced in the process of pauperization of Muthuva Community, an aboriginal tribe of Kannan Devan Hills. When we are analyzing Adivasi history, we can see that they were developed their own mechanism, where they had enjoyed their autonomy. They were against the normative system. Adivasi had followed shifting cultivation, which was considered as an uncivilized work by the colonial state. But Adivasis were very much aware that shifting cultivation doesn't need permanent settlement. Once you started a permanent settlement. The state would come up with tax. So they don't want to pay that. The colonial state has implemented several policies which were an absolutely a threat to the existence of aboriginal tribes like Muthuvas in Kanan Devan Hills. The colonial state has ruined forest as well as indigenous lives. Even Though Adivasi communities were aware of the exploitation of the colonial state. So this chapter is also analyzing the consciousness of Adivasi Community. Moreover, this chapter includes the historical account of migration of laboueres in Kannan Devan Hills. Laboueres were the major backbone of tea plantation. The Major part of Laboueres belonged to Tamil Speaking regions of south India.

The Second chapter talks about the role of the colonial state in Kannan Devan Hills and analyzing the less significance of Travancore princely state under colonialism with

special reference to tea plantation context. Colonialism has played a significant role in the development of plantations in India. The colonial state has shown keen interest to help the planters in various ways. Especially through the construction of Roads and Railways, the introduction of the Forest Department that ensured several advantages to the planting community to access forest easily for their plantation works. Moreover, the judicial system and colonial bureaucracy were completely favorable to the planting community. This chapter would look at the role played by Colonial state for the development of plantation in Kannan Devan Hills. And also this chapter would discuss how Travancore state became loyal to the colonial state in the context of the development of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills.

The third chapter would discuss how did the power structure in Kannan deavan tea plantation has functioned? With special reference to Kangany (labour Recruitment agent) and also would look at the various colonial strategies of discipline in tea plantation and furthermore would discuss how did women plantation laboueres were experienced the plantation lives.

Chapter 1

Historical Background of Tea Plantation in Kannan Devan Hills

Different forms of plantation production emerged in most areas of the third world during the time of the sixteenth century. Plantations initiatives were taken by those who had imperialistic affairs with the natives of the region. Plantation production has actually revealed specific resemblances in regards to its beginning, making use of labour, the nature of labour, and also the plants generated, as well as crops produced, and how do plantations effect on the native society and native economy.¹ The plantation has shaped as a settlement institution which carries together enterprise, and basic necessities to run the plantation in a proper manner such as capital, and labour from different parts of the world into a new location where land was available to start the plantation. So this settlement institution has particular control and also authority. It is labeled as a bureaucratically organized system. In this system, entire blocks of people are dealt with as units under the monitoring of the small managerial staff.²

¹Uma Devi, S. (1989). *Plantation economies of the Third World*. Delhi: Himalaya Publishing House.

²Best, L. (1968). Outlines of a Model of Pure Plantation Economy. *Social and Economic Studies*, 17(3), 283-326. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27856339>.

Waibel, L. (1942). The Climatic Theory of the Plantation: A Critique. *Geographical Review*, 32(2), 307-310.

Thompson, E. (1941). The Climatic Theory of the Plantation. *Agricultural History*, 15(1), 49-60. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org>

Denis M. Benn (1974) The theory of plantation economy and society: A methodological critique, *The Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 12:3, 249-260.

British colonialism has patronage the Tea Plantation in India. During the colonial period, India has produced several crops such as Tea in Assam and the Nilagiri, Wayanad, Indigo in Bihar, Cotton in Maharashtra, Jute in West Bengal, and Tobacco in Andhra Pradesh Coffee in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala. And these regions were opened to the world's capitalist system through the introduction of above mentioned new crops and finally, it worked to the damage of the poor.³

Tea plantation in India was begun with the advent of colonialism. The history of tea plantation in India dates back to 1824 when the first indigenous tea bush was discovered in Assam by Robert Bruce of the British army.⁴ Consequently, however, more than three decades later, tea plantations were started in different parts of colonial India. Such as Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts of West Bengal, Nilgiris, and the Coimbatore districts of Madras (Tamil Nadu), as well as the Idukki and Wayanad districts of Kerala.

³Dewey, C., & Hopkins, A. G. (1978). *The Imperial impact: Studies in the economic history of Africa and India*. Athlone Press for the Institute of Commonwealth Studies.

Lonsdale, J. (1979). *The Imperial Impact: Studies in the Economic History of Africa and India*. Edited by Clive Dewey and A. G. Hopkins. University of London: The Athlone Press, Pp. x, 409. *Modern Asian Studies*, 13(4), 690-693.

Kumar, D. (1979). Book Reviews: CLIVE DEWEY and A.G. HOPKINS (Eds.), *The Imperial Impact: Studies in the Economic History of Africa and India*, The Athlone Press, University of London, 1978, Pp. 409, £ 12.50. *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, 16(4), 433-435. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001946467901600406>.

⁴Bhowmik, S. (1981). *Class formation in the plantation system*. Delhi: Peoples Publishing House.

Bhadra, M. (1992). *Women Workers of Tea Plantations in India*. New Delhi: Heritage.

Bhadra, M. (1985). Women Workers in Tea Plantations. *Indian Anthropologist*, 15(2), 93-114. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41919512>.

Chaudhury, S., & Varma, N. (2002). Between Gods/Goddesses/Demons and 'Science': Perceptions of Health and Medicine among Plantation Labourers in Jalpaiguri District, Bengal. *Social Scientist*, 30(5/6): 18-38.

The favorable geographical features of Kerala like the presence of Western Ghats, with its sufficient rainfall and the perfect temperature, has provided a platform to start tea plantation in Kerala during the colonial period. Peerumade as a part of Travancore was the first place where tea was first planted as an experimental crop along with coffee and chinchona in 1864.⁵

There had actually been 4 *edavagais*⁶ or Province under the Erstwhile Government of Travancore. They were the Edavagais of Edappally Swaroopam, Kilimanoor Kottaram, Poonjar Koickal as well as Vanjipuzha Madom. Those Edavagais were holding numerous villages or substantial degree of land that were completely freehold as well as excused from repayment of any kind of sort of tax obligation to the government under any kind of scenarios. Of the 4 edavagais, the Poonjar Koickal had actually been provided freehold right in the Edavagai town of Poonjar in Meenachil Taluk. Kannan Devan, as well as Anjanad Hills, was being held by the Poonjar Koickal as a component of their freehold land.⁷ The Kannan Devan Hills, formerly called Kannan Devan Anchanatu Mala, was sold to J, D Munro by Punhatil Koyikal Kerala Varma Valiya Raja in 1877 via the initial Poonjar concession in which was carried out

⁵ Nagam, Aiya, V. (1906). *The Travancore State Manual*, Vol 3, New Delhi; Asian Education Services, 1989, P.71.

<https://archive.org/details/travancorestate00aiyagoog/page/n11>

⁶This term denotes for Province which actually confined particular geographical locations. The Cambridge Dictionary defines Province as one of the areas that country or empire is divided into as the part of organization of its government which has often some control over its own laws. See, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/province>.

⁷ Rajamanickam, M. (n.d.). *Report of the special officer and collector* (Rep. No. GLR- (LR) – 1/2016/BRT/Co).

Subject: Kerala Land Conservancy Act, 1957 – The resumption of Government land which had been occupied and abandoned by the English Companies and individuals prior to Indian Independence.

on the 11th of July; this was adhered to by a 2nd Poonjar concession on 26th July 1879, which was one more contract in between Munro and also the Poonjar chief.

On 11.7.1877, the Edavagai chief of Poonjar, Kerala Varma Valiya Raja, carried out an Action in favor of Mr. John Daniel Munroe, a coffee planter. As the Europeans and also Americans were not permitted to hold permanent belongings in the State of Travancore without the consent of the Government of the Maharajah, the immigrant, Mr. John Daniel Munro sent an application prior to the Maharajah of Travancore to allow holding the land provided by the Poonjar chief. On 28.11.1878 an action of approval was carried out by the Diwan of Travancore in support of the Maharajh. Yet the transfer of given by the beneficiary needed to be right away made recognized to the 'Sirkar'. On 26.07.1879 one more Act called "the 2nd Poonjar Concession" was carried out in between the Poonjar chief and also Mr. John Daniel Munroe. As a component of the land transfer, the government initially took control of over the area from the Punhatil Raja in Exchange for certain paddy lands in central Travancore. The sale was created a straight-out rate of Rupees 5,000 and also went through a yearly lease of Rupees 3, 000 from the 7th year let's start after the bearing of the crop. Both concessions completely consisted of concerning 215 Square miles,⁸ greater than 1.37 lakh acres, comparable to virtually one-seventh of the net cultivated area of the princely state. The North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society have accessed this huge portion of land, which is currently in Devikulam Taluk of Idukki district in Kerala. The North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society were developed

⁸For the copy of the original deed, see TLRM, 1915, Vol.11, pp.21-5.
Aiya, Travancore state manual, Vol.111, pp.71-4; Pillai, State Manual, Vol.4. pp.475-87.

by the consortium of British financiers in 1879 with 215 Square miles of land bought up. The grant was once more moved from the society to the North and South Sylhet Company, a subsidiary of the Scottish- based Finlay Muir and company, commonly called Finley and Company.

As the chief Poonjar had no 'Jenmom right'⁹ on the Concession Area he surrenders the 'jenmom right' to the Government of Travancore. After that, the Maharajah of Travancore provided the Royal Pronouncement on 24.09.1899 and also stated inter alia that the territory referred to as Anjnad and also Kannan Devan Hills are the indispensable component of the region of the Maharaja which all rights over it come from and also vest in the government of Travancore. There was an indenture dated 16.07.1900 in between the claimed 'North Travancore Land Granting and also Agricultural Society Ltd' and also 'the Kannan Devan Hills Co. Ltd'. The new company by an indenture dated 06.4.1936 moved a section of the giving land (Devikulam Estate) to the Anglo American Direct Tea Trading Company Ltd. All the above business had actually been the international Companies signed up in the U.K¹⁰

⁹There were different types of land structures in Travancore State. Jenmom Rights was one of the prevailed agrarian structure. British had constituted a class of landlords who had absolute rights and ownership on land recognized by the enforcement of law and courts. This land rights were known as Jenmom Rights. Generally, these jenmis maybe a temple or a stani or Namboodiri illom or Nair Tharavad having property rights over hundreds of acres.

¹⁰ Rajamanickam, M. (n.d.). *Report of the special officer and collector* (Rep. No. GLR- (LR) – 1/2016/BRT/Co).

Subject: Kerala Land Conservancy Act, 1957 – The resumption of Government land which had been occupied and abandoned by the English Companies and individuals prior to Indian Independence.

See, https://archive.org/stream/1958KERALA8/1958KERALA8_djvu.txt.

The reality that the Kannan Devan concession made up matching of one- 7th of the net cultivated area as well as virtually one-tenth of the complete forest of Travancore nicely bears witness the level to which the princely state under indirect colonial guideline was secondary to the Imperial power.¹¹

Table: 1

Tea Cultivation in Kannan Devan Hills in 1885 and 1901¹².

Year	Total number of Estates	Total Acreage	Estates growing Coffee	Estates growing Cinchona	Estates growing Tea
1885	17	2,247	2	17	6
1901	43	17,136	17	14	27

¹¹Of the total 6,730 square miles or more than half of the geographical area was under forests in the beginning of the nineteenth century. See, Ward and Conner, Lieutenants (1863) *Memoir of the Survey of the Travancore and Cochin States*, Vol.1.Thiruvanthapuram. State Editor.1994. *Kerala Gazetteers*, p.3.Nearly 10 percent of these forests was leased out by the State to a single corporate capital through the Kannan Devan deeds. <http://statelibrary.kerala.gov.in/gazette/index.php>.

¹² Official Papers regarding the Kannan Devan Hills: CDS.RF.546.

Table: 2

*Tea Cultivation in Travancore in 1904*¹³

District	Number of Estates	Acreage Cultivated with Tea
South Travancore	18 (27%)	3,830 (15%)
Central Travancore	24 (36%)	8,415 (34%)
Kannan Deavan Hills	24 (36%)	12,466 (50%)
Total	66 (100%)	24,711 (100%)

The tea has become the significant cultivated plant that is grown commercially on a large scale in the Kannan Devan Hills, which is shown in above-mentioned table 2. In, 1901, twenty-seven plantations were producing tea, while only fourteen estates were still cultivating cinchona. Of greatest significance, the increase in acreage in the Kannan Devan Hills, from 2,247 acres in 1885 to 17,136 acres in 1901, was brought almost solely by the development of tea. Tea was quite a different undertaking. Large investments were necessary for the opening up and exploitation of the plantations. In comparison with coffee, tea required a more stable work force.¹⁴ Here I would like to

13.Nagam, Aiya, V. (1906). *The Travancore State Manual*, Vol 3, New Delhi; Asian Education Services,1989, P.71.

<https://archive.org/details/travancorestate00aiyagoog/page/n11>

¹⁴Eric Baak, P. (2000). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

point out that after the introduction of Tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills that has witnessed a gradual spatial transformation. It means that a hilly area has gradually transformed into a capitalist space. In this context, this study points out that here capitalism has acted as a way for colonialism in Kannan Devan Hills. Liberal land policy by the various colonial state governments accelerated the rest to open up large tracts of tea by European capitalists.¹⁵

The impoverishment of Tribal communities in plantation

While recounting the social and Economic background of southern Indian Plantations, one needs to check into the man-made environmental calamities, which was the result of hostile capitalist growth. A lot of the monoculture plantations were developed on Land, formerly inhabited by deciduous evergreen forest, honored with natural deposits. It likewise harmed the resources of livelihood source of the Aboriginal people like Muthuvar, Naiker, Kurumbar, Kuriachiar as well as Vellalar that were enjoying varied chopping pattern.

Idukki district have active presence of the Muthuvan (plural: Muthuvar) community which is a scheduled Tribe. Although this community trace their origin to Madurai based on their myth and remembered traditions and much later only they migrated to the hills of Kerala. Popular story states that while they are moving from Madurai to the hills of Kerala, they happened to carry their idol of goddess known as Madurai Meenakshi on their backs. It is therefore from here they derived their tribe name ‘ Muthuvar’ which mean people carrying something on the back. Another popular story

¹⁵Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge.

states that they derived this name because of their custom of carrying their children on the back of their body.

During the colonial period, Britishers have actually applied an extremely various as well as a discriminative stand to the tribal community throughout the country. The term 'tribe' was created in the colonial period to distinguish specific forest or hills communities from the mainstream society. As well as in colonial understanding, the term 'tribe' was connected with savage, conceited, barbaric, vicious, wild and also foolish people. These defamatory concepts were not totally colonial invention; however, the recreation of the presumption of middleman's likes zamindaris, lenders and also thickadars as well as conventional Hindu resources like Ramayana, Manusmriti. As an example: In Sanskrit literature, Adivasis were referred to an asura (demon), nishad (hunters), dasyu (slaves), vanar (monkey) and rackchas (beast).¹⁶

Adivasis were taken the subject in the colonial literary works with the intervention of Anthropological and also ethnographic studies. It was later on complied with by Marxist as well as Nationalist scholars who unsuccessful to remove the colonial understanding of Adivasis in their studies. The political awareness of Adivasi obtained acknowledgment just with the introduction of Subaltern studies. Nonetheless, in spite of this, subaltern studies failed to eliminate the colonial concepts from the minds of individuals. Colonial anthropology can be separated into four components: Darvanic anthropology or official anthropology, missionary anthropology, romantic

¹⁶Xalxo, P. (2007). *Complementarity of Human Life and Other Life Forms in Nature: A Study of Human Obligations Toward the Environment with Particular Reference to the Oraon Indigenous Community of Chotanagpur, India*. Italy: Georgia University Press. P.20.

anthropology, and Hindu nationalist anthropology.¹⁷ Each school has its agenda in generating as well as reproducing Adivasi society. Amongst this colonial anthropology, the present researcher wants to evaluate the Racial anthropology of Colonial India as well as how did Muthuva or A tribe in Idukki District of Kerala Adivasi community in Kannan Devan Hills were opposed the basic idea of Colonial racial anthropology.

Racial anthropology of colonial India established from 19th-century European racial concepts. In this, anthropologists utilized body measurement tools and also separated the human species on their body measurement. On this basis, Adivasis were categorized as 'primitive' or 'the same' or 'savage'. This took a brand-new turn when H.H. Risley came to be the commissioner of the 1891 census. He was the pioneer of the anthropometric study of Bengal as well as under his influence the government dealt with to accomplish an ethnographic study throughout India at the time of 1901 census. He selected Edward Thurston who developed an interest in anthropology as well as created 7 volumes on the castes as well as tribes of South India. Body measurement offered primary standards for his category which led to the labeling of numerous communities. For example, on the basis of body measurement, some Adivasi communities were labeled as a as criminal¹⁸ So this was the colonial racial anthropological understanding about Adivasi communities.

¹⁷Bhukya, B. (2008). The Mapping of the Adivasi Social: Colonial Anthropology and Adivasis. *Economic and Political Weekly*,43(39), 103-109.

¹⁸Bhukya, B. (2008). The Mapping of the Adivasi Social: Colonial Anthropology and Adivasis. *Economic and Political Weekly*,43(39), 103-109.

Here the present Research study wants to negate this idea on the basis of a petition letter that has actually sent out by Muthuva community of Devikulam Taluk to His Highness of Maha Raja of Travancore. The prayers of the Muduvans are “ (1):That they should free from the operation of the hill men rules and that they should be treated as ordinary subject of his highness Maharaja¹⁹, The first prayer of Muthuvans were clearly intend that Muthuvans doesn’t want to follow any kind of hill men rules which they didn’t experience it in earlier times. Before the advent of the plantation in Kannan Devan Hills, they had followed their own kind of tradition and culture. Their socio-economic and cultural life was associated with forest and they didn’t experience any kind of hindrances to access the forest. In the days prior to the arrival of colonialism, there had actually not been any kind of official relocate to manage the control of forest source. Neither was there any kind of demand for such regulations, the forest being taken into consideration as public property, specifically belonging to the indigenous peoples whose rights over the sources continued to be uncontested as long as anyone could remember. As colonial infiltration started to be really felt, a new branch of trade of imperial interest was developed- trade in timber and plantations- which demanded the organized capitalization of nature: a well- specified administrative structure with unscrupulous rules as well as regulations was established; the forest sources were recognized thoroughly as well as evaluated, demarcated and also scheduled; grazing was banned; shifting cultivation was prohibited, as well as planters were urged to

¹⁹ See, Letter submitted by Muthuva community members of Devikulam to Travancore Diwan, 09/04/1917. *Revenue file* 275/1917, Bundle: 394.

transform varied forestry into a monoculture plantation.²⁰ For additional funding build-up, the Forest Department was established in 1865 and also the India Forest Act was applied in 1878. The Creation of Forest Department with well- fueled oil administrative machinery as well as unscrupulous regulations led to the organized capitalization of nature.²¹

In the early years, the regional state had actually acknowledged the possession rights of the locals over grazing lands; consequently, it transformed its position. Suggesting that they could have just grazing rights, hence intruding on their lands without paying any kind of payment. In those areas where a grazing charge was specified, the tribes could not meet it for obvious reasons. In Travancore, grazing charge in the high ranges was initially presented with the purpose of recognizing finance to build roads and also Canals. The local people therefore not just pushed away from their houses, yet likewise were anticipated to subsidise the propertied class. The colonial bureaucracy was strident in its stricture of the activities of the local peasants and also the tribes, especially that of shifting cultivation. The native individuals that stayed in total coherence with their forest environment were criticized for the damage of timber as well as for eco-friendly deterioration in its entirety, a clear sign of the distortion of history by the European intruders. As versus the placing of constraints on making use of common property sources by the local population, consisting of grazing, the planters

²⁰ Gadgil, M., & Guha, R. (2014). *This fissured land: An ecological history of India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

²¹ Stebbing, EP. 1923. *The Forest of India*, Vol 1, New Delhi: Goyal Offset Press. Vol 1, pp 68-124.

Gadgil, M., & Guha, R. (2014). *This fissured land: An ecological history of India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

had no compunctions concerning the infringements that they themselves made. These continued to be undoubted, also legitimized, either in the name of revenue or in the name of development of the region. As mentioned earlier forest was scheduled for the specific objective of organized exploitation, as well as, as a component of it, shifting cultivation was either outlawed or limited, and other rights – grazing and pasturing, cutting of the grass, gathering of leaves, hunting, fishing and so on were regulated.²²

So after the introduction of the plantation in Kannan Devan Hills, they were witnessed several kinds of new forest rules from the side of Colonial state to remove the accessibility of muthvans on the forest. The first prayer specifically means that muthuvans were very well aware of their rights. Through this petition, it became an attempt of a tribal community to attain their rights. Moreover, they want them to be treated as an ordinary subject of his highness Maharaja. It is clearly a powerful attempt of a tribal community to show their individuality and also they don't need any kind of interference from others on their day to day lives. The second prayer is that: The swamps and *Kalai*²³ forest should be registered in their names subject to a light assessment and *taravila*²⁴, the reason for this second prayer is clearly mentioned in that letter. They claimed that they (Muthuvans) and their ancestors were part of indentured labour of Poonjatil royal family, so they couldn't save anything for their lives. However, this was the reason for them to ask the second prayer. So this was an attempt

²² Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge Publication. P,38.

²³ Kalai meaning the cultivation of paddy or some inferior grain in the same land after the first cultivation of rice known as Ozhavu is over also weed.

²⁴ The minimum price as fixed by the government.

of a tribal community to attain certain economic mobility which they were deserved to get it.

And the third prayer is that: The pattas should be given to them for the cardamom lands in their possession and that the taravila for the name should be received into installments and the last prayer is that a member from their community should be elected to represent them at the Srimoolam Popular Assembly.”²⁵ The above-mentioned prayers of Muduvans were intended that they were very much conscious about their day to day lives and the conditions of their surroundings. The total four prayers of Muthuvans were specifically meant that it was a strong consciousness of a tribal community to attain their socio-economic and political mobility. Moreover, this letter shows that they did not belong to the brand of any criminal tribes. Ultimately it has contradicted the general understandings of colonial racial anthropology. In this context, the present research study wants to point out that this petition has been sent out by muthuva community of Devikulam in 1917. During this particular period, Devikulam was a part of Travancore Princely state. And the main reason for this petition was that muthuva communities were undergone various difficulties due to the colonial state²⁶. The particular community does not want to be loyal to the colonial state, because already their area was part of Travancore Princely state. This letter can be an attempt of a tribal community to drag the attention of Travancore Princely state into the matter, that is British officers were trying to implement a state within the Princely state through the various activities and policies in Kannan Devan Hills. So the

²⁵ See, Letter submitted by Muthuva community members of Devikulam to Travancore Diwan, 09/04/1917. *Revenue file 275/1917*, Bundle: 394.

²⁶ *Revenue file 275/1917*, Bundle: 394.

muthuva community can be realized that this was a threat to the sovereignty of Travancore Princely state.

But this petition has forwarded by the commissioner of Devikulam Taluk to the His Highness of Maharaja. The commissioner has made his own remarks to the petition such as that the hill men rules as framed are intended for the protection of the hill men and not for oppressing them as stated in the petition. So this was a mandatory justification from the side of the colonial state to prove that they were not doing anything against the inhabitants of Kannan Devan Hills. But in reality, these hill men rules were in acted to restrict the mobility of this community. And another argument of Devikulam Commissioner regarding this petition is that the petitioners have now lightly modified their prayer in regard to the registry of swamps and Kalai Forest and say that they want the swamps registered in the name of paddy cultivation but if by doing so they will not be allowed to migrate other places and cultivate other lands as they now do, they are not particular to not the lands registered and will be content by requesting government to reserve all suitable swamps and kalai lands for their cultivation. Commissioner's opinion was that the registry of these lands to the hill men should be refused but that some of the swamps and Kalai forest not suitable for the cardamom cultivation may be reserved for their use.

The petitioners have stated that before the tahsildar that they want the protection of government as hitherto but that cardamom lands supplied for by them and in their possession should be registered in their names on a taravila of Rs. 5 per acre payable

in 5 annual installments. They have a real grievance as they cannot now get good forest for their hill cultivation. All such lands being either given on patta or supplied for and entered on by others for cardamom cultivation. They have there to find their bread by coolie labour. Some of them Muduvans and Mannans have already supplied for cardamom lands. And some of them have even cultivated the lands but the question of effecting the registry in their favor is kept in abeyance pending separation of the cardamom area from the forest area kindly vide government letter no: 3323/F & M.R. dated 27th August 1915. Under these Circumstances, Devikulam commissioner has suggested to His Highness of Travancore that 3rd prayer deserves favor considerations. He has recommended that two acres cardamom lands may be granted to each adult free of Taravila and assessment for the first four years and subject to an assessment of Rs. 2 per acres from the 5th year- the concession being withdrawn and the usual taravila and assessment charged. If the lands alienated to others, suitable modification has also to be made in the rules for the protection and management of the hill men. In respect of a member to represent the hill men at the Sri Moolam popular assembly, they say that they do not know what the assembly and they do not want a member to be returned. In the statement made by the petitioners, they have made a further request and that is that they should be paid wages at 6 annas per day whenever they do Sirkar (Government) work.²⁷ The request is reasonable and may be allowed. In this above-mentioned context, the present research study wants to point out that the Devikulam Commissioner has made various remarks in that petition. So the opinion of Devikulam

²⁷ See the letter submitted from J. C. H Robinson esquire, Commissioner Devikulam, 08/06/1917
Revenue files 275/1917, bundle no. 394.

Commissioner about that petition was an attempt of a British officer to show their commitment to the colonial state.

The growth of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills was mainly developed by getting rid of the regional tribal neighborhood, the Muthuvar, from their conventional field.²⁸

As the plantation prospered as well as broadened, so did the procedure of pauperization as well as economic impoverishment gain origin; tribal were burglarized of forest that was their residences and also resources of livelihood, and also peasants were pressed under the concern of raised land revenues. These unfortunate, as well as displaced people, were the very first to develop the labor force in the recently established plantations. Those tribal whose prehistoric awareness rebelled versus the concept of struggling on estates were pushed into the hinterlands, their financial base as well as their actual feeling of social identification being endangered.²⁹

Here present research study pointed out that during British Raj the Muthuvas once a self-sufficient tribal community became victims of predatory capitalism through the various disciplinary mechanisms which were successfully implemented by the colonial state and also colonialism has wiped out customary relations of muthuvans and manipulated it for more surplus extraction.

Moreover, the plantation has changed their traditional lifestyle. " A strange exercise with the Muthuvans is that after the marital relationship is cleared up the groom by force eliminates the maiden from her mom's residence when she pursues water or

²⁸Eric Baak, P. (2000). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. P.98.

²⁹*Revenue files 275/1917*, bundle no. 394.

firewood as well as lives with her discretely for a couple of days or weeks in some isolated part of the forest. They after that return, unless meantime, they are looked for as well as revived by their connections. No Tali is connected about the new bride's neck. However brand-new garments are brought by the groom and also provided to the new bride". Here the present research study points out that Muthuvans had adhered this sort of lives which is completely different from other people. It was a kind of indigenous life. But after the introduction of plantation in Kannan Devan Hills, Muthuvans were gradually lost their rights on forest and their traditional customs.

Chapter 2

The role of the Colonial state in Kannan Devan Tea plantation

Historically plantations were the product of colonialism. The colonial planters, eager to help the planters through various ways especially in the names of land concessions, constructions of roads and railways and the introduction of the forest department, so and so.¹

The colonial state aided to upsurge commodity production by adding significant amounts to the building as well as upkeep of roadways, bridges, healthcare facilities, and also various other such infrastructural centres like research and development centres. These were the earliest symptoms of State capitalism in the planting areas. As a matter of fact, the whole system of communication in the planting areas had actually been designed so as to transport the abundant commercial crops of the state like pepper, ginger, cardamom, rubber as well as tea to the closest harbour by the most inexpensive and also best path of exportation. The opening of roadways was likewise planned to permit a very easy influx of labour.² The plantation items from southern India relocated

¹Bhowmik, S. (2011). Ethnicity and Isolation: Marginalization of Tea Plantation Workers. *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts*, 4(2), 235-253.

²Broughton Papers, Tweedledale to Hobhous, quoted in Varghese, Development of Transport, P.79. as cited in Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge.P.34.

westward via the ports of Tuticorin as well as Madras, and along the Malabar coastline which had centuries-- the old practice of the trade in spices with Europe.³

The formation of the general Public Works Department (pwd) by the mid- 19th century- in 1848 in Madras, and also in 1860 in Travancore- assisted in the building and construction of ghat roadways on a huge range. The ghat roadways were maintained either by the PWD or by the District Board. Most of the roadways created at the demand of the planters became referred to as planters' roadways. Additionally, the Road Board was certain in using the term, 'planting districts' 'with reference to those districts where there were European planters.'⁴

Among the early high- range roads created by the PWD in Travancore was the ghatt Road from Kottayam in the direction of the State frontier near Guddalur via Peerumedu. This cart track to peerumedu was finished in 1871 and also was after that reached the frontier in 1884.⁵ By the turn of the century, bridle paths and cart tracks linking Munnar with the low country to the west in Tamil Nadu as well as to the eastern in Travancore were progressively being created.⁶ Virtually fifty per cent of the earnings

³Muthiah S. (1993). *A planting century: the first hundred years of the United Planters' Association of Southern India, 1893–1993*. East West Books (Madras) Pvt Ltd. P. 68.

⁴TNA, Local Self Government, GO No.752/1923 dated 26 March 1923; DAT, CSF No.10927/1894. Extract of the statement of Expenditure in connection with 'Planters Roads' for construction or for repair of various roads.

⁵Aiya, N. V. (1906). *The Travancore state manual*. Trivandrum, Travancore government press. pp.229-30.

⁶In the early 1880's roads were constructed from Munnar down to Talayar and from Marayoor to Chinnar through the villages of Mattupetty, for the transportation of both labour and food from the Tamil countryside, upon which the plantation empire thrived even more. For some information, see Abraham Varghese, M. 'Kannan Devan Planters' Association- Organization of the High Ranges Plantations' and Sulochana Unnikrishnan Nair, 'History of High Ranges'

from the sale of lands and also export duties in Travancore were invested in surveys, roads, and so on in the planting region area after the creation of PWD.⁷

The per cent of State expense on PWD roadways was raised from one- quarter to one-half during the late nineteenth century.⁸ Additional roadways were created by the first quarter of the twentieth century, as it was regularly explained that the unapproachability of these areas acted as the considerable barrier to the movement of local labour to the plantations, from the Tamil countryside.⁹

The State adhered to an inequitable strategy favouring the European planters over the local planters additionally in its subsidization of roadways in the planting areas; the vernacular press did not fail to show up a dissenting note this way.¹⁰ The campaigns taken by the planters to include as well as likewise settle the planting areas by means of rail roadways began with the erection of monorail in addition to ropeways where the Kannan Devan Plantation took the lead: a monorail tramway showed up in 1899, which was transformed by a 2 ft. scale vapour train in 1909.¹¹

in *KDHP- Centenary Year, 1888-1988, Hundred Years of Kannan Devan Planters' Association, Munnar*, 1988, pp.13-17, pp.18-27 respectively; *Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol.p.13.

⁷Jeffrey, R. (1994). *The Decline of Nair Dominance: Society and Politics in Travancore, 1847-1908*. New Delhi: Manohar Publication. pp.90-99.

⁸ Brightsingh, D. (1949). *Financial Development in Travancore*, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to the University of Travancore, p.87.

⁹ Census of India, 1931, Travancore, Vol.1, p.87.

¹⁰Malayala Manorama, 'Thiruvithamkotte Theiyilathottangal' (Tea Plantations in Travancore), 22 July 1916, p.2.

¹¹This was further followed by regular passenger and goods services including the transport of mail. In Peerumedu, a few planters formed a syndicate with a view to get around the transport problems they were facing; they started off by importing four lorries from England to carry estate produce, general goods and passengers from Mundakkayam to Peerumedu. Finding it successful venture, it was widened in scope resulting in the formation of the Mundakkayam-Peerumedu Motor Transport and Aerial Ropeways Co. Ltd; an extensive scheme was also laid down

Illustration: 1

Blair Hill, Munnar Transport; 1900

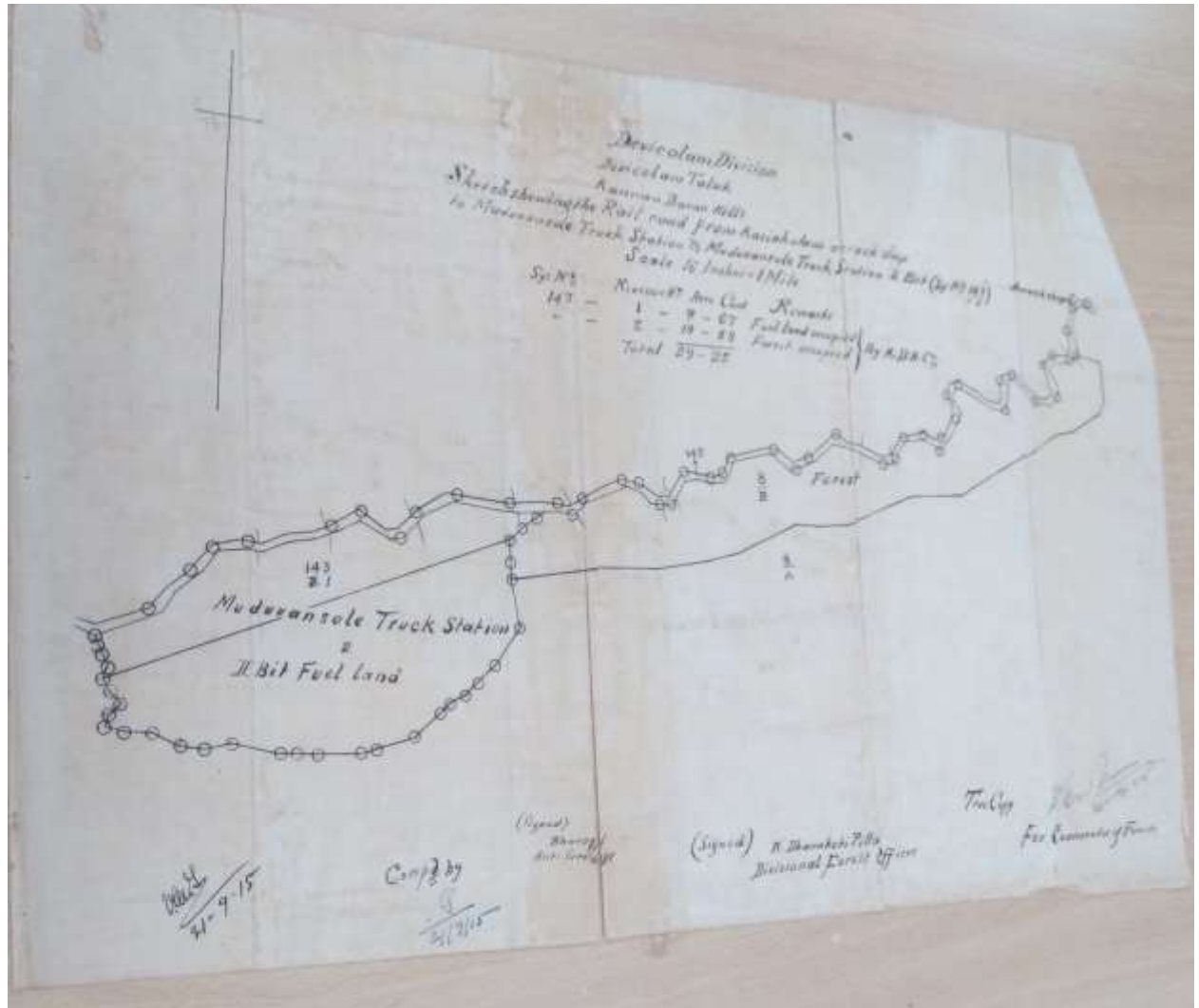


Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea museum Nallatani, Idukki District, Kerala.

for the setting up of ropeways but this did not materialize. See Somerset Playne. (1914). *Southern India: Its History, People, Commerce, and Industrial Resources*, Asian Educational Service: New Delhi, p.558.

Illustration: 2

Sketch of the Railroad from Karinkulam arrack shop to Muduvansole Truck Station



Source: State Archives Thiruvananthapuram.

An additional setting of appropriations of open sources considered by the planters was a huge range of infringement of both public and also private lands. Such infringements were frequently legitimized by the State for the maximization of earnings from these lands. In Travancore, for instance, when one European planter ordered 114 acres of forest- land, the State, as opposed to enforcing a fine on him or at the very least advising him, notified him that though the lands adjacent the majority of the infringements had actually been sold at an average value of Rs 20-35, the government was disposed to grant him the same as a matter of concern at Rs 10 per acre¹². W. Rees, the British political representative, while on his trip to Devikulam in 1896, commented that a planter had actually complained of a delay in obtaining a *patta* (Malayalam term denotes that legal document regarding the ownership of the land) for some land near Mettu, yet that it appeared to be as a result of his having actually taken greater than the level for which he had actually used.¹³

There were many examples of the providing of evergreen forest throughout the Western Ghats to European planters as ‘concessions’. Such concession was every commonly made overlooking the point of views of professionals that alerted that the forest area worried should not be allocated for planting as it would certainly mislead

¹²DAT, CSF, NO.10107, Dewan to Miss A. Baker, dated, p.1097

¹³Rees,W. Taravel to Devikulam and his notes on the High Ranges Road, cited in M. Moench, From Forest to Agroforest ; Land – use Dynamics and Crop Successions in the Western Ghats, Kerala, South India (hereafter Land-use Dynamics), Unpublished in Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, 1985. As cited Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge.p.28.

the lasting eco- system in the area. The allotment of evergreen forests for planting was in fact urged, given they entered into European hands.¹⁴

It has actually been observed throughout colonial plantation economies that tracts of land were mostly obtained at low cost, much over of the requisite minimum for possible plantations. In particular situations, the planters obtained extra land that they had the capital to invest. In both the instances, what triggered the planters to obtain greater than the minimum need of land could perhaps be the wish to preserve the plantations as a single adjoining unit, to have extra land for speculative businesses, to manage the right-of-way to various other nearby areas and also or/ to maintain potential rivals out of the enterprise. All these elements either alone or in mix resulted in over-purchase as well as hence under- use of plantation land as in various other colonies the world over.¹⁵ The instance of tea plantations in southern India remained in no way different. An applicant was not prohibited to obtain land also if he had no ways to cultivate it. The procedure of over- procurement remained in reality increased by the marshes policies as well as the preparedness of the State to legitimize advancements on whatever scale they went on.¹⁶ In particular planting regions, huge systems of land were offered out to private planters and also companies. Sometimes, neither beneficiaries neither the individual company had any type of idea of the area rented in; they after that indulged in conjecture by selling the grants to merchant's capital to

¹⁴Ravi Raman, *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India*, p.27.

¹⁵De Silva, S. (2011). *The Political Economy of Underdevelopment*. Routledge.

¹⁶Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge Publications.

elevate plantations. In the first half of the twentieth century, around half of the total area possessed by these companies continued to be essentially uncultivated.¹⁷

Whenever the local authorities rejected to obey with the wishes of the planters, the previous was managed terribly. While on a tour of the high ranges in 1907, for example, the Dewan of Travancore was come close to by some European planters requiring even more land, roadways and also judicial centres. The Dewan nevertheless did decline these needs. This fairly naturally frustrated the Europeans, among who is reported to have actually complied with the Dewan on horseback in an effort to block his trip.¹⁸ Though a police case was filed against the offending planter, absolutely nothing resulted in it as the planter declined to send himself to the law of the land.¹⁹

When the first post office was started in Munnar in 1892, Mr Turner, amongst the initial investors of the Kannan Devan Plantations, established with each of his friends to have actually Post cards sent out by mail in his name to make sure that the authorities would absolutely preserve the post office open.²⁰ Even more, the UPASI took

¹⁷ Computed from the Indian Tea Statistics, various years. Unless otherwise stated that, all figures on area, production, employment and prices of tea are from the Indian Tea Statistics of the respective years. Over- acquisition of land was at times indulged in by the planters without a thought towards the means at their disposal. And when government rules were modified to the effect that the planters could acquire land without declaring their means for investment, speculation on land, aiming at the business concerns in London became a common phenomenon. For related arguments, see Gadgil, *Industrial Evolution*, p.52. as cited in cited Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge publications.

¹⁸ Malayala Manorama. *The Diwan and the Planters*, 27 February 1907, p.2. *Dewan's High Range Tour*, 6 March 1907, p.1.

¹⁹ Malayala Manorama, "The Diwan and the Planters", 27 February 1907. *Dewan's High Range Tour*, 6 March 1907.

²⁰ Banerji, R. (1966). *Pioneer Planning, Finlay's Magazine*, Vol.3. No.3, Autumn, p.9.

particular passion in the developing of a communication network working to acquire the cost of producing public telegraph lines to the planting areas reduced.²¹

The planters settled in Kannan Devan Hills, which took pleasure in a different legal status due to the Pooniat Concessions, additionally handled to get a decrease in their economic responsibilities, throughout the mid-1880s. Munro, among the concessionaires, got the help of the British Resident in their strategies. He contacted him on 12 March 1885; 'I have actually been from the Rajah's early communication wished some decrease would certainly be consented to however be sorry to say have failed to acquire it'. Obviously, in the days which adhered to the British Resident utilized his impact to excellent impact for these planters as the Dewan, V. Rameiengar, contacted Munro just seventeen days later on: 'all the lands included in the grant will be free of assessment for 6 years.'²²

By the quarter of the 19th century, the building and construction of railways started to 'invade every continent', funded from Europe as an efficient tool of development of the worldwide economic situation focused in London.²³ As in various other swarms, in India as well, trains infiltrated to one of the most interior parts, incorporating the resources of raw materials as well as work with the marketplaces, 'under the stress of

²¹ UPASI Proceedings, 1912I, p.12.

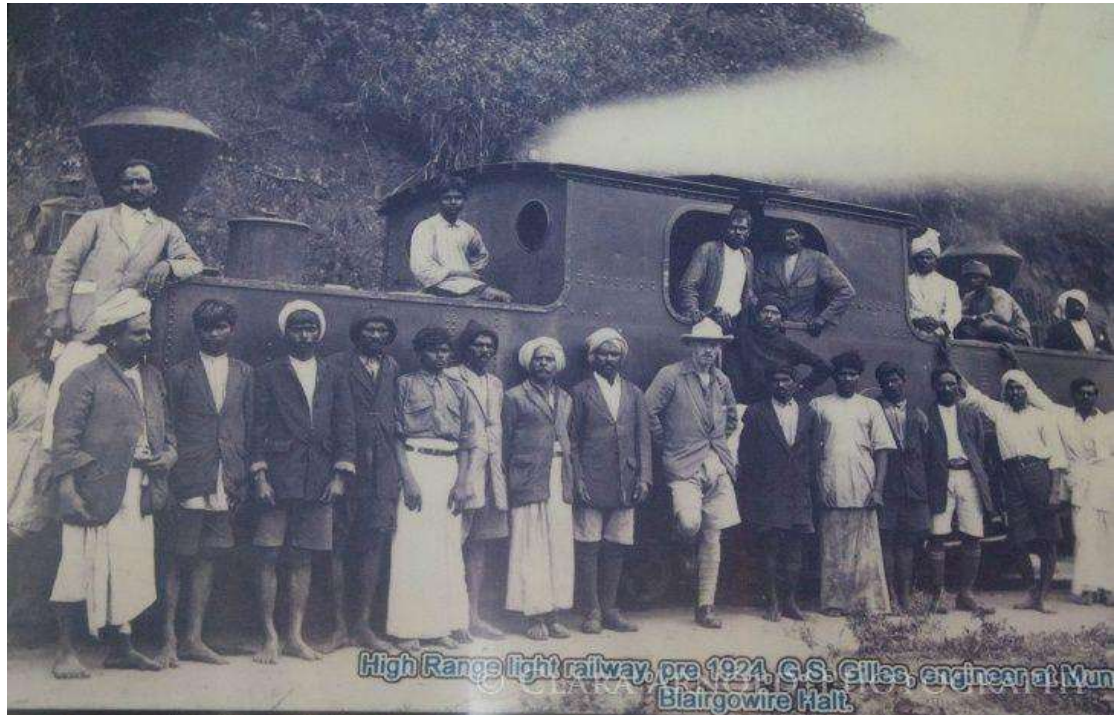
²² Papers regarding the Kannan Devan Hills, in: CDS. RF. 546.

²³ Habakkuk, J.J. and Poston, M. (1977). *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe* (hereafter History of Europe), 8 Vols, New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 256-65.

British merchants, manufactures and also investors to aid in the exploitation of the resources', as the nationalist 'appropriately place it'.²⁴

Illustration: 4

High Range Light Railway



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallathani, Idukki District, Kerala

²⁴For the very same reason, more than 90 percent of the total capital invested in Indian Railways was also British. For the 'nationalist' development perspective in India, See Chandra, B. (1991) *Colonial India, British Versus Indian View of Development* ', Review, Vol. 14, Winter, p.109. For a thoughtful analysis of railroad construction as a colonial project, see the various articles in Davis, C.B., Wilburn Jr., K. E. and Robinson, R.E. (Eds.), *Railway Imperialism*, New York: Greenwood Press, 1991. For an understanding of how the spread of railways and transport systems shattered the parochial nature of the local society, see Srinivas.MN. (1962). *Caste in Modern India and other Essays*, Bombay: Oxford University Press.

Illustration: 5

The engine of the Railway



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallathani, Idukki District, Kerala

Today Idukki is one of two districts in Kerala which has no railway connectivity, with Wayanad being the other, owing to the hilly nature of the terrain. But it is a forgotten part of history that the first railway lines in Kerala were laid in Munnar.

There was a well-connected Railway system in the plantation town during the British period, which was later dismantled following a heavy flood in 1924. In the Facts of a 'Hundred Years Planting' an in-house publication by Tata – Finlay Ltd, there is a reference to the railway system and interesting facets of life in Munnar during the period. It says there was a monorail before the light railway was set up. "In 1908, the monorail was replaced by the light railway, which took one- hand – a-half years to be completed," says the book. All equipment, including the steam engine, were imported from the U.K. and brought to Munnar in pieces to be re-assembled here. The British East India Company's engineering division was entrusted with the task of reassembling the equipment. The book says initially it was planned to run the locomotives on wood fuel. However, due to steep curves, it was impractical and the use of Indian coal was adopted. The goods and men were carried by the railway from Munnar town to Madupetty. The monorail undertook the service from there to Top Station.

The railway station was also a storage facility for rice and tea. It was occasionally used to hold church services. There were four engines in use and there was a first-class compartment for the British managers. "The train journey was slow due to frequent derailment and elephants crossing the track," the book says adding that by the Second World War, the railway system disappeared from the Munnar landscape." It was decided to dismantle it as the damage in the flood was found beyond repair in the Munnar- Madupetty section".

The Great Flood took away practically the whole of Munnar town. A good part of the road linking Munnar with Alwaye has washed away. New tracts of land emerged. A road was turned into a river. The river appeared in new land tracts²⁵

Illustration: 6

Munnar Floods, 1924.



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallathani, Idukki District, Kerala

²⁵ Malayala Manorama, 19 August 1924, P 4.

Illustration: 7

Madupatty Bungalow after floods, 1924.



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallanthani, Idukki, Kerala

Illustration; 8

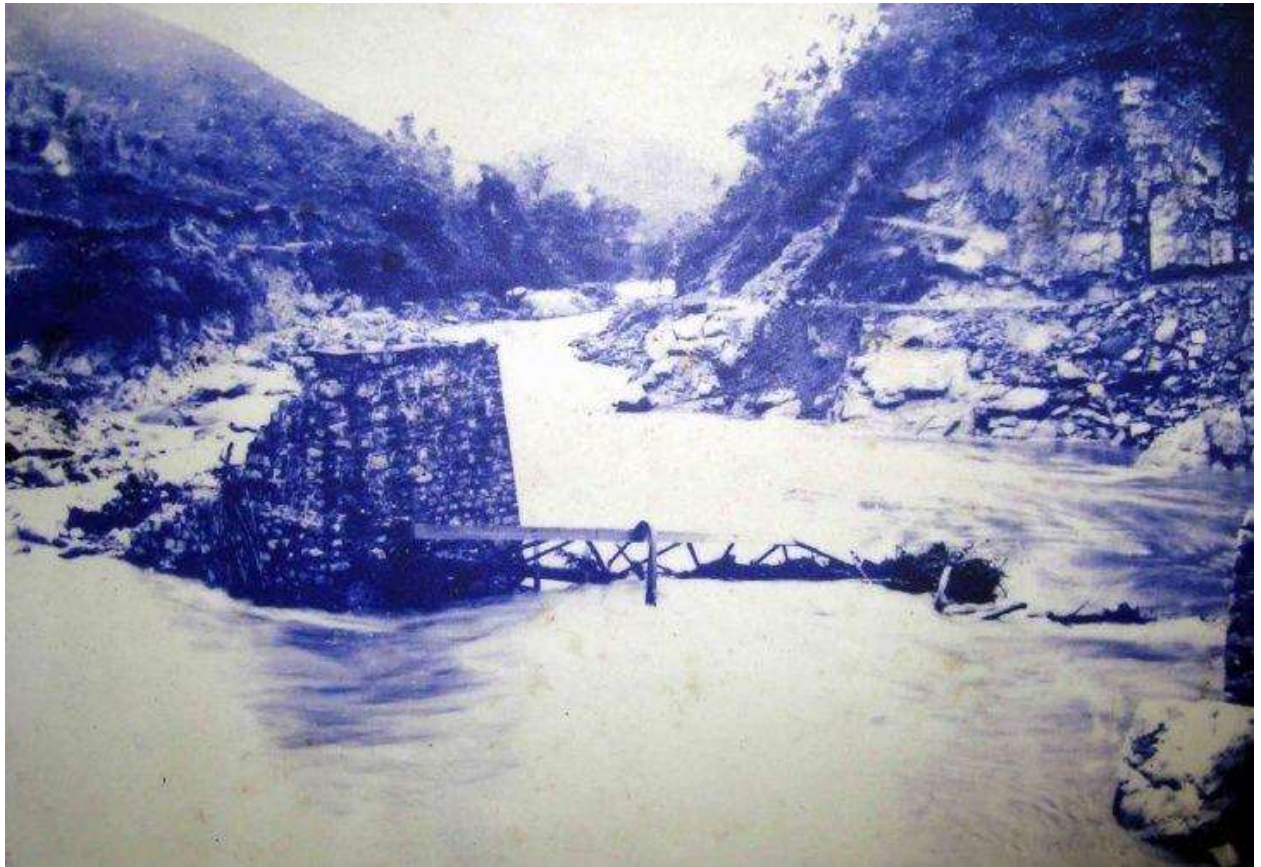
Madupatty Factory after Floods



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallanthani, Idukki, Kerala

Illustration; 9

The Old Munnar Road after Floods.



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallanthani, Idukki District, Kerala²⁶

²⁶The old Munnar road which was damaged beyond repair was also abandoned and the present day road from Kothamangalam was constructed.

How did Travancore princely state help in the rapid development of Tea cultivation? In a way, Travancore princely state has shown their interest in the development of capitalist production such as Tea plantation. Through their various policies they have welcomed the tea cultivation in their area.

“In the afternoon, I inspected the site proposed to be acquired for the Excise Inspector’s office and quarters at Munnar from the concession area. The K.D.H.P Company objects to the acquisition of this site, measuring about 3 and odd acres, on the ground that it has been already planted with a new kind of bamboo from Australia and other places as an experimental measure and that if the site is acquired, the company will be put to unnecessary loss. The company has offered to give another site for the Excise Inspector’s office and quarters in lieu of the proposed site. Inspected this site also. The area of the site is about 10 acres and it adjoins the chief Engineers Bungalow at Munnar. The site is well suited and I don’t see any reason why this site should not be acquired in lieu of the original site proposed. The area if acquired will be sufficient not only for the Excise Inspector’s office and quarters but for other public buildings also which may require for Munnar. This site will be acquired in lieu of the state proposed by the excise department and the acquisition proceedings in respect of the latter will be cancelled.”²⁷ This inspection note replicates that the concern of Diwan regarding

²⁷ Extract from the Diwan inspections note, 10/03/1917. R. Ramalinga swamy.

the unnecessary loss of K.D.H.P Company. Diwan was ready to do the adjustment with the K.D.H.P Company.

Table 3

Tea Cultivation in Travancore and the Madras Presidency (1885- 1904); Average Area (in acres) and Average production (in pounds)²⁸

Period	Average Area		Average Production	
	Travancore	Madras	Travancore	Madras
1885-89	3,352	5,558	342,718	935,369
1890-94	7,186	5,385	1,735,803	1,095,590
1895-99	15,682	7,016	3,505,938	538,7621
1900-04	24,931	7,263	6,107,429	1,171,594

Between 1885-89 the average production of Travancore stands at 342,718 in contrast to 935,369 of Madras in an average area of 3,352 & 5,558 respectively. However, in

²⁸ *Indian Trade Journal* 1921; supplement 10.

the following term, there was a steady increase in the production of Travancore with respect to their increase in the average whereas Madras showed a decreasing trend in these parameters. The trend reversed all over again between 1895-99 with Madras coming on top in terms of production within an average area of 7116. But between 1900-04 raced past Madras plantations both in terms of production & are of cultivation. The production and average area of production of Travancore stood at a staggering 6,107,429 & 24,931 respectively.

Table 4

Tea Cultivation in South India (1885-1900) Area (in acres) and Production (in pounds)²⁹

Year	Area	Production
1885	6,370	939,000
1890	10,912	1,841,000
1895	16,276	4,394,000
1900	31,308	5,104,000

²⁹ UPASI Planting Directory 1979: 877.

Table 3 reveals the eruptive growth of tea production in Travancore as contrasted to that in the Madras Presidency or southern India. A contrast of Tables 3, as well as 4, shows that Travancore ended up being one of the most vital tea cultivating area of south India throughout the last years of the 19th century.

The advancement of plantations - fairly quick in contrast with the various other South Indian: Areas- was not totally positive for the Travancore administration. With no uncertainty, the g). On the other hand, the English authorities were not specifically pleased with Seshiah Sastri, the Dewan that attempted to combat a few of the planters' additional-- lawful approaches, like collusion at government auctions, acquiring of land for supposition, deceptive infringements on nearby land as well as damage of the all-natural balance. As a result, the Resident was entreated by the Madras administration on April government's plan in the direction of the European planters added to a re-examination of the princely state by the British. Throughout the last part of the 19th century, Travancore was often classified 'the Model State' by the British administrator's Official acknowledgement was given up 1866 when the colonial authorities recognized the Raja, and his ultimate followers, with the title of 'Maharaja' as a gesture of gratitude. Similarly, in the exact same year, Madhava Rao, the initial Travancore Dewan that sustained the introduction of a European plantation sector convincingly, was knighted³⁰

³⁰ In, Resident Maltby wrote about Dewan Madhav Rao; 'I have never yet met with any Native of India who has obtained so thorough a mastery over our language, or so intimate a knowledge and application of the modern views of Englishmen in matters of political economy and Government (Jeffery 1975: 276). In contrast, the English officials were not particularly happy with Seshiah Sastri, the Dewan who tried to counteract some of the planter's extra- legal strategies, like collusion at government auctions,

Another example of loyalty of Travancore princely state to the European planters is given below. The Devikulam Commissioner Mr., Forbes has sent a letter to the *Diwan*³¹ of Travancore, P. Rajagopalachariar. He has argued that the Manager of the K.D.H.P Company writes to him that they propose to employ Mr Verede in connection with the recruitment of labour in the High Ranges and that he would necessitate his being part of the time in the plains where the labour is recruited and part of the time in the hills. Before doing so, however, the director of the Company wishes to ascertain if the Darbar would consider the proposal in any way objectionable. Mr Vernede's knowledge of the Vernacular and the habits and customs of the people would make him peculiarity suited in the opinion of the directors to undertake the work which they propose to give him.³²

Mr Forbes has got Replay letter from P. Rajagopalachariar, Diwan of Travancore. In that Letter he has argued that the Darbar has no objection to Mr Verenede being employed by the K.D.H.P Company as suggested. In fact, the Darbar is glad that the old gentleman will get some work to do.³³ So here the present research points out that there was no problem in the appointment of Mr Verened in Kannan Devan Hills. But the point is that whenever KDHP Company has come with any request, the state has

buying of land for speculation, fraudulent encroachments on neighbouring land and destruction of the natural equilibrium. Consequently, the Resident was requested by the Madras administration on 5 April 1877 to 'inform His Highness the Maharaja that His Grace the Governor in Council in no way desires to press on him the renewal of an engagement which is about to expire; and that His Grace has no objection to offer to the selection of the Dewan Peishkar, Nanoo Pillay, for the post of 'Dewan' (R/2/879/8). In the same year, Sehiah Sastri was replaced by Nanoo Pillay.

³¹ The term Diwan represents the Prime minister in Travancore state.

³² A letter submitted by Devikulam commissioner, Mr. Forbes to Diwan Bahadur, P. Rajagopalachariar, Diwan of Travancore in 19/09/1913, File No: 2523 of 1913,

³³ Letter from P. Rajagopalachariar, Diwan of Travancore in 27/09/1913, File No: 2523 of 1913.

most of the time responded in a positive manner. The State was all the time willing to remove any practical difficulties faced by the planting community. That indicates the interest of Travancore princely state in Capitalist production. So these actions show that the colonial state, as well as Travancore princely state, has given much support to capitalist production.

Even though in certain cases Travancore officials were aware of the Exploitation of Kannan Devan Hills. Say, for instance, The Divisional Forest officer High Range division has written a letter to the conservator of forest in Munnar regarding the subject of Accommodation for forest officer in the Munnar Tram-way. The letter is that” I have the honor to inform you that there is train traffic between Munnar and top station in the high ranges. No 1 being the passenger train and No 2 for goods. The former starts at 1 pm precisely and later though timed to start and reach the destination, owing to the long delay in the intermediate stations for loading and unloading goods. In both of these, a first-class wagon is attached. The 2nd and 3rd class wagons are fit only for coolies. They are open cars exposed to the weather. I had to travel in one of them during a rainy day completely wet as the company’s servants refused to take me in a first class compartment, but when I arrived at the railway station I was refused admission into the goods train, seeing the No; 1 train starting at 1 pm with her passengers. I understand that first class wagon of this is intended only for Europeans. There is no objection to this, but the company insisting on Travancore officials to go only in the goods train is in my opinion open to attach the Travancore officials first class wagon to the passenger train or to allow us also to use the European compartments to maintain the prestige of

the Travancore officials of position.”³⁴ It indicates that the European officials in Kannan Devan hills were firmly believed that the Travancore officials were inferior to them. Even though there was an attempt from the side of the Travancore officials to question the superiority complex and racial discrimination of the west. And this letter was further forwarded by the Conservator of Forest to the Chief Secretary. He wrote that “I believe that in British India, there is a mutual understanding between the Railway Company and the Government whereby certain preferential treatment is given to Government servants. It seems also necessary that the Munnar Tramway company should likewise show some consideration at least, If not preferential treatment to Travancore Government officials. From the Divisional Forest Officers letter, it will be seen that the treatment accorded to these officers is not what it ought to be. I am strong of opinion that government interference in the matter is necessary and I, therefore, request that the government will come to a definite understanding with the company. So that the officers touring in the high ranges may not be inconvenienced as far as possible.”³⁵ This letter indicates that Travancore officials were conscious about the privilege of the Kannan Devan Hills under Colonial rule. Therefore, in certain cases, Travancore officials were tried to make an attempt to inform such violation or issues related to the Kannan Devan Hills to the higher authorities through their letter. Resistance can be in any form. The present research study argued that such letters of Travancore officials to the higher authorities regarding the issues related to Kannan Devan tea plantation can be considered as a form of resistance. Say, for instance, The

³⁴ Copy of letter No. R/C. 3495/89 dated 29/07/1914, State Archives Trivandrum.

³⁵ Copy of letter No. R/C. 9601/89 dated 27/08/1914, Kerala State Archives Trivandrum

Divisional Forest Officer, C.R Padmanabha Pillai has written a letter to the conservator of Peerumade, Travancore regarding the subject of Collection of timber and fuel by the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company. He argued that “I have to honour to inform you that I notice three trains running everyday between Munnar and top stations by the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company, and they take passengers and private goods in them. The company according to the terms of their agreement can have the free use of timber and fuel only for their bonafide private use and beg therefore you will be good enough to let me know If I may charge Seigniorage on the fuel used by them in running the trains. The arrangements being under an agreement the Company is liable to pay the arrears also from the very commencement which is five years ago. Munnar is a small village and the company was selling fuel to the inhabitants at annas 8 per c.f.t. But I understand that they have not stopped the same for reasons of their own. It indicates that the Divisional Forest officer was conscious about that Kannan Devan Hills Company was violating the rules of the agreement with the Poonjar Royal family.

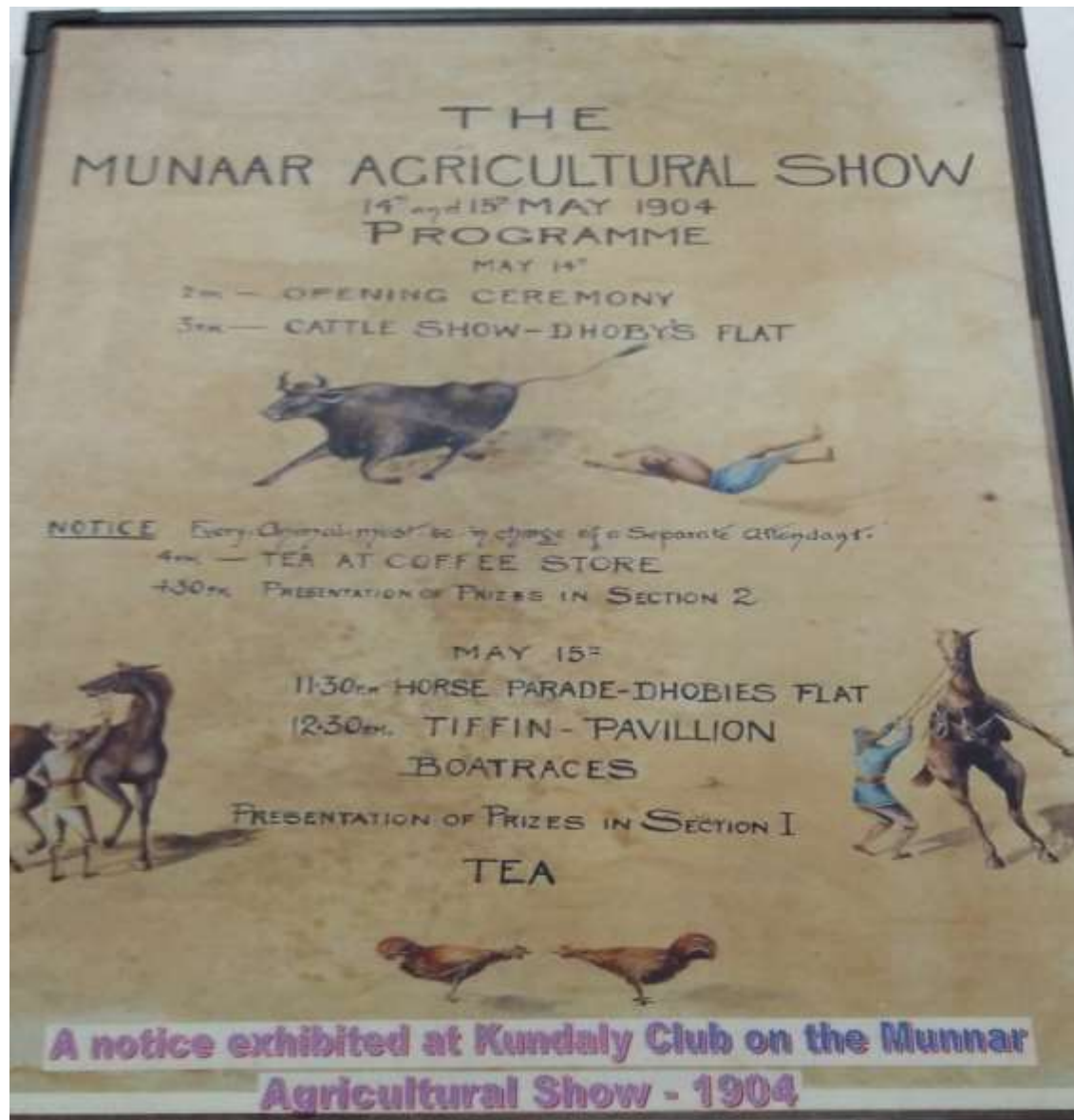
Theoretically one can consider plantation as a field. The French social scientist Pierre Bourdieu has used the concept of field. He considers field is a setting where the agents and their social position are situated. He argued that the position of each particular agent will determine the outcome of the interaction between the specific rules of the field, agent's habitus and agent's capital (Social, economic and cultural). Capital as a principle cause for the distinction in the field. Moreover, it will interact with each other. And it also is hierarchical. Most are subservient to the larger field of power and class relations. So this theory can be applied to plantation as well. In the context of

Kannan Devan tea plantation, the position of the agents which includes both the plantation labourers as well as the planters was determined by the different forms of capital such as their economic, social and cultural. The present research study argued that the tea plantation labourers under the colonial period were vulnerable section due to the lack of the capital such as socio, economic, and cultural, and it contributed to the lack of consciousness among the labourers. But on the other side planters were availed all forms of capital along with the support of the colonial State. That ensured them to execute power over the labourers. And it became a way to perpetuate capitalism.

The present research study pointed out that it is the undeniable fact that right from the beginning the European Planters were the masters of the land (garden) and they were led a life which was entirely different from the Labourers. The present research study argues that since the beginning of tea plantation, the Kannan Devan Hills has witnessed spatial segregation. Both planters and labourers were lived in Kannan Devan Hills. But geographically they were same but the same space has two different dimensions. Apart from their plantation related works, planting communities were engaged in several entertainments activities.

Illustration: 10

The Munnar Agricultural Show



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallathani, Idukki District, Kerala

Illustration: 10

The Munnar Flower Show



Sources: Exhibited at Munnar Tea Museum Nallathani, Idukki District, Kerala

The research study argued that, throughout the span of British ownership of Kannan Devan's tea garden, the European Planting Community maintained the weightage of

their standard within the garden and were remained aloof from the local people. So above mentioned figures are substantiate to prove this statement. Because the picture indicates that planting community had an opportunity for entertainment.

To sum up this chapter that the sate machinery was manipulated to suit colonial interest and atrocities perpetrated through the acts such as Breach of Contract Act, 1859 and the Madras Planters Labour Act, 1903. Via these numerous Acts and also regulations the colonial State were utilized to maintain the hegemony of planters. In order to make sure that migrant workers stayed within the rigorous regimes of plantation work, colonial sate utilized numerous sort of methods, ranging from penal measures to physical and economic coercion, for immobilizing as well as controlling them.³⁶ So the prsent research study argued that in the context of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills proved that in a way Colonialism is enabled Capitalism and in turn Capitalism enabled Colonialism.

³⁶Piya Chatterjee, (1995). Secure This Excellent Class of Labour: Gender and Race in Labour Recruitment for British Indian Plantations. *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars*, 27 (3): 43-56.

Rana P Behal. (2010). Coolie Drivers or Benevolent Paternalists? British Tea Planters in Assam and the Indenture Labour System. *Modern Asian Studies*, 44 (1): 29-51.

Chapter 3

Mapping of the Colonial Discipline, power Structure, and Women Laboueres of Kannan Devan Tea Plantation

Administration and exploitation went hand in hand during colonial India, and the situation in plantation field was no different. To maintain labour in control and also to make use of labourers mercilessly the forceful device of early colonial state was thoroughly made use of. The state was at all times ready to eliminate any kind of practical troubles encountered by the planning community also for changing several of the existing rules as well as regulations in its rush to evaluate in on the authority of capital. Planters maintained their supremacy using various significant ways such as the judiciary, backed by a collection of acts and regulations, and also the police, backed by the colonial administration. As is popular, in the greater framework, the British established a uniform Indian Penal Code¹, The Criminal Procedure Code and the Evidence Act² as well as an effective colonial administration to bring the entire Civilian society under the Imperial legal system'.³

¹The Indian Penal Code (IPC) is the criminal code of India. It is a detailed code planned to cover all substantive elements of criminal legislation. The code was prepared in 1860 on the referrals of first law commission of India established in 1834 under the Charter Act of 1833 under the Chairmanship of Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay. It entered force in British India during the early British Raj in 1862.

²The Indian Evidence Act, 1872, has eleven chapters and 167 sections, and came into force 1st September 1872. During that time, India belonged of the British Raj.

³The Imperial Government was driven to a rehaul of the legal system by the Revolt of 1857. The Indian Penal code which was originally drafted by the Indian Law Commission with Lord Macaulay playing a pivotal role came into force in its revised form on 1 January 1862. Eventually, other pieces of legislation such as the criminal Procedure Code also came into operation. For more details regarding the implication of these with respect to plantations in the late nineteenth century, see Report of the *Southern India Planter's Inquiry Committee*

A system of hierarchy had actually been seen in the colonial plantation. European estate owners, Anglo Indians and local Savarnas,⁴ belong to the majority of the managerial class in colonial tea plantation. And the workers were come from socially and financially backward communities. In the colonial plantation disciplinary mechanism especially coercion and also added lawful authority were used mostly to work out the structure of power. The workers were challenged with a system of hierarchy when reached the plantation. The hierarchy was positioned in three-wide classifications, Viz., the white superintendent and the Visiting agent as the representative of the absentee owner at the top⁵; of supervisory staff which consist of a group of functionaries like factory assistants, clerks, the watch and ward and the Kangany in the middle, and laborers were all-time low of the hierarchy.⁶ Under colonial regulation, a lot of the labourers of Kannan Devan⁷ tea plantation have come from Tamil talking areas of south India. A huge part of the workforce was women.⁸ So usually the power relationships in colonial tea plantation were mostly operated on the basis of class, caste and also gender.

(hereafter Planters' Inquiry Committee), Madras, 1896, pp.23-34. Raman. Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge Publication.

⁴Here Savarna denotes for elite caste

⁵Macfadyen, Eric. (1954). *Managing Agents in the Eastern Plantation Industry; Tropical Agriculture*. Vol.31, No.3.

⁶Eric Baak, P. (2000). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

⁷ Kannan Devan Hills is a village in Idukki district in the Indian state of Kerala. <https://www.kdhptea.com/>

⁸Eric Baak, P. (2000). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Why is that Labour come from outside to the Kannan Devan Tea plantation?

Migrants, the light infantry of commercial funding, coming from villages impacted by starvation and also various other all-natural catastrophes comprised one more significant resource of plantation labour. The mid-nineteenth century witnessed an outpour of depressed- caste travelers from various work catchment locations in umpteen components of states like Tamil state, Bihar, Eastern UP, Orissa even from Konkan shore due to the risk to sustenance.⁹

The famines or starvations which often barged in numerous components of India and also specifically the starvation of 1876-8 had their devastating impacts on seven out of twenty-one districts of the Madras presidency¹⁰. Scenes of countless starvation- struck collies existing dead in the forests and also the levels, as well as individuals passing away of hunger in various other areas, were not unusual¹¹. The bursting out of scarcity and also plague, as well as their utter destitution, pressed the Paraiyar as well as various other depressed-- castes from their towns in capitals,¹² most of them that had

⁹See, Chakravorthy.L.(1978). *Emergence of an Industrial Labour in a Dual Economy, British India, 1882-1920* (hereafter Industrial Labour in a dual Economy), Indian Economic and social history Review, NO.3, pp.249-328.

¹⁰Sundram, Shanmugha.V. (1964). *Economic Conditions in the Presidency of Madras with special reference to the Great Famine of 1876-78*, unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of Madras, p.44.

¹¹Such instances were cited in Arnold, L. On the Indian Hills, P.284; Madras Mail, 'The Plantation Inquiry Commission' 17 June 1896, p.7.

¹²Manichakam, S. (1978). *The Social Setting of Christian Conversion in South India*, Ergon Verlag Publications.

Lovatt, H. (1972). *A Short History of the Peermade/ Vandiperiyar District, Kottayam*; C.M.S Press.p.12.

actually been transformed to Christianity protected work in capitals with the assistance of Christian promoters.¹³

The immigrants in the tea, rubber and cardamom estates represent 59 percent of the aggregate immigrant population of the state, which shows that most of the immigrants in the State are labourers in the estates and are temporary or semi-permanent sojourners. The tea and cardamom plantations in the state employ mostly foreign labour. If they would recruit all their labour from the state itself, more than 750000 local persons could find their work there under the present conditions and to that extent, the volume of unemployment in the State would be reduced.¹⁴

Labourers were motivated to move to the tea estates with their family members. This offered two objectives. Initially, the planters desired inexpensive labour that would certainly ensure their permanent settlement in the plantation. This can be accomplished by motivating family members to migrate rather than individuals. So the planters can easily access the services of the entire family. Second reason for this recruitment is associated with the reproduction in the family. It ensure their further recruitment in the future.¹⁵ A lot of the moments, the entire family members: husband, a spouse in addition to children was encouraged to come up the hills. Such an activity had a number of advantages particularly for a tea planter; it guaranteed a permanently settled women workers, and also consequently a continuous resource of reproduction of labour; a study done on 121 estates in Travancore reveals that the average rate of reproduction

¹³For a similar case in Dooars in West Bengal, see Sharit Bhowmik. (1981). *Class formation in the plantation system*, P.12.

¹⁴Census Reports of Travancore. 1931.

¹⁵Sarkar, K., & Bhowmik, S. K. (1998). Trade Unions and Women workers in Tea Plantations. *Economic and Political Weekly*,33(52), 50-52.

took place increasing from 1.73 to 5.9 according to the period of keep of family members in the estates.¹⁶

In addition to adherence to the traditional patriarchal family value, it furthermore assured affordable labour for the planters as the worker - family, having once settled on the estate, could not then obtain another work accessible; these components, in addition, helped the planters in the exercise of the authority of capital. Here the present Research study points out that family-based migration was an example to prove that colonial planters were paid significant attention to the accumulation of more profit in the plantation. Because they were aware of one among the major reasons for the development of plantation was mainly depend upon the proper availability of cheap labour. So the present study suggests that family-based migration of labourers in the early stages of tea plantations were mainly due to the capitalist interest of the Colonial planters. It has actually been disclosed that even the 19th century described to a close; a pool of pauperized masses had actually started developing in the southern Indian countryside, which had the possibility to work as an endless resource of labour, consisting of that of women labourers, for the recently established plantations. Immigrant labourers constituted a significant section of the Kannan Devan Hills and their daily labour was the backbone of the plantation. The procedure of pauperization of the peasants, tenants and also the tribals proceeded without allow- Up, also as even more all-natural tragedies dogged the regrettable labourers. In 1900, the Kerala Patrika commented, 'when the government increased the rent, the jenmimar¹⁷ increase the rent

¹⁶See Census of India, Travancore, 1931, Vol. 28, p.84.

¹⁷This term denotes landlord or those who have property rights over lands.

and the tenants have to bear the double burden¹⁸. The Kerala Shobhini reported in 1903 that the tenants continued to be decreased to 'mere paupers owing to the exaction and suppression of the landlords.'¹⁹

Squeeze out by a broadening population- which expanded by greater than 19 percent in the Madras Presidency in the First 4 years of the twentieth century - and also beckoned by the 'alluring' plantations, migrant labour put right into the Planting areas well right into the twentieth century. A notable study on internal migration in India throughout 1901-31 exposes particular details attributes in connection with plantations:(1) that the movement of the population was continually westward, i.e. from Madras to Mysore as well as to Travancore- Kochi as well as (2) that there was a high percentage of women in the stream of migration, much-surpassing men in Travancore- Kochi as versus the basic pattern of men exceeding women.²⁰ The movement to Travancore enhanced from 10 to 67 thousand throughout the very first 30- year duration.²¹ On top of that, there was likewise a migration of population from the coastal areas and also midlands of Travancore to the highlands. The population in the high ranges of Travancore raised by 136 percent throughout 1881-91, 47 percent rise throughout 1911-21. Throughout 1921- 31 there was an 85 percent boost in population in the entire of Travancore. Additionally greater than 86 percent of the

¹⁸Kerala Patrika, 20 January 1900, p.29.

¹⁹Kerala Shobhini, 18 May 1903.

²⁰Zachariah, K.C. (1964). *A Historical Study on Internal Migration in the Indian Subcontinent, 1901-31*, New York: Asia Publishing House, pp.280- 289.

²¹Zachariah, K.C. (1964). *A Historical Study on Internal Migration in the Indian Subcontinent, 1901-33*. pp.217-18.

population in the high ranges in 1931 was made up by migrants from the close-by Tamil areas.²²

The excess stress of population on land and also the major enhancement in the average sale price of such lands in those areas where labour was mainly hired caused a fresh movement of workers to the plantation in the very early the twentieth century also.²³

The hefty stress on land was additional worsened by the high regularity of bad seasons which mandated reducing of farming procedures, this subsequently generated the employees to look for work somewhere else; the planters fasted to profit from this. The drought of the 1920s, with the following financial distress, as well as the modifications in the chopping pattern causing a rise in the costs of staple food like rice with the unavoidable pauperization of the peasantry even more promoted the supply of labour to plantations- which came to be a lot more bountiful compared to it had actually remained in the late nineteenth and also very early twentieth centuries.²⁴ The living problems of the laboueres that had actually moved to overseas plantations were reported by the local press to be wretched²⁵ as well as it was recommended that more

²²*Census of India, Travancore*, 1931, Vol. 28, Report, Pt.1, pp.22, 38 and 41. In Kodagu, the decrease in the natural population during 1921-31 was made up by an increase in the immigrants, from 33,937 to 38,718 during the same period. See *Census of India*, Coorg, 1931, Vol.13, p.9.

²³The number of person's dependent on 1,000 acres of actually cultivated land in the labour recruiting districts such as Tiruchirappalli, Salem and Madurai was 1,584, 1,823 and 1,591 respectively as against the Presidency average of 1,293 in 1930. The average sale price of land both wet and dry had doubled during the decennium 1910-20, and the rising trend persisted in the following years as well. For details, see RCL, Written Evidence of P. Audiah Naidu, pp. 255-306, as quoted in Raman. Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge Publication.

²⁴RCL, Written Evidence, p.155.

RCL, Oral Evidence, p.214.

²⁵Swadeshamithram, 24 May 1922.

Mathurubhmi, 27 May 1931, NNR.

emigration to the plantations of Assam and also overseas ought to quit; this gave a fresh resource of labour to the plantations in southern India. The postwar deficiency of food grains and also the subsequent increase in costs resulted in a rise in wages after years of torpidity; the Kannan Devan planters in their yearly basic conference in May 1923 hence reported that labour is plentiful owing to the rise in wages²⁶

*Statement of Tea Plantation Labour in Travancore during the year 1904*²⁷

District	Number of plantation on the 31 st December	Laboueres employed daily average	
		Permanent	Temporary
Kannan Devan Hills	24	8,743	645
Central Travancore	24	4,286	1,304
South Travancore	18	1,854	1,578

It is evident from the above table is that; the number of permanent laboueres is more in Kannan Devan Hills as compared to Central Travancore as well as South Travancore. It is also noticed from the above table that the number of Temporary laboueres are less in Kannan Devan Hills. So that indicates that Kannan Devan Hills

²⁶ Minutes, GBM of KDPA, 26 May 1923, pp.52-3.

²⁷ Aiya, N. V. (1906). *The Travancore state manual*. Trivandrum, Travancore government press.

plantation was paid much more importance to the permanent labourers than temporary. Labourers were an integral part of the plantation. Proper availability of the labourers will determine the development of the plantation. So the present research study argued that Kannan Devan Hills plantation has given adequate attention to ensure the availability of Labourers in the plantation. They gave more preference to permanent labourers rather than temporary.

The role of Kangany system in the Kannan Devan Hills

The plantation has a distinctive type of production organization which needed a large number of labour forces. Since the plantation industry is labour intensive, cheap labour is one of the most vital methods for increasing profits. The employers were able to hold a captive labour force, which was destined to work on any wage that was offered by the employers. This practice was ensured by the employment of indentured or slave labour²⁸. The planters needed large number of labourers to work on their plantation.²⁹ During the colonial period planters were adhered different ways for the recruitment of labourers at cheap cost.

In 1894, the government of Madras drafted a Bill licensing labour suppliers nonetheless this was in the future deserted. The Planter's Inquiry Committee recommended the enrollment of labour suppliers for both inland along with emigrant

²⁸ Sarkar, K., & Bhowmik, S. K. (1998). Trade Unions and Women workers in Tea Plantations. *Economic and Political Weekly*,33(52), 50-52.

²⁹ Sarkar, K., & Bhowmik, S. K. (1998). Trade Unions and Women workers in Tea Plantations. *Economic and Political Weekly*,33(52), 50-52.

labour in 1896. In their initiatives to accrue more labour, the Kannan Devan Company opened up a Labour Recruitment Office at Tiruchirappalli in 1902.³⁰

Nevertheless, all such initiatives to mobilise adequate labour proved to be fruitless. The planters after that turned to an organized recruitment of workers with the help of middlemen's, commonly referred to as Kanganies or Masteries, extremely comparable to the jobbers in various other plantations of Southeast Asia, who carried out a double function ; that of recruiters in the village as well as of supervisor on the estates. The Kanganies were selected from the same districts as well as a village as the labourers who were to be hired; they talked the same language and also shared a usual social background with these labourers. Equally, as the planters determined this common bond assisted the kanganies in controlling the workers both in the villages along within their workplace. The abundant landlords, with their substantial feudal impact, likewise recruited persons from their villages and also sent them to the estates.³¹ Throughout the colonial period, a crucial technique of hiring labour for the tea plantation of Kerala was with the Kangany system. Munnar tea plantation likewise utilized Kangany system for labour recruitment. The family basis recruitment was the characteristics of the recruitment of tea plantation labourers. Which was done by the kanganies.³² The major bases of the recruitment of workers were generally hired greatly on a family basis by the labour recruiter called Kangany played a crucial role in the migration process and became central figure among Tamil laborers on plantations. The

³⁰Baig, A., & Henderson, W. (1978). *A Centenary of Planting in the Kannan Devan Hills Concession, 1878-1978*. Calcutta: Tata-Finlay Limited.P.277.

³¹*Planters Inquiry Committee Report*.pp.12-13.

³²Raman, R. (2002). *Bondage in Freedom: Colonial Plantations in Southern India C. 1797-1947*. Centre for Development Studies.

Kanganies initially became part of agreements with the planters consenting to provide a given number of workers for a given amount of time at a defined rate per head. The agreement was either verbal or registered. The Kangany would initially attempt to organize his own family members and relatives as well as those around however coming from his castes. When such sources had been selected, he would then after that continues to the remaining pool of the labouring poor combing the whole countryside. The worker or the household of the family received the advance from the Kanganies, frequently receiving the promissory notes and after that becoming part of agreement generally for nine months, followed them to the plantations.

And also in particular various other instances, the workers themselves came to the estates without the assistance of middleman's, creating estate gangs, qualified to obtain the payments which would or else have gone to the intermediaries. Though such various ranges of recruitment existed, it was the Kangany- led system which remained in the popular at all times. At first, two significant recruitment systems, both operating with the Kanganies, dominated: recruitment of indentured labour as well as free recruitment. Under the indenture system, a labourer was bound by a penal agreement to serve on a specific plantation for a given duration.³³

By the late 20th century, this system was slowly changed by the so-called 'free recruitment' system under which the workers were not bound by any kind of written contract. This is no other way indicated that the 'free labour' had any type of options

³³The indenture system of recruitment was one which became a major subject of discussion, after the abolition of slavery, in the colonies. Abuses were reported from various parts of the world till its final repeal in 1918. For a critical discussion see Hugh Tinker, *New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas 1830-1920*, the University of Michigan. pp.288-333.

margin available to him. The distinction between these two systems was extremely refined as the 'coolie' continued to be, mostly, a coolie; the additional personified in the income differential did not accumulate to him,³⁴ furthermore, the non-indentured workers continued to be in bondage even when they became decided on plantations as resident labour.

Advances not only assisted in the mobilization of adequate labour but also aided to moor the workers to capital; it was a usual method adhered to by the employers within India and various other colonies. The beginnings of the system of advance payment as well as the rise in the amounts of the advance paid have their historical factors. These low caste workers were mostly, linked to their regional superiors- a system under which they were required to work for food as well as shelter. In order to fulfill their various other basic expenditures for social events such as the marriage, the workers were paid an advance on condition that they work on the land to settle the financial debt. Along with this, the workers were also pushed into much deeper financial debts by the village moneylenders. Both the feudal proprietors as well as the village moneylenders- who came from the Nattukottai Chettiar, Multani, Marwari, Kallidaikurichi Brahmins and also various other such upper caste, along with the Muslims- charged excessively high rates of interest, and also they frequently utilized several tactics to avoid the workers from settling the advance full therefore intentionally holding them in a state of unending insolvency.³⁵

³⁴Chakravarti, L. (1978). Emergence of an Industrial Labour Force in a Dual Economy-British India, 1880-1920. *The Indian Economic & Social History Review*, 15(3), 249–327.

³⁵Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Such types of yoke remained to exist even several years after the abolition of slavery under a various system of suppression, currently called the indenture system; serfs such as the Jithedas, Holeyas, and also Madigas in Mysore; Panchamas in Tamil district Cherumas as well as Pulayas in Malabar and Travancore, and so on. Were housed and fed while they rendered their services only to the landowners concerned continuing to be chained to the system of advances. In order to safeguard labour for the plantations, the planters had to break these agreements. This could be achieved only by settling the financial debts via a fresh advance, therefore, inducing the potential workers to break the chains with their villages and also to bind themselves to the planters' instead.³⁶

It was a transfer of bondage from the feudal connections of production to a capitalist one. Though the advance money obtained from the Kanganies served to release them from their old masters and also assisted in transport to their new locations, this amount was eventually subtracted from their wages. This was a strategy that was utilized consistently both in times of wealth and deficiency. It was, in fact, the' method of making the worker spend for the expense of his own recruitment.³⁷

The labourers were as a result indentured to a particular estate for details duration for 'fixed wages'. This indenture kind of job contract brought the sticking to benefits to the planters: (1) they were ensured for a sufficient 'allocation' of work under their command to keep their estate running constantly, (2) negotiating for increases in wage settlement can be taken. Relative to the labor force, this kept in mind the begin of new phases: introduced from the fetters as well as likewise chains of enslavement as well

³⁶*Planters Inquiry Committee Report*. P.8.

³⁷*RCL Report*, 1931, p.236.

as likewise the boundedness of feudalism they began a stage of financial debt peonage; with the invoice of an advancement from the Kangany, the workers 'doom was sealed', as well as additionally she/ he would definitely remain indebted to the Kangany/ planter completely³⁸.

The kangany was paid an advancement for every single employee he took on to bring, average rate differing from area to area from Rs 5 to 20 and also Rs 50 to 200 for a private employee and also a family members containing 8 to 10 members specifically. By the end of the 19th century, there were about 12, 430 kanganies throughout southerly India with an average number of 25 workers each³⁹, labour suppliers, generally, kanganies, numbered somewhere between 17,000 and 20,000 in 1930⁴⁰.

The Kanganies that went as recruiters to the villages would certainly come back on the estates as supervisors. They created the lowest stage in the plantation hierarchy with the superintendents as well as Managers on top; the last was inevitable of European beginning. The Kanganies needed to function under the straight guidance of the Superintendent. In short, the Kanganies commanded labour; however, by the exact same procedure of relations of production, they subsequently were commanded by the planters class. The Kangany was not totally free to transfer the labour force that he had actually allocated to a specific estate to an additional, although he might usually bring a greater payment from the last. Hardly ever was it feasible for him to damage the colonial code of relationships. He was qualified to obtain profits at two levels (1) 10-15 percent of the earnings of the workers as payments for his function as labour

³⁸Subramanian, A. (1989). *Working Class Movement in Tea plantations in Nilgiris*. PP.44-64.

³⁹Planters' Inquiry Committee, p.8.

⁴⁰Correspondence attached to UPASI Proceedings, 1899, pp.150-1.

distributor (96 explanation), i.e., supervising for collecting and exchanging labour force in the feudal – colonial market. And Also (2) daily wages equivalent to a worker's wage for his function as labour supervisor, i.e. for the labour force in accordance with the interests of the planter class.⁴¹

Specific kanganies are handled to make decent revenue from this double function, the size of which was straight pertaining to the size of the labor force that each of them hired as well as brought under guidance. Instances of Kanganies/ maistries coming to be thriving, concerning possess landed property in their home villages, also wedding their youngsters off well as well as constructing reasonably comfy homes were reported also in the late 19th century.⁴²

How did Colonial Discipline function in Kannan Devan Hills?

The colonial tea plantation in India has witnessed the strict discipline as well as surveillance among the labourers by the planning community. European planters were well aware abbot that the maximum extraction of labour was an important way to increase the profit; therefore, the growth of tea plantation can be possible.

Marx analyses of the capitalist production system “The advancement of capitalist production is characterized by accumulation of wealth at one pole and deprivation and misery at the other” To quote Marx, “Primarily, the labour power belongs to the

⁴¹RCL, Oral Evidence of J. E. Samson, Manager, Panchamalai Estate, p.339. As cited in Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge Publications.

⁴²Meilora,S. ‘*Tamil Labour in Mysore*’, Letter to the Editor, Madras Mail,9 May 1896,P.7. as cited in. Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge publications.

capitalists and the workers works under these capitalists. Secondly, the product is not the property of the workers but of capitalists”.⁴³

The procedure of production in capitalism is evaluated as a 'labour process' by Marx. According to this evaluation the control over the process of production would be in the hands of capitalists. One of the most important identifying function of Marxist economics as compared to other schools is the emphasize on the capitalist control over the labour process. By this Marx have actually depicted that the disciplining of the labour force develops the prominence of capitalist connections. Technical subordination , supervision and precision are the various ways in which this discipline is imposed⁴⁴.

Plantation workers also laboured under the surveillance of supervisors, the personification of the ‘authority of capital’. The performance of each worker was evaluated in regards to precision: “Time measured and paid must also be a time without impurities or defects, a time of good quality throughout which the body is constantly applied to its exercise. Precision and application are, with regularity, the fundamental virtues of disciplinary time “⁴⁵ Das Gupta argued that “in case of the tea industry, the scope of movement of from even one garden to another garden was virtually non-

⁴³ Karl Marx, Capital Vol: 1

See, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Capital-Volume-I.pdf>
<https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/marx-capital-a-critique-of-political-economy-volume-i-the-process-of-capitalist-production> accessed on 14 December 2017.

⁴⁴Karl Marx, Capital Vol: 1.

⁴⁵Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. New York: Vintage Books. p. 151

.existent.”⁴⁶ These kinds of statements mainly emphasis upon the controlled movement of labour in view of the fact that there is a private ownership feature of a capitalist commodity such as labour. In the Early 1900s the Kannan Devan Hills Produce Company introduced its own coinage and this money was in use of all financial transactions relating to the labourers. The basic purpose of introducing their own coinage was ensuring that the workers remained in the plantations after receiving the payment since the currency was negotiable only within the company⁴⁷.

Here the research study pointed out that through the introduction of its own coinage of Kannan Devan Hills Company reflects that it restricted the movement of labourers. It also ensures that labourers were not going anywhere from the estate. Labourers doesn't have any income other than getting a wage from Kannan Devan Hills Company. So in order to meet their expenses, they have only estate wage. So basically through the introduction of its own coinage of Kannan Devan Hills Company has created a kind of surveillance among the labourers to ensure that they will be remains in the estates of Kannan Devan Tea Plantation. According to Althusser⁴⁸ state is a repressive apparatus. It is a machine of repression that makes the ruling class dominate over the working class. This is done through police, courts, prisons, government, administration, etc. The repressive state apparatuses function as a unified entity.

⁴⁶Gupta, R. (1981). Structure of the Labour Market in Colonial India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 16(44/46), 1781-1806.

⁴⁷See, the Document exhibited in Tea museum of Munnar, Nallatanny. (Kerala).

⁴⁸Althusser, L. (2014). *On the Reproduction of Capitalism: Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*. London: Verso Publication.

<https://isreview.org/issue/99/althussers-theory-ideology>

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm>

Whenever an individual or a group of individuals challenge the dominant ideology of the state, the latter uses repressive state apparatuses in order to stabilize the former. These apparatuses are always violent. The RSAs have a monopoly on violence (such as imprisonment, torture, execution, exile, etc.) and include army, police, courts, and prisons.

In the context of colonial tea plantation, the colonial state has used different repressive state apparatus in the name of controlling the large number of labourers.

If we agree that plantation violence is an indispensable component of the plantation experience and also we cannot sufficiently comprehend plantation life without it. The labour process on the plantations was arduous and exhausting. Work was extracted from the laborers with a machine like precision; any fault detected being dealt with severely. Plantation work was operated with clockwork regularity, any instance of default being punished with the awarding of half- pay for the day's work or even total pay- cuts.⁴⁹ In addition planters were also used penal measures such as workman's Breach of Contract Act of 1859 and the Act of 1865 to retain labourers under the control of the planters. Not only this, other coercive methods and extra-legal measures were used to ensure their surveillance among the labourers , some of which encompass constant surveillance of the residential/living quarters of labourers referred to as 'coolie lines', arrest or detention of labour without notifying district authorities, oral abuse for controlling the labour force, a large part of which comprised of women,

⁴⁹Raman, R. (2002). *Bondage in Freedom: Colonial Plantations in Southern India C. 1797-1947*. Centre for Development Studies.

different methods of physical oppression like beating, keeping them in imprisonment in prison houses' located within the plantation in order to keep them within the plantation boundaries⁵⁰.

The coolies were forced to work in very adverse conditions. Their condition was not good. It was similar to slaves or bondsmen and rigorous as well as hurting ill-treatment was faced by them in the plantation.⁵¹ The Kanganies were not averse to bullying their workers to extract work from them in order to have the maximum commission. The treatment which was given by the European planting community to the tea plantation labourers was cruel. The labourers were tied as well as thrashed violently; offending workers were punished like animals. The Kanganies or the Maistris denied them the basic amenities of life and tried to make maximum money. The planters even forced the government in the case of labour issues. The laws enabled the plantation owners to penalize run away labourers.⁵²

⁵⁰ Tinker, Hugh. (1974). *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Abroad, 1830-1920*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Guha, Amalendu. (1977). *Planter Raj to Swaraj: Freedom Struggle and Electoral Politics in Assam 1862-1947*. New Delhi: People's Publishing House.

Bhowmik, S. (1981). *Class formation in the plantation system*. Delhi: Peoples Publishing House.

⁵¹ Raman, R. (2002). *Bondage in Freedom: Colonial Plantations in Southern India C. 1797-1947*. Centre for Development Studies.

⁵² Eric Baak, P. (2000). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. p.12.



(Dhooli (Palanquin) transport from Bottom to Top Station. N.S Cole and Mrs. Cole, 1921)

The present research study suggests that the above-mentioned photo provides an idea that this was a form of power exertion of planting community on labourers. Planting communities were used labourers for even their transport.

Women Tea labourers lives in Kannan Devan Hills under the colonial era

In order to control laborers, they exercised various barbaric forceful penalties. Here the research study tried to understand how women labourers in Kannan Devan tea plantation have actually been represented in a context where wages and also various other working conditions have been discussed as well as institutionalized. And how they have negotiated their everyday lives furthermore exactly how they experienced plantation lives under the colonial era. The majority of the labour force in Colonial tea plantation in India was women. Colonial planters gave preference to women labourers. The reason behind the selection of women labourers was mainly because of their nimble finger's which was more convenient and good at the plucking work compared

to men. Due to this, work in tea plantation had exactly outlined gender-specific domain where the necessary labour - intensive, routines and repetitive nature of the task of plucking tea leaves was claimed to be essentially female, requiring nimble fingers of the women had and also the physical exertion work of maintenance of the tea plantations and factory work, demanding more physical strength, to be done by men.⁵³ In addition the tea plantation industry had not introduced any mechanization for the purpose of plucking tea leaves. Women labourers have been more employed in this labour intensive task of plucking tea leaves and they thus became enormously indispensable for the presence of this industry.⁵⁴

Moreover the cause for recruiting large number of women in the tea plantation was mainly because of the capitalist motives of the colonial planters. Through the recruitment of women labourers they tried to retain wages low. It indicated that women labourers were able to get less payment compared to men in the plantation for doing the similar work all along till the passage of the Equal Remuneration Act of 1975.⁵⁵

Women were always considered as ignorant, submissive, sexually weak, dependent, hopeless and emotional and irrational with no real leadership quality not only in

⁵³Bhowmik, Sharit K, (1981). *Class Formation in the Plantation System*. New Delhi: People's Publishing House.

Chatterjee, Piya, (2001). *A Time for Tea: Women, Labour and Post/ Colonial Politics on an Indian Plantation*, Durham, NC; Duke University Press.

Sen, Samita (2002). Questions of Consent: Women's Recruitment for Assam Tea Gardens, 1859- 1900. *Studies in History*, 18 (2, New Series): 231-60.

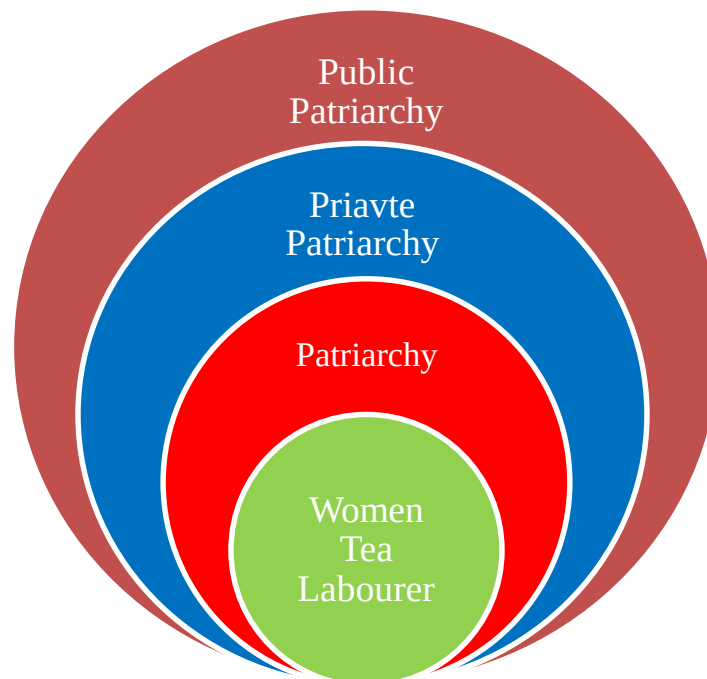
⁵⁴Jain, Shobhita (1983). Tea Gardens in Assam: Patterns of Recruitment, Employment and Exploitation of Tribal Labourers. *Social Action*, 33 (3): 262-84.

⁵⁵Bhowmik, Sharit K, (1981). *Class Formation in the Plantation System*. New Delhi: People's Publishing House.

Sarkar, Kanchan and Sharit K Bhowmik (1998). Trade Unions and Women Workers in Tea Plantations. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 33 (52): L50-L52.

plantation but also in gender ideologies. They were discriminated on the basis of gender. The contribution made by women in Plantation economy as well as in their own household was never considered as worthy of and they always took subordinate role which provided no higher status or autonomy for women.⁵⁶

Figure: 1



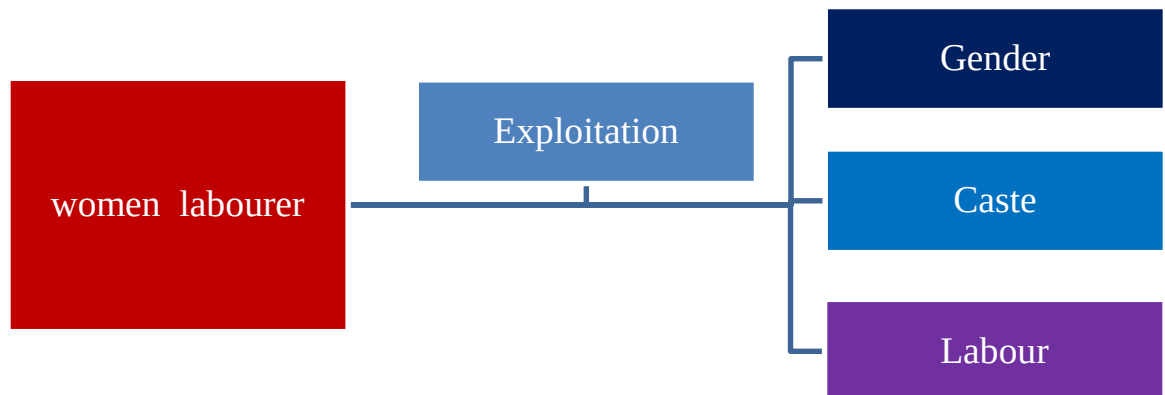
This figure shows that women labourer in Kannan Devan Hills in the Colonial period were living in a patriarchal control. There were many examples to ensure that women were lived in a certain patriarchal control. They were experienced two types of patriarchy. One is Private Patriarchy that mainly at the domestic level patriarchy and

⁵⁶ Amali Philips (2003) Rethinking culture and development: marriage and gender among the tea plantation workers in Sri Lanka, *Gender & Development*, 11:2, 20-29,

the second one is Public Patriarchy. Mainly at the workplace or the patriarchal control at the tea estate.

The women on the plantation were carried a multiple burdens of work. One in terms of wage work, and another in terms of housework. Women household chores were never considered worthy to mention even and cooking, cleaning, motherhood duties were considered job meant for women as “traditional roles”. There was dominance of male in plantation though the contribution made by women was nonetheless.⁵⁷

Figure: 2 Multiple level of exploitation of women laboueres in Kannan Devan Hills



Women laborers were the sufferers of numerous degree of exploitation. They were differentiated for sex, caste as well as labour identity. The women laborers were not

⁵⁷Nitin Varma, (2011). *Producing Tea Coolies? Work, Life and Protest in the Colonial Tea Plantations of Assam, 1830s-1920s*. Berlin: Doctoral Dissertation, Humboldt University, Germany.

allowed to stay longer than 4 to 5 days in the house after child birth⁵⁸. The plight of women labourers is summed up in the Record of work Emigration right into Assam (1884).⁵⁹

‘A coolie woman gets a variable amount of leave for her confinement. After that, if the infant is not strangled at birth, she must either take it out with her to her work or leave it behind, with no one to look after it. Hence we can observe that pregnant women laborer were likewise subjected to the discipline of the planters as well as were not saved from strenuous plantation throughout the maternity period.

The exploitation of laborers was an important element of the success of colonial plantations in India. Exploitation was the result of the structure of power hierarchy in the colonial plantations. Laborers have encountered discrimination with Disciplinary mechanisms and also various other forceful activities. But in women laborer case it was double level exploitation. Colonial planters never considered women’s gender issues. Their problems of pregnancy time and Menstruation period was not considered by Colonial Planters. So they were the victims of the multiple levels of exploitation. Women laboureres in colonial tea plantation were found their experience of being a working class different from that of their male colleagues. The efforts which was taken by the women labourers to make productivity in the tea estate was unremarkable as well as their domestic contribution were unnoticed.

⁵⁸Nitin Varma, (2011). *Producing Tea Coolies? Work, Life and Protest in the Colonial Tea Plantations of Assam, 1830s-1920s*.

⁵⁹ Hugh Tinker, (1974). *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Abroad, 1830-1920*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The exploitation of laborers was an important element of the success of colonial plantations in India. Exploitation was the result of the structure of power hierarchy in the colonial plantations. Laborers have encountered discrimination with Disciplinary mechanisms and also various other forceful activities. But in women laborer case it was double level exploitation. Colonial planters never considered women's gender issues. Their problems of pregnancy time and Menstruation period was not considered by Colonial Planters. So they were the victims of the multiple levels of exploitation. In almost all societies of the world, violence against women is a common phenomenon. Through various activities, a man exerts pressure, power authority on women and tries to control women's body and behavior.

One of the most important factors of production is 'labour' which efficiently led to production of commodity. Karl Marx placed lot of importance on the quality of value creation of labour. And he considered that labour means worker's own life activity which the workers sell to another person to secure the necessary means of subsistence.⁶⁰ Women labourers played a crucial role in pre-capitalist society where they needed to execute both the productive and unproductive activities. The male members also performed labour together with women members in society. Therefore there existed a specific type of cumulative labour. Yet in the instance of a capitalist economy, the surplus goes to the capitalist and here labourers work for the wages. In the case of women labourers, their labour was distributed in public production and

⁶⁰Marx, Karl. (2010). *Wage Labour and Capital*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, p.34

household production. The lives of women labourers in Kannan Devan Tea plantation were similar to this.

Women's multiple marginalities based on gender, race, class, employment, and geography have severe effects on the control over their bodies and well-being below mentioned words of an Upcountry Tamil Poet has reflected the condition of women. "Not only the line rooms my grandparents inherited from white men and tea bushes that cherished their lives but also the wombs of our women have been privatized."⁶¹

Colonial planters, as well as a colonial state policy towards women labourers, were miserable. On plantations, the world over, sexual exploitation prevailed whether the women were employed as slave labour or indentured labour. Planters were sexually utilized used women for their pleasure.⁶² In fact, there was an added dimension to it- the women workers often forced to sell their flesh.⁶³

Planters were the owners of the tea gardens. The authority of that place was under the hands of planters. In many cases, planters were taken advantages while using their power. The present research study pointed out that in the context of sexual exploitation of women labourers during colonial period planters were never considered the consent of women labourers. This study suggested that European planters were easily ignored the consent of women labourers through executing their power over them. In certain

⁶¹The Up- country Tamil were brought by the British to Sri Lanka as indentured labourers from south India to work in colonial plantations. See, Balasundaram, S. (2011). Stealing Wombs: Sterilization Abuses and Women's Reproductive Health in Sri Lanka's Tea Plantations. *Indian Anthropologist*, 41(2), 57-78. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41921991>

⁶²Raman, R. (2009). *Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India* (1st ed.). Routledge.

⁶³Moore, Moore. *Plantation Labour in Mysore; A historical approach to Migration Analysis*, in the Census of British India, Manohar Publication; New Delhi. P.6.

cases, women labourers were ready to go for sex with planters that indicate that women labourers were negotiating gender for their survival. Domestic responsibility is always attached to women. So the negotiating gender of Women labourers was not only for the self-survival but one among the part of the survival of the entire family.

Conclusion

To sum up, Plantations were the main industry in the world during the period of the Industrial Revolution. Plantation denotes huge agricultural enterprises, generally for the cultivation of one specific crop for distant markets; for the purpose of production process it has using huge number of labourers under the surveillance of the planters. The production of the cash crops for export purposes is considered as plantation¹.

Historically, plantations were a product of colonialism. Plantation agriculture was an important feature of the colonial economy in India. Tea is considered as one of the oldest industries in India. Tea plantations in India started under colonial rule. Robert Bruce in 1823 has discovered tea leaves in Assam and the first tea leaves from Assam were sent out for sale to the United Kingdom in 1838. Since then, India has witnessed large scale tea plantation production mainly concentrated in the four states: the northeastern states of West Bengal, Assam and also the southern states of Tamil Nadu as well as Kerala. This dissertation is tried to understand the historical background of tea plantation labour and gender question in Kannan Devan Hills in Kerala under the Colonial rule. The introduction of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills is an outcome of Colonialism. In the late 1870s, John Daniel Munroe was successfully accessed the vast tracts of land for tea plantation from the Raja of Poonjar royal family.

¹Eric Baak, P. (2000). *Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. P.19.

Before the establishment of tea plantation, Muthuva Adivasi community was the original inhabitants of the Kannan Devan Hills. Although the Muthuva community trace their origin to Madurai based on their myth and remembered traditions and much later only they migrated to the hills of Kerala. The development of tea plantation in Kannan Hills accelerated the process of impoverishment of Muthuva Adivasi community from Kannan Devan Hills. Particularly the introduction of various Forest rules by the Colonial State. Say, for instance, the forest department was established in 1864, adhering to a Forest Act passed in 1865. In addition, the complete monopoly over Indian forestland by the British Government was achieved through the introduction of the Indian Forest Act of 1878. The Colonial notion of Adivasis was connected with the savage, conceited, barbaric, vicious, wild and also foolish people. Adivasis were taken the subject in the colonial literary works with the intervention of Anthropological and also ethnographic studies. It was later on complied with by Marxist as well as Nationalist scholars who unsuccessful to remove the colonial understanding of Adivasis in their studies. So the present research study negates the notion of colonial understanding of Adivasi by using a petition which was sent by Muthuva community of Devikulam Taluk to His Highness of Maha Raja of Travancore in 1917. The content of the letter was that Muthuvans should free from the operation of the hill men rules and that they should be treated as ordinary subject of his highness Maharaja of Travancore and swamps and *Kalai*² forest should be registered in their names subject to a light assessment and *taravila*³, They claimed that they (Muthuvans)

²Kalai meaning the cultivation of paddy or some inferior grain in the same land after the first cultivation of rice known as Ozhavu is over also weed.

³The minimum price as fixed by the government.

and their ancestors were part of indentured labour of Poonjatil royal family, so they couldn't save anything for their lives. In addition the pattas should be given to them for the cardamom lands in their possession and that the taravila for the name should be received into installments and the last prayer is that a member from their community should be elected to represent them at the Srimoolam Popular Assembly⁴.

The present research study argues that the above-mentioned prayers of Muduvans were intended that they were very much conscious about their day to day lives and the conditions of their surroundings. The total four prayers of Muthuvans were specifically meant that it was a strong consciousness of a tribal community to attain their socio-economic and political mobility. Before the introduction of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills Muthuvans had autonomy on the forest. Their socio-economic and cultural life was associated with forest and they didn't experience any kind of hindrances to access the forest. So the present research study understands that after the establishment of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills, the Muthuva Adivasi community has lost its autonomy in the forest. This was mainly the result of British colonialism and their policy to control forest for their benefits.

Supply of cheap labour force was one of the main reasons for establishing a strong base by the colonial capitalists including plantation owners in the country. Another important factor for the smooth running of the tea plantation was the absence of worker's movements despite severe deprivation caused by the owners. The major

⁴See, Letter submitted by Muthuva community members of Devikulam to Travancore Diwan, 09/04/1917. *Revenue file 275/1917*, Bundle: 394.

source of labour supply was the villages affected by famine and natural calamities and migrants from these areas could be easily taken as a resident captive labourer. Most of them migrated from different parts of the country to the Kannan Devan Hills particularly from Tamil speaking regions of South India. During the colonial period, a crucial technique of hiring labour for the tea plantation of Kerala was with the Kangany system. Kannan Devan tea plantation likewise utilized Kangany system for labour recruitment. Many historic variables indispensable in the colonial system had in fact conspired to bring into existence the Kangany System. While developing the plantations, the planters came across numerous problems. Firstly, the areas most suitable for tea cultivation were covered with thick unhealthy forests which required to be eliminated. Secondly, most appropriate areas for the establishment of plantations were in areas where labour supply was sparse. A high wage rate would possibly have caused much more workers to migrate to these areas; however, the planters were not happy to pay these workers well. It is in this context that the Kangany System came to be introduced.⁵ Since the workers were the outsiders, they have not been able to bag local support to protest against their exploitation. Therefore, the exploitative nature of tea plantation owners during the colonial period with reference to recruitment and working condition of labourers remained unchallenged. The family basis recruitment was the characteristics of the recruitment of tea plantation labourers in Kannan Devan Hills, which was done by the kanganies.⁶ This was mainly accelerated by the capitalist

⁵Bhowmik, S. (1981). *Class formation in the plantation system*. Delhi: Peoples Publishing House. P.152.

⁶ Raman, R. (2002). *Bondage in Freedom: Colonial Plantations in Southern India C. 1797-1947*. Centre for Development Studies.

interest of the planters. The major reason behind this was the concern of the planters to get more labour recruitment in the future.

Accumulation of more profit was the primary intention of the tea plantation enterprise in colonial India. This was a similar situation in Kannan Devan Hills also. Colonial Planters Motives was mainly based on their capitalist interest. Labourers were the backbone of tea plantation and a major part of the plantation labour force was women. The exploitation of labourers was an integral part of the success of colonial plantations in India. Exploitation was the outcome of the structure of power hierarchy in the colonial plantations. So in order to accumulate more profit, labourers were exploited by colonial planters mainly through various disciplinary strategies which were based on coercion and the Kangany has performed an important task in the process of controlling labourers.

But in women labourer case it was multiple levels of exploitations. Colonial planters were ignored to consider the gender issues of women labourer. Say, for instance, their problems of pregnancy time and Menstruation period. The characteristic of the social hierarchy of tea plantation in India is and has always been patriarchal, highly centralized and rigid where the backward caste women labourers were at the bottom of the hierarchy.

The colonial state performed a vital role in the rapid growth and prosperity of the tea enterprise. The British Indian Government provided directly as well as indirect help and protection to the Kannan Devan Tea planters. Especially through their

administration of law and order, forest policy, labour recruitment and control methods, taxation measures promotion of transport and communication. In addition, Travancore princely state's policy towards Kannan Devan Tea Plantation was positive in several cases. Based on the various archival sources the research understands that the Colonial State has performed a vital role in the development of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills. The Colonial state was able to get the support of Travancore Princely State for the development of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills. The present research study understands that there was a nexus between the Colonial State and the Travancore Princely State. Not only it contributed to the development of tea plantation in Kannan Devan Hills but also it helped to make disciplinary mechanism more easily to the planters. As a result of this, tea plantation labourers became more vulnerable.

Bibliography

1. Archives

a. Kerala State Archives, Nalanda, Thiruvanthapuram

Revenue Files No: 2523/ 1913 : A letter written by the Devikulam commissioner, Mr. Forbes to Diwan Bahadur, P. Rajagopalachariar, Diwan of Travancore in 19/09/1913.

Revenue Files No: 2523/ 1913: A letter written by the P. Rajagopalachariar, Diwan of Travancore to Mr. Forbes in 27/09/1913.

Copy of letter No. R/C. 3495/89 dated 29/07/1914: Letter written by the Divisional Forest Officer, High Range to Conservator of Forest, Munnar.

Copy of letter No. R/C. 9601/89 dated 27/08/1914: Letter written by the Conservator of Forest, Munnar to Chief Seceretary.

Revenue files 275/1917, bundle no. 394: Letter written by the Muthuva community members of Devikulam to Travancore Diwan,

Revenue files 275/1917, bundle no. 394: the letter written by the J. C. H Robinson Esquire, Commissioner Devikulam, 08/06/1917

b. Regional Archives , East Fort Thiruvanthapuram.

Kannan Devan Hills Concession: File No : 258, S.No : 18.

c. Madras State Archives, Egmore, Chennai.

Proceedings of the Judicial Department

2. Legislative Proceedings

Proceedings of the Sir Mulam Popular Assembly, 1922,1924

Madras Legislative Council Proceedings, 1923, 1924.

.

3. Government Publications

a. Census of India

Census of India 1931, Vol. 28, PT.1, Travancore, 1922.

Census of India 1931, Vol. 28, PT.1, Travancore, 1932.

b. Gazeteers and Manuals

Aiya, V.N. Travancore State Manual, 3 vols, Thiruvanthapuram: Government Press, 1906.

Ward, B. S. and Conner, P.E. Lieutenants. Memoir of the Survey of the Travancore and Cochin States, 2 Vols, Vol.1, 1863, rpt. Thiruvanthapuram: State Editor, Government Press, 1993.

c. Reports

Government of India. Report of the Plantation Enquiry Commission,Pt.1 – Tea, Delhi : Government of India Press,1956.

Government of India. Report of the Southern Planter's Inquiry Committee, Madras, 1896.

4. News Papers Reports

Kerala Patrika, 20 January 1900, p.29.

Kerala Shobhini, 18 May 1903.

Malayala Manorama,' *Dewans High Range tour*, 6 March 1907,p.1.

Malayala Manorama,' *Thiruvithamkotte Theyilathotangal*', *Tea Plantations in Thiruvithamkur*, Editorial,22July 1916,p.2

5. Published Books

Baig, A., & Henderson, W. (1978). "*A Centenary of Planting in the Kannan Devan Hills Concession, 1878-1978*". Calcutta: Tata-Finlay Limited.

Bayly, C.A. (1999). "*Caste Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*", Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Behal, R.P. (1983). "*Some aspects of the Growth of Tea Plantation Labour Force in Assam*", Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

Bowmik, K.S. (1981).*Class Formation in Plantation System*, New Delhi: People's Publishing Houses.

Chatterjee, P. (2001). *A Time for Tea : Women, Labour, and Post?Colonial Politics on Indian Plantation*, Durham,NC : Duke University Press.

De Silva, S. (2011). "*The Political Economy of Underdevelopment*". Routledge

Eric Baak, P. (2000). "*Plantation Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in Southwest India in a Long Term Historical Perspective 1743-1963*". New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Foucault, M. (1997). "*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*", London: Penguin Books.

Gadgil, M . and Ramachandra, G. (1992). “*This Fissured Land; An ecological History of India*”, Delhi: oxford university Press.

Griffiths, P. (1967). “*The History of the Indian Tea Industry*”, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Hugh Tinker, (1974). “*A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Abroad, 1830-1920*”. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Muthiah S. (1993). “*A planting century: the first hundred years of the United Planters' Association of Southern India, 1893–1993*”. East West Books (Madras) Pvt Ltd

Namboothiripad, E. (2008).” *Kerala Charithram Marxist Veekshanathil*”.(Second ed.). Thiruvanthapuram: Chintha Publishers.

Raman, R. (2009). “*Global Capital and Peripheral Labour: The History and Political Economy of Plantation Workers in India*”. Routledge.

Sarkar, S. (1998).” *Writing Social History* “(2nd ed.). Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Sen, S. (2006). “*Women and labour in late colonial India*”. Cambridge University Press.

Uma Devi, S. (1989). ” *Plantation Economies of the Third World*”, Bombay : Himalaya Publishing House.

Xalxo, P. (2007). “*Complementarity of Human Life and Other Life Forms in Nature: A Study of Human Obligations Toward the Environment with Particular Reference to the Oraon Indigenous Community of Chotanagpur, India*”. Italy: Georgia University Press.

Zachariah, K.C. (1964). “*A Historical Study on Internal Migration in the Indian Subcontinent, 1901-31*”. New York: Asia Publishing House

6. Articles and Journals

Bhowmik, S. K. (2011). “Ethnicity and Isolation: Marginalization of Tea Plantation Workers. *Race/Ethnicity: Multidisciplinary Global Contexts* 4(2), 235-253. Indian University Press. Retrieved October 10, 2017, from Project MUSE database.

Bhowmik, S. K. (1980).” The Plantation as a Social System”. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 15(36), 1524-1527.

Bhukya, B. (2008). The Mapping of the Adivasi Social: Colonial Anthropology and Adivasis. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43(39), 103-109. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40278007>

Das Gupta, Ranajith,(1986). “*From Peasants and Tribesmen to Plantation Workers; Colonial Capitalism, Reproduction of Labour Power and Proletarianisation in North East India, 1850s to 1947*”, in *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol. 21, no.4,25 January, pp. PE2-PE10.

Raman, R. (2002). “*Bondage in Freedom: Colonial Plantations in Southern India C. 1797-1947*”. Centre for Development Studies.

Ravi Raman, K.’ *Plantation Labour: Revisit Required*’, *Economic and Political Weekly*, vol.XX1,No.,22, 31 May 1986,pp.960-2.

Scott, J. (1986). “*Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis*”. *The American Historical Review*, 91(5), 1053-1075. Accessed on 15 December, 2017.

Sen, S. (1999). "*Women and Labour in late Colonial India*", Cambridge University Press,

Sen, S. (2008). "*Gender and Class: Women in Indian Industry, 1890-1990*". *Modern Asian Studies*, 42(1), 75-116. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20488013>.

Locating the Historical past of Colonial Tea Plantation Labour and Gender question in Kannan Devan Hills: 1870 to 1930

by Anaswara Bk

Submission date: 27-Jun-2019 10:24AM (UTC+0530)

Submission ID: 1147394826

File name: anaswra_pdf.pdf (915.32K)

Word count: 18973

Character count: 99335

Locating the Historical past of Colonial Tea Plantation Labour and Gender question in Kannan Devan Hills: 1870 to 1930

ORIGINALITY REPORT

7%

SIMILARITY INDEX

3%

INTERNET SOURCES

2%

PUBLICATIONS

4%

STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1

Submitted to The University of Manchester

Student Paper

2%

2

cds.edu

Internet Source

1%

3

Paul E. Baak. "About Enslaved Ex-slaves, Uncaptured Contract Coolies and Unfreed Freedmen: Some Notes about 'Free' and 'Unfree' Labour in the Context of Plantation Development in Southwest India, Early Sixteenth Century–Mid 1990s", Modern Asian Studies, 1999

Publication

1%

4

baadalsg.inflibnet.ac.in

Internet Source

<1%

5

Submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU)

Student Paper

<1%

6

englishsummary.com

Internet Source

<1%

7	Desirée Kumpf. "A Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World, by Erika Rappaport", South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies, 2018 Publication	<1 %
8	R. P. Behal. "Book Reviews : PAUL ERIK BAAK, Plantation, Production and Political Power: Plantation Development in South-west India in a Long-Term Historical Perspective, 1743-1963, Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997, pp. xxii + 370, Rs 495", Studies in History, 02/01/2001 Publication	<1 %
9	amrc.org.hk Internet Source	<1 %
10	Submitted to Ambedkar University Delhi Student Paper	<1 %
11	Suparna Chatterjee. "Women Workers in the Dooars Tea Gardens", Contemporary Voice of Dalit, 2010 Publication	<1 %
12	Submitted to Gauhati University Student Paper	<1 %
13	"Marxist Economics", Marxian Economics, 1990. Publication	<1 %

14	www.wcd.nic.in Internet Source	<1 %
15	Submitted to Bath Spa University College Student Paper	<1 %
16	theses.gla.ac.uk Internet Source	<1 %
17	en.m.wikipedia.org Internet Source	<1 %
18	Submitted to Sydney Institute of Business Technology Student Paper	<1 %
19	Submitted to Siena College Student Paper	<1 %

Exclude quotes ☐ On

Exclude matches

< 14 words

Exclude bibliography ☐ On